

Exercise: Proportionate assessment

People should receive an appropriate and proportionate assessment i.e. one that is flexible and adaptable so it best fits with their needs. The assessment must follow core statutory obligations, but the process should be flexible and adaptable and the format could include, for instance:

- a face-to face assessment i.e. between the person and the assessor
- an online or phone assessment
- a combined assessment e.g. of a person needing care with their carer or with a child
- an integrated assessment where the local authority carries out an assessment jointly with other agencies and professionals involved

The key consideration is whether the assessment is proportionate to the severity of need and complexity of the situation. For instance, where needs are easily recognizable, the assessment may be carried out by phone or online, but where this takes place assessors will have to have the training and experience to be able to recognise issues around mental capacity and further underlying needs.

Local areas may have guidance or procedures in this area, identifying different response levels relating to different levels of risk for instance. If not, one approach to determining an appropriate and proportionate assessment could be to consider the following questions:

1. How severe/extensive are needs?
2. Do needs fluctuate?
3. How complex are the circumstances?
4. How significant are the impacts of these needs?
5. What are the strengths of the person, any carers, and any community & family support available?
6. What are desired outcomes/preferences?
7. Does the person have capacity?
8. Does the organisation have historical information that can inform assessment?
9. Does the person have any difficult engaging in the assessment? See [independent advocacy workbook](#).

Scenarios

Four brief scenarios are considered below. For each scenario, consider the questions listed above, and suggest what might be an appropriate and proportionate approach to assessment for each person. Compare and contrast the approaches that you identify.

- Pank Koria is in his late sixties and is a widower who lives alone. He recently fractured his leg and after a few days living with his daughter is about to return home to his flat. He appears to have been discharged from hospital without assessment. He completes a self-assessment. He sees a short term need for help with getting up, dressing, bathing and going to bed. Shopping and cleaning are a problem, but his daughter will assist in these areas. From his wheelchair he will manage to make simple meals. Apart from his broken leg he enjoys good health. He is happy for the assessor to check out his self-assessment with his daughter and the hospital he has been treated in.
- Jeanne Cissé is 76 and lives in her own house with her husband. Jeanne's husband is now bed bound and taking up the only downstairs room as a bedroom. Thirteen years ago Mrs Cissé collapsed in the street and was found to have suffered a subdural haematoma which required surgery. She has had to learn to read and write again, has some word finding difficulties and cannot manage correspondence. Her mobility is reducing and has difficulty managing stairs, but her bedroom is upstairs. A neighbour refers her to you asking if you can help.
- Jenny Wimborne is 39 and was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis three years ago. There has been a rapid deterioration in function for her in recent months. She relies for care on her partner who is also the prime carer to their two children aged 8 and 10, as well as working full time. She is increasingly fatigued, and has bowel problems. The District Nurse has referred her to you.
- Philippa Portland is a 46 year old woman with Down's syndrome who has been diagnosed with dementia. She lives with her parents who are in their late 70s and in increasingly poor health. They have just moved to your area to live closer to Philippa's married sister. For some years Philippa attended a Day Service three times a week that was near her old home, but that is too far away for her to continue. Her physical health has not been too bad.