



## Northamptonshire County Council

By Email  
Linda Saunders  
[request-486609-fa942d49@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-486609-fa942d49@whatdotheyknow.com)

Please ask for: Freedom of Information  
Tel: 01604 368360  
Our ref: FR8266  
Your ref:  
Date: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Dear Ms Saunders,

### **Information Request: FR8266**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request dated 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018 which was received by us on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018. Your request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act and is detailed below in italics with our response in bold.

(Please note the extract below has been taken directly from your original information request and is unedited).

*Further to*

*[https://northamptonshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/make\\_a\\_referral\\_to\\_community\\_occupational\\_therapy](https://northamptonshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/make_a_referral_to_community_occupational_therapy)*

*Please send me the process tree, decision making information, guidance, forms and templates and training materials used for Community Occupational Therapy assessment and duties and responsibilities of Community Occupational Therapy*

### **Our Response**

The Freedom of Information Team has been provided with the following information in response to your recent request on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council (NCC).

**The community occupational therapy service is provided by the local council under the care act aimed at reducing or delaying needs.**

### **Referral**

**A referral to community occupational therapy can be made by phoning the customer service centre or completing an online referral form. The self-referral or process for making a referral for another person using the following website link is designed to ensure that appropriate requests are made for community Occupational therapy. This is uses questions**

Northamptonshire County Council  
One Angel Square  
Angel Street  
Northampton, NN1 1ED

**w.** [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk)  
**t.** 01604 368360  
**f.** 01604 237004  
**e.** [freedomofinformation@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk)



Northamptonshire  
County Council

around walking aids, broken equipment, wheelchairs and scooters to direct people through the most appropriate pathways.

<http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/adult-social-care/living-at-home/Pages/equipment.aspx>

Following the referral a customer service member of staff will call the customer to check and collect other relevant information in order to complete the referral so that the most appropriate member of staff can be allocated the referral for a visit to be made.

### **Assessment**

The assessment mainly takes place in the customer's home. The staff member attending from the Community Occupational Therapy Service carries out an assessment and takes relevant details according to the request. The more complex the request the more likely more details will be needed. The approach used to the assessments is called person centred approach whereby the views of the customer are included in the assessment. The assessment tool records the customer's name, address, date of birth. Also recorded is the customer's height and weight and NHS number as appropriate and the people present on the assessment visit.

The assessment usually starts with an introduction of the staff member and then the customer or representative is asked for their views of their difficulties and expectations of the assessment. The occupational therapy staff member establishes the reasons for the visit and the outcome the customer would like to achieve.

A list of current and past medical history that is relevant to the assessment and function of the customers is taken. This will include both physical and mental health problems. Range of movement, pain, continence, postural problems and pressure ulcers can also be recorded as appropriate to the assessment.

The customers walking ability and falls history, any speech difficulties, use of communication aids being used, sensory impairments such as sight and hearing is also recorded as appropriate to the assessment.

The occupational therapy staff member will also establish the ownership of the property, type of the property, person living in the accommodation. Other environmental factors are also noted that are appropriate to the assessment such as access to the property, stairs, any internal steps and layout or room sizes as required, potential hazards such as rugs and poor lighting.

Assistance currently being given to the customer is recorded and any existing care package being provided to the customer is recorded. Tasks such as shopping, cleaning, laundry, meal preparation, feeding and drinking is recorded as appropriate to the assessment.

The assessment may also include questions and observations of tasks such as walking, chair, bed, toilet, bath or (and) shower transfers, food or drink preparations, washing and dressing tasks, the use of any access or steps and stairs or any equipment used by the customer as appropriate to the type of assessment request. The type of furniture which is used by the customer will also be a consideration especially if equipment is being used or recommended for an identified need.

During the assessment the staff member may draw diagrams, take measurements, may need to complete further risk assessments as it is relevant to the completion of their assessment and may share advice.

The assessment will conclude with a summary of risks, reasoning or options discussed with recommendations based on the information collated during the assessment, needs identified and the appropriate services available to meet those needs.

As part of the assessment process the occupational therapy staff member may also complete a manual handling assessment if it is relevant to the referral. The manual handling assessment consists of relevant medical history in relation to mobility difficulties, physical problems, communication details, behaviour which affects moving and handling, handling constraints, cultural/religious considerations, task, individual capability, load and environment. The manual handling assessment also includes the outcome which is the customer's personal moving and handling plan. A copy of the personal moving and handling plan is given to the customer.

Other forms used by the occupational therapy staff as part of their assessment may be a bed rail or bed loop/lever risk assessment form. These forms give consideration to cognition, comprehension, certain condition and movements which may be contraindicated to using the equipment by increasing risk of entrapment, altered sensation, body size in comparison to the equipment being used, medical devices being used, customer ability to move in bed and situation, supervision, strength and co-ordination, ability to climb over a bed rail. Other considerations include the equipment itself potentially being prescribed, detailing key factors, other equipment used in conjunction with rail, safe working loads, environment, and alternatives to using bed rails, loops and levers as well as ensuring the customer consent has been obtained.

### Intervention

The occupational therapy staff will use an incremental approach to the provision of any services. An incremental approach is a method of breaking down the decision making process into small steps instead of making one huge leap towards solving a problem. At each step the staff member will consider the customer's needs and what the outcome of a potential intervention will be. This process uses a combination of the assessment information, the staff member's skills, abilities, experiences and techniques to determine the most cost effective solution to recommend which will meet a customer's need.

Occupational therapy staff have access to equipment services, minor adaptation service and a major adaptations service. A couple of simplistic examples of an incremental approach would be:

- A customer is having difficulty with bathing and has requested a walk in shower. The occupational therapy staff member assesses the customer, considers their needs, the information collated during an assessment and thinks about equipment such as a bathlift and grab rails to meet the need before thinking of the walk in shower. If the customer can use the bathlift and grab rails independently with no predictable or imminent change likely then the walk in shower will not be needed.
- A customer is having difficulty using the front steps of their property or their staircase and a ramp or stairlift has been requested. The occupational therapy staff member assesses the customer, considers their needs, the information collated

during an assessment and thinks about minor work adaptations such as a handrail or banister rail before thinking about major adaptations such as a ramp or a stairlift.

If the assessment is such that the smaller interventions such as equipment and minor works will not be appropriate then they talk with the customer about the major adaptation intervention. There are occasions where equipment and minor works are tried with the customer before a recommendation for a major adaptation is made. Each intervention is reviewed upon completion to ensure that the needs have been met.

Equipment and minor adaptations are prescribed in line with the care act and relevant policies and legislation. Major adaptations are also recommended according to relevant DFG legislation.

Prior to the ordering or recommending the intervention an action plan and consent is agreed with the customer (or family member or representative), signed by the customer and occupational therapy staff member. This is a record of the agreement which has resulted from the assessment and the customer retains a copy of it.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities of Community Occupational Therapy**

The Community Occupational Therapy Service will assist individuals with social care needs to participate in the activities of daily life by modifying the person's environment or supporting individual programmes of support that promote independence. In promoting independence for the Customers it will also aim to reduce the need for ongoing support.

They will do this by:

- Providing a specialist assessment of the person's ability and needs. The assessment generally takes place at home but can also be at work, school, day centre or other residential establishment. The assessment takes into consideration the physical, psychological, social and cultural needs of the individual as well as those of the carer;
- Providing support and advice to the Customers, informal carer and where appropriate formal carers on managing and maintaining independent living;
- Explaining new methods of carrying out daily living activities.
- Contributing to the development of support plans to assist independence;
- Advising or prescribing equipment to assist with living independently;
- Advising or prescribing minor adaptations to be carried out within the home e.g. grab rails, key safes, banisters;
- Advising on major adaptations e.g. ramp, shower installations, widening doors for wheelchair access.

**Prescriptions are for people who are eligible for equipment or adaptations under the Council's eligibility criteria with services arranged with the Council's chosen supplier. Advice will be given to people not eligible who may benefit from equipment and adaptations that they may choose to purchase themselves.**

**Training Materials Used for Occupational Therapy Assessments**

**Occupational Therapists are trained to a degree level. The occupational therapy staff have guidance notes for assessments which are used for training, they have an induction period, they receive 1:1 shadowing, 1:1 on task supervision which involves them being observed in an assessment situation, ongoing 1:1 supervision, regular continuing professional development sessions and audits of their work.**

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If you are unhappy with the response, you can ask the Council to review it. To do this please write to the address below:

Mr Simon Deacon  
Reviewing Officer  
Northamptonshire County Council  
One Angel Square  
Angel Street  
Northampton  
NN1 1ED

Email [dataprotection@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

If our internal review does not resolve the issue to your complete satisfaction, you have the right to apply to the information Commissioner for a decision at the following address:

Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Or, if you have any complaints in respect of your information request please complete the on-line comments form that can be found at [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk), along with a full set of guidance.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information/Data Protection Team  
Business Intelligence and Project Management  
E-Mail- [freedomofinformation@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk)