

# Contributing Towards The Cost Of Non-Residential Services Charging Information

April 2019 - March 2020



## Introduction

The following information deals with those services that people receive in their own homes, in the community and for planned short term care lasting less than 8 weeks. Residential and Nursing Care Services (including temporary placements) and the charges for those services are covered in a separate leaflet “Residential And Nursing Care - Paying For Care In A Care Home”.



## Why charges are being made for services

Like all local authorities, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council must work within the strict financial limitations placed upon it by the Government. However, the Council recognises the important part that Social Services play in the lives of many people and is committed to maintaining the best possible standards and widest range of services.

It is also important to ensure that the charges being made are affordable to service users and so, before any charge is made, there is an individual assessment of what a person will be expected to contribute based on their ability to pay; known as the financial assessment. This information explains the charges and how they are calculated.

Please note that only one charge is levied, regardless of the number of non-residential services received.

**Social Services**

## What services are charged for?

The following non-residential services are chargeable from the first day they are received:

- Home Care (services provided for personal care, sitting services, domestic help and shopping). Standard charge £21.05 per hour.
- Attendance at a day care centre (meals and transport, where applicable, will be charged separately). Standard charge £57.44 per session
- Supported Living Services. Standard charge £21.05 per hour.
- Direct Payments. Standard charge £14.49 per hour.
- Shared Lives/Adult Placement services. Standard charge for sessional support £8.21 per hour. Standard charges for respite services/long term placements. Band A £48.45 per night, Band B £57.29 per night, Band C £65.79 per night, Band D £83.13 per night.
- Planned Short Term Residential or Nursing Care up to a maximum of 8 weeks. After 8 weeks short term care will be assessed under the charging policy for Residential and Nursing Care. Temporary placements that are expected to exceed 8 weeks or have an indefinite end date will be assessed under the charging policy for Residential and Nursing Care from the date of admission.

The charges do not apply to:

- Services provided where the service users has previously been sectioned under Section 3 of the Mental Health Act and is now receiving Section 117 after care.
- Supported employment projects.
- Floating support services - if funded by Supporting People Grant.
- Services for mental health clients under the support worker scheme.
- Services provided to a person under the age of 18 years.
- Re-ablement.



## How the amount a person has to pay is worked out

From 8th April 2019 the standard charges for services are as detailed above, however, because a person's ability to pay is taken into account, the actual amount they will be required to contribute may be lower or there may be no charge.

A person from the Council known as the Income Maximisation Officer will calculate the amount to be paid by looking at all the relevant financial information. They will also assist with completion of the form if you wish.

A means-tested system is used to calculate the charges. The total amount of the charge for services is compared to the Service Users total weekly income. We then ensure that the person is not left with less than a guaranteed level of weekly income as set by the Welsh Government.

Once this guaranteed level of income has been calculated any remainder is available to pay for services (in some cases this will result in there being a nil charge).

## Capital

Capital includes savings, investments, property and land (other than the person's home - the value of a person's home is always disregarded).

Over £24,000 - if a person has capital over this amount they will be charged for services at the rates listed earlier, up to a maximum of £90.00 per week.



## Weekly income

Total Weekly Income includes:

- most Social Security benefits and pensions
- all private and occupational pensions
- Annuities

## The rules on capital and income for couples

If both members of a couple receive a service then they will be assessed as a couple. Where only one member of the couple received a service they can be assessed in one of two ways.

- If the benefits that are paid to the couple, such as pension credit or income support are part of a claim for both members of the couple then their income and savings will be assessed jointly and the minimum income amount and DRE disregard applied to their assessment should be based on the basic income support figure for a couple.
- If there are no joint benefits and only one member of the couple receives a service they are within their rights to only declare their own financial details and they would then be assessed as a single person. This method may result in a higher charge being applied than if a couple's assessment is completed if the individual receiving services receives the majority of the income. If the couple are in agreement financial details of both members of the couple will be collected and a 'better off' calculation will be completed to determine which method would provide the individual with the lowest charge. If on checking with the Department for Works and Pensions it is clear that the partner is claiming benefits on the individual's behalf the income would be assessed jointly.



DLA, AA and PIP are only taken into account for both members of the couple if they are both receiving services. If only one member is receiving services then only his/her own DLA, AA or PIP is taken into account at the relevant rate.

## Disregards

When calculating a person's weekly assessable income some forms of income are fully or partially disregarded. These are. These are:



### Fully Disregarded

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) - Mobility component
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) - Mobility component
- Christmas bonus
- Social Fund Payments
- Winter Fuel Payments
- ILF Payments
- Child Benefit
- Earnings
- Working / Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Carers Premium of Pension Credit / Income Support
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- War Disablement Pension

### Partially Disregarded

- War Widows / Widows Pension
- Pension Credit - savings credit
- Disability Living Allowance
- Attendance Allowance (AA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Having calculated the person's Weekly Assessable Income a minimum income allowance, a set allowance for disability related expenditure and allowances for any eligible mortgage rent or council tax expenses are deducted to produce a maximum weekly charge for further investigation.

## Queries relating to the financial assessment outcome

Should you have any questions regarding the outcome of the financial assessment, please contact the Income Maximisation Officer. The officer will check the calculations again and advise you of any revised figures. If you remain unhappy with the explanation, you should advise the officer who will then refer you to the Income Officer for further investigation.

## Reviews

When a client has been assessed they are advised in writing of their charge. If a client is unhappy with the assessed charge a review should be requested within 10 days of receiving the written notification.'

The review will be carried out by the Income Officer and will involve a re-calculation of the clients charge; the client will be notified of the outcome within 10 days from receipt of the request, this will give details of any change to the weekly assessed charge along with an explanation



If after the review the client is still unhappy the official complaints procedure should be followed.

## How charges can be paid

You will receive an invoice every four weeks listing the services that have been provided, the charge for each week during the period and the total cost of the invoice.

Payments can be made by

- Direct Debit
- Cheque
- Online Payment
- Credit or debit Card\* (by contacting C2BG - see contact list)
- Cash (by taking your invoice or a payment card to any Post Office, Pay Point or the Civic Centre)

\*Please note there is a small surcharge payable when paying by credit/debit card

In order that the charges for services are applied fairly, the County Borough Council will take appropriate action to collect unpaid charges from persons assessed as liable.



## How a person can make sure they are claiming all their benefits to help pay for charges

The Welsh Government and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council understand that having to pay for services is likely to be of great concern to people, even though the charges have been kept as low as possible. The calculation of what people will have to pay towards the cost of the services they receive takes account of their ability to pay.

There is a commitment from the Welsh Government and Social Services to anyone being charged for services, that help to claim all the Social Security benefits and pensions they are entitled to must be provided. This includes benefits that people may have missed out on in the past.

The Income Maximisation Officer will complete a benefit check when they complete the financial assessment. There is no charge for this service and it is available to everyone who receives a chargeable service from the Department.

## What happens to the financial and personal information given?

Social Services will deal with all information with complete confidentiality. The information will not be used for any purpose other than calculating the expected contribution towards the charges.

We may share information with other Departments within the Council, such as Housing Benefit and Council Tax to ensure that the information held is accurate.

## How To Contact Us

Social Services Income Team  
Resources Department  
Anvil Court  
Church Street  
Abertillery  
NP13 1DB

Tel: (01495) 355794

Or

C2BG (Connect to Blaenau Gwent)  
The Contact Centre

Tel: (01495) 311556

Duty Referral Team  
Tel: (01495) 315700



To receive this information in Braille, large print, electronically or on audio tape please contact the Information Officer on (01495) 354630.

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