

# Wellbeing Standard

# Care Act 2014

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## Principle and legal framework

*“Wellbeing should be seen as the common theme around which care and support is built at local and national level”*

- ▶ The Wellbeing Principle is the guiding principle behind the Care Act. It puts wellbeing at the heart of care and support. It puts the needs and goals of the individual at the heart of the assessment and care planning process/client journey.
- ▶ The Wellbeing Principle is described by the Department of Health as representing a change in focus, from providing services, to meeting needs. Social care practitioners who are acquainted with the personalisation agenda will be familiar with many aspects of this principle.

The Wellbeing Principle applies equally to carers as adults with care and support needs.

## Wellbeing in practice

In carrying out any of their care and support functions or making a decision in respect of a person, we:

- ▶ **must promote** (improve) an individual’s wellbeing which relates to the following areas:
  - personal dignity
  - physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
  - protection from abuse and neglect
  - control by individual over everyday life
  - participation in work, education, training or recreation
  - social and economic wellbeing
  - domestic, family and personal
  - suitability of living accommodation
  - individual’s contribution to society
- ▶ *and* **must have regard to** (consider) the following matters:
  - the individual’s views, wishes, feelings and beliefs
- ▶ *the need to:*
  - consider all the relevant circumstances (not based on unjustified assumptions)
  - protect people from abuse and neglect
  - minimise any restriction on rights or freedoms
- ▶ *the importance of:*
  - beginning with the assumption that the individual is best placed to judge their own wellbeing
  - preventing and delaying future needs and reducing existing needs
  - maximising the participation of the individual (do not exclude from decisions)
  - balancing the wellbeing of the individual and their carers

The above approach should lead to a holistic approach that considers an individual’s need in the context of their skills, ambitions and priorities as well as the other people in their life.

It is important to remember the duty to promote wellbeing *does not* require any local authority to undertake any particular action and that there is no set approach to applying the principle. Practitioners must consider each case on its own merits with an understanding that different things have different importance to different people.

The promotion of wellbeing in practice will depend on a particular function being performed. However, we should ensure that we provide sufficient information, in a format of the person's choice, to enable them to take control of their care and support and choose the options that are right for them.

The Wellbeing Principle has at its core the concept of "independent living", focussing on supporting people to live as independently as possible for as long as possible.

The Wellbeing Principle applies equally to those who do not have eligible needs but come into contact with the system in some other way (for example, via an assessment that does not lead to ongoing care and support) as it does to those who go on to receive care and support, and have an ongoing relationship with us.

It should inform the delivery of universal services which are provided to all people in the local population, as well as being considered when meeting eligible needs. Although the Wellbeing Principle applies specifically when we perform an activity or task, or make a decision, in relation to a person, the principle should also be considered when we undertake broader, strategic functions, such as planning, which are not in relation to one individual. As such, "wellbeing" should be seen as the common theme around which care and support is built at local and national level.

**"It is not possible to promote wellbeing without establishing a basic foundation where people are safe and their care and support is on a secure footing."**

## Contact information

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