

# IRN Need Assessment Tool

Replacement to the Exceptional Needs  
Payment Tool

West Provider Forum  
2 July 2024

# Overview

The IRN Needs Assessment Tool replaces the Exceptional Needs Payment Tool. It is designed to be clearer, and more transparent which aims to bring more uniformity across the county



**Go live date – 01 June 2024**



**Will become part of the assessment stage and will be considered for all new placements, as well as existing placements when they are reviewed**



**Three criteria system following feedback from providers at Focus Groups.**



**Need, not diagnosis focused**

# How we got here

Following feedback sessions with ECC framework providers, the aim was to simplify the process and ensure that ECC are supporting providers to do well. The Need Assessment Tool ensures a uniform approach across the county and has been developed to support the decision-making process on whether an adult has additional need and an enhanced payment in addition to the IRN contracted rate should be paid to the care home provider.

Current tool not fit for purpose

Regular meetings with IRN focus groups and “you said we did” feedback sessions

Conversations with other local authorities (Norfolk have implemented a similar tool)

Involvement from adult operations

# Key Takeaways for providers

- There are three tiers within the IRN Need Assessment Tool, Standard Care, Higher Need and Exceptional Need, with separate criteria for each tier.
- The enhanced payment is to acknowledge the additional work and efforts provided in supporting adults with additional needs.
- This enhanced payment is for adults who have been assessed as having additional need to Standard Care in an IRN contracted rate placement (an IRN bed). The enhanced payment cannot be used for SPOT placements or placements in an IRN contracted home that are not at the IRN contracted rate.

# Criteria

There are three tiers within the IRN NAT, Standard Care, Higher Needs (core rate plus £70 a week) and Exceptional Needs (core rate plus £140 a week), with separate criteria for each tier. Adults will need to meet three or more of the criteria within the selected tier or at least one in the selected tier if the need is significant. The expectation, however, is that most care home placements will continue to be at the Standard Care IRN rate.

## Tier 1 - Standard Care

Need
Adult requires 24-hour support to keep them safe and maintain all daily needs. This can include full assistance with personal care, washing and dressing, and continence care at regular intervals throughout the day and night.
Adult may require 2:1 support with all moving and handling such as hoisting and repositioning.
Adult mostly responds to verbal and physical assistance with all daily care tasks.
Periods of distressed presentation presents low risk to self and others which follows a predictable pattern but is not routine in day-to-day care support.

## Tier 2 – Higher Need

### Need

Adult's needs would ordinarily follow the care plan but if not managed may trigger a distressed presentation which, left unsupported, could escalate, and put themselves or others at risk.

De-escalation strategies are required and are often effective in managing the adult's needs through reliable and routine support interventions.

Moving and handling requires experienced and skilled intervention beyond the skills learnt through routine moving and handling training to achieve the desired outcome.

Interventions can take time and requires several attempts to achieve the outcome based on the adult's need. Physical risk may be presented but adult responds to known coping strategies.

## Tier 3 - Exceptional Need

### Need

Adult requires frequent reassurance and additional contact time during the day. Without this intervention the adult's wellbeing would be significantly impacted and lead to risk to self and others.

Requires high levels of observation throughout the 24-hour period.

Care tasks take a long time, requiring additional staff to provide routine managed interventions. Specialist support or intervention is needed to achieve the desired outcomes.

High level of knowledge and skill is required to meet the adult's needs and circumstances safely.

This information is issued by:  
Essex County Council

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