

Formulate Practitioner Reference Pack – Carers (V9)

Strengths-based working for Carers

Contents

1	What is Formulate?	1
2	Where does Formulate fit into the process?	2
3	How does Formulate work?	3
4	How do I complete the Needs Profile?	3

1 What is Formulate?

Formulate is a tool to help you calculate an Estimated Budget. It has been designed to be fair, accurate and consistent.

Formulate is based on an assessment of need, meaning it helps eliminate variation in provision for carers with the same needs and situation – and ensures that the carers you work with get a fair Carers Personal Budget compared to others with similar needs and situation.

The purpose of the Carers Estimated Budget is to provide a starting point for the support planning process. The figure provides a framework to enable choice, control and person-centred care within a sustainable financial envelope. This helps move the conversation away from more traditional service or provision-led thinking, and towards outcomes.

Benefits for practitioners

- Clarity in understanding the money available for support planning.
- Confidence in decision making through the use of a robust, evidence-based tool.
- Free to focus on the person rather than the money.

Benefits for carers

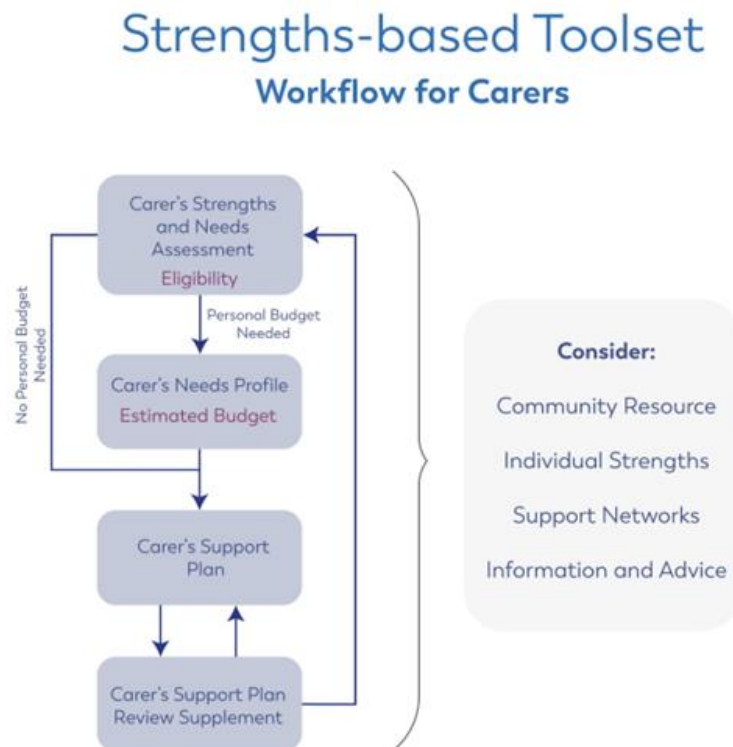
- Clarity in understanding the money available for support planning.
- Empowered to exercise choice and control - allows for greater creativity.
- Assurance that allocation is fair and driven by needs and outcomes - rather than decisions on cost.

Benefits for Local Authorities

- Supports financial and budgetary planning and control – helping to inform future commissioning arrangements.
- Better understanding of carer population
- Increased support for carers - increasing sustainability of unpaid care
- Delegated decision making – potential to reduce moderation/panels.

2 Where does Formulate fit into the process?

Once you've completed your assessment and determined if a carer has eligible needs, the 'Needs Profile' would be completed which contains the questions which are used by Formulate to calculate a Carers Estimated Budget. The Needs Profile is shown as the second grey box in the flowchart below:



In a strengths-based approach, you would usually have explored all of the person's strengths and looked for any community resources or support networks before completing the Needs Profile – so the Needs Profile is about the remaining unmet outcomes.

3 How does Formulate work?

Firstly, a Carer's Need Band is calculated based on the information captured in the Needs Profile. The Need Band is calculated based on:

- The degree to which the carers well-being is affected by any challenges they have in meeting their outcomes, and;
- The risk of their physical and/or mental health getting worse.

The outcome areas, and the different levels to which the carer's well-being may be affected, are weighted within Formulate. These weightings give an overall score, which is then used to assign the Need Band. This is then adjusted, where relevant, using the scores provided in relation to the risk of the carer's physical and mental health deteriorating.

A text statement is generated to describe the relevant scores that have led to the final assigned need band.

Your Local Authority will have assigned different EPB figures and information statements to the different Need Bands, which may be weekly or yearly values – this is known as the local configuration. These figures are based on the paid and unpaid services available to carers locally.

An estimate of the care and support that the carer provides in an average week may also be taken into account, depending on the local configuration.

4 How do I complete the Needs Profile?

You will only complete the sections of the Needs Profile which are relevant for the carer's needs and situation – this is based on which Care Act outcome areas have been recorded as eligible needs within the assessment prior to the Needs Profile.

As the Needs Profile captures information in a measurable way, it is made up of a combination of scales and checkboxes. You should choose the most relevant answer for the person's situation. People are different and we are not trying to fit people into boxes – it's about which answer most closely reflects the person's situation – in order to generate an accurate Estimated Budget.

To help choose the most relevant answer, there are some key principles that should be applied.

- Assess the impact that arises due to the caring role (not due to the carer's own needs).
- Assess the impact based on providing "necessary care" only.
- Aim to determine the care and support the carer is **able** and **willing** to provide on an ongoing basis.

The narrative from your assessment should provide the written evidence for the responses you choose within the Needs Profile.

What if the carer disagrees with the estimated personal budget?

It is important to remember that Formulate produces an Estimated Budget – the Actual Budget may well be different.

However, there are cases where recording issues may result in an inaccurate Estimated Budget. If you feel the budget is not realistic, for example it is either too low or too high, the first step is to establish whether you feel that the carer's needs have been recorded correctly in the Needs Profile.

Where the Estimated Budget is £0, it is important to check:

- Whether eligible needs have been determined in one or more areas in the carer's assessment (or at the start of the Needs Profile), and;
- Whether any risk to physical and/or mental health deteriorating has been recorded.

If neither of these are the case, the carer is not eligible for support and the Estimated Budget will be £0.

It is important to note that even if the carer is eligible for support, they may not be offered an Estimated Budget. It may be the case that there are local services available which may be better suited to help meet their outcomes. You should check the carer's Need Band and information statement to understand whether your Local Authority has configured an Estimated Budget value for that Need Band.

You should also check the estimated hours of care and support provided by the carer, and ensure that the carer is providing necessary care to another adult. Your Local Authority may adjust the Estimated Budget values according to the hours of care and support provided in an average week.