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Needs assessment

Needs Assessment Service Coordination agencies (NASCs) operate the needs assessment and service coordination process on behalf of Te Whatu Ora.

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Every person who wishes to receive disability support services funded by a DHB must be needs assessed by the NASC. The information from the assessment is then used to determine the level of need the person has – very low, low, medium, high or very high.

The criteria for residential care entry is that the person has been assessed as having high or very high needs which are indefinite and cannot be safely met with a package of care in the community.

[Find your local NASC](#) on the Needs Assessment and Service Co-ordination Association website.

How can I apply for a needs assessment?

Any person can apply for a needs assessment, either in person or by referral from any other person, such as a general practitioner. The contact details for a local needs assessment and service coordination service are available by clicking on the following link, contacting the local DHB.

If a person is living in the community and requires support, they should apply as soon as possible for a needs assessment by a NASC. The person may be eligible for health and disability support services that help them to maintain their independence at home. If a person receiving a support services package is unable to live safely in the community, and is re-assessed as requiring a high or very high level of care, then long-term residential care is available.

If a person is currently living in the community, and their health circumstances have changed they are able to apply for a re-assessment of their needs.

If a person is currently living in a residential care facility but has not been officially needs assessed by the NASC and wishes to apply for a needs assessment, then the person should apply for a needs assessment as soon as possible. This first step is necessary before the person applies for a financial means assessment to determine if they are eligible for government funding (the residential-care subsidy).

Go to [Residential care questions and answers](#) for more information.

How long will I have to wait for a needs assessment?

The NASC should contact the referred person within two days of receiving a referral. A completed needs assessment application should be processed within 20 working days, but it may take longer depending on the demands on the assessment service.

Is there a time limit on the validity of my needs assessment?

There is no time limit on the validity of your needs assessment. You might need a reassessment if there has been a significant change to your needs or circumstances that means your existing support plan doesn't work for you any more.

interRAI assessment process

interRAI is a suite of clinical assessment instruments used to assess an older person's care needs both in the community and residential care.

[Read More](#)

Also in this section

Long-term residential care

Needs assessment

Health of older people organisations and websites

The LiLACS NZ research programme

Healthy Ageing Strategy: update

Home support services

Dementia Mate Wareware

Aged Care Funding and Service Models Review

Last updated: 30 August 2023

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Te Aka Whai Ora | Māori Health Authority

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