**Draft letter for councillors to send to the cabinet member with responsibility for carer’s assessments**

Please see below for suggested wording that you can use to email your colleague with responsibility for carer’s assessments. Feel free to edit and add your own experience if applicable. If you get a response, please forward it to campaigns@mndassociation.org.

You can also help to raise awareness of carer’s assessments by [sharing this infographic on social media](https://www.mndassociation.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/Carer%27s%20assessment%20infographic%20v3.png). Be sure to tag us @MNDCampaigns so we can share your post.

Dear X,

As the cabinet member with responsibility for carer’s assessments, I’m writing to you to inform you about the specific needs of people caring for those with motor neurone disease (MND) in our area.

As you may know, MND is a fatal, rapidly progressing disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. MND leaves people locked in a failing body, unable to move, talk and eventually breathe. Six people a day die from MND in the UK.

Caring for somebody with a complex and progressive disease like MND is an enormous responsibility which impacts carers in multiple ways. It is often family who take on the bulk of caring responsibilities.

Research conducted by the MND Association found MND carers are physically and mentally exhausted, unable to access breaks and impacted financially. Many are also juggling caring with work and additional parental responsibilities.

MND carers also felt unable to leave their loved one with MND for prolonged periods of time, if at all, due to the lack of access to proficient care staff trained to deal with complex care needs associated with MND. For example, people making use of equipment such as assisted ventilation or suction machines for saliva control require care staff who are trained in the use of such equipment.

You can read the report in full here: <https://www.mndassociation.org/support-mnd-carers/>.

As you know, carer's assessments are the responsibility of local authorities in England. They can provide much needed support and they are a statutory right.

In light of these findings, it would also be helpful to understand:

* What steps are taken locally to ensure that carers are identified, and their support needs are assessed?
* For example, do you work with local NHS bodies to ensure carers are identified and referred for a carer’s assessment?
* Are you aware of Carers Partnership (Carers UK and Carers Trust) [good practice guidance](https://www.carersuk.org/media/ooudwsan/carers-assessments-report-2023.pdf) for providing and delivering carer’s assessments which rests on the [NICE recommendations](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng150/chapter/Recommendations#assessing-carers-needs) for supporting adult carers?
* Do you have an estimate of the proportion of carers in our local authority area who have been offered/received a carer’s assessment?

I look forward to hearing from you and working together to show our support for people living with MND, and especially their carers and families living in our area.

Yours sincerely,

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