

How to Apply the Principles of Well-Managed Needs

The Basic Principles and Correct Approach

At Checklist:

The principles in relation to 'well-managed need' (outlined in the Assessment of Eligibility section of this National Framework) apply equally to the completion of the Checklist as they do to the Decision Support Tool. (National Framework 2022, Paragraph 128).

At Decision Making:

The decision-making rationale should not marginalise a need just because it is successfully managed: well-managed needs are still needs. Only where the successful management of a healthcare need has permanently reduced or removed an ongoing need, such that the active management of this need is reduced or no longer required, will this have a bearing on NHS Continuing Healthcare eligibility. (National Framework 2022, Paragraph 162).

...Where psychological or similar interventions are successfully addressing behavioural issues, consideration should be given as to the present-day need if that support were withdrawn or no longer available and this should be reflected in the Behaviour domain.

(NHS Continuing Healthcare Decision Support Tool (DST) paragraph 31).

Well-managed need and Behaviour:

An example of the application of the well-managed needs principle might occur in the context of the behaviour domain where an individual's support plan includes support/interventions to manage challenging behaviour, which is successful in that there are no recorded incidents which indicate a risk to themselves, others or property. In this situation, the individual may have needs that are well-managed and if so, these should be recorded and considered in the eligibility decision. (National Framework 2022, Paragraph 163).

Example

James is a young adult with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome who currently lives in a specialist unit. He has a history of exhibiting challenging behaviour involving injury to both himself and others but there have been no injuries for 12 months. However, an examination of his care plan and speaking to his carers about his day-to-day support reveals that he has skilled carers with him at all times and on a daily basis they need to intervene to prevent escalation of challenging behaviours that would result in injuries.

It is clear that the risks are such that if this support was reduced or withdrawn James would injure himself or others.

This is a well-managed need and should be reflected in the Behaviour domain of the DST.

In applying the principle of well-managed need, consideration should be given to the fact that specialist care providers may not routinely produce detailed recording of the extent to which a need is managed. It may be necessary to ask the provider to complete a detailed diary over a suitable period of time to demonstrate the nature and frequency of the needs and interventions, and their effectiveness.

(National Framework 2022, Paragraph 164)

In James' case considered above, the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) should ensure the Care Plan is up to date and may ask the carers to provide a detailed diary/record of needs and interventions over an appropriate period. This is likely to help to demonstrate the extent to which his needs in this domain are intense, complex and/or unpredictable. It may draw out interactions with other domains, such as issues with psychological and emotional needs and communication.

Needs should not be marginalised just because they are successfully managed. Well-managed needs are still needs. Only where the successful management of a healthcare need has permanently reduced or removed an on-going need, such that the active management of this need is reduced or no longer required will this have a bearing on NHS Continuing Healthcare eligibility. This principle is incorporated into the domain descriptors of the DST. For example, in the behaviour domain the level of support and skill required to manage risks associated with challenging behaviour helps determine the domain weighting. In such cases the care plan (including psychological or similar interventions) should provide the evidence of the level of need, recognising that this care plan may be successfully avoiding or reducing incidents of challenging behaviour (refer to paragraphs 162-166 of the National Framework and Practice Guidance note 23. (DST Paragraph 31)

...in the Behaviour domain, the level of support and skill required to manage risks associated with challenging behaviour helps determine the domain weighting (DST paragraph 27).

A priority weighting is appropriate where an individual displays 'Challenging' behaviour of a severity and/or frequency and/or unpredictability that presents an immediate and serious risk to self, others, or property. The risks are so serious that they require access to an immediate and skilled response at all times for safe care.' (DST, Behaviour Domain, Priority description)

On the other hand, a severe weighting is appropriate where the challenging behaviour is of a 'severity and/or frequency that poses a significant risk to self, others or property. The risk assessment identifies that the behaviour(s) require(s) a prompt and skilled response that might be outside the range of planned interventions.' (DST, Behaviour Domain, Severe description).

It can be seen that there is a difference in the level of response required to meet the varying levels of risk presented by challenging behaviour at these two different weightings.

Care should be taken when applying this principle. Sometimes needs may appear to be exacerbated because the individual is currently in an inappropriate environment rather than because they require a particular type or level of support – if they move to a different environment and their needs reduce, this does not necessarily mean that the need is now ‘well-managed’, the need may be reduced or no longer exist (See Practice Guidance 23.1).

Example

Elizabeth is in an acute hospital setting following a fall. She is disorientated and has difficulty sleeping and consequently is exhibiting very challenging behaviour. On discharge, she moves to a residential care home setting and in due course settles in. At the time of her assessment for CHC eligibility, she has ceased to display behaviour that challenges without requiring any support around behavioural issues. This is because she is now in an environment where she feels safe and orientated.

This not a well-managed need, this is an example of a need which no longer exists. (See Practice Guidance 23.1).

Well-controlled conditions

*It is not intended that this principle should be applied in such a way that well-controlled conditions should be recorded as if medication or other routine care or support was not present (refer to Practice Guidance note 23 for how the well-managed needs principle should be applied). The Multi-Disciplinary Team should give due regard to well-controlled conditions when considering the four characteristics of need and making an eligibility recommendation on primary health need (**National Framework 2022, Paragraph 166**).*

*It is not intended that this principle should be applied in such a way that well-controlled health conditions should be recorded as if medication or other routine care or support was not present. For example, where needs are being managed via medication (whether for behaviour or for physical health needs), it may be more appropriate to reflect this in the Drug Therapies and Medication domain. Similarly, where an individual's skin condition is not aggravated by their incontinence because they are receiving good continence care, it would not be appropriate to weight the skin domain as if the continence care was not being provided (**National Framework 2022, Paragraphs 162-166**) **DST: Paragraph 32**.*

Well-managed needs and reviews

*When undertaking NHS Continuing Healthcare reviews, care must be taken not to misinterpret a situation where the individual's care needs are being well-managed as being a reduction in their actual day-to-day care needs. This may be particularly relevant where the individual has a progressive illness or condition, although it is recognised that with some progressive conditions care needs can reduce over time. More information on well-managed needs can be found in the Assessment of Eligibility section in this National Framework. (**National Framework 2022, Paragraph 208**).*

References

[National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS-funded Nursing Care - July 2022 \(Revised\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
[NHS continuing healthcare decision support tool - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)