

Freedom of Information – Response – 27144

Could you please let me know Social Cares criteria for Adult social care assessment waiting lists. Could you explain what the green, amber and red criteria are.

Adult Social Care Referrals are prioritised using a risk-based approach. Each referral is reviewed on receipt and assigned a priority level which determines the order in which assessments are allocated and undertaken. Priority levels are aligned to Red, Amber and Green, reflecting the level of identified risk and need. This approach supports equitable and consistent decision-making. However, the priority levels do not operate as fixed thresholds and professional judgement is applied in each situation, taking account of individual circumstances and available information. Priority levels may change if circumstances change while someone is waiting for assessment.

Red – High Priority

Referrals assessed as Red indicate a high level of need or risk. This may include situations where an adult is unable to meet basic personal care or safety needs, there are safeguarding concerns, a significant deterioration in circumstances, lack of mental capacity with no available support networks, or an informal carer is no longer able to continue caring. These referrals are prioritised for allocation and assessment as soon as possible.

Amber – Normal Priority

Amber referrals reflect a moderate level of need or risk. The individual may be experiencing difficulties that impact wellbeing, independence, or daily living, but there is some ability to safeguard themselves or manage with existing informal or community support. These referrals are monitored while waiting and assessed within standard timescales.

Green – Low Priority

Green referrals indicate a lower level of identified risk. Needs are generally stable, and the individual is able to maintain safety and wellbeing with existing support, community resources, or preventative services while awaiting assessment. These referrals remain under review and can be reprioritised if circumstances change.