



The main points about the new Comprehensive Area Assessment: What do you think?

What is 'Comprehensive Area Assessment'?

Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) is a new way of finding out about how good life is for people in an area and how it can be improved.

It will tell you what is going fine and what might go wrong.

It will include looking carefully at the needs of people who are at risk of being abused or hurt and it will help to make sure people get equal chances in life.

It will check on how well big organisations work together to improve the area. The main organisations it will look at are:

- councils
- health services
- police forces
- and other organisations that run local public services

From 2009 the inspectors who check on these organisations will do this together.

Each year, they will report to local people about what is going well and what needs to get better in the places where you live and work.

If local services are improving, there might be fewer inspections. But if not, inspectors might check on services more.

The inspectors will tell local people what they find out about in a clear and straightforward way.

We are sure that this new approach will help to make life better for people and give them better value for money.

What will CAA include?

Things which have to get better in the area are written about in the Local Area Agreement. Each area will have to sign a Local Area Agreement by June 2008.

CAA will check that councils and the other organisations are keeping the promises made in their Local Area Agreement.

It will also make checks on the things the council does alone or together with other organisations, including

- If they help people keep healthy and well
- If they help people keep safe
- If they are making places where people want to live and work
- If there are enough homes for people to live in
- If they make life good for children and older people.

Each year the inspectors will do some work to find out how good life is for local people and what they can expect in the future.

The area risk assessment will also say what things are likely to get better and what the problems are that might stop things from getting better.

It might say something about:

- health care
- more affordable or better homes
- less crime
- better chances to learn and train

- finding more money for creating jobs and skills
- making the area a cleaner, 'greener' place.

It will also find out if local people are asked enough about what they want or need in their area.

It will pay close attention to people who are in most need.

There will be a special inspection of services for children in care.

And there might be other inspections of services for people who might need extra help and support.

There might be a new way of scoring how good local services are.

So what is new?

How well councils are doing is measured now by a **'Comprehensive Performance Assessment' or CPA for short.**

But this and other old ways of measuring how services are doing will stop.

After 2009, inspectors will know what to look at in an area by doing the risk assessment.

But they still will do some other important checks on the council and other local organisations to make sure that they get better and that their money is spent sensibly.

What will we do with what we find out?

Everyone, including people who use public services, will be able to see the information from the CAA.

We will tell people how well their local services are doing and how good life is in their area.

It will help the council and the other organisations make services better.

This should make sure that local services meet the needs of everyone.

It will help people from different communities to say what they think of their local services and what else they would like from them.

Inspectors will put all the information onto a website.

The website will be easy to find and it will be simple for people to find out about the areas where they live and work.

We will look at other ways of giving people this information too.

The Government will use the information when they are talking to councils and the other organisations about what they should do.

Inspectors will use the information to decide what other checks they need to make.

Timetable

We want everyone who uses public services to have their say in our plans for CAA.

Next summer, we will ask people again about CAA.

The old way of measuring how councils and other organisations will finish by the start of 2009.

The new way of measuring how well councils and other organisations are doing will start on 1 April 2009.

The first new CAA reports will appear in autumn 2009.