



OAKMEADOW SURGERY

Carers Information Pack

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Introduction:

Do you care for someone with severe illness?

If you are a partner, relative or close friend of someone with health difficulties and you provide a major part of their care, then you would be known as a 'carer'

It can sometimes be difficult to see yourself as a carer, particularly if you are looking after a friend or family member. If you answer yes, to any of the following then you would be considered a carer;

- Do you feel responsible for supporting a person with ill health?
- Do you assist a person on a day to day basis?
- Do you feel you have to be there for them?
- Do you feel you need more information about health difficulties and the options open to you?
- Do you feel no-one understand the pressures on you?
- Do you feel you have to cope alone?

Types of Caring:

Parent Carer:

A parent or guardian who supports an ill or disabled child including a child or young person who is misusing or abusing substances and/or alcohol, where the support is greater than would be expected is a parenting role.

Young Carer:

A child or young person under 18 who provides regular, ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.

Working Carer:

Where a person is in employment or education whilst caring.

Multiple Carer:

Someone who cares for more than one person.

Older Carer:

A Carer over the age of 65

Sandwich Carer:

A Carer who has caring responsibilities for different generations, such as children and parents at the same time.

Mutual Caring:

Where people with their own care needs are providing care to their ageing or disabled relatives or friends

Highs and lows of being a carer;

Caring for someone can be immensely rewarding, but there are times when caring for someone with severe illness can bring a sense of isolation and extreme stress. It is at these times that you might well benefit from the information contained on these pages and the different kinds of help and support highlighted here.

Caring about Carers;

Caring about Carers is a national strategy introduced by the government. The strategy acknowledges the vital role of carers and introduces ways of supporting them more effectively.

We hope the information you have been provided with in this pack will assist you in receiving the support and resources you are entitled to as a carer.

How to tell if you're a carer

You're a carer if you're looking after someone regularly because they're ill, elderly or disabled – including family members.

Carers help with:

- washing, dressing or taking medicines
- getting out and about and travelling to doctors' appointments
- shopping, cleaning and laundry
- paying bills and organising finances

They can also give emotional support by:

- sitting with someone to keep them company
- watching over someone if they can't be left alone

All these count as being a carer.

If you're a carer, you can find information about [support and benefits for carers](#) and [caring for children and young people](#).

You probably are a carer if you're looking after someone regularly (including your spouse or a family member) because they're ill or disabled.

Popular topics include:

- [Benefits for carers](#)
- [Practical tips if you care for someone](#)
- [Carers' breaks and respite care](#)
- [Help for young carers](#)

NHS care

In some situations, social care and support is provided by the NHS instead of your local council. In these instances it's free. It's not means-tested.

It includes:

- up to 6 weeks of [care after illness or hospital discharge](#), known as reablement (this service can also be provided by local councils)
- care if you have complex and serious health conditions ([NHS continuing healthcare](#))



Carer's assessments

If you care for someone, you can have an assessment to see what might help make your life easier. This is called a carer's assessment.

It might recommend things like:

- someone to take over caring so you can take a break
- gym membership and exercise classes to relieve stress
- help with taxi fares if you don't drive
- help with gardening and housework
- training how to lift safely
- putting you in touch with local support groups so you have people to talk to
- advice about benefits for carers

A carer's assessment is free and anyone over 18 can ask for one.

It's separate from the [needs assessment](#) the person you care for might have, but you can ask to have them both done at the same time.

How to get a carer's assessment;

Contact adult social services at your local council and ask for a carer's assessment.

If you're a parent carer or a child, contact the children with disabilities department.

You can call or do it online.

What happens in the carer's assessment?

Someone from the council, or an organisation the council works with, will ask how you're coping with caring.

This includes how it affects your physical and mental health, work, free time and relationships.

The assessment is usually face to face. Some councils can do it over the phone or online.

Assessments usually last at least an hour.

How to prepare for your carer's assessment

You'll need:

- your NHS number (if you have one)
- your GP's name, address and phone number
- contact details of anyone who's coming to the assessment with you
- the name, address, date of birth and NHS number of the person you care for (if you have it)
- your email address

Give as much detail as you can about the impact caring for someone is having on your life. This will help make sure you get all the help and support you need.

Which? Later Life Care has a [checklist of questions to help you prepare for a carer's assessment](#), regardless of your age.

Have someone with you

It can help if you have someone with you during the assessment. This could be the person you care for, a friend or relative.

You could also use an advocate. Advocates are people who speak up on your behalf.

They can help you fill in forms and sit with you in meetings and assessments. They're often free.

[Find an advocate in your area](#)

Telephone help

If you want to talk to someone about carer's assessments, call:

- your [local council's adult social services department](#)
- Carers Direct's free helpline on 08088087777
- Age UK's free helpline on 08006781602
- Independent Age's free helpline on 0800 319 6789
- Contact a Family's with disabled children free helpline on 0808 808 3555

Getting the results

You'll usually get the results of the assessment within a week.

If you qualify for help from the council, they'll write a [care and support plan](#) with you that sets out how they can help.

Help with costs

Your council might be able to help with the costs. You might need a [financial assessment](#) (means test) first. This will be arranged for you after the carer's assessment.

Help for young carers

If you're a young carer, friends and relatives are often the first people to turn to for help with problems. Talking things through with them can be really helpful.

If you find it hard to talk to others, try to write your thoughts in a diary, poem or letter first. This can help to make sense of your thoughts and how you feel, before getting help.

Help from teachers and other school staff

Teachers are there to help pupils get the most out of school. They can be a good person for you to speak to about any problems you have.

If you're missing lessons to help look after someone at home, or struggling to get your work in on time, talk to a teacher about what you do at home so that they can understand what is happening and give you more help.

As a young carer, you might find school a place where you can forget about your caring responsibilities and feel "normal" for a while. But it can also be a place where you're under extra pressure or where people do not understand what your life is like outside school. It can sometimes be hard to juggle all your responsibilities as a young carer with the demands of teachers, friends and homework.

Keeping up-to-date with school work

You might not want your school to know you're caring for someone. But if they do not know about your situation, it will be difficult for teachers to understand if you struggle to keep up in class or do not do your homework. It's a good idea to let at least one teacher you feel able to trust know you're a carer.

You might find it difficult to talk about your home life with a teacher, so you could ask someone in your family to write to the school, perhaps to the head of year.

Some young carers find it easier to talk about the situation if they keep a diary or a list of all the jobs and tasks they have to do.

If you're having trouble with school or homework, your teachers may offer:

- extra time for school work when you have to give more help to the person you care for
- help for your parents to travel to parents' evenings if they have trouble leaving the house
- to talk to you privately about your home life
- homework clubs

Support at school

There are lots of ways your school can help. You could be allowed to use a phone during breaks and lunchtime so you can check on the person you're looking after.

The school could also put you in touch with your local young carers service, or get a young carers worker to talk to you.

Some schools run lunchtime groups or homework support groups for young carers. If your school does not do this, you could suggest it to your teachers.

Nobody wants to get into trouble at school. If teachers know you're a carer, they may be more sympathetic to your problems (such as lateness), but it will not necessarily stop you being disciplined if you break the rules.

If you're given detention, you could ask to have it during lunchtime rather than after school because of your caring responsibilities.

Missing school

You may feel you have to miss school to care for someone. But missing school can affect your whole future. Try to get help as quickly as possible so the situation does not go on for a long time.

A GP, nurse, social worker or another person whose job is to help the person you look after can organise more support at home to help you concentrate on school or college.

Friends and your social life

As a young carer, you may miss out on opportunities to play and spend time with your friends and classmates. You may feel isolated from your friends because:

- you do not have as much free time as them
- you're often thinking about the person you look after
- you may be worried they will bully you

Being a young carer can make you stand out from other people, or you may find that you do not get included in certain activities.

It's important to get the help you need so that you have time to do the things you want to do and be with your friends.

If possible, put aside some time each day to do something you enjoy. Your local young carers project or carers centre may be able to help.

Are you being bullied?

Bullying can include being deliberately left out of activities or groups, as well as being called names, hit, kicked, punched or threatened.

Young carers are sometimes bullied because the person they care for is ill or disabled, or because they cannot always do the things other young people can. Some people are bullied for no reason.

In fact, nearly half of children and young people say they've been bullied at school. Even adults get bullied.

It's natural to feel sad, angry or scared if you're being bullied. But remember: there are ways to deal with the problem.

[Find out more from Bullying UK](#)

Childline

Childline is a free and confidential telephone helpline for children on:
0800 11 11.

You can talk to someone on [Childline](#) who may be able to give you advice and get you help. They will not tell anyone that you have called.

Meet other young carers

Meeting up with other young carers is a great way to make new friends, have some fun and share some of your worries with people in similar situations to your own.

Young carers projects can help you have a break from home, plus meeting other young carers can help you to relax. Young carers projects may offer evening clubs, weekends away, days out and even holidays, as well as friendly advice and information for you and for your family.

[The Children's Society](#) runs the [Young Carers Festival](#) and funds projects for young carers.

[KIDS](#) is an organisation specially for carers under the age of 18. It runs regular clubs where you can meet other young carers as well as offering support, advice and information.

[Action for Children](#) can put you in touch with other young carers. It also has free places for young carers at its residential activity camps.

Help from social workers

A social worker from your local council has to visit, if you or your parents request this.

Social workers may be asked to help a young carer's family if there are problems that the family members are finding hard to sort out on their own.

Other organisations that can help young carers

[Citizens Advice](#) has information on money, benefits and your rights.

The [National Careers Service](#) has a helpline, webchat and email service about education and careers for teenagers. Support is also available up to the age of 25 for those who have learning difficulties or disabilities.

Get in touch with Carers Direct

For advice and support with caring issues over the phone, call the Carers Direct helpline on 0300 123 1053.

If you're deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing or have impaired speech, you can contact the Carers Direct helpline using textphone or minicom number 0300 123 1004.



Being a young carer: your rights

You're a young carer if you're under 18 and help to look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem.

If you're a young carer, you probably look after one of your parents or care for a brother or sister.

You may do extra jobs in and around the home, such as cooking, cleaning or helping someone get dressed and move around.

You may also give a lot of physical help to a parent, brother or sister who's disabled or ill.

Along with doing things to help your brother or sister, you may be giving them and your parents emotional support, too.

Your choices about caring

Some people start giving care at a very young age and don't really realise they're carers. Other young people become carers overnight.

If someone in your family needs to be looked after, you may really want to help them. But as a young carer, you shouldn't be doing the same things as adult carers.

Nor should you be spending a lot of your time caring for someone, as this can get in the way of you doing well at school and doing the same kinds of things as other children or young people.

It's important you decide how much and what type of care you're willing or able to give, or whether you should be a carer at all.

Decide whether you're the right person to offer the care needed by the person you look after.

All disabled adults are entitled to support from their local council, depending on their needs, so they shouldn't have to rely on their children to care for them.

[Find out more about who can help young carers](#)

Young carers' rights

If you or your parents request it, a social worker from your local council must visit to carry out a young carer's assessment.

This assessment is different from the one adult carers have. It'll decide what kind of help you and your family might need.

Even if the council has already carried out one of these assessments, they must do another if you or your parents feel that your needs or circumstances have changed.

A young carer's assessment can determine whether it's appropriate for you to care for someone else, and takes into account whether you want to be a carer.

The social worker must also look at your education, training, leisure opportunities and views about your future.

As part of the assessment, the social worker must ask about your wishes and involve you, your parents and anyone else you or your parents want to be involved.

All these people should receive a written record of the assessment. This will include whether the council thinks you need support, whether their services could provide you with it, and whether they'll give you it.

It should also explain what you can do if you or your parents disagree with the assessment.

If you and the person you care for both agree, the local council can assess your needs as a young carer and the needs of the person you care for at the same time.

If you're 16 or over and not in full-time education, you may be eligible for help finding work, as well as with your family's finances (for instance, through benefits such as Carer's Allowance).

[Find out more about Carer's Allowance from GOV.UK](#)

Getting an assessment is the best way to find out what's available in your situation.

[Find out about having a carer's assessment](#)

Getting help

For advice and support with care issues, call the [Carers Direct helpline](#) on 0300 123 1053.

If you're deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing or have impaired speech, contact the Carers Direct helpline using the textphone or minicom number 0300 123 1004.

Other organisations that can offer help and advice are:

- [The Children's Society](#)
- [Carers UK](#)
- [Youth Access](#)



Carers' breaks and respite care

Respite care means taking a break from caring, while the person you care for is looked after by someone else.

It lets you take time out to look after yourself and helps stop you becoming exhausted and run down.

There are lots of respite care options. They range from getting a volunteer to sit with the person you look after for a few hours, to a short stay in a care home so you can go on holiday.

The person you look after could go to a day care centre. Or, a paid carer could visit them at their home to look after them.

Your local council or local carers' centre can give you information about local support.

[Find your local social services team \(England only\)](#)

[Find your nearest local carers' centre or respite service.](#)

First step – getting assessed

Local councils will only fund respite care for people that they have assessed as needing it.

So if you want the council to pay for respite care for either yourself as a carer or the person you look after, it's important that you both have an assessment.

Carers should have a [carer's assessment](#).

The person you're looking after should have a [needs assessment](#).

Apply for a needs assessment

Even if they don't want council funding, it's still useful for the person you look after to have a needs assessment as it will say which type of respite care is most suitable.

Different types of respite care

The main types of respite care are:

- day care centres
- homecare from a paid carer
- a short stay in a care home
- getting friends and family to help
- respite holidays
- sitting services

Day care centres

Day care centres offer a chance for people who find it difficult to get out and about to socialise, make friends and take part in activities.

For example, day care centres might offer tea dances, singing, games and arts and crafts. Some offer hairdressing, foot care and assisted bathing.

Transport is often provided, but there may be a charge.

To qualify for council-funded day care centre visits, the person you look after will need to have had a [needs assessment](#).

Arranging it

Day centres are usually run by councils or local charities.

To find out what's available in your area contact:

- your local council. [Find your local social services team \(England only\)](#)
- charities such as [Age UK](#) or [Contact the Elderly](#)

Help at home from a paid carer

If you care for someone and need more time for yourself, you can arrange for a [paid carer to help at their home](#). This is also called homecare.

It might be regular (for example, one day a week so that you can work, study or have a day off) or for a short period, such as a week, so you can take a holiday.

If the person you care for needs 24-hour supervision, you can arrange live-in care.

To qualify for council-funded homecare, the person you look after will need to have had a [needs assessment](#).

Arranging it

- ask your local council's adult social care department for information on homecare agencies in your area. They may have a directory of homecare agencies on their website. [Find your local social services team \(England only\)](#)
- search the NHS website for a list of [local homecare agencies](#) and a [list of national homecare organisations](#)
- ask the [United Kingdom Homecare Association \(UKHMA\)](#) for a list of approved homecare agencies in your area
- the [Carers Trust](#) supports carers by giving them a break from their caring responsibilities through homecare services
- contact Age UK to see if it offers [help at home from a paid carer in your area](#)

A short stay in a care home

Some [care homes](#) offer short-term respite care.

It can be difficult to get respite space at short notice, but some care homes take advance bookings which can help you to plan ahead, for example if you want to book a holiday.

Arranging it

Search the NHS website for:

- [local care homes with nursing](#)
- [local care homes without nursing](#)

Getting friends and family to help

Friends and family might temporarily move into the house of the person you care for. Or, they could invite the person you care for to stay with them for a while.

Respite holidays

Respite holidays allow carers and people with illnesses or disabilities, to take a break from everyday life.

Arranging it

- [MindforYou](#) offer supported holidays in the UK for people who are living with dementia and their carers to enjoy together
- some charities, such as [Revitalise](#), offer subsidised holidays for elderly or disabled people
- [Family Fund](#) has grants towards the cost of holidays for families on a low income who are caring for a child with a severe disability
- [Family Holiday Association](#) has breaks at holiday sites, or grants to help with the cost of a holiday, to low-income families. You need to be referred by your social worker, GP or health visitor, or by a charity or other welfare agent

Sitting services

Some charities and carers' organisations offer sitting services where a trained volunteer keeps the person you care for company for a while, usually a few hours at a time.

This type of sitting service is often free, or there may be a small charge.

Arranging it

These organisations offer sitting services. Find out if they are available in your area:

- your [local carers' service](#)
- [Age UK](#)
- [Royal Voluntary Society \(RVS\)](#)
- [Independent Age](#)

Emergency respite care

Think about who you could contact in an emergency if you couldn't reach the person needing care, for example, due to an accident or sudden illness.

This might be another relative, friend or neighbour who could step in for a few hours while proper arrangements are made.

Make sure they:

- have door keys or know the code to a key safe
- know the type of care the person you look after will need – this may be as simple as sitting and chatting with them, making a meal for them or helping them take their medicines

Write some notes about what kind of care the person you look after needs and leave them in a prominent place to help anyone who steps in to help at a moment's notice.

These notes could include essential information on medicines, and any dos and don'ts for the substitute carer to be aware of.

Paying for respite care

According to the UK care guide, respite care costs on average £700-800 a week.

It can be as much as £1,500 a week, for emergency respite care, live-in care, or staying in a care home.

There are 2 main ways of getting help with the costs of respite care:

- from the council
- from a charity

Or, you can pay for it yourself.

From the council

Councils will only pay for respite care for people who they've assessed as needing it following a [needs assessment](#) and [carer's assessment](#).

If you or the person you care for qualifies for respite care, the council will do a financial assessment to work out if it will pay towards it.

If you or the person you care for qualifies for council-funded respite care, you can ask the council to arrange it for you, or you can do it yourself through a [personal budget or direct payment](#).

From a charity

The [Carers Trust](#) offers some grants to carers who need respite.

The charity, [Turn2us](#), can help to find grants for people who need respite care but can't afford it.

Paying for it yourself

If the person you care for has to pay for their own respite care, they might be able to raise money towards this from:

- income from pensions, work, investments or property
- savings
- benefits, such as Attendance Allowance

More info

- the [Disabled Holiday Directory](#) is an online directory of organisations and venues, in the UK and abroad, that cater for children and adults with disabilities
- the government has advice specially for [disabled people travelling abroad](#)
- [Carers UK](#) has more info for carers on taking a break



Telephone helplines and forums

Older people

Age UK – for older people, their families, friends and carers

- Call 0800 678 1602
- Helpline open: every day of the year, 8am to 7pm

Independent Age – for older people, including advice about care, money and health

- Call 0800 319 6789
- Helpline open: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 6.30pm
- Email: advice@independentage.org

The Silver Line – for older people

- Call 0800 470 8090
- Helpline open: every day of the year, 24 hours a day

Money and benefits

Money Helper – for advice about money and benefits

- Call 0800 011 3797
- Helpline open: Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Citizens Advice – for advice about money and benefits

- Call 0808 223 1133
- Helpline open: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
- Citizens Advice will not charge you to call its national phone service or helpline, however your service provider may do

If you care for someone else

Carers UK – help and advice for carers

- Call 0800 808 7777
- Helpline open: Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm

If you care for a child

Family Action – support for parents and carers

- Call 0808 802 6666
- Text 07537 404 282
- Helpline open: Monday to Friday, 9am to 9pm
- Email: familyline@family-action.org.uk

Call your local council for help and advice

Find local authority adult social care services

Speak to other carers online

There are many people who care for others sharing their stories and offering support online. You don't have to join in conversations, but it might help to see what's being said.

- [Carers UK forum](#)
- [HealthUnlocked care community](#)

Find your local social services team (England only)

You might also qualify for [benefits for carers](#) that can help with costs.

If you don't qualify for help from your council

If you're told you don't qualify for help and support, your council should give you free advice about where you can get help in your community.

Leicestershire County Council Customer Services
www.leicestershire.gov.uk

Carers can self-refer for support with the following services

∞ VASL – 01858 468 543
www.supportforcarers.org

Apply for Carers allowance

∞ 0345 604 5312
www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim

Feel Supported at work

- ∞ It is your choice whether to tell your employer about your caring role, however there may be extra support for carers in your workplace. It is worth finding out what extra support, if any might be available.

Check your employment contract or staff handbook to see if they have a carers policy or speak to your HR Department

At a Glance:

Leicestershire County Council	www.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/looking-after-someone	
Adult Carers	Adult Social Care Customer Services Monday-Thursday 8.30am to 5pm Fridays – 8.30am to 4.30pm	0116 305 0004 02084891400
	Adult Emergency Duty Team Evenings, weekends & bank holidays	0116 255 1606
NHS 111	If you require medical help fast but it is not life-threatening	
Carers UK Advice Line (Monday & Tuesday 10am to 4pm)	www.carersuk.org	0808 808 7777
Samaritans	www.samaritans.org	08457 909 090
Citizens Advice (between 9am-4pm)	www.citizenadvice.org.uk	0300 330 1025
Carers rights at work	www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/work-and-career	

CARERS IDENTIFICATION FORM

DO YOU LOOK AFTER SOMEONE WHO HAS A PHYSICAL DISABILITY, LEARNING DISABILITY, DEMENTIA, MENTAL HEALTH OR SUBSTANCE MISUSE PROBLEM OR MAY BE ILL OR FRAIL

If so, you are a carer and we would like to support you. Please complete and return this form to your GP Surgery.

Book an appointment with your GP, if your caring role is affecting your health.

YOUR DETAILS

Name	
Date of Birth	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone Number	
Any relevant information	

DETAILS OF THE PERSON YOU LOOK AFTER

Name	
Date of Birth	
Address if different from above	
Postcode	
Telephone Number if diff from above	
GP Details (if different from your own)	

**AGREEMENT FOR A CARER TO HAVE ACCESS TO A PATIENTS
PERSONAL DETAILS and/or COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE**

Patients Name	
Patients address	

To: The County Practice

I give permission for my Carer (name) to have access to my medical records and personal details held by the Practice.

This permission relates to all/part of my record/specific condition only
*delete as appropriate

Where the permission is restricted to part of the record only, please specify below the precise limits of this permission and any areas of the record which are excluded.

I understand that the G.P may override this authority at any time and that this permission will remain in force until cancelled by me in writing.

I consent to my carer receiving copies of all correspondence relating to my treatment. (
*delete if not applicable.

I confirm that this has been explained to me by my GP and that the GP has sole discretion to withhold all or any copies.

Signed _____ (Patient)

Date _____

Accepted by _____ (GP) Date _____