

Thursday 26 November 2020

## Know Your Rights



When you're caring, getting the right information at the right time can make all the difference.

Caring can be extremely complicated, whether we're grappling with the benefits system or considering how to fund future care costs. Each strand is confusing but when all the strands are tangled, it can feel bewildering.

The Carers UK Helpline is here when you need expert information, advice and support about your rights, about financial and practical help available or about any other challenges caring can present.

**0800 055 6112**



## Upfront

Upfront is the first online guide of its kind to give tailored financial and practical information to those who are new to caring.

As well as the practical and financial support, you'll find information to help you manage the impact of caring on your health and relationships. Click the link below to give it a go and get your own personalised guide to caring!

[UPFRONT](#)

## Looking after someone

'Looking after someone' is Carers UK guide for anyone caring for family or friends. The guide outlines your rights as a carer and gives an overview of the practical and financial support available.

It is divided into the following sections: getting help and support, your finances and your work. The guide for 2021 is available to download through the links below or to order for free from our [online shop](#).

**ENGLAND**

# Carer's assessment

A **carer's assessment** is the council's way of working out whether you qualify for support from them in your role as unpaid **carer**. The **assessment** is a chance for you to discuss how your caring responsibilities affect you. It will look at: whether you're willing and able to carry on providing **care**.

## DOWNLOAD FACTSHEET

During the COVID-19 period, no face-to-face assessments will be carried out and reassessments are temporarily on hold. For details of the latest changes visit the [Gov.uk website](#) and see our [A-Z of changes](#).

Many carers find it easier to continue in their caring role if they can get some support.

Local councils can provide care and support for people who require care, and their carers. The way they make a decision about the support that they can provide is by carrying out assessments.

<https://www.warrington.gov.uk/carers>

A carer's assessment is for carers over 18 years old who are looking after another adult over 18 years old who is disabled, ill or elderly. It is an opportunity to record the impact caring has on your life and what support or services you need. The assessment will look at for example, physical, mental and emotional needs, and whether you are able or willing to carry on caring.

# Carers and employment rights

You also have a statutory **right** to ask **your** employer for flexible **working** if you **care** for an adult who is a relative or lives at the same address as you. **Carers** also have the **right** to take unpaid time off **work** for dependants in an emergency.

Your rights in work

If you're juggling work with looking after someone, you're not alone - there are 5 million working carers in the UK.

Juggling work and care can be very challenging, so it's important to find out about your rights.

Your rights in work come from two sources:

- the law gives you 'statutory rights' which everyone has
- your contract of employment gives you 'contractual rights' which can be more generous than statutory rights.

In this section, we're providing guidance about your statutory rights as a working carer. However, it's always worth checking your contract of employment, staff handbook, HR policies or letter of appointment to see if you have any contractual rights on top of your statutory rights.

Note: For further information about your general rights, [see the gov.uk website](#).

For a summary of your statutory rights, you can also take a look at our factsheet [Your rights in work](#).

# Time off for family and dependants GOV.UK

The right to take time off to deal with an emergency (e.g. Support workers doesn't turn up and you have to stay at home with your loved one).

<https://www.gov.uk/time-off-for-dependants/taking-time-off>

This page also has connections to ACAS if you have been treated unfairly for taking time off.

## Caring Behind Closed Doors

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of carers have had to provide more care. It has left many exhausted and close to burning out. They urgently need more support to help them through winter.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on the lives of carers and those they are caring for. A majority have had to provide extraordinary hours of care for loved ones with increasing needs during the crisis, often without the usual help from family and friends, and with limited or no support from local services.

As a result, many people providing care have been left exhausted, socially isolated and close to burnout. Adding to these considerable pressures, carers have also taken a financial hit, and seen their health and wellbeing decline.

We now need your help in telling the government that they must take more action to support carers.

## Campaign with us for more support for unpaid carers

To raise awareness of the increased support carers urgently need to help them through winter, we are asking that you write to your local MP to share with them your own personal experiences of caring during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is vital that MPs hear first-hand how the pandemic has made it harder for their constituents to care for those close to them.

[CLICK HERE TO TAKE PART](#)

## We are calling on the government to do the following

In the short term, we are calling on the government to continue to introduce measures that support carers, including:

- Making sure that carers can take breaks and that the return of essential services is prioritised.
- Providing clear guidance, information, and advice specifically for carers
- Raising the level of Carer's Allowance
- Supporting carers' to look after their own health and wellbeing, and providing targeted funding for carers mental health support.
- Ensuring that carers are better able to juggle work and care and remain in work.
- Providing sufficient funding for social care over the winter.

But we're not just focussing on the immediate action. After what carers have experienced during the pandemic, we also want the government to implement a New Deal for Carers, with medium term tangible action to support carers and those they care for.

Longer term, carers also need to be placed at the heart of a reformed and sustainable social care system that provides more support to both those giving and receiving care.

## *Caring behind closed doors: six months on – key stats:*

- 4 in 5 unpaid carers (81%) are currently providing more care than before lockdown.
- More than three quarters (78%) of carers reported that the needs of the person they care for have increased recently.
- Most carers (64%) have not been able to take any breaks at all in the last six months.
- More than half (58%) of carers have seen their physical health impacted by caring through the pandemic, while 64% said their mental health has worsened.

## What Carers UK is doing

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Carers UK has placed a high value on information and advice to carers, providing carers with clear information about how to manage and care safely.

Carers UK, Carers Wales, Carers Scotland and Carers Northern Ireland have consistently raised issues with our governments on behalf of carers, highlighting the concerns carers have been raising with us through our helpline, online forum and in our research. We have campaigned for better guidance; funding to enable local services to reopen; consideration for carers in food schemes; testing for carers; PPE and specific advice to support juggling work and care. We are continuing to work hard to ensure that carers voices are heard by all of the UK governments.

## Find out more

You can read more about the challenges faced by carers during the coronavirus outbreak in our report, *Caring behind closed doors: six months on (October 2020)*, [here](#).

Back in April 2020, at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, we also released our original, *Caring behind closed doors (April 2020)*, which you can read [here](#).

You can find information and advice about caring during the coronavirus outbreak [here](#).

## Flu vaccination: who should have it this winter and why

[Leaflet explaining the importance of the influenza \(flu\) vaccination this winter 2020 to 2021.](#)



Calling all carers! Please complete this anonymous 'Having your say – carers' views' survey from Carers Trust, to help understand and influence future support available from the government

16th September 2020

About this survey

**This survey is for unpaid carers to complete, to help Carers Trust understand your needs and influence the future support available to unpaid carers from the government.**

It should take less than 10 minutes of your time to complete.

They ask questions about age, gender, ethnicity, disability and location. These are so they can try to understand if certain groups of unpaid carers have different needs and how they can be helped.

**The survey is anonymous and Carers Trust are not collecting personal identification details as part of this survey e.g. they don't ask for your name.**

There are no right or wrong answers. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to. If you are affected by the issues raised in the survey or would like more information, advice and support, you can find it on the [Carers Trust website](#).

The information provided in these surveys will be shared anonymously with Carers Trust campaigns to improve the support available to unpaid carers.

If you have any questions, please email [policy@carers.org](mailto:policy@carers.org)

**If you are happy to proceed on this basis, please [CLICK HERE](#) to complete the survey.**

Thank you.