

Caring for Someone – A Free Guide

If you're looking after someone regularly because they're ill, disabled or can't manage without your support, you may be a carer. This guide explains your rights and the benefits, services and support that may be available to help you look after someone else. It covers:

- What it means to be a carer
- Caring for someone with dementia
- Getting a carer's assessment
- Practical support
- Financial support
- Taking care of yourself
- When your caring role ends.

About this guide

At some point in our lives most of us will look after someone when they become ill or disabled. There are currently more than five million unpaid carers in England.

You may gradually take on caring responsibilities over time and may not think of yourself as a carer. Or there may be a sudden change that means you take on a caring role. While it can be positive and rewarding, looking after someone can also be emotionally, physically and financially demanding.

This guide explains your rights and the benefits, services and support that may be available to help you look after someone else. It also looks at what happens when your caring role ends.

Many people look after someone else but don't realise that they are carers. If you're looking after someone regularly to help them with their daily life because they're ill or disabled, or can't manage without your support, then you may be a carer.

If you're not sure whether you're a carer, do any of these statements apply to you?

- I help someone get washed, dressed or use the toilet.
- I make sure someone has enough to eat and drink. I take someone to the GP and hospital appointments.
- I help someone to get around their home, for example helping them to use stairs safely.
- I help someone keep their home clean and safe.
- I help someone to see their family or friends or attend social activities.
- I make sure someone takes their medication at the right time.

If you ticked any of these statements, you are likely to be a carer.

The person you look after could be your partner, a friend or a family member and you may just think of it as part of your relationship. You may be a couple who are caring for each other. Whatever your situation, if you're providing unpaid support to someone, you may be entitled to some help as well.