

Looking after someone

Who is a carer?

A carer is someone who provides unpaid help and support to a family member, parent, friend, partner, child or neighbour who could not manage without their help. This applies to children, young carers and adults.

The person you care for may have a disability, a physical or mental illness, be frail, or have alcohol or drug-related problems.

On the whole, neither adults, young carers and children see themselves as carers, but rather as family members or friends simply looking after someone. If you are a carer, you may be able to get financial and practical support from the Council, health services and voluntary organisations.

You may also find that your responsibilities are affecting the way you live your own life. It is important to remember that, even though you are caring for someone else, you need to take care of yourself too.

Support for Carers

Caring for someone can be stressful. You may find that you experience a wide range of conflicting emotions; feelings of isolation, guilt, anger or depression are common. Having someone to talk to about how you feel can make all of the difference.

Emotional Support – Things you can do

- Talk to the key workers involved with the person you care for, for example their social worker, doctor, community or district nurse.
- **Newcastle Carers** have Carer Information and Advice workers for adults, young carers and children who you can talk to. They run various carer support groups and carer cafes where you can meet other carers and share your experiences. They also offer a telephone support service where a volunteer will call you regularly to offer a listening ear.
- If you care for someone with **Dementia**, dementia cafes are a supportive environment in which people with dementia and their carers can socialise.

Visit [Newcastle Carers' Information Hub](#) for more details on online forums and carer support groups.

Looking after your health

When you are caring for someone else, it is very easy to forget about your own health. However, it is important to look after yourself so that your own health doesn't suffer.

- Let your doctor know that you are a carer and how it affects your health. Ask for this information to be noted on your medical record, so that your doctor can provide you with suitable help.
 - Let your school know that you have caring responsibilities that may affect your work, attendance and ability to concentrate.
 - [Healthy eating and drinking](#) and [Keeping physically active](#) are important to help you take care of yourself.
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Take a break

Caring can be rewarding, but it can also bring stress and strains, and you may need the opportunity to take a break. You may need someone else to be with the person you care for when you have a break.

Some carers make arrangements with family, neighbours or friends so that they can take a break. Another option is to employ a Personal Care Assistant or use a homecare agency to provide [home care](#).

[Community Health & Social Care Direct](#) may be able to arrange support for the person you care for, so that you can have a break. This could be a sitting service at home, somewhere to go during the day or a short respite stay in an appropriate setting.

[Residential Care Homes in Newcastle](#) gives a directory of care homes including those that offer respite to free up your time as a carer.

[Home care in Newcastle](#) gives a directory of home care providers that may offer a sit in service to offer respite.

[Newcastle Emergency Carer's Card Scheme](#) can arrange for planned support to allow carers to attend personal appointments. They also offer a range of support at home services. This is provided by British Red Cross in partnership with Newcastle City Council.

[Newcastle Carers](#) offer a Complementary Therapy service to carers who they feel would benefit from this to help them through a very stressful time in their caring role that is affecting their health and wellbeing. They also offer a specific service for children and [young carers](#).

Visit [Newcastle Carers' Information Hub](#) for more details on taking a break.

Carers Wellbeing fund

You can apply for a small grant of up to £200 from [The Carers Wellbeing Fund](#) to pay for things that help to improve your health and wellbeing as a carer. The fund is currently closed for applications.

Ask [Newcastle Carers](#) about support for young carers to study, work or participate in an apprenticeship.

Carers assessments

You should be offered a free [Carers assessment](#) by [Newcastle City Council](#) if you care for someone over 18 living in Newcastle. If you are not offered an assessment, you should ask for one.

A carers assessment is usually carried out by a social worker and offers you the opportunity to tell the Council about your caring role and the impact caring for someone is having on your own health and wellbeing.

Following your assessment, the Council will decide if you are eligible for support. This can be provided to you or the person you are looking after to reduce the impact caring has on you.

All carers, (even if you are not considered to be eligible for support) will be provided with information and advice on local services that can help to support you.

Contact [Community Health & Social Care Direct](#) to request a Carers Assessment.

Find [guidance for a young carer assessment](#)

Paying for help and support

Depending on the outcome of your carers assessment, you may be eligible for a [Direct Payment](#) from the Council, also known as a carer's personal budget.

This is a cash payment that enables you to pay for something that can help you in your caring role – for example, to pay for respite care, or for membership to a club that gives you time away from your caring role.

The Council may or may not charge you for carer's services, depending on the support you need. However if they do decide to charge you they must carry out a [financial assessment](#) to determine how much you would need to contribute.

Visit [Newcastle Carers' Information Hub](#) for more details on arranging care and support

Be Informed

Most carers learn how to look after someone by trial and error and by relying on their common sense. However, advice and training is often available from organisations including:

- [Patient Information Centre](#)
- [Carers UK](#)
- [Jointly](#) is an app for your phone, tablet or computer that can help you keep organised and up to date with your caring roles and responsibilities. It has features such as group messaging, to do and medication lists and calendar.
- [NHS.UK](#)
- [Community Health and Social Care Direct](#)

[Newcastle Carers](#) run information and advice drop-in sessions for adults and young carers, and carers' toolkit six-week courses at various locations across Newcastle.

The following articles on this site may also be helpful:

- [Equipment and aids](#)
- [Day centres and services](#)
- [How to pay for adaptations to your home](#)

Benefits for carers

Caring for someone can be expensive. You may have given up work to be a carer, or the person you care for may have been the main breadwinner in the past. You may find yourself with less money to spend but more to pay out, for example, on heating bills, equipment or prescriptions.

You may be eligible to receive certain benefits depending on your situation. These could include:

- [Carer's Allowance](#)
- [Universal Credit](#)
- [Pension Credit](#)

Visit [Newcastle Carers' Information Hub](#) for more details on financial help.

Carer's Credit

[Carer's Credit](#) is a National Insurance credit that helps carers build up qualifying years for their [State Pension](#).

To qualify for Carer's Credit you must care for a total of 20 hours or more per week. The person you care for must receive:

- Disability Living Allowance care component at the middle or highest rate; or
- Attendance Allowance at any rate; or
- Constant Attendance Allowance at any rate

If none of these apply, Carer's Credit can still be awarded if you supply a Care Certificate that is signed by a health or social care professional.

Benefits advice

It is worth seeking advice about your benefits before you make a new claim, as this can sometimes affect the benefits you already receive. Organisations that can help include:

- [Newcastle Welfare Rights Service](#)
- [Pension Service](#)
- [Citizens Advice Newcastle](#)

See [Benefits for Carers](#); an article from NHS.UK for more information.

Employing a care worker

If you need a bit of extra help you might want to employ a care worker to help with your caring responsibilities. You can either go through a home care agency or you can employ an individual care worker directly.

Employing an independent care worker requires more initial organising, but it is often a cheaper option than using a home care agency, and also means that the same person will provide the care each time.

Workplace Pensions for care workers

The law has changed so now every employer must now provide a workplace pension by April 2019. Whether you're a hairdresser, an architect or employ a personal care assistant, if you employ at least one person you are an employer and you will need to set up a workplace pension for them.

[The National Employment Savings Trust](#) (NEST) is a government scheme to help people who don't have an existing workplace pension.

It's an ideal workplace pension scheme for small employers, especially for individuals who hire their own carers or assistants, because it's free to sign up to NEST and there is no ongoing administration.

[Disability North](#) can support you with arranging a workplace pension and other administrative duties for your employed care staff. They can also support you with recruiting a Personal Care and Support Assistant and advertise Personal Assistant vacancies on your behalf.

Employment

If you are caring for someone and want to combine paid work with your caring responsibilities, there is a variety of help available from Jobcentre Plus including:

- training, guidance and work placement programmes
- work experience, volunteering and job trialling schemes
- help with starting your own business
- help combining work with looking after children or caring responsibilities
- extra help for specific problems

Visit [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) or contact your local [Jobcentre Plus](#) office for more information.

The [Newcastle Carers Information Hub](#) has some helpful advice on working and caring.

Your rights as a carer

[Carers UK](#) produce a [Carers Rights Guide](#), which includes information on:

- [Benefits](#) and other financial help: including help with council tax, fuel costs, pensions and health costs
- Practical help: including [carer's assessments](#) and [direct payments](#)
- Technology: information about [health and care technology](#) that could make life easier
- Your workplace: your rights at work, from [flexible working](#) and parental leave to protection from discrimination
- Other help: how to find other help nationally and in your local community

Making decisions on someone's behalf

If you are a carer, you might need to manage someone else's affairs or make decisions on their behalf. If this is the case, you may find the following topics useful to read:

- [Power of attorney](#)
- [Making Decisions \(mental capacity\)](#)

Visit [Newcastle Carers' Information Hub](#) for more details on legal issues as a carer.

Accessible Information Standard

If you have a sensory loss or disability you are entitled by law to accessible information about your health care and support from the NHS and publicly funded social care services. For example this could include large print or a professional BSL interpreter at medical appointments.

Services must:

- Find out your information needs
- Record them in a set way
- Highlight them in your records so that staff meet your needs every time you use services
- Share your information needs with other services e.g. if you give details to your GP then these can be shared with any hospital service you maybe referred to
- Make sure you get support the way you need including when your needs vary. For example you may need to receive short letters in large print but need longer documents on audio.
- Ask on a regular basis if your needs have changed

Remember – tell services this is your right to have your needs addressed and they have to do this by law ([section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012](#))

Read more from NHS England about the [Accessible Information Standard](#).

Emergency help

[Newcastle Emergency Carer's Card Scheme](#) helps carers think ahead so you can attend personal appointments and make a plan for what would happen if you cannot be there because of an emergency. Your plan would say who could replace you at short notice to make sure the person you look after is safe.

If you don't have anyone who you can ask to help in an emergency, the Red Cross can send a volunteer who will be able to make sure the person is safe in the short-term.

You will be given a pocket sized card to keep with you at all times, which will have a telephone number to ring in an emergency. The service is free and the emergency services will know what the card means.

This is provided by British Red Cross in partnership with Newcastle City Council.

Emergency Duty Team

If you need urgent help with social care during the evening or at weekends, you can contact the Emergency Duty Team at Adult and Children's Social Care on telephone: 0191 278 7878.

Useful Organisations

- [Carers UK](#)
- [Carers Direct Helpline](#) is available if you need help with your caring role and want to talk to someone about what options are available to you.
- [The Relative Experience Project](#) gives help and support to Kinship Carers – grandparents and their family members who are bringing up a relative's child, often in very difficult circumstances.
- [FirstStop – Advice for older people](#) is an independent, free service providing advice and information for older people, their families and carers about housing and care options in later life.
- [Change Grow Live](#) offer a support service to people with alcohol, drug or addictions

problems.

Other Useful Information

Being Heard; a guide to self-advocacy for carers – Free guide from Carers UK

Caring from a distance – factsheet from the Age Action Alliance to help those who care for someone who lives far away.

Carersmart is a discount club run by Carers Trust. It is free to sign up and you can get benefits including:

- cashback on shopping
- discounts on holidays
- free legal advice
- best rates from energy providers

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Useful Organisations

Newcastle Carers

Email: info@newcastlecarers.org.uk

Website: www.newcastlecarers.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 275 5060

Address: 135-139 Shields Road, NE6 1DN

Newcastle Welfare Rights Service

Email: welfare.rights@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: www.newcastle.gov.uk/welfarerights

Telephone: 0191 277 2627

Patient Information Centre – Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)

Website: www.cntw.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0191 246 7288

Address: St Nicholas Hospital, NE3 3XT

Independent Age

Email: charity@independentage.org.uk

Website: <https://www.independentage.org/>

Telephone: 0191 731 4000

Address: The Grainger Suite, Dobson House, NE3 3PF

Community Health and Social Care Direct – Newcastle City Council

Email: scd@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care>

Telephone: 0191 278 8377

Pension Service

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/contact-pension-service>

Telephone: 0345 606 0265

Address: The Pension Service 6, WV98 1AJ

Carers UK

Email: Advice@carersuk.org

Website: www.carersuk.org

Telephone: 020 7378 4999

Address: 20 Great Dover Street,, SE1 4LX

Newcastle Emergency Carer's Card Scheme

Email: Carerscard_Northeast@redcross.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 273 7961

Address: British Red Cross, NE4 8SR

Carers Direct

Email: CarersDirect@nhschoices.nhs.uk

Website: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/Pages/carers-direct-helpline.aspx>

Telephone: 0191 273 7961

The Relative Experience Project

Website: www.familylives.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 284 4060

Address: Spaceworks, NE7 7LX

When They Get Older

Email: editor@whentheygetolder.co.uk

Website: <http://www.whentheygetolder.co.uk/>

Telephone: 0191 284 4060

Carersmart

Website: <http://www.carersmart.org/>

Telephone: 0191 284 4060

Jointly

Email: jointlyappsupport@carersuk.org

Website: <https://www.jointlyapp.com>

Telephone: 0191 284 4060

Change Grow Live

Website: <https://www.changegrowlive.org/>

Telephone: 0191 261 5610

Address: Bridge View House , NE1 2AF

Related Articles

[Home care](#)

[Home adaptations, equipment and aids](#)

[Meals at home](#)

[Day centres and services](#)

[Personal alarm systems and telecare](#)

[Your Care: Needs assessments](#)

[Your Care: Financial assessments](#)

[Dementia](#)

[Direct Payments](#)

[Making decisions and your mental capacity](#)

[Power of Attorney](#)

[Paying for care](#)

[Food and friends](#)

[Carers Wellbeing Fund](#)

[Carers assessments](#)

[Care homes in Newcastle](#)

[Home care agencies in Newcastle](#)