



10 – 16 June 2024

Are you an unpaid carer?



An unpaid carer is someone who looks after a family member or friend who could not cope without their support.

The person they care for could have a disability, illness, mental health condition, or may need extra help as they grow older. Caring is often part and parcel of family life and close friendships.

Every day, 6,000 people in the UK start looking after someone close to them, unpaid. For many, caring is something that happens gradually when someone becomes older, or has a progressive illness. For others, it arises suddenly, for example as the result of an accident, a stroke or as a consequence of a COVID-19 infection.

Caring can be hugely rewarding, but it can also have an impact on all aspects of your life. Looking after someone without the right information and support can be tough. If any of the issues below are affecting you, the organisations supporting Carers Week, listed overleaf, may be able to help.

Getting more support

You can find out you about local support groups and services by contacting your local council or Health and Social Care Trust in Northern Ireland.

They can also tell you what rights you have.

For example, a carer's assessment can explore what your needs are and the support available, from emotional assistance to practical help.

Looking after yourself

Taking care of your health and wellbeing is essential when you are caring for someone, but it can be challenging. You may struggle to eat and sleep well, find the time to exercise and manage your stress levels. It's common to feel lonely or isolated as a carer, especially as friends and family might not understand how difficult it can be.

For more information visit:

carersweek.org/info-for-carers

Work and finances

If you are balancing paid work with caring, it is worth checking out your company's policies and procedures regarding caring responsibilities. For example, as a working carer, you might be able to request flexible working and time off to look after dependants in an emergency.

Technology and equipment

Simple devices and apps can help you feel more connected and manage care on a day-to-day basis. They may also help someone live independently for longer and give you peace of mind.

Planning for the unexpected

It's important to think about what you could do if something goes wrong or your situation changes suddenly. For example, could family and friends help you?

Try to keep up-to-date information about the person you care for somewhere easy to access. Some areas also have emergency card schemes for carers. They are often set up by the local council (or trust) or your local carers' organisation.

**Find out more and get involved:
carersweek.org**

Carers Week partners

These charities have come together for Carers Week, and can help you access the information, guidance and support you need to help you in your caring role.



Age UK provides help and support to carers across the UK in many ways – such as offering counselling and support groups, sharing advice on carer's assessments and benefits, and providing day care and respite, or organising fun activities to allow carers to relax. Call the Age UK Advice Line on 0800 678 1602 or visit: ageuk.org.uk



Carers Trust works to transform the lives of unpaid carers. It partners with its network of local carer organisations to provide funding and support, deliver innovative and evidence-based programmes and raise awareness and influence policy. Its vision is that unpaid carers are valued, with access to support, advice and resources to enable them to live fulfilled lives.

To find your nearest Network Partner call 0300 772 9600 or visit:

carers.org



Carers UK is here to listen, to give tailored information and advice, campaign for lasting change, and find new ways to support carers with their caring role.

Visit carersuk.org or contact their Helpline: email advice@carersuk.org or call 0808 808 7777 (Mon–Fri 9am–6pm). Or visit:

carersuk.org



The ME Association supports, informs, campaigns and invests in medical research to help people with ME/CFS and Long Covid and those who care for them. We are focused on improving healthcare for the 1 million or more people that are so often neglected. Helpline: 0344 576 5326 (10am–12pm, 2pm–4pm, 7pm–9pm, 365 days a year.)

meassociation.org.uk



MND Association funds research, supports patients, carers and professionals, and campaigns for better care. Their support includes information and resources, grants and local support and the MND Connect helpline: 0808 802 6262 (Mon–Fri 9am–5pm and 7–10:30pm) or email mndconnect@mndassociation.org

mndassociation.org



Oxfam GB is a global movement of millions of people who won't live with the injustice of poverty – we believe in a kinder and radically better world where everyone has the power to thrive, not just survive.

As part of our mission, we work with others to make sure that anyone who provides care – including parents and guardians of children, care workers and unpaid carers – is supported and valued, and does not have to live in poverty for the vital work they do.

oxfam.org



Rethink runs over 130 local groups. These provide vital peer support in the community, including over 50 support groups which offer a listening ear, friendship and social support for carers.

They also offer practical advice over the phone via their advice line, as well as on their website:

rethink.org/carers-hub



The Lewy Body Society aims to shine a light on Lewy body dementia, the second most common type of dementia in older people. They raise awareness of the disease, fund clinical research and help families affected through information materials and through their Helpline on 0800 888 6678.

lewybody.org