

# **WE CARE YOU CARE.**

A guide for adults looking after loved ones in  
Middlesbrough & Redcar & Cleveland

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# Am I a carer?

A **carer** is anyone, including **children and adults**, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care given is unpaid.

## **Does this sound like you?**

You may have found yourself in a caring role suddenly; someone you love is taken ill; has an accident or your child is born with a disability. For others, caring creeps up unnoticed; your parents can't manage on their own any longer, your daughter's drug dependency increasingly affects her ability to take care of herself or her children.

**You may not identify with or particularly like the term 'carer' and that is fine.** We are not here to label you; we want to ensure you have access to the right support and information when you feel you need it most.

This guide aims to help you to understand the support available and how to access it. You can find details of local support on pages 7, 8 & 12.

**Visit [www.wecareyoucare.info](http://www.wecareyoucare.info) for much more information.**

needs you may face in  
the future?

other commitments in  
caring for children/ adults?

relationships?

leisure and social life?

work, education,  
training, or volunteering?

eating and drinking?

emotional health?

physical health?

Do you help the  
person you care for to...

- ...get washed, dressed, take medicine?
- ...eat, drink or make meals, buy food?
- ...move around their home?
- ...get around, use transport, reach appointments?
- ...keep safe, be emotionally supported?
- ...deal with letters, bills, other money matters etc?

# The Carers Assessment

The Carer Assessment is simply a chat to find out what needs you may have as a carer and what support may be available for you. The person you care for does not need to be receiving help from Social Care for you to have a Carers Assessment. The time it takes to carry out your assessment will depend on the urgency of your situation.

The Carer Assessment is a supported process, and your views and opinions will be considered throughout the assessment, which is aimed to be completed within 28 days.

Your worker will ask questions to understand the level of support you provide and whether this has an impact on your life. They will be aware that some areas that need to be discussed may cover delicate issues and this may well be a stressful experience. **Please be assured that questions will be asked sensitively and the answers you give will be treated in the strictest confidence.**

You will get a written copy of the Carer Assessment and a Carer Support Plan. This is a plan that shows how your needs identified in your Carer Assessment will be met. This will be reviewed annually to make sure your needs are still being met and can be done online if required.

**Middlesbrough carers** can get an assessment through the **Middlesbrough Adult Social Care Access Team** on **01642 726004**.

**Redcar & Cleveland carers** can get an assessment by speaking to **Redcar & Cleveland Adult Social Care Access Team** on **01642 065070**.

# Carers rights

Early identification as a carer enables you to access appropriate support and can significantly improve your health and wellbeing as well as having a positive benefit for the person('s) you care for. It also means that you can utilise your rights.

Since the implementation of the Care Act 2014, carers now have more rights than ever before.

It is important that you know your rights wherever you are in your caring journey, whether you are in the workplace, in a healthcare setting, when interacting with professionals or at home.

## Defined by the law you have the following rights as a carer:

- to choose whether **to be a carer or not** (although you may feel there is no element of choice)
- to **self-determine willingness and ability to care**
- to be **supported to identify which of the cared-for's needs you might be willing and able to support**
- for **your views to be considered by Social Services** when organising provision for the person you care for
- to a **Carers Assessment** (see page 4)
- to **request** flexible working
- to **engage in employment, education, training and leisure**
- rights as defined by **Civil Rights** and **Human Rights Legislation**
- additional rights associated with the **Equalities Bill**.



## Taking longer breaks

Unlike time off for emergencies, there is no right in the law for a carer to take a longer break from work to deal with on-going situations. Many employers offer discretionary leave in special circumstances. This is often known as 'compassionate leave' or 'special leave' and can be either paid or unpaid.



## Protection from discrimination

You have a right to not be harassed or discriminated against at work because you're a carer. It doesn't matter whether it's your employer or other colleagues who are treating you unfairly, you're entitled to feel safe and supported at your workplace.



## Flexible working

Employees in the UK have a right to **request** flexible working, however, your employer can turn down your request if they have a good business reason for doing so. For some carers, having the option to come in later or leave work earlier on a day-by-day basis is all they need, whereas others need to work part-time, from home or a different office or job sharing.



## Taking time off from work

Anyone could have a family emergency that requires time off work, but if you're a carer, it can happen more often because you're already looking after someone who's vulnerable. The law gives you a right to time off to deal with emergencies involving dependents however this may be unpaid. A dependent is a partner, child, parent or someone who depends on you for care.

**Carers Together** offer a wide range of services, information, advice and support for all carers across the South Tees area aged 18 and over. In partnership with The Junction Foundation the team provide a transition service called Next Steps for carers aged 18-25  
**Telephone:** 01642 488977 **Email:** [info@carerstogether-rc.org.uk](mailto:info@carerstogether-rc.org.uk)  
**[www.carerstogether.co.uk](http://www.carerstogether.co.uk)**

**The Junction Foundation** delivers a Young Carers Information and Support Service, offering a range of support to young carers, families and young adult carers across South Tees. In partnership with Carers Together the team provide a transition service called Next Steps for carers aged 18-25.

**Telephone:** 01642 756000 **Email:** [info@thejunctionfoundation.com](mailto:info@thejunctionfoundation.com)  
**[www.thejunctionfoundation.com](http://www.thejunctionfoundation.com)**

**Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind** provides mental health community outreach for carers dealing with their own mental health and wellbeing challenges or looking after loved ones with mental health difficulties. **Telephone:** 01642 257020 **Email:** [carers@middlesbroughandstocktonmind.org.uk](mailto:carers@middlesbroughandstocktonmind.org.uk)

**[www.middlesbroughandstocktonmind.org.uk](http://www.middlesbroughandstocktonmind.org.uk)**

**Redcar and Cleveland Mind** provides mental health support for carers dealing with their own mental health and wellbeing challenges or looking after loved ones with mental health difficulties **Telephone:** 01642 296052 **Email:** [carers@rcmind.org](mailto:carers@rcmind.org)

**[www.rcmind.org](http://www.rcmind.org)**



**Age UK Teesside Dementia Advice Service (DAS)** for people diagnosed with Dementia, their carers, professionals supporting clients with dementia and anyone wanting to learn more. **Telephone:** 01642 805500

[www.ageuk.org.uk/teesside](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/teesside)

### **Redcar & Cleveland Council**

Access Team **Telephone:** 01642 065070

[www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)

### **Middlesbrough Council**

Access Team **Telephone:** 01642 726004

[www.middlesbroughmatters.co.uk](http://www.middlesbroughmatters.co.uk)

**Healthwatch South Tees (Middlesbrough & Redcar & Cleveland)** supporting people to find the right health and social care services for them and making sure their views and experiences of local services are heard. **Freephone 0800 989 0080**

[www.healthwatchmiddlesbrough.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchmiddlesbrough.org.uk)

[www.healthwatchredcarandcleveland.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchredcarandcleveland.co.uk)

**North East NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy** offer free and independent advocacy support for NHS services. **Telephone:** 01914 788350

**Freephone helpline:** 0808 802 300

[www.nenhscomplaintsadvocacy.co.uk](http://www.nenhscomplaintsadvocacy.co.uk)

**PAM Assist (Middlesbrough)** provide free and confidential, emotional and wellbeing counselling for Middlesbrough carers, funded by Middlesbrough Council. You can talk to PAM Assist 24/7, 365 days a year.

**Telephone:** 08081 968 890 connect through the app or online at [www.pamassist.co.uk](http://www.pamassist.co.uk)

**Username:** mbcsupport

**Password:** mbcsupport!



# Financial support

As a carer, there may be benefits, grants or other financial support available to you. You may be entitled to...

## Attendance Allowance

This benefit is to help to pay for personal care for those that have reached the State Pension age and have a disability or illness that makes it hard to look after yourself. Therefore, this may be a benefit that would be granted to the person you care for but can contribute towards your support.

## Carers Allowance

If you care for someone for at least 35 hours a week and the person you care for is getting a benefit because of their disability. The government has confirmed that providing emotional support counts towards the threshold of 35 hours of care a week across the UK.

## Carers Credit

If you are under State Pension age and you are caring for someone for at least 20 hours a week. Carers Credit is a **National Insurance credit** that helps with gaps in your National Insurance record which allows you to take on caring responsibilities without affecting your ability to qualify for the State Pension.

## Universal Credit

If you are on a low income or unemployed, you may be able to claim Universal Credit (UC) which is a means-tested benefit (meaning the amount of income and capital you have can affect your eligibility).

# Advice and support

You can apply for any of these benefits directly yourself by visiting **www.gov.uk** or you can get help from a local service who can discuss your financial situation, impartially, with you and support you to maximize your benefit entitlement:

**Free online benefits calculator:** [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

## Local Support

**Citizens Advice** give advice to people for the problems that they face and work to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

**The Welfare Rights Team** provide specialist benefits advice via the advice phone line and home visits (housebound customers only).

### Middlesbrough



#### **Citizens Advice Bureau**

**Tel:** 01642 802282 **Adviceline:** 0344 499 4110

**Email:** [advice@mcab.org.uk](mailto:advice@mcab.org.uk)

#### **Middlesbrough Council Welfare Rights**

**Tel:** 01642 729242

**Email:** [welfarights@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:welfarights@middlesbrough.gov.uk)

### Redcar & Cleveland



#### **Citizens Advice Bureau**

**Tel:** 01642 030000 **Adviceline:** 03444 111444

**Email:** [enquiries@rccitizensadvice.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@rccitizensadvice.co.uk)

#### **Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council Money**

**Advice Service.** Information platform for local and national financial support. **Visit:**

<https://redcar-cleveland-self.achieveservice.com/>

# Looking after children:

## Kinship care

Kinship carers are relatives (grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles or other relatives) or even sometimes just friends of the family, who provide full time (either temporary or permanent) caring support for a child or children of parents who are unable to provide care and support. These children and young people are known as kinship kids. Almost half of kinship kids have a disability or emotional difficulty.

Kinship Care is an arrangement for a relative or close friend to provide care for a child. This may be an informal arrangement (for example, placed there by the child's parents without the involvement of the local authority) or a formal arrangement (for example, placed there by the local authority and where a Legal Order has been obtained). When arrangements have been formalised by the court, the kinship carer then has parental responsibility.

Advice is available from Kinship, Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub (MACH) or Redcar & Cleveland Multi-Agency Children's Hub (MACH). MACH is the first point of contact for Early Help and kinship carers will be offered support, advice, signposting, and information. Kinship carers experience some of the most difficult challenges. MACH sits within the South Tees Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

## Parent carers

Parent carers provide support to their children, including grown up children who could not manage without their help. The child/adult can be ill, disabled, or have mental health or substance misuse problems. As a parent carer you may not recognise that you are in a caring role; first and foremost, you are a parent. But being a parent of a child or adult who needs additional support means you are a carer – and there's help available for you too should you need it.

# Handy phone numbers

- **Alzheimer's Society** (dementia support line) 0333 150 3456
- **Contact** (for families with disabled children) 0808 808 3555
- **Daisy Chain** (supporting autistic & neurodivergent individuals & families) 01642 531248
- **Department of Work & Pensions (DWP)** 0843 5158313
- **Emergency Duty Team (EDT) Middlesbrough Council** 08702 402994
- **Emergency Duty Team (EDT) Redcar & Cleveland Council** 01642 524552
- **Family Information Directory Service Middlesbrough** 01642 354200
- **Family Information Service Redcar & Cleveland** 0800 073 8800
- **Kinship** (national charity) **0330 0167 235 Advice Service** 0300 123 7015
- **MAIN** (services for children and adults with a range of disabilities) 01642 608012
- **Multi-Agency Children's Hub (MACH) Middlesbrough** 01642 726004
- **Multi-Agency Children's Hub (MACH) Redcar & Cleveland** 01642 130700
- **Middlesbrough Short Breaks** 01642 579160
- **Neuro Key** (helping people who live or care for someone with a neurological condition) 01642 641825
- **Parents 4 Change** 01642 956742 / 07975 621843
- **Tees Valley Buddies** (neurodiverse self-advocacy and peer support network) 07852889202
- **Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust** (mental health crisis) 0800 0516 171

# 13 Health and wellbeing

As a carer, it is important to look after yourself, your own health and wellbeing are just as important as the person you take care of. Your ability to look after others will be affected if your own health and wellbeing are not prioritised.

## Prioritise your own health:

- Inform your GP practice that you are a carer.
- Request a health check from your GP practice and discover self-help care and advice on the NHS Choices website.
- Recognise your stress triggers and know how to manage stress in your daily life.
- Ask for help if you recognise that you are struggling to manage your mental wellbeing. Visit [www.wecareyoucare.info](http://www.wecareyoucare.info) for self-signposting to local support.

Carers are a flu vaccine priority group, so you are entitled to get this for free by asking at your GP practice. This vaccine is important for you as a preventative measure for the person you care for.



# DO IT FOR YOU



Being physically active might be far from your mind when you're a carer, but for your health and well-being, it's important to find time for yourself. Find an activity you enjoy and do something for yourself every day, no matter how small. A walk in the fresh air, doing some gentle exercise or increasing your activities at home all count **#doitforyou**.

**YOU'VE  
GOT  
THIS.**



# Time off from your caring role

**Caring for someone can be hard and getting time off isn't easy. Most carers need a break from time to time. It's important that you try to build in some time off for yourself, however hard that may seem.**

You may want a short break of just an hour or two, a whole day or longer. What kind of break and for how long will depend on your circumstances and the type of care and support that the person you care for requires. Respite care can mean lots of different things and can mean the person you care for having a short stay in a care home, attending a day service, or receiving alternative care at home. Having a break from caring is important for you as an individual but can also be just as beneficial for the loved one you care for.

## **Where to start?**

It may be the case that you are able to leave the person you care for, but **you feel guilty about taking some time for yourself**. Remember, you have needs too. If you can do something that you enjoy, it will 'recharge your batteries' and help sustain you in your caring role. Ultimately, both of you will benefit. **Prioritising yourself is not selfish!**

If you have family and friends around you, it may be worth asking if they can help. It can be hard to ask for help and it can also be hard for people to offer support if they are unsure of what is needed. All families and friendships are different but consider talking to them to express how you are feeling and what would help.



If arranging time off from your caring role isn't something you can organise yourself or with support from family and friends you will need a **carer's assessment** and the person you care for is eligible for a **needs assessment** which can give you access to funded or partially funded respite options. 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 (see page 4 for contact details of your local authority to access assessments).

## Short Break Services

**Short Breaks** are available for disabled children and young people and are intended to have positive benefits for both children and young people and their parents and carers. Short Breaks provision can range from a few hours a week to an allocated number of overnight breaks per year and anything in between.

Short breaks aim to provide parents and carers with:

- A necessary and valuable break from their caring responsibility.
- A chance to rest and unwind.
- To spend time with other members of the family.

**Middlesbrough Short Breaks Telephone:** 01642 579160

**Email:** [shortbreaks@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:shortbreaks@middlesbrough.gov.uk) Advice can be provided without a referral but for an assessment, a referral should be made through the **Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub** (01642 726004).

**Redcar & Cleveland Short Breaks- Telephone** the Family Information Service at 0800 073 8800 or

**Email:** [ShortBreaks@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:ShortBreaks@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk).

# Managing your loved one's affairs

You may be caring for a loved one who is able to manage their own money, and affairs at present but depending on their needs they may become less able to do this over time. Setting up '**power of attorney**' can help you both, as you know there is a plan in place for the future in case the person you care for can no longer make their own decisions.

A power of attorney simply means a written authorisation to represent or act on another's behalf in private matters, such as discussing an electric account with a supplier.

## Lasting Power Attorney (LPA)

This is the most common form of attorney. It is an ongoing arrangement with no expiry date that allows another person to make decisions on your behalf. Once the document is registered, it can be used immediately, with your permission while you still have the capacity, or it can take effect when you lose the ability to make your own decisions (mental capacity). A LPA has to be registered with the government, via the Office of the Public Guardian, for which there is a charge (£82 per LPA, 2023). There are two forms of LPA', property and financial affairs LPA and health and welfare LPA. You can choose to make one or both.

## Further Information and Support

**We Care You Care** for much more information visit [www.wecareyoucare.info](http://www.wecareyoucare.info)

**Carers Together** for further information and to access 30-minute free legal clinic call **01642 488977**

**Age UK Teesside** has specially trained staff to help with setting up LPA's (charges apply) call **01642 805500**

The **Office of the Public Guardian (OPG)**, is a government organisation, whose role is to register powers of attorney. You can contact the OPG for more information call **0300 456 0300**.





**WE CARE  
YOU CARE.**

We hope by producing this guide we have provided a useful tool to help you navigate local services and support available to you as a carer, living in **Middlesbrough** and **Redcar & Cleveland**.

Visit [www.wecareyoucare.info](http://www.wecareyoucare.info) for the latest information, advice, and self-signposting to local support.

All information is correct at date of publication: March 2023