

Looking after someone living with dementia

Printable guide for South Tees unpaid carers.



**WE CARE
YOU CARE.**



wecareyoucare.info



@wecareyoucarelocal

This guide has been created for people in Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland who provide care and support for a family member or friend living with dementia.

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Understanding dementia

Dementia is a group of symptoms. It's caused by different diseases that damage the brain. The symptoms get worse over time and include: memory loss, confusion, needing help with daily tasks, problems with language and understanding and changes in behaviour. Dementia isn't a natural part of getting older. The diseases affect the brain in different ways, resulting in different types of dementia. Living well is still possible when you're caring for someone with dementia, but things will change over time.

Having some knowledge and understanding of dementia can help you better support somebody living with the condition. It can also help you come to accept their diagnosis and changes they may go through.

Dementia Action Teesside facilitate a Dementia Friends Information Session which is a free one hour session that aims to increase understanding of dementia and inspire people to take action to support people affected by dementia in our community. Dementia Friends is an Alzheimer's Society initiative which can help you to see what life can be like for those affected with the condition, making you more confident to provide support as you learn about the symptoms, challenges, and needs of people living with dementia.

Email Brian or Marie for more info: brian@dementiaactionteesside.org
marie@dementiaactionteesside.org



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.

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.

Looking after a loved one with dementia



Caring for someone with dementia can be challenging and stressful. If you engage with the right support, it can be rewarding and satisfying.

Within this guide are some useful resources and contact information for local services to support you on your journey.

Know your 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 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 your willingness and ability to care
- to be supported to identify which of the cared-for's needs you may 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 from your Local Authority
- 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.

Carers Assessment

A Carer Assessment is simply a conversation to find out what needs you may have as a carer and what support may be available to you from the Local Authority.

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 Assessment is a supported process, and your views and opinions will be considered throughout, the process should 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.

Accessing a Carers Assessment

You have the right to request a carers assessment from the Local Authority in which your loved one resides.

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 771500 .

Informing your GP



Informing your GP that you are an unpaid carer will help them to understand and support you better. It will open the door to vital health and wellbeing support/ services such as Flu vaccinations and signposting to local services.

We can often assume that our surgery is aware of our caring responsibilities; you may accompany the person you care for to appointments, or manage prescriptions on their behalf. Despite some staff within the surgery being aware you may not be officially registered as a carer which is required to provide you with holistic support.

In partnership with Teesside Mind we have created a form that aims to make registering your caring role with your GP surgery as simple as possible.

The form asks for some basic details from you such as name, D.O.B and relationship to cared-for. There is an optional section where you can add information for the person being cared-for, providing they are at the same GP surgery as yourself and you obtain their permission to do so. You can complete the form (overleaf) and hand it into your surgery or complete it online and email it directly to your surgery. The form can be found here: www.wecareyoucare.info

You can of course do this verbally with your practices reception team if preferred.

Informing Your GP Surgery if You Look After Somebody

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If you are a child or adult 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 your support you are a carer.

Please complete this form and hand it, or send it to your GP surgery, who will record in your notes that you are a carer. This can help your surgery provide you with arranging repeat prescriptions, Flu immunisation, annual health checks and arranging appointments which fit in with your caring role.

About me (carer)

My GP surgery	
My NHS number (if known)	
My full name	
My D.O.B	
My address	
My contact phone number	
My relationship to person cared for	

Person cared-for

Full name	Only complete this section if you are both at the same GP surgery.
D.O.B	
Address	
Phone number	

For information and self-signposting to local support visit
wecareyoucare.info

Something not right with your NHS care or treatment?

We can help

NHS Complaints Advocacy



**If you live in Hartlepool,
Middlesbrough, Redcar
and Cleveland and have
been unhappy with your
NHS treatment or care,
People First can help you.**



Scan the QR code
to find out more

We can help you:

- Feel confident to raise your concern or complaint
- Explore your rights and choices to make an NHS complaint
- Understand and navigate the NHS complaints process
- Access tools and self-help information to raise your NHS complaint
- Find out about other services or organisations that can help

**Independent NHS Complaints
Advocacy is free and confidential.**

How to get help

☎ **0300 303 8037** 🌐 **wearepeoplefirst.co.uk**

Campaigns



The Herbert Protocol is a form that carers, friends or family of a vulnerable person can fill in. These forms help the Police in the event that a vulnerable person goes missing.

Keeping vulnerable people safe can be a challenge, especially those suffering with dementia or Alzheimer's.

There is a risk that they can get lost and disoriented if they start to 'walk about'. It may only be for a short time, or they could go missing. This is why it's important to plan ahead and keep them as safe as possible.

What is the Herbert Protocol?

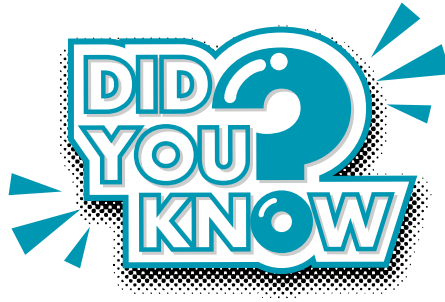
It contains a list of information to help the police if the person goes missing, including: medication, mobile numbers, places previously located, a recent photograph. Request a form from your support worker or any professional you are connected to.

Download the form from wecareyoucare.info



John's Campaign is a national campaign which recognises the important role of family members who care for people living with dementia and people with complex needs, including learning disabilities and/or autism.

The campaign also emphasises that carers should not just be allowed but should be **welcomed into all care settings**. Both South Tees Hospital Trust and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust have adopted and implemented the campaign. **Find out more:**
johnscampaign.org.uk



Carers Passport



South Tees Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

The South Tees Hospital Trust recognises the value and expertise of unpaid carers and provide carers passports which you can obtain for the time the person you care for is in hospital. The carers passport enables you to:

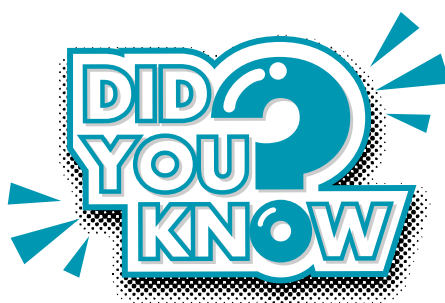
- visit your family member/ friend outside normal visiting hours
- provide assistance with meals and drinks
- be actively involved in your loved ones care plan including discharge planning
- provide support and assistance when loved one is admitted or undergoing tests
- free/ discounted car parking and regular offers of food and drink on the ward.

Ask at the hospital for an application on visit: carerpassport.uk

Council Tax Reduction

The 'severely mentally impaired' (SMI) council tax discount is a reduction off a household's council tax bill, worth, a minimum, 25%, all the way up to, in some cases, the entire bill being wiped. SMI is a medical diagnosis in itself, but the underlying cause could be a condition such as dementia (including Alzheimer's), profound learning difficulties, multiple sclerosis, the result of a severe stroke or something else. Council tax is discounted based on how many qualifying adults live in a house. Having SMI means you don't count towards this (like full-time students & under-18s). Contact your appropriate Local Authority to apply for the discount.

Middlesbrough- 01642 726006
Redcar & Cleveland- 01642 774774.



Home Safety

Northern Gas Networks can fit a **locker cooker valve**, a simple safety device, to existing gas cooker pipework. When the valve is locked, the gas supply to the cooker is stopped. This eliminates the risk of the cooker being unintentionally turned on or left on, and gives peace of mind to the carer or relative that the cooker can't be used when they leave the house or the room. The carer or relative can easily turn the valve on using the key when the cooker is required, enabling the vulnerable person to continue to use their gas cooker safely.

Visit: northerngasnetworks.co.uk to apply.

Local Centre's for Warmth

Centre for Warmth aims to provide essential support to individuals and families experiencing fuel poverty, helping them make informed energy decisions, save money, and access their rightful benefits. By offering education and empowerment, the initiative targets key areas of need where households are frequently forced to choose between basic necessities such as food or heating. A wide range of services are offered including energy efficiency advice, carbon monoxide awareness, referrals for fuel top-up vouchers, sign-up to the Priority Service Register (ensuring access to extra support during power cuts or other emergencies) and much more.

Redcar & Cleveland Centre for Warmth: Redcar Baptist Church, Park Ave, Redcar, TS10 3LJ | Phone: 01642 280440
Email: admin@redcarbaptist.co.uk

Middlesbrough Affordable Warmth Team: Nine Yards (Middlesbrough Environment City) | Phone 0800 304 7084
Email: warmhomes@menvcity.org.uk

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. You are eligible 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 (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:

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.

Middlesbrough CAB- Tel: 01642 802282 Adviceline: 0344 499 4110
Email: advice@mcab.org.uk

Darlington, Redcar & Cleveland CAB- Tel: 01642 030000
Adviceline: 03444 111 444 Email: enquiries@rccitizensadvice.co.uk

Free online benefits calculator: turn2us.org.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) 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 (£92 per LPA, Nov 2025).

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 more information visit 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.

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, it may involve 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.

Request assessments from the Local Authority of the person you care for:

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 771500.

Dementia Advisory Service's

Middlesbrough



Age UK Teesside

Dementia Advice Service is for people diagnosed with Dementia, their carers, professionals supporting clients with dementia and anyone wanting to learn more. **Find out more:**

Telephone: 01642 805500

Email: front.office@ageukteesside.org.uk

Redcar & Cleveland



Teesside Mind

Dementia Advisory Outreach Service is for anybody who has dementia or who is worried about dementia and in need of help – even if you don't know what support you need - we're here for you. The Dementia Advisory Outreach Service (DAOS) project is focused on providing information and advice to people living with dementia and their families, unpaid carers, and the wider community. **Find out more:**

Phone: 01642 257020

Email: daos@teessidemind.org.uk



Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust

Older people's mental health service's provide assessment's, treatment and appropriate intervention.

Woodside Resource Centre (Middlesbrough)

Contact: 01642 368945 or email: teww.mhsopwellbeing-dementiahub@nhs.net

Reed Marsh House (Redcar and Cleveland): 01642 777400.

Carers support



Carers Together offer a wide range of services, information, advice and support for all carers across the South Tees area aged 18 and over.

Telephone: 01642 488977

Email: info@carerstogogether-rc.org.uk

Web: carerstogogether.co.uk



Teesside Mind provide an emotional wellbeing support service for carers 18+ across the South Tees.

Telephone: 01642 257020

Email: carers@teessidemind.org.uk

Web: teessidemind.org.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

Web: thejunctionfoundation.com

Your local health and social care champion



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

healthwatchmiddlesbrough.org.uk

healthwatchredcarandcleveland.co.uk

Dementia services/ activities and support

Alzheimer's Society is the leading support and research charity for people with dementia, their families and carers. Contact the Alzheimer's Society National Dementia Helpline on 0300 222 1122.

The charity deliver a range of local activities across the South Tees alongside advice and support. For more information on any of the local Alzheimer's Society services contact the team by phone 01904 929441 or mobile 07738741318.

Dementia Action Teesside is passionate about supporting those living with dementia to lead an active life within their community. The team are on a mission to make Middlesbrough, and Redcar and Cleveland Dementia Friendly Communities.

The team provide dances which are held most weeks in Middlesbrough and Redcar, and they're open to anyone living with dementia and their carer. They also jointly deliver singing sessions.

Fancy a dance or a sing? Get in touch with the team:

Brian Rowcroft- brian@dementiaactionteesside.org / Marie Kerr-
marie@dementiaactionteesside.org

Guisborough Bridge hosts Music and Memories on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kemplah Lounge, New Road TS14 6DP.

The afternoon begins with refreshments at 1:45pm, followed by a music hour starting at 2:00pm and finishing 3.00pm and closed by 3:15pm, with an amazing acoustic guitarist and singer, Trisha. All welcome, particularly people living with dementia and carers. Enjoy fellowship, fun, and a dash of respite.

Reflections is a free support group in Redcar for anyone living, or caring for someone, with dementia. It is a small and friendly group who enjoy a chat over a cuppa. Volunteers run the group and give everyone a warm welcome and a listening ear. The group runs every Monday 9.30- 11.30am in Footprints Community Cafe on Redcar High Street.

To find out more email reflections@footprintsinthecommunity.co.uk or telephone 01642 484842.

RDA Unicorn Centre offers a session, Tea with a Pony, to anyone living with Dementia and their carer. You are invited to join the Unicorn Centre every 3rd Thursday of the month for demonstrations, to meet the ponies and enjoy tea and cake at the Unicorn Centre in Hemlington. The sessions are £5 per person and need to be pre-booked by contacting the RDA Unicorn Centre team on 01642 576222.

John Dalton Dementia Cafe

Every Friday 10-12pm at Linthorpe Community Centre, 466 Linthorpe Rd, Middlesbrough TS5 6JG. A friendly, welcoming space for people living with dementia and peer support for carers.

To find out more email: community@friendsoflinthorpe.org

Senses Wellbeing Centre deliver a range of dementia friendly sessions including cinema screenings and chair based exercise.

Contact Senses Wellbeing Centre- Phone: 01287 650151 Mobile: 07794571933 Email: karen@senseswellbeingcentre.co.uk

Sleights Community Hub at Sleights Court Community Centre, Guisborough, TS14 6TE. The Hub offers a Community Cafe and Warm Space and provides information, advice, support and activities for carers and people living with dementia, related conditions and older adults. Contact Jade Lavan for more info. Phone: 01287 773323 Email: info@lavandementiacareservices.co.uk

Dementia Cafe at MyPlace

Every other Friday from 11am–1pm at MyPlace Custom House, North Street, Middlesbrough. The café offers an opportunity for people living with dementia and their carers to meet others, enjoy live music and take part in a free afternoon tea. For more information: call 01642 728015 or email myplace@middlesbrough.gov.uk

We Care You Care

We Care You Care is a coordinated brand aimed to reach carers (whether known to services or not) to provide relevant, accessible information and support. The project is designed to reach carers in Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland.

MVDA is hosting this communication and campaigns project to complement the South Tees Carers Partnership in line with the developments of the local carers strategy.

Every day 6,000 people become carers and often do not have the opportunity to plan and prepare for this. We strive to provide up-to-date useful resources to support family members and friends providing care, to minimise any adverse impacts caring can have on their own health and wellbeing.

Visit our website for more information: wecareyoucare.info

Follow us on Facebook: @wecareyoucarelocal

Subscribe to our regular e-bulletins: hello@wecareyoucare.info



Dementia Action Teesside are on a mission to make Teesside more Dementia Friendly.

Developing symptoms or receiving a diagnosis of dementia can be frightening and although life will change, being able to continue to do the things you enjoy will delay progression and help someone live well with dementia.

Living well means different things to different people. Meeting friends for a meal or a coffee, playing a game of badminton, going shopping, being part of a local group are all ways in which we can live well. Through understanding and support we can create dementia friendly communities where everyone feels included, valued and respected.

This can help individuals with dementia to remain independent for longer, feel more confident in accessing their community and participate in activities that enrich their lives.

We want Teesside to be the best place to live where empathy and awareness is given, reducing stigma and creating a more compassionate community for everyone.



There are already hundreds of local organisations and businesses signed up and have received dementia awareness training and pledged to do more to be dementia friendly. You can find a full list of dementia friendly businesses and organisations on Dementia Action Teesside's website:

dementiaactionteesside.org

You are not alone!



You can receive regular ebulletins covering everything relevant to unpaid carers across Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland. Sign-up by visiting our website.

www.wecareyoucare.info

Information correct at time of publication: September 2026