



Carers

Are you a carer?

You do not have to be living with someone or see them every day to be a carer. You are a carer if you assist someone by helping with any or all of these:

- daily activities
- medication (giving it or preparing pill boxes)
- transport to regular appointments
- emotional support

This information sheet was created to help you find the services that can support you in your role as a carer.

Where do I start?

The first step is to contact your local carers association (see table overleaf). They will be able to support you and may suggest you contact your local social services to ask for a **carers assessment**. This would be used to access the support available where you live. Carers UK and other national organisations provide further support both before and after your assessment.

Tips for carers

1. Tell your GP you're a carer. Register as a carer with your GP surgery.
2. Take care of yourself. Carers tend to put their own health last. If you feel unwell, visit your doctor —don't put it off!
3. Request a Carer's Assessment (see overleaf).
4. Take time out if you can - to enjoy the things you enjoy doing. Support services are available from various agencies if you're unable to leave the person you're caring for on their own.
5. Accept help! Don't feel guilty, selfish or neglectful to either ask for help or accept it. It will help you to manage better.
6. Communication is key. Does phone or email work best or would you prefer a friend or family member to take charge? Be open and honest about what you need.
7. There's lots of advice, information and support out there! You may find it helpful to talk to other carers in similar situations or simply to chat to other people (see table overleaf).
8. Everyone is different. It's good to be aware of services but also to do what feels right for you.
9. Plan ahead. Keep a copy of all contact numbers, a current list of medication and the latest notes in a secure, easy to access place.
10. Financial support. If you need advice about benefits, caring whilst working, debts or other financial concerns, contact Macmillan benefits helpline on 0808 808 0000.
(With thanks to The Hospice of St Francis for permission to use their 'Top Ten Tips for Carers')
11. A number of services are available at the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre. These include relaxation classes (held three times a week that you can attend alone or together) and complementary therapy sessions. The half day 'Time and Space' workshop provides an opportunity to meet with other carers. Contact us on 020 3826 2555.

Local carers associations

Location	Organisation	Contact details
Bedfordshire	Carers in Bedfordshire	www.carersinbeds.org.uk Tel: 0300 111 1919
Berkshire	Berkshire Carers Service	www.berkshirecarers.org Bracknell Forest, Tel: 01344 266 088 Reading and West Berkshire and Wokingham, Tel: 0118 324 7333 Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Tel: 01628 683800
Brent	Brent Carers	brentcarerscentre.org.uk Tel: 020 3802 7070
Buckinghamshire	Carers Bucks	carersbucks.org Tel: 0300 777 2722
Harrow	Harrow Carers	www.harrowcarers.org Tel: 020 8868 5224
Hertfordshire	Carers in Hertfordshire	www.carersinherts.org.uk Tel: 01992 586969 or 01992 586959
Hillingdon	Hillingdon Carers	carerstrusthillingdon.org Tel: 01895 811206

What other support is available?

Carers UK	Offers advice and support online and by phone. An online place where you can chat about real issues with people who understand and who can support you through the ups and downs of caring.	www.carersuk.org Tel: 0808 808 7777
Carers Trust	Works to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring unpaid.	www.carers.org Tel: 0300 772 9600
Macmillan Cancer Support	Has healthcare professionals who can offer support by telephone and an online community where those caring for someone with cancer can share experiences and support each other.	www.macmillan.org.uk CancerLine: Tel: 0808 808 0000
Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre	Offers a drop-in centre, telephone helpline, counselling, complementary therapies, benefits advice and self help courses.	www.ljmc.org Tel: 020 3826 2555
healthtalk.org	Lets you share in people's experiences of health-related conditions and illnesses.	www.healthtalk.org

Other services

Homestart	Helps support families with young children by providing volunteers who can visit the family's home for a couple of hours every week. They tailor-make their support to meet the needs of the parents of children under 5 years.	www.home-start.org.uk Tel: 0116 464 5490
Herts Neighbours	Part of Peace Hospice Care's community service; Herts Neighbours is a volunteering service that helps families coping with a life-limiting illness. Provides practical and emotional support to individuals and their families within their home or care setting.	www.peacehospicecare.org.uk Tel: 01923 330330 (main Peace Hospice Care switchboard)
Blue Badge scheme	Helps disabled people park closer to their destination.	www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge