

# Looking after someone

Information and support for carers in **Scotland**



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# About this guide

It's estimated that there are 627,700 people who are looking after family or friends who are older, disabled or seriously ill in Scotland.<sup>1</sup>



At times, caring can bring many positives and rewards. There's nothing more natural and human than helping our loved ones get the most out of life.

There's also nothing more difficult than focusing on someone else's needs without neglecting our own. Whether we're caring around the clock or balancing caring with work and family life, it can be exhausting.

The 'system' can be bewildering. The emotions can be shattering.

This guide is designed to outline your rights as a carer and the support available to you.

We have produced separate versions of this guide for carers living in England, Wales and Northern Ireland because there are some differences in legislation, health and social care.

**However caring affects you, we're here.**



This icon means there is a Carers UK factsheet available to download for free from: [carersuk.org/scotland/factsheets](https://carersuk.org/scotland/factsheets)

<sup>1</sup> [scotlandscensus.gov.uk/news-and-events/scotland-s-census-health-disability-and-unpaid-care](https://scotlandscensus.gov.uk/news-and-events/scotland-s-census-health-disability-and-unpaid-care)

# A carer's guide

Looking after someone can be tough. Here are 10 of the key challenges that caring can throw your way...

## 1. Getting the right advice and information... quickly!

Caring can be extremely complicated, whether we're grappling with the benefits system or considering how to pay for care. Each strand is confusing but when all the strands are tangled, it can feel bewildering. Turning to an expert can help to unravel the most complex situation.



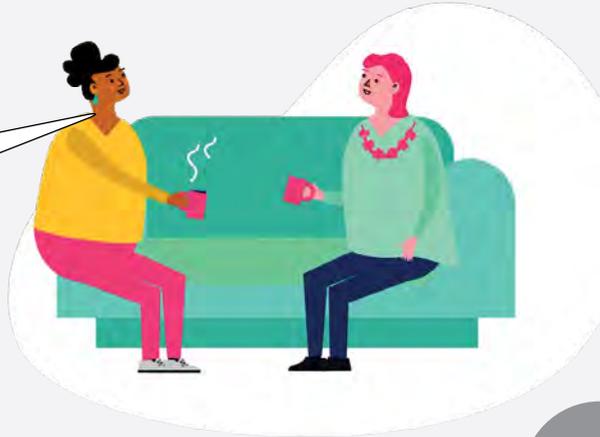
"I contacted the Carers UK Helpline and you gave me vital information that empowered me to challenge and win my case."

## 2. Coping with feelings of guilt

When we're looking after someone, it's important to accept that guilt is normal and that we only feel it because we care. Being able to talk to people who understand what we're going through and how we feel can help us handle our feelings of guilt better.

"After the diagnosis, I was consumed with the thought that I could have done more. Why didn't I recognise the signs? I now accept that what has happened isn't anyone's fault.

So now I don't say I feel guilty, I say I feel sad – an easier emotion to cope with."



## 3. Being assertive with professionals

Looking after someone will often involve dealing with several different professionals. When we feel a professional has not explained things clearly, does not see the whole picture or perhaps is not doing what they should do, it can be hard to speak up. However, that is exactly what we need to do. And this starts with valuing ourselves and our caring role.



"The doctors discussed his condition with me and we agreed that we should implement a care plan to give Dad a dignified and pain-free death. They asked if I wanted to talk to Dad about it, and I did."

## 4. Handling difficult conversations

Even a tricky conversation with professionals can be a breeze compared to having to deal with family and friends. We may have to ask a sibling to be more supportive, remind a friend that we still exist or talk gently to a parent who doesn't accept that they can't live independently any longer. This takes courage, bags of patience and tact. Talking it through with people outside the situation can make a world of difference.

“We put off talking about mental capacity with my grandmother. Having these difficult conversations early is far preferable to leaving it too late and having other people make decisions about the future.”



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## 5. Looking after our own health and wellbeing

As carers, we may have immediate needs such as taking breaks, getting sleep, eating properly or exercising. We may have longer-term needs such as building fulfilling relationships, pursuing hobbies or developing careers.

Caring always involves an element of putting our own needs aside. However it's important that we look after ourselves too, so we can keep going as carers, and because we are individuals whose needs are just as valid as those of our loved ones.

“I never took a break – I look back now and wish I had been stronger to let others help care for Mum.”

## 6. Noticing when we're too stressed

Stress can alert us to potential dangers and spur us on to achieve a goal.

However, sometimes the balance tips too far and the pressure becomes so intense or persistent that we feel unable to cope. As soon as we notice it getting too much, it's helpful to talk about how we feel rather than hoping the stress will go away.



"Sometimes stress and tiredness take their toll. One night we had a fight about nothing..."

"...at the time I didn't know what to do or where I could go for help. That's how it feels when we're under stress."

## 7. Making difficult decisions

There will be points when we are faced with a particularly emotional or difficult decision.

Sometimes it's a decision we have planned for, or at least held at the back of our minds. Sometimes it's completely unexpected and leaves us feeling out of control. Where we can, thinking about decisions in advance can help us keep a cool head when it comes to the crunch.



"It's better to be prepared and to do some research about different options, even if you're not sure what route you'll go down. I couldn't have selected the right care home whilst Mum was in hospital, in the middle of that stressful time."

## 8. Keeping relationships fulfilling



Caring for our loved ones can express the best of who we are, and can take a relationship to a profound new level. It can also push us to the brink through financial, emotional and practical strain. Illness can cast aside the best-laid plans and make relationships feel utterly different. What matters most is that there's a way for us to talk honestly and find help when we need it.

“I was suddenly juggling hospital visits, a full-time job and trying not to scream. I remember feeling I had lost all control over my life: that stroke had happened not just to Peter, but to both of us.”

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## 9. Adapting to changing circumstances

Whether we're looking after someone who's recovering or whose condition is deteriorating over time, caring inevitably involves adapting to circumstances.

Sometimes it's easy to focus on the practical details – the administration of care workers or move to the care home. Being able to stay attentive to our relationship with the person we're caring for in the midst of all that change is far from easy.



“There were times when it seemed that Dad was at death's door. But a couple of days later he was sitting up in bed, bright as a button. That really made the emotions difficult, constantly living on the edge.”

## 10. Keeping a sense of humour

Nothing relieves stress and tension better than a good laugh.

Sometimes caring can feel a bit like starring in our own sitcom, and there's no shortage of comedy material. Other times we may need a bit of help finding something to laugh about.

Either way, sharing experiences with other carers is often great not just for feeling listened to and understood but for finding the humour that can keep us going.

“Dementia is no laughing matter, but humour is my way of coping.

I treat most of Dad's outbursts as comedy gold for the book or the sitcom I'll never get round to writing!”



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### Join Carers Scotland for support, understanding and lasting change

However caring affects you and your family, we're here for you. By joining Carers Scotland, which is part of Carers UK, you can be part of a supportive community and a movement for change.

It's free to join us. Just call us on 0141 445 3070 or visit [carersuk.org/scotland/join-us](https://carersuk.org/scotland/join-us)



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# Getting help and support



# Where to start

Caring can be hard work – physically and emotionally. It's important to find out about the different ways you can get help and support with caring.

One way to get help and support is through an assessment by your local authority, sometimes known as your local health and social care partnership (HSCP). Both you and the person you care for can get assessments. This may result in help and support being provided to you as a carer and/or to the person you are looking after. For further information see pages 12–13.

You could decide to buy in additional help and support for the person you are looking after. One option would be to employ an individual or use a care provider such as a care agency.

If you are looking for care providers you could:

- ask the local authority if they have a list of approved care providers
- search on the Care Inspectorate website: [careinspectorate.com/index.php/care-services](https://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/care-services)
- search on the Housing Care services directory: [housingcare.org/service](https://www.housingcare.org/service)

You can also find out about equipment and technology that could help. Even minor aids and adjustments could make the home safer and help someone you care for to feel more independent – see pages 20–21.

Caring inevitably means adapting to changing circumstances, so it's important to think about the future. You may need to look into different ways of managing someone's affairs, either now or for the future – see page 15.

There are carers' organisations in most areas in Scotland which can offer support. To find your local carers' organisation visit [carersuk.org/scotland/support-where-you-live](https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/support-where-you-live)

Care Information Scotland is also a useful source of information about getting help and support. Visit [careinfoscotland.scot](https://www.careinfoscotland.scot) or call 0800 011 3200.

Upfront is a free online tool that can help you get straight to the information you need.

Visit [carersuk.org/scotland/upfront](https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/upfront) to give it a go!

**Upfront**



# Adult carer support plans and young carer statements

If you are a carer, you should be offered an adult carer support plan by the local authority of the person you are looking after. If you are under 18 (or 18 if still at school), you should be offered a young carer statement by the local authority you live in.

If you are not offered a support plan/statement, you should contact the local authority and ask for one. You can have one of these no matter the amount of care you provide, your level of need or your financial means. Your support plan/statement should cover:

- your caring role and how it affects your life and wellbeing
- your feelings and choices about caring
- your physical and mental health
- work, study, training, leisure
- relationships, social activities and your goals
- housing
- planning for emergencies.

Following this, the local authority will decide if you are eligible for support. This can be provided to you and/or to the person you are looking after to reduce the impact of caring on you. Support could be provided by the local authority, by a voluntary or independent

organisation in the form of a direct payment or a combination of these.

Some examples of the support you could get include help to have a break from caring, gym membership or driving lessons.

The local authority cannot charge you for any support you receive that has been identified within your support plan/statement. This includes replacement care for the person you care for to help you have a break from caring.

Even if you are not considered eligible for formal support, the local authority must provide you with information and advice on local services to support you including local carers' centres and young carers' services. They may be able to offer training to help you care safely, help to access breaks or emotional support.



For more on support plans, go to [carersuk.org/scotland/support-plans](https://carersuk.org/scotland/support-plans)

# Assessment for the person you care for

If the person you are looking after is an adult and appears to have a need for support, they should be offered a needs assessment by their local authority.

The person you are looking after can have an assessment no matter what their level of need or their financial means. If they are not offered a needs assessment, they (or you) could contact the local authority and ask for one.

The assessment will look at their physical, mental and emotional needs. As their carer, you can also be involved in this assessment (with their consent) and have an opportunity to share your views.

Following the assessment, the local authority will decide whether the person you are looking after is eligible for support. Support could be provided by the local authority, a voluntary or independent organisation, or in the form of a direct payment.

Some examples include: changes to their home to make it more suitable, a care worker to help with personal care, a place at a

day centre or a temporary stay in residential care.

The local authority may charge for some of the support the person you care for needs eg day centres or community alarms, depending on their financial circumstances. However, they cannot charge for any personal care support. Each local authority has their own charging policy. You should be provided with a copy and it should be explained.

Even if the person you are looking after is not considered to be eligible for support, the local authority must still provide them with information and advice.

 Read more at [carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/practical-support/needs-assessment](https://carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/practical-support/needs-assessment)

See [carersuk.org/scotland/free-personal-care](https://carersuk.org/scotland/free-personal-care) for more details.

## Note: Needs assessments are for adults (18+)

If you are looking after a disabled child under 18, they can have a Children Act assessment from the local authority. A Children Act assessment will consider all the help that your child needs, the needs of any other children in the family and the help that you may need to care for your child. Visit [carersuk.org/scotland/support-plans](https://carersuk.org/scotland/support-plans) for more.

# Coming out of hospital

Deciding to care, or continue caring, for someone who is coming out of hospital can be very difficult.

It is important to remember that it is your choice whether or not to take on a caring role.

Before the person you are looking after comes home from hospital, a discharge assessment should be carried out to see whether they need any support once they are discharged.

The NHS has a duty to inform and involve you in discharge planning. This duty applies even if you cannot be at the hospital in person. Staff should be ready to have phone or virtual discussions with you.

This discharge assessment, which may involve a social worker or occupational therapist based at the hospital, should look at whether the person you are looking after needs:

- any intermediate or reablement care to help them recover
- any nursing care at home eg, a district nurse to change dressings or palliative care nursing
- any other NHS services
- any other community care services (see previous page) from the local authority.

You should also be offered an adult carer support plan or young carers statement to see whether you, as a carer, need support (or more support) once the person you are looking after is discharged.

If you are not offered this, you should contact the local authority of the person you are looking after and ask for one.



Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/coming-out-of-hospital](https://carersuk.org/scotland/coming-out-of-hospital)

## What is an interim care place?

If the NHS says that the person you care for is clinically ready for discharge and is awaiting either an assessment of their needs, a package of care or the care home place of their choice, they may be offered an 'interim care place'. This is a short-term place in a care home and like all discharge planning, you should be fully involved in discussions about whether this is most appropriate for the person you care for.

Find out more at: [careinfoscotland.scot/topics/how-to-get-social-care-support/coming-out-of-hospital/intermediate-care/discharge.pdf](https://careinfoscotland.scot/topics/how-to-get-social-care-support/coming-out-of-hospital/intermediate-care/discharge.pdf)

Our self-advocacy guide also offers tips on communicating effectively with professionals. See [carersuk.org/scotland/self-advocacy-guide](https://carersuk.org/scotland/self-advocacy-guide)

# Managing someone's affairs

You may want to help manage the affairs of the person you are looking after, or you may want to know how to plan for doing this in the future.

There are different ways of managing someone's affairs depending on whether the person you are looking after can currently make decisions for themselves (which is called having mental capacity) or whether they are unable to make some or all decisions for themselves (which is called lacking mental capacity).

If the person you are looking after has mental capacity but wants some help with managing their bank or building society account, they could make a **third party mandate**. This gives a specific person, such as you as their carer, authority to manage their account.

If the person you are looking after can make decisions for themselves at the moment but wants to appoint a specific person, such as you as their carer, to make certain decisions on their behalf, should the need arise in the future, they could give a **power of attorney** while they are still able to do so.

There are two types but you can also arrange a power of attorney document that covers both:

**Power of attorney for property and financial affairs** – bank accounts,

paying bills, collecting benefits/pensions and selling a home for example. It can be used before the person is unable to make their own decisions, if they so wish.

**Power of attorney for welfare** – decisions about your health and welfare including living arrangements, medical treatment and personal care.

If the person you care for lacks capacity and does not have a power of attorney, you can apply for **guardianship** to help with decisions about welfare and/or financial matters.

If the person you care for lacks capacity or is severely disabled and receives benefits, you may also be able to become a **benefit appointee** to act on their behalf with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) or Social Security Scotland.

Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/managing-someones-affairs](https://carersuk.org/scotland/managing-someones-affairs)

## MyBackUp

Our contingency planning tool could help you prepare for the unexpected. Go to: [carersdigital.org/mybackup](https://carersdigital.org/mybackup)

# Taking a break

Caring for someone can be a full-time job so breaks are vital for your own wellbeing and quality of life.

It's important to take time out even if it's just a day here and there. Think about the kind of break that you need as a carer and what kind of alternative care the person you are looking after needs.

There are different options for getting alternative care (sometimes called respite care) for the person you are looking after while you take a break. These include:

- getting help from the local authority social work department via assessments (see pages 12–13)
- arranging care yourself (see page 11)
- support from friends or family
- some organisations provide break services for carers or for the person being looked after (or both).

If you want to go on holiday, either alone or with the person you are looking after, there may be some help you could get towards the cost. You could see if there are any local grants or schemes to help carers with the cost of a holiday and you could have a look through the list of organisations offering

services in our *Taking a break* factsheet.



Find out more at [carersuk.org/break-factsheet](https://carersuk.org/break-factsheet)

Many local carers' centres in Scotland have Time to Live funds to offer small grants to carers. Some also offer vouchers and other help through what is known as the Respite scheme.

Find your local centre at [carersuk.org/scotland/support-where-you-live](https://carersuk.org/scotland/support-where-you-live)

Shared Care Scotland has very useful information about breaks in Scotland including an online directory and details of funding. Phone 01383622462 or visit [sharedcarescotland.org.uk](https://sharedcarescotland.org.uk)

## Online meetups

Join Care for a Cuppa via Zoom and chat with others who understand what you're going through: [carersuk.org/scotland/care-for-a-cuppa](https://carersuk.org/scotland/care-for-a-cuppa)

We also provide fun and relaxing sessions with Share and Learn: [carersuk.org/scotland/share-and-learn](https://carersuk.org/scotland/share-and-learn)

# Looking after yourself

It can feel as though there is very little time for you to take a breather when caring. However finding moments to relax and de-stress could make a huge difference to your wellbeing.

Here are some suggestions to help you look after yourself and develop your resilience.

## Expand your support network

Keeping in touch with family, friends or neighbours about your circumstances may help open up more doors for support when needed. You could join other carers at one of our online meetups (page 16).

## Need more sleep?

It may be particularly hard to get the sleep and rest you need, especially if you are helping to look after someone during the night. If you have trouble switching off, there are specially tailored apps that can help, or you may wish to speak to your GP if you're really struggling.

The NHS Inform website also has some helpful suggestions: [nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/mental-health-self-help-guides/sleep-problems-and-insomnia-self-help-guide](https://www.nhs.uk/health-a-z/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/mental-health-self-help-guides/sleep-problems-and-insomnia-self-help-guide)

You can also see our tips here: [carersuk.org/scotland/getting-enough-sleep](https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/getting-enough-sleep)

## Don't neglect your health

Eating well and staying active regularly are great ways to stay healthy, but it can be challenging to eat well and exercise with a busy caring role. Take a look at our Carers Active Hub for ideas and inspiration: [carersuk.org/scotland/carers-active-hub](https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/carers-active-hub)

Speak to your GP if you are concerned that your caring responsibilities are having an impact on your health so that they can offer you further advice.

## Keep up your own interests

As well as doing a physical activity you enjoy, pursue any interest you can to maintain your sense of identity and keep your spirits up, even if it's for only 10–15 minutes. Don't feel guilty and try to arrange extra support to help you do this if you need to – see pages 12–13 and page 16.

## Jaycee's story

Jaycee is a carer for her mother who is in her 90s and has reduced mobility due to a spinal condition. Seven years ago, Jaycee quit a 30-year nursing career to care for her mother full-time.



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“ I consider it a privilege to support my mother to be as independent as possible and enjoy a comfortable quality of life. As well as managing her ongoing healthcare needs, providing emotional support and dealing with day-to-day household responsibilities, I love assisting her with her favourite activities: cooking, gardening and going on community outings. Even through

the tough times, our connection and respect for each other has grown deeper. Since becoming a carer, my biggest struggle has been dealing with my emotions. When I first became a carer, I experienced a huge emotional upheaval that came with the sudden change of circumstances. My way of coping was to suppress my feelings and pretend that everything was okay, when it wasn't.



I felt shame around admitting I was struggling, experiencing feelings of guilt, frustration, and resentment. But more than anything, I felt alone in my caring responsibilities and invisible to the outside world. I have since found wonderful outlets for expressing my emotions through dancing, writing poetry and sharing how I feel with other carers.

Being able to access support through organisations such as Carers UK has been a lifeline. I have also made new friends, gained new skills and established new support



networks. As a result, I feel more empowered not only in my caring role, but also as an individual in my own right and for that I am extremely grateful.

As a carer, I received no training on managing difficult emotions and coping with the ongoing pressure and responsibility of caring for loved ones.

But through connecting with a positive network of support with other carers, I have gained strength in knowing that I am not alone.

”



See [carersuk.org/break-factsheet](https://carersuk.org/break-factsheet) for more information.  
Or watch our film series: [carersuk.org/breaks-videos](https://carersuk.org/breaks-videos)

# Equipment and technology

Different types of equipment, adaptations and technology could help make the home safer, your life easier and provide independence for the person you are looking after.

**Equipment** could be purchased privately or you might be able to get help with the cost through the NHS or through assessments from the local authority, if they decide such equipment is necessary.

**Minor adaptations** (which means adaptations up to the value of £1,500) should be provided free of charge through assessments from the local authority, if they consider that the person you are looking after needs such adaptations. Adaptations that cost more than £1,500 could be paid for privately, or you could see if the person you are looking after can apply for a charitable grant to help meet the costs. You may also be able to get help from the local authority.

Care and Repair Scotland provides independent advice and support to older and disabled homeowners to repair, improve or adapt their homes. Find out more at: [careandrepairsotland.co.uk](http://careandrepairsotland.co.uk)

**Assistive technology** can help people live independently in their own homes and give you peace of mind.

**Safety and monitoring devices**, such as sensors, can be positioned throughout the home. They can detect if there is a problem, such as

a gas leak or fire, and the person you look after needs assistance. Movement alarms can detect motion such as falls or doors opening, and wearable technology can help locate a person if they have wandered away from home.

**Mobility aids**, such as wheelchairs, stairlifts or mobility scooters, can help people gain more independence, improve their accessibility, and help them feel safer.

There are also ways of using technology to monitor a person's health remotely through equipment they have in their home. Conditions such as asthma, heart failure, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), stroke and hypertension can be monitored.

**Everyday technology**, such as the internet or your mobile phone, can take the stress out of a whole host of tasks such as shopping and coordinating care for the person you look after and can help them manage their own condition.

Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/technology-and-equipment](http://carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/technology-and-equipment)

**Smart meters** send gas and electricity readings automatically to the energy supplier. This could help give greater independence to the person you care for and could help save time and money if you are helping them manage their energy.

Smart meters come with an in-home display so you can see how much energy is being used and how much it's costing. With a smart meter you get a bill based on how much energy you used – not an estimate. This can take some of the guesswork out of balancing budgets.

**Smartphone features and apps** have a lot to offer. You can use your phone to scan a document if needed so that you have a back-up version to refer to on your phone for appointments, for example, or you can use the reader mode feature to research key information without interference from adverts. The medical ID setting is also worth exploring.

**Connected devices** – examples include smart bulbs or blinds that can be controlled remotely. This means that if the person you look after lives at a distance, you can control things like their lighting on their behalf or use smart heating controls to ensure their heating is on or off when appropriate. Voice controlled devices (such as Siri or Alexa) can also be useful for disabled or older people.

### Financial support

While technology and equipment can make your life easier, costs can also add up. You may be able to get financial support to help you pay for some types of technology and equipment. For more information on financial support that may be available to you, you can contact our Helpline team by emailing [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org) at any time.

Please note where you are from as guidance will vary by nation.

### Support during tough times

The **Priority Services Register** is for anyone who is in a vulnerable situation and in need of extra support even if this is just needed on a temporary basis. All energy suppliers provide this additional support for customers who need it. It enables you to be prioritised for services, for example, if your energy supply is cut off due to an unforeseen incident.

Read more: [theprsr.co.uk](http://theprsr.co.uk)

## Olga's story

Olga turned to technology for help juggling full-time work and caring for her elderly parents.



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“ When I first heard about Carers UK's Jointly app, I was juggling full-time work with caring for my parents. I was living in London – 170 miles away from their home in Staffordshire.

It was a complicated and stressful situation. My mum has a range of conditions, including osteoporosis and arthritis. My dad had been caring for her, until 2015 when he was diagnosed with lymphoma and needed care himself.

My siblings and I tried to coordinate it between us, taking turns to travel to their home to help around the house, cook meals and take them to appointments.

Jointly was an excellent way of making sure we had all the information we needed in one place. We only had to enter the

information once and all of us had access to it. Up until then we'd been trying to coordinate everything through email, phone calls and trying to share calendars.

Each time one of us took Mum or Dad to an appointment we would make notes in Jointly. The medication list meant we all had up-to-date information to share with the GP – which was essential when Dad was prescribed aspirin, which he wasn't allowed to have whilst on his cancer drugs.

Being able to look after my parents has been really important to me. I wanted to return the care and love they gave me during my childhood. After Dad passed away in 2016, my siblings and I have continued to share the care for Mum, and Jointly helps us do that. ”

# Looking after someone?

jointly  
by carersUK

Our **Jointly** app can make your life easier



*“Looking after someone can be complicated. Jointly helps me stay on top of things and share information easily with everyone involved in sharing the care.”*

**Jointly** makes caring feel less stressful and more organised.

Jointly is a mobile and online app designed to keep people connected as they share care. It includes:

- group messaging
- task management
- shared calendar
- profile and contacts pages
- notes
- medication manager
- uploaded documents
- contingency planning.

Caring is easier when you do it **Jointly**.



# Your finances



# Getting information on benefits

There are various benefits that can offer extra support with caring. This section provides an overview of what help is available.

It is a good idea to get a benefits check to make sure you and the person you are looking after are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to. In addition, it is a good idea to get benefits advice if you or the person you are looking after have a change of circumstances. The change might affect your benefits, so it's important to make sure you make the right decision for your situation.

Although benefits can be complicated, they can increase your household income and can sometimes help protect your State Pension entitlement in the future.

The Carers UK website describes the main conditions for each benefit and we have produced factsheets with more detailed explanations. Some benefits and conditions are specific to Scotland, so where applicable, separate information has been developed by Carers Scotland for these. Find out more at: [carersuk.org/scotland/financial-support](https://carersuk.org/scotland/financial-support)

Our Helpline can also help with questions that you have about benefits. Email [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org) or call 0808 808 7777.

Please mention which nation you are based in so that we can tailor our guidance.

Check here for opening hours: [carersuk.org/scotland/helpline-and-other-support](https://carersuk.org/scotland/helpline-and-other-support)

You can get a personalised benefits check online. It will take about 20 minutes to complete. Visit [carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/benefits-calculator](https://carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/benefits-calculator)

These online benefits check tools are not suitable for everyone. Special rules apply to some groups of people, for example: students, people under 18, people in permanent residential care, UK nationals who live abroad and people who are not British or Irish citizens.

“Thank you so much for taking the time to do some research for me. I have calmed down somewhat now and can look at things more objectively having read your reply.”



# Carer Support Payment

If you're looking after a family member or friend, you may be entitled to Carer Support Payment.

You may be eligible for Carer Support Payment (which is £83.30 per week, 2025-26) if you meet all of the following conditions:

- You look after someone who gets a qualifying disability benefit – this includes the middle or the higher rate of the care component of Child Disability Payment, the daily living component of Adult Disability Payment/Personal Independence Payment, the middle or higher rate of Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance, Pension Age Disability Payment or Attendance Allowance, Constant Attendance Allowance (at a certain level) and Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP).
- You look after that person for at least 35 hours a week.
- You are aged 16 or over.
- You meet certain requirements if you are a student – see below.
- You don't earn over £196 a week (after deductions). Check [mygov.scot/carers-support-payment/who-can-apply](https://mygov.scot/carers-support-payment/who-can-apply) from April 2026 as this may change then.
- You usually live in Scotland and satisfy the presence and residence conditions.

## Requirements if you are a student:

The main difference between Carer's Allowance (the equivalent carers' benefit in the rest of the UK) and Carer Support Payment is the requirements for students. You can receive Carer Support Payment while studying if you are:

- aged 16 or over and studying part-time – that is, not more than 21 hours a week
- aged 16 to 19 and studying full-time advanced or higher education – this means Higher National Certificate level or above
- aged 20 or over and studying full-time – the level of qualification does not matter.

If your circumstances change when claiming, you must always notify the benefit offices.

If you are getting certain other benefits, including a State Pension, you might not be able to be paid Carer Support Payment as well. However, it might still be useful to make a claim and receive what is called the ‘underlying entitlement’, even though you won’t be paid the benefit itself. This can help to increase any means-tested benefits you might be getting (such as Pension Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction), or it could mean that you become entitled to means-tested benefits for the first time.

Claiming Carer Support Payment can sometimes have an impact on other benefits you receive, but this shouldn’t put you off thinking about making a claim, as it can often increase your household income overall.

Claiming this support won’t affect any disability benefits or State Pension that the person you are looking after may receive. However it can sometimes affect any means-tested benefits they get.

Carer Support Payment will not count as income for Scottish Funding Council (SFC) or Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) funding assessments for carers who are students. Carer Support Payment will count as income for SFC and SAAS assessments for the wider household, for example if you’re a student and your parent or partner gets Carer Support Payment.

When claiming, if your circumstances change, you must always notify Social Security Scotland: [mygov.scot/carer-support-payment/if-your-circumstances-change](https://mygov.scot/carer-support-payment/if-your-circumstances-change)



Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/financial-support/carer-support-payment-1](https://carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/financial-support/carer-support-payment-1)

## Mike's story

Mike cared for his father for over five years. Since discovering Carers UK, he has become a voice for other carers, especially those in marginalised communities.

“ In 2012, I discovered Carers UK after being a carer for my father for more than five years. It was during this time that I was looking for organisations I could volunteer for to use my experience.

I am forever grateful to Carers UK for involving me. Being a voice for carers since then, I have never looked back because there are so many unidentified carers out there who are desperately seeking guidance and practical help.

The thought of many unfound carers, who are missing out on support simply because they don't consider themselves as carers, fills me up with the dedication, passion and drive to reach out, especially to those belonging to BAME and other marginalised and silent groups, such as the very young or elderly carers, as well as working 'sandwich' carers.



I have been involved as a user representative and a voice of carers with CCG, NHS Trusts, local authority, GP practices, CQC, GM Cancer, GM Mental Health and other platforms events.

”

### Interested in volunteering?

You can find out more about all our volunteering opportunities on our website: [carersuk.org/get-involved/volunteer-with-us](https://carersuk.org/get-involved/volunteer-with-us)

Contact [volunteering@carersuk.org](mailto:volunteering@carersuk.org) for more details.



Specsavers

## Bringing expert eye care and hearing services to your loved one with Specsavers Home Visits



Specsavers understands the challenges of caring for someone, and our home visit service is designed to help you look after all their sight and hearing needs.

The loved one you care for may be eligible for a home visit if one of the following applies:

- They are housebound or bedbound due to a physical disability.
- They live with a diagnosed mental health condition that makes it difficult to go out without assistance.

### What to expect

Our mobile experts will provide eligible individuals with a comprehensive, NHS-funded eye test in the comfort of their own home, ensuring the same level of care and thoroughness you'd receive in-store. Additionally, Specsavers now offers a free home hearing visit service in select locations in the UK.

The service is tailored to each individual's needs, offering personalised eye and hearing care that's as unique as they are. It's designed to adapt to their changing circumstances and comfort levels, ensuring the best possible care in the comfort of their own home.

### Why choose Specsavers Home Visits?

- **Convenience:** Our experts come directly to you.
- **Personalised care:** Visits are tailored to the individual's needs, with specialist equipment to ensure comfort and accuracy.
- **Peace of mind:** Your loved one will receive the same high-quality care as they would in-store.

For more information on Specsavers Home Visits, to check eligibility or to book an appointment, call 0800 089 0144 or visit [specsavers.co.uk/home-visits](https://www.specsavers.co.uk/home-visits)

# Carer's Allowance Supplement

Carer's Allowance Supplement is a benefit that is paid automatically to people who are already claiming Carer Support Payment.

Carer's Allowance Supplement is only payable to carers who live in Scotland. The person you care for does not need to live in Scotland.

It is paid as a lump sum twice a year to people in receipt of Carer Support Payment on the qualifying dates. The qualifying dates in 2025 are 14 April and 13 October. In 2026, check here: [mygov.scot/carers-allowance-supplement](https://mygov.scot/carers-allowance-supplement)

Carer's Allowance Supplement payments are £293.50, with each payment covering six months.

Each payment is made in June and December, approximately two months after the qualifying dates. Carer's Allowance Supplement payments will continue to be paid every six months as long as you continue to qualify for Carer Support Payment. They are updated annually.

It is not paid to carers who do not receive Carer Support Payment but instead have an "underlying entitlement".

An underlying entitlement is where you are not being paid Carer Support Payment because another benefit is paid at a higher rate. This applies to, for example, the State Pension and Employment and Support Allowance.

Carer's Allowance Supplement is paid by Social Security Scotland. You do not need to do anything. As long as you are in receipt of Carer Support Payment on a qualifying date, you will receive the payment automatically.

If you receive a payment for a six month period but your caring role ends before the six months are over, you do not need to repay this payment.

If you have a backdated Carer Support Payment for a qualifying date, you'll get your Carer's Allowance Supplement payment with the next supplement payment. This may mean you get two payments at once.

## Impact on other benefits

Carer's Allowance Supplement does not affect other benefits such as Housing Benefit, Income Support, Universal Credit or Council Tax reduction. You do not need to tell anyone about this payment for benefit purposes and it will not affect the amount of any other benefit you receive.

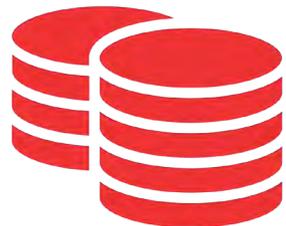
Carer's Allowance Supplement is not counted as income in calculating tax credits but Carer Support Payment itself continues to be counted as income.

Carer's Allowance Supplement is also not taken into account in income assessments for college student support. However, both Carer Support Payment and the Carer's Allowance Supplement are taxable, so you should let HM Revenue and Customs know about your Carer's Allowance Supplement as this may increase the amount of tax you need to pay.

Find out more: [carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/financial-support/carer-support-payment-1/carer-s-allowance-supplement-in-scotland](https://carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/financial-support/carer-support-payment-1/carer-s-allowance-supplement-in-scotland)

There are some changes that will be made to Carer's Allowance Supplement in due course. To find out the latest information on this, please visit [mygov.scot](https://mygov.scot).

You can also find information in different languages about Carer's Allowance Supplement at [socialsecurity.gov.scot](https://socialsecurity.gov.scot)



# Carer's Credit

Carer's Credit is a way of protecting your State Pension rights. It applies if you are looking after someone, but are not paying National Insurance contributions through paid work and are unable to claim Carer Support Payment.

You do not get paid any money if you claim Carer's Credit. However you get a National Insurance contribution credit to help protect your record (which helps to protect your entitlement to a State Pension).

If you already get Carer Support Payment then you do not need to claim Carer's Credit as your record is already protected.

To claim Carer's Credit you need to be looking after someone for a total of 20 hours or more a week. Normally, the person you are looking after must be getting one of the following:

- either rate of the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- either rate of the daily living component of Adult Disability Payment
- either rate of Attendance Allowance
- Constant Attendance Allowance
- Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)
- Child Disability Payment (middle or higher rate of care component)

- Pension Age Disability Payment
- Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance (middle or higher care component).

However, if the person you are looking after doesn't get one of these benefits, you may still be able to claim Carer's Credit. When you apply, fill in the Care Certificate part of the application form and ask a health or social care professional to sign it.

Carer's Credit can also help with breaks in your caring role. You can claim Carer's Credit for any week within 12 weeks before the date you become entitled to Carer Support Payment or following the week you stop being entitled to Carer Support Payment. This is without meeting the 20-hour condition. This means you could have a break in caring for up to 12 weeks without losing your National Insurance contribution credit.



Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/carers-credit](https://carersuk.org/scotland/carers-credit)

# Support for young carers

If you're looking after a family member or friend and are 18 or under, you may be eligible for some of the support listed below and you can ask for an assessment of your needs as a young carer (see page 12).

## Young Carer Grant

This is a yearly payment of £390.25 in 2025/26 for young carers in Scotland. To be able to get a Young Carer Grant, you must:

- be 16, 17 or 18 years old
- have been caring for one to three people who have a qualifying benefit for an average of 16 hours a week for at least the last three months
- have not been receiving Carer's Allowance or Carer Support Payment for providing this care.

If you care for more than one person, you can combine the hours of the people you care for to an average 16 hours a week.

For more details about the Young Carer Grant and how to claim, visit [mygov.scot/young-carer-grant/about-the-grant](https://mygov.scot/young-carer-grant/about-the-grant)

## Young Scot Package

All young carers, aged 11-18, are entitled to access a package of non-cash benefits as part of a special young carers package within the Young Scot National Entitlement Card.

The package includes digital vouchers, access to subscriptions and exclusive opportunities.

Visit the Young Scot Young Carers page for more details: [young.scot/get-informed/national/young-carers-package-of-opportunities](https://young.scot/get-informed/national/young-carers-package-of-opportunities)

All children and young people aged between 5 and 22 can now also receive free bus travel. Find out more: [mygov.scot/under-22s-bus-pass](https://mygov.scot/under-22s-bus-pass)

# Disability benefits for the person you are looking after

The person you are looking after may be entitled to disability benefits to help pay for the extra costs of long-term illness or disability.

Disability benefits are not dependent on how much money the person you are looking after has, and they are not based on their National Insurance record. However, there are conditions they would have to meet in order to receive one of these.

In Scotland, there have been recent changes to some disability benefits for adults and children. Child Disability Payment (CDP) replaces Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children and Adult Disability Payment (ADP) replaces Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for working age adults. Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance replaces Disability Living Allowance for all adults in Scotland and Pension Age Disability Payment replaces Attendance Allowance. Qualifying criteria are broadly the same though.

All children have already been moved to CDP, but if an adult you care for is receiving PIP, DLA or Attendance Allowance, they will gradually be transferred to Social Security Scotland. They will not need to do anything and their benefit will continue to be paid.

If you are claiming for the first time for your child or an adult of working age that you care for:

## Child Disability Payment (CDP)

If you are looking after a child under 16, you could claim CDP for them. CDP has a care component which may be awarded if the child needs help with personal care (such as dressing, washing or using the toilet) or supervision to make sure they are safe, because of their illness or disability. The help the child needs must be substantially more than the help needed by a child of the same age without the illness or disability.

CDP also has a mobility component which may be awarded if the child needs help getting around.

Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/child-disability-payment](https://carersuk.org/scotland/child-disability-payment)



## Adult Disability Payment (ADP)

If you are looking after someone aged between 16 and State Pension age then they could claim ADP. ADP has a daily living component which may be awarded if they need help with daily living activities, such as dressing, washing or using the toilet. ADP also has a mobility component which may be awarded if they need help getting around. If you are aged between 16 and State Pension age, and have such needs for yourself, you could also apply.



Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/adult-disability-payment](https://carersuk.org/scotland/adult-disability-payment)

## Independent Living Fund (ILF)

The ILF provides discretionary payments to disabled people aged 16 and over, allowing them to purchase care and support to live independently.

ILF Scotland is open to new applicants.

For more information, including details of qualifying criteria, visit: [ilf.scot/independent-living-fund/who-can-apply](https://ilf.scot/independent-living-fund/who-can-apply)

## Pension Age Disability Payment

If you are looking after someone of State Pension age, they could claim Pension Age Disability Payment. This benefit may be awarded if they need help with their care needs (such as dressing, washing or using the toilet), or supervision to make sure they are safe. If you are of State Pension age and feel you have such needs, you may also be eligible. Pension Age Disability Payment has replaced Attendance Allowance in Scotland.

Find out more at [mygov.scot/pension-age-disability-payment](https://mygov.scot/pension-age-disability-payment)

# Help with Council Tax

If you're caring for someone, you may be able to get help with your Council Tax bill.

Council Tax Reduction is a scheme run by local councils to help those on a low income with their Council Tax bill. Find out how to contact your local council for more details at [gov.uk/find-local-council](https://gov.uk/find-local-council)

Under certain circumstances, **properties can be exempt from Council Tax**. These are the ones that may be particularly relevant to you as a carer:

- If you have left the property empty and it is no longer your main residence because you are providing personal care to someone.
- If the only person(s) living in the property is severely mentally impaired and no one else could be liable to pay the Council Tax.
- If the property has been left empty by someone who is now resident in a hospital, a care home or a hostel where personal care is provided.

You may be able to benefit from a discount on the Council Tax bill. For example, if only one person lives in the property, a 25% discount can be applied to the bill.

Some people are not counted when it comes to working out how many people live in a property. If everyone is disregarded, a 50% discount will be applied to the bill. Or if only one person counts as living at the property, a 25% discount would apply.

Those who are not counted include certain carers or people with a severe mental impairment. You may also be able to get a discount if you live in a band E-H house and are on a low income. See this page for more details: [citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/housing/council-s/council-tax-s](https://citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/housing/council-s/council-tax-s)

You may be able to pay less Council Tax under the **disability reduction scheme** if your home has had work carried out on it to help you or someone else living with a disability.



Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/council-tax](https://carersuk.org/scotland/council-tax)

# Other financial help

There are other ways you may be able to reduce your household expenses – from getting help with fuel and health costs, to applying for certain loans or grants.

## Help with household energy costs

There are a number of ways you can get help with energy costs.

You could contact your supplier to see if they have any discounted tariffs you are eligible for. You may also want to shop around to see if you can find a better deal from another supplier, by using a price comparison website or by visiting Home Energy Scotland for advice: [energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/home-energy-scotland](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/home-energy-scotland)

From winter 2025/2026 onwards, the Scottish Government intends to introduce a universal Pension Age Winter Heating Payment. Pensioners in Scotland in receipt of Pension Credit (or certain other benefits) will continue to receive payments of £200 or £300, depending on their age. Every other pensioner household will receive a payment of £100. More information will be available later in the year and you will find this, and other help with energy bills at: [mygov.scot/help-energy-bills](https://mygov.scot/help-energy-bills)

Cold Weather Payments have been replaced in Scotland by a £59.75 per year Winter Heating Payment. This is paid automatically rather than triggered by freezing events if you're receiving certain benefits. You can find out whether you qualify and when it is paid at: [mygov.scot/winter-heating-payment](https://mygov.scot/winter-heating-payment)

You could get a Warm Home Discount on your electricity bill if you meet certain conditions – this can be around £150.

If you are on a low income and have arrears in your energy bills, British Gas Energy Trust helps families and individuals experiencing hardship who are struggling with gas and electricity debts by awarding grants to clear those debts. You do not need to be a Scottish Gas/British Gas customer to apply. Find out more at: [britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/Home/HowToApply#who](https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/Home/HowToApply#who)

Find out more about help with energy costs on our website at [carersuk.org/scotland/energy-costs](https://carersuk.org/scotland/energy-costs)

## Help if you have children

### Help with heating

If you have a child on the highest or enhanced care components of DLA for children, Child Disability Payment or Personal Independence Payment, you may be eligible for a Child Winter Heating payment. In 2025/26 this will be £255.80 and it is paid automatically. If there is more than one child or young person who qualifies in the household, they each get a payment.

Find out more at: [mygov.scot/child-winter-heating-assistance](https://mygov.scot/child-winter-heating-assistance)

### Scottish Child Payment

Scottish Child Payment is a new payment for parents on low incomes in Scotland. It is a weekly payment of £27.15 that you can get for every child you look after who's under 16 years of age. You'll receive the payment every four weeks.

You can apply whether you're in work or not, as long as you're getting one or more of the following benefits: Universal Credit, Child Tax Credit, Income Support, Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

Scottish Child Payment does not affect any other UK or Scottish Government benefits that you, or any person in your household, currently receive.

You can find out more at: [mygov.scot/scottish-child-payment](https://mygov.scot/scottish-child-payment)

### Best Start Grants/Best Start Foods

These grants are available if you are on certain benefits.

Best Start Grant involves three cash payments made during pregnancy and birth, when your child is starting nursery, and when starting school. You can apply online using a form.

You can also use the same form to apply for Best Start Foods. This is a separate payment in the form of a prepaid card that you may be eligible to use online or in shops for essential healthy food items.

Find out more: [mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods](https://mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods)

### Family Fund

Family Fund provides grants for families raising disabled or seriously ill children and young people for a wide range of essential items including computers, tablets, kitchen appliances and family breaks: [familyfund.org.uk/grants](https://familyfund.org.uk/grants)

## Help with NHS health costs

In Scotland, everyone can get free prescriptions, NHS dental check-ups and NHS eye tests regardless of your income. Everyone aged under 26 also receives free dental treatment.

You may qualify for help with NHS health costs if you are claiming certain benefits. This includes dental treatment and vouchers to help pay for glasses/contact lenses, as well as reimbursement of fares to hospital for treatment for you or your child. You can also claim for the fares of a companion who needs to travel with you for medical reasons.

If you aren't getting benefits that entitle you to help with NHS health costs, but you have a low income, you may be able to get help with health costs through the NHS Low Income Scheme.

Find out more at [carersuk.org/scotland/health-and-care-costs](https://carersuk.org/scotland/health-and-care-costs)

## Support with living costs

From managing essential costs to budgeting, find some tips and guidance to help with living costs at [carersuk.org/scotland/living-costs](https://carersuk.org/scotland/living-costs)

## Budgeting Loan

If you are claiming certain benefits, you may be able to get a Budgeting Loan to help pay for essential things like rent, furniture, clothes or hire purchase debts. The smallest amount you can borrow is £100.

Budgeting Loans are interest free so you only pay back what you borrow. You normally have to repay the loan within 104 weeks. Find out more at [gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits](https://gov.uk/budgeting-help-benefits)

## Help from your local authority

Every local authority has a Scottish Welfare Fund. These help people on a low-income who are in crisis because of a disaster (such as a fire or a flood) or an emergency (such as where money has been lost or an unexpected expense has arisen). They also aim to help someone you care for to start to live, or to carry on living, in the community.

For more information, contact your local council or visit [mygov.scot/scottish-welfare-fund](https://mygov.scot/scottish-welfare-fund)

Your local council may also help you access urgent help with food and heating costs. Find out more at: [mygov.scot/urgent-help-food-fuel-money](https://mygov.scot/urgent-help-food-fuel-money)

## Grants

There are also sometimes grants that you may be able to apply for. You could also ask a nearby advice centre or carers' centre if there are any local grants available.

Turn2us is a charity that has a grants search tool. Find out more at [turn2us.org.uk](https://turn2us.org.uk)

Your work



# Working carers

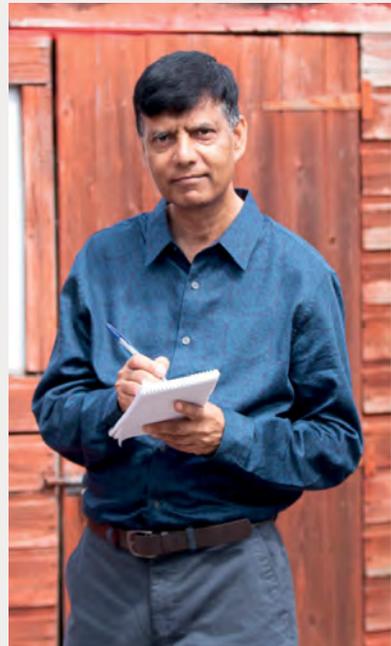
If you are balancing work with caring for family or friends, you are not alone.

There are rights you have in the workplace that might help you to combine work and care (see pages 42–43). As well as these statutory rights, you may also have additional contractual rights.

In addition to your rights at work, there might be other ways to strike a better balance, such as accessing relevant support at work (see page 44), or outside of your employment.

Before deciding to give up work, it's worth seeing if you can improve your situation. See if there are any rights you have at work that could support you with your caring commitments (see pages 42–43), and check what other sources of help are available (see page 44).

Running through a benefits check will help you understand what your financial situation would look like if you were to leave your current work, reduce your hours or reduce your salary (see page 25).



Watch our film series for useful tips on flexible working: [carersuk.org/scotland/flexible-working](https://carersuk.org/scotland/flexible-working)

# Your rights in work

Without the right support, the stress and pressure of juggling work and care can lead people to leave their jobs. It's important, therefore, to find out about your rights and about any support that is available.

Your rights at work come from two sources:

- The law gives you 'statutory rights', which everyone has.
- Your contract of employment gives you 'contractual rights', which can be more generous than statutory rights.

The following information is about statutory rights. However it is always worth checking your contract of employment, staff handbook or letter of appointment to see if you have any contractual rights on top of your statutory rights.

All employees in England, Scotland and Wales have a **right to request flexible working** from the first day of employment. Employees may also now make two statutory requests within any 12-month period. This law came into effect on 6 April 2024.

Employers must agree to a flexible working request unless there is a genuine business reason not to.

A decision to reject a request must be for one or more business reasons which are set out in the law.

Examples of flexible working include:

- flexitime
- home working or remote working
- hybrid working
- part-time working
- term-time working
- working compressed hours
- working staggered hours
- working annualised hours
- job sharing
- shift work or team-based rostering.

The Equality Act 2010 provides carers with **protection from some forms of discrimination**. For example, employers and providers of goods and services must not treat carers less favourably than those without caring responsibilities.

All employees have the right to take a 'reasonable' amount of time off work to deal with an emergency or an unforeseen matter involving a dependant. This could include your partner, child or parent, or someone living with you as part of your family – others who rely on you for help in an emergency may also qualify.

The time off is unpaid unless your employer is willing to give paid time off as a contractual right.

Examples of emergency situations:

- a disruption or breakdown in care arrangements
- the death of a dependant
- if a dependant falls ill, has been assaulted or is in an accident
- to make longer term arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured (but not to provide long term care yourself)
- to deal with an incident involving a child during school hours.

If you have worked for the same employer for 12 months and you are responsible for a child aged under 18, you are entitled to 18 weeks' **parental leave** per child, which must be taken by the child's 18th birthday.

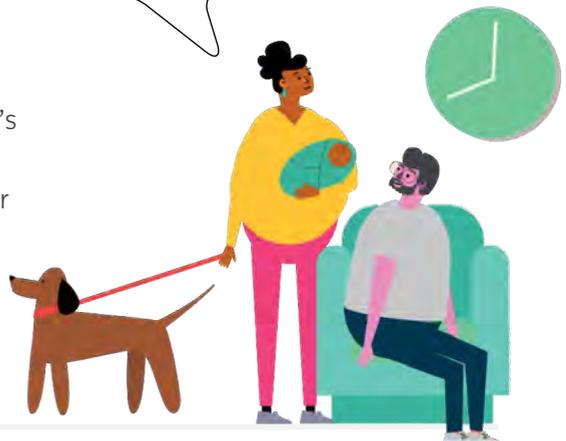
This time off is unpaid unless your employer is willing to give paid time off as a contractual right.

The Carer's Leave Act 2023 gives employees a right to one week's unpaid care leave per year in England, Scotland and Wales. If you're 'providing or arranging care for a dependant with a long-term care need,' this law, which came into effect on 6 April 2024, may apply to you.

A 'long-term care need' could be a physical or mental related injury, disability, condition or need connected with older age where care is needed for more than three months. This right is available from the first day of employment. The leave can be taken flexibly, as half or full days, for planned caring commitments.

Visit [carersuk.org/scotland/work-and-career](https://carersuk.org/scotland/work-and-career) to read our online information.

"My employer supports me with a great deal of flexibility. When an emergency or unforeseen caring need does happen, they tell me not to worry about work."



# Getting support

## Telling your employer that you are a carer may not always feel like an easy step.

Ask your employer if they have a carers policy or other support that could help manage your caring responsibilities, such as flexible working arrangements.

Some organisations provide support such as counselling or other health and wellbeing services and information for carers such as advice packs. Trade unions can also be a good source of support. You may find that your colleagues are supportive, or even in similar caring situations themselves.

As well as seeing if there is any support available to carers through your workplace, you could explore what support is available outside of your employment.

This could include getting an assessment to see if there is any assistance the local authority can offer to help you combine work and care – see page 13.

This could also involve reaching out to others who know what you are going through.

Visit [carersuk.org/scotland/support-where-you-live](https://carersuk.org/scotland/support-where-you-live) to find carers' organisations and support services available for carers in your local area.

Our online forum, Carers Connect, may be a good place to speak to other carers about how you are feeling – visit [forum.carersuk.org](https://forum.carersuk.org)

To become part of this online community, please join us as a member: [carersuk.org/scotland/join-us](https://carersuk.org/scotland/join-us)



**CARER POSITIVE**  
Employer in Scotland

Carers Scotland operates an awards scheme on behalf of the Scottish Government that raises awareness, supports and recognises employers who help carers to balance the demands of work and caring.

Find out more at: [carerpositive.org](https://carerpositive.org)

## Joanne's story

Joanne is an HSBC employee and unpaid carer for several family members. Here she shares her experience of juggling work and care.

“ I care for four of my closest family members aged between 24 and 84, who all have different disabilities/illness and needs. My caring role involves facilitating appointments, managing all of my families' affairs, providing emotional support, dealing with education and healthcare providers, and supporting with personal care. In addition, I work full time as a Global Inclusion Delivery Manager for HSBC where I am also heavily involved in developing resources for carers and those with physical and mental health conditions.

Through my own experiences and supporting other carers in the bank, I understand the day-to-day challenges faced by working carers. Whether this is trying to juggle work with care and/or facilitating appointments, managing work deadlines and priorities or being exhausted, all carers face significant challenges.

Carers bring a range of transferable skills and an empathy for others to work, which is why it is so important to have them in the workplace.

To support our people, we have an Employee Resource Group which focuses on providing carers from

across the bank with the help and support they need. In addition to the bank's internal policies and access to an employee assistance programme, carers are supported through the bank's partnership with Carers UK. This partnership gives our employees access to the Jointly app, a wide range of online resources and the opportunity to link in with other carers through various forums.

I am very grateful for the support I receive from HSBC; they provide me with the opportunity to pursue a career, and by working flexibly, I am also able to provide the care and support required by my family.

Working for an employer who understands the importance and value of supporting carers in the workplace has made a huge difference to my wellbeing and that of my family.



# Directory

There are a range of national organisations that can provide help. We've listed some of these below.

## Age Scotland

Information and advice for the over 60s, and help to connect you with your community.

T 0800 12 44 222

[ageuk.org.uk/scotland](http://ageuk.org.uk/scotland)

## Alzheimer's Scotland

Information and advice for people with dementia and their carers.

T 0808 808 3000

[alzscot.org](http://alzscot.org)

## Care Information Scotland

A phone, webchat and website service providing information about care services for people living in Scotland.

T 0800 011 3200

[careinfoscotland.scot](http://careinfoscotland.scot)

## Carers Trust Scotland

Information about local carer and young carer support services.

T 0300 772 7701

[carers.org/scotland](http://carers.org/scotland)

## Change Mental Health

Information and advice for people affected by mental illness and their carers.

T 0808 8010 515

[changemh.org](http://changemh.org)

## Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland

Support for people affected by lung and heart disease and stroke. They also offer advice on long Covid.

T 0808 801 0899

[chss.org.uk](http://chss.org.uk)

## Citizens Advice Scotland

Local offices for advice/representation on benefits, debt and housing.

T 0800 028 1456

[citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland)

## Contact

Information and advice for families who care for children with a disability or special need.

T 0808 808 3555

[contact.org.uk](http://contact.org.uk)

## Enable

A membership organisation in Scotland for people with learning disabilities and family carers.

T 0300 0200 101

[enable.org.uk](http://enable.org.uk)

## Living Made Easy

Information and advice on equipment for independent living.

[livingmadeeasy.org.uk](http://livingmadeeasy.org.uk)

### Local council support

Your local council will have advice on a range of issues including benefits and practical help, energy costs, access to food, housing and other support.

[mygov.scot/find-your-local-council](https://mygov.scot/find-your-local-council)

### Macmillan Cancer Support

Information and advice for people with cancer, their families and carers.

T 0808 808 00 00

[macmillan.org.uk](https://macmillan.org.uk)

### Marie Curie

Support for people living with any terminal illness, and their families.

T 0800 090 2309

[mariecurie.org.uk/services/scotland](https://mariecurie.org.uk/services/scotland)

### MND Scotland

Care and support to people affected by MND and their families.

T 0141 332 3903

[mndscotland.org.uk](https://mndscotland.org.uk)

### MS Society Scotland

Support and information to anyone living with MS and their families.

T 0808 800 8000

[mssociety.org.uk/contact-us/scotland](https://mssociety.org.uk/contact-us/scotland)

### NHS Inform

Scotland's national health information service provides accurate and relevant information to help you make informed decisions about your own health and the health of the people you care for.

T 0800 22 44 88

[nhsinform.scot](https://nhsinform.scot)

### Relationships Scotland

Counselling and support services for couples, families and young people.

T 0345 119 2020

[relationships-scotland.org.uk](https://relationships-scotland.org.uk)

### Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs

Provides support and information to families, friends and carers affected by someone's drug or alcohol use.

T 08080 10 10 11

[sfad.org.uk](https://sfad.org.uk)

### Shared Care Scotland

Information about taking a break from caring.

T 0138 362 2462

[sharedcarescotland.org.uk](https://sharedcarescotland.org.uk)

### Shelter Scotland

Information and advice on housing issues.

T 0808 800 4444

[scotland.shelter.org.uk](https://scotland.shelter.org.uk)

There may be local support groups and organisations that can also provide help. Visit [carersuk.org/scotland/support-where-you-live](https://carersuk.org/scotland/support-where-you-live)



It's estimated that there are 627,700 people who are looking after family or friends who are older, disabled or seriously ill in Scotland.

However caring affects you, we're here.

For information and tailored support, contact the Carers UK Helpline:

E [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org)

T 0808 808 7777

With support from



Tell us how you found this guide [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DSMRH6V](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DSMRH6V)



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This guide is designed to provide helpful information and advice. While we work to ensure that our information is accurate and up to date, we would recommend contacting the Carers UK Helpline or visiting our website for more information.

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