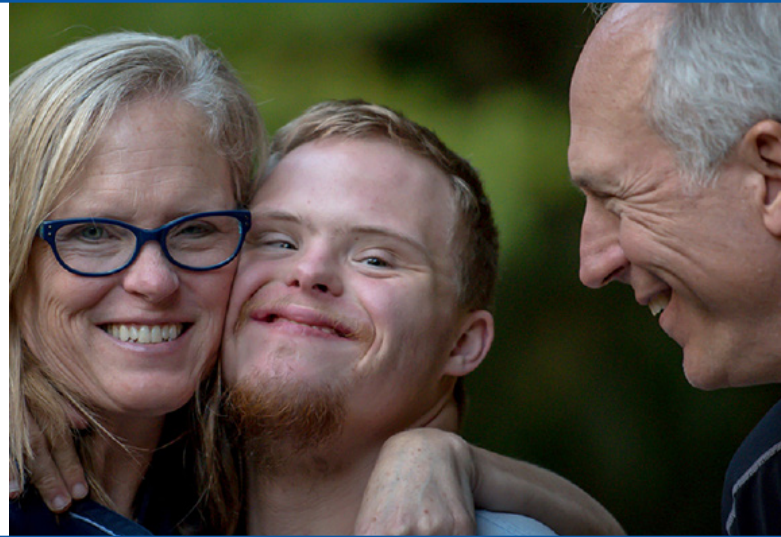


# Are you an unpaid carer?



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

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

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

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

## Getting more support

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

They can also tell you what rights you have.

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

## Looking after yourself

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

For more information visit:

[carersweek.org/info-for-carers](https://carersweek.org/info-for-carers)

## Work and finances

If you are balancing paid work with caring, it is worth checking out your company's policies and procedures regarding caring responsibilities. For example, as a working carer, you might be able to request flexible working. If you're an employee in England, Wales or Scotland, you also have the right to take up to one week's unpaid carer's leave per year.

## Technology and equipment

Simple devices and apps can help you feel more connected and manage care on a day-to-day basis. They may also help someone live independently for longer and give you peace of mind. There are also home adaptations or simple aids that can make caring easier or improve the quality of life of the person you care for.

## Planning for the unexpected

It's important to think about what you could do if something goes wrong or your situation changes suddenly. For example, could family and friends help you? Try to keep up-to-date information about the person you care for somewhere easy to access. Some areas also have contingency planning or emergency card schemes for carers.

## Carers Week partners

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



Age UK and many of its local partners provide help and support to carers across the UK – such as offering counselling and support groups, sharing advice on Carers' Assessments and benefits, and providing day care and respite, or organising fun activities to allow carers to relax.

Call the Age UK Advice Line on 0800 169 6565 or visit: [ageuk.org.uk/help-for-carers](http://ageuk.org.uk/help-for-carers)



Carers Trust works to transform the lives of unpaid carers. It partners with its network of local carer organisations to provide funding and support, deliver innovative and evidence-based programmes and raise awareness and influence policy. We work to ensure that every carer who needs help is able to access a great local service.

To find your nearest Network Partner call 0300 772 9600 or visit: [carers.org](http://carers.org)



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

Contact their Helpline: email [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org) or call 0808 808 7777 (Mon–Fri 9am–6pm). Or visit: [carersuk.org](http://carersuk.org)



The Lewy Body Society aims to shine a light on Lewy body dementia, the second most common type of dementia in older people. They raise awareness of the disease, fund clinical research and help families affected through information materials and through their Helpline available on 01942 914 000. [lewbody.org](http://lewbody.org)



The ME Association supports, informs, campaigns and invests in medical research to help people with ME/CFS and Long Covid and those who care for them. We are focused on improving healthcare for the 1million or more people that are so often neglected. Helpline: 0808 801 0484 (10am - 6pm Mon to Fri, until 9pm on Thurs. 10 am - 12noon Sat and Sun) [meassociation.org.uk](http://meassociation.org.uk)



MND Association funds research, supports patients, carers and professionals, and campaigns for better care. Their support includes information and resources, grants and local support and the MND Connect helpline: 0808 802 6262 (Mon–Fri 9am–4pm) or e. [mndconnect@mndassociation.org](mailto:mndconnect@mndassociation.org) [mndassociation.org](http://mndassociation.org)



Rethink Mental Illness provide vital peer support for carers in the community, including four Carers Support services and 50 peer support groups which offer a listening ear, friendship and social support for carers. They also offer practical advice over the phone via their advice line, as well as on their website: [rethink.org/carers-hub](http://rethink.org/carers-hub)

Find out more and  
get involved:  
[carersweek.org](http://carersweek.org)