



Carer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

About Carers

What is a carer?

A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help. This could be a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or is affected by mental health or substance misuse.

About 1 in 8 adults (around 6.5 million people) are carers.

Most of us don't identify as carers and see our caring role as an extension of an existing family relationship. It can take up to two years to identify as a carer.

Caring can take a variety of forms, such as personal care, practical help with things like shopping or housework, emotional support, or help with managing behaviours or relationships.

What is a young carer?

A young carer is a person under the age of 18, who provides or intends to provide care for another person. You may not realise you're a carer because looking after someone is part of your normal life. Caring can cover lots of different things, such as washing, dressing, preparing meals, housework, or even helping to look after a brother or sister.

Do I have to live with the person I support to be classified as a carer?

Carers provide unpaid care by looking after an ill, older or disabled family member, friend or partner. It could be a few hours a week or round the clock, in their own home, or down the motorway. You don't have to be living with the person you care for to be helping care for them.

Who should I tell I'm a carer?

You can register as a carer at your GP practice, either by speaking to your GP or asking at reception. By registering as a carer you could be entitled to a health check (for over 45s), a free flu jab, and flexible appointments.

You may also want to tell your employer to see if they can help and support you with your caring responsibilities. For example, an entitlement to carers leave.



Carer's Assessment

Caring for a friend or family member can be valuable and rewarding, but without the right support caring can have an impact on your health, your job, your finances, and social life. If you care for someone, you may be eligible for support and you can have an assessment to see what might help make your life easier.

Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a legal duty to provide carers with a Carers Assessment. This assessment does not take into account your finances. Under the Children & Families Act 2014, young carers are entitled to a Carers Assessment in their own right.

What is the Care Act 2014?

The Care Act 2014 changed the way care and support was delivered, making it more consistent across the country. The act puts people in control of the help they receive and ensures any decisions about care and support also consider wellbeing to support people in staying healthy and independent for longer. Many of us will need care and support at some point in our lives, and most people will pay at least something towards the cost of their care.

What is a Carer's Assessment?

A Carer Assessment is for anyone over 18 years old who is looking after another adult over 18 years old. It is free, and is separate from the needs assessment the person you care for might have, but you can ask to have them both done at the same time. It looks at your physical, mental and emotional needs.

Any carer who is in need of support can have an assessment regardless of the amount or type of care they provide, finances or level of need for support. Visit the NHS website to find out more.

Web [nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carers-assessments/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carers-assessments/)

A Carer's Assessment might recommend things like someone to take over caring so you can take a break; exercise classes to relieve stress; help with taxi fares if you don't drive; help with gardening and housework; training how to lift safely or putting you in touch with local support groups so you have people to talk who can give advice about benefits for carers.

How do I get a Carer's Assessment?

Carer's Assessments are completed by Adult Social Services or organisations who have been commissioned to carry out the assessment on their behalf. You will need to contact your local council to determine who completes a Carer's Assessment in your locality.

Our Carer Information page on our website includes relevant contact details for each locality across Berkshire.

Web berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/carers-information

Support

Are there any Carers Support Groups locally?

If you are a carer, you can find free independent information, advice and support through local support groups. They can support you to maintain your wellbeing and stay connected to your community through providing details such as carer groups, events, training and befriending. Visit our website for helpful information relevant to each locality across Berkshire or access the Berkshire Care Services Directory (an independent guide to care and support in Berkshire).

Web berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/carers-information

Web carechoices.co.uk/publication/berkshire-care-services-directory/

Am I entitled to any benefits or allowances?

You or the person you care for may be eligible for some benefits or allowances. Visit the NHS Social Care and Support Guide to see what support is available.

Web nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/support-and-benefits-for-carers/benefits-for-carers/

What does “consent” mean?

Patients and service users have a legal right to decide whether or not they wish staff to share their information with anyone, including their carers, partners and families. Our Friends, Family & Carers Handbook includes information about consent, confidentiality and information sharing. The handbook is available on our website or you can ask a member of staff for a copy.

What does “advocacy” mean?

Advocacy means getting support from another person to help you express your views and wishes, and to help make sure your voice is heard. Someone who helps people in this way is called an advocate.

Patients can sometimes struggle to communicate their views or to feel confident in expressing their thoughts with clinical staff. With the consent of the person you care for, you will be able to advocate on their behalf. If the patient prefers, staff can arrange for them to access a trained, independent advocate who will support them in meetings and/or with appointments.

Web berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/advocacy-groups

How can I understand some of the jargon used by professionals?

If you're unsure about any language used by healthcare professionals, ask them to explain what they mean. You may also want to access the Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) website. A national partnership of more than 50 health and care organisations, have a helpful jargon buster on their website which explains the terms and phrases used in the Care Act 2014. Visit the TLAP website to find out more.

Web thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/Browse/Informationandadvice/CareandSupportJargonBuster/



berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/carers-information