

WE CARE YOU CARE.

**A guide for adults looking after a family member, partner
or friend in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland**

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Am I a Carer?

A carer is anyone, including children and adults, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care given is unpaid.

Does this sound like you?

Sometimes caring happens suddenly, such as when a loved one falls ill, has an accident, or a child is born with additional needs. Other times it happens gradually—perhaps your parents can no longer manage alone, or your child or partner’s challenges mean they need more support day by day.

You may not think of yourself as a “carer,” and that’s okay. What matters is knowing that support is available for you when you need it most. This guide will help you understand what support is out there and how to access it. Local support can be found on pages 7, 8 & 12.

For more information, visit www.wecareyoucare.info

emotional health?

eating and drinking?

Do you help the person you care for to...

...get washed, dressed, take medicine?

...eat, drink or make meals, buy food?

...move around their home?

...get around, use transport, reach appointments?

...keep safe, be emotionally supported?

...deal with letters, bills, other money matters etc?

work, education, training, or volunteering?

leisure and social life?

relationships?

other commitments in caring for children/adults?

needs you may face in the future?

physical health?

Carers Assessment

A Carer Assessment is a friendly conversation to talk about your needs as a carer and the support available to you. You can have an assessment even if the person you care for is not receiving help from Social Care. The time it takes will depend on how urgent your situation is. During the assessment, your views and opinions will be listened to, and it should usually be completed within 28 days. You will be asked about the support you give and how it affects your life. Some questions may feel sensitive, but they will be asked with care, and everything you share will be kept confidential.

Afterwards, you will receive:

- A written copy of your Carer Assessment
- A Carer Support Plan – this shows how your needs will be supported.

Your plan will be reviewed once a year to make sure it's still meeting your needs. Reviews can be done online, over the phone, at home, or in another place that feels comfortable for you.

Middlesbrough carers can access an assessment through the **Middlesbrough Adult Social Care Access Team- 01642 065070**.

Redcar & Cleveland carers can get an assessment by speaking to **Redcar & Cleveland Adult Social Care Access Team on 01642 771500**.

If the person you care for lives in a different Local Authority Area from you, you will need to contact their Local Authority.

Knowing Your Rights

Being recognised early as a carer means you can get the right support. This can improve your own health and wellbeing and benefit the person you care for. It also gives you access to your legal rights.

Since the Care Act 2014, carers have more rights than ever before. It's important to know these—whether you're at work, dealing with healthcare professionals, or at home.

Your Rights as a Carer:

- The right to choose whether or not to provide care (*although it may not feel like it*).
- The right to decide how much care you can and want to give.
- The right to support in working out which of the cared-for person's needs you can meet.
- The right for your views to be listened to by Social Services when planning support for the person you care for.
- The right to a Carer's Assessment (*see page 4*)
- The right to take part in work, education, training, and leisure alongside caring.
- The right to request flexible working.
- The right to Carer's Leave – 5 days of unpaid leave each year to help care for someone.
- Protection under Civil Rights and Human Rights law.
- Extra protection under the Equality Act 2010.



Carers Leave

The **Carer's Leave Act**, introduced on 6 April 2024, gives new rights to working unpaid carers.

Employees can take up to one week of unpaid leave each year to provide or arrange care for someone with a long-term care need.

Leave can be taken flexibly – in full days or half days – for planned caring responsibilities.

This right is available from your first day of employment.

You are protected from dismissal or negative treatment in the same way as with other types of family-related leave.



Flexible working

The **Flexible Working Act** gives all workers the right to request flexible working from day one of a job, up to twice a year.

- Employers must reply within two months and consult with you if they refuse.
- Flexible working can include:
 - Hybrid working (fewer days in the office)
 - Changing hours (e.g. evenings)
 - Using a work phone or desk phone.

If you request flexible working arrangements, be clear in your request—say exactly what you want and whether it's temporary or permanent.

Carers Together offer a wide range of services, information, advice and support for all carers across the South Tees area aged 18 and over. In partnership with The Junction the team provide a transition service called **Next Steps** for carers aged 18-25.

Telephone: **01642 488977** Email: **info@carerstogether-rc.org.uk**

www.carerstogether.co.uk

The Junction Foundation delivers a Young Carers Information and Support Service, offering a range of support to young carers, families and young adult carers across South Tees. In partnership with Carers Together the team provide a transition service called

Next Steps for carers aged 18-25. Telephone: **01642 756000** Email:

info@thejunctionfoundation.com

www.thejunctionfoundation.com

Teesside Mind provide an emotional wellbeing support service for carers across the South Tees. Telephone: **01642 257020** Email: **carers@teessidemind.org.uk**

www.teessidemind.org.uk

Middlesbrough Council Access Team

Telephone: **01642 065070**

www.middlesbroughmatters.co.uk

Redcar & Cleveland Access Team

Telephone: **01642 771500**

www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Mobilise provides digital carers information, advice and support and online peer support platforms. **www.mobiliseonline.co.uk**

Age UK Teesside Dementia Advice Service (DAS) for people diagnosed with dementia, their carers, professionals supporting clients with dementia and anyone wanting to learn more in Middlesbrough. Telephone: **01642 805500** www.ageuk.org.uk/teesside

Teesside Mind Dementia Advisory Outreach Service is for anybody who has dementia or who is worried about dementia and in need of help – even if you don't know what support you need - we're here for you. The Dementia Advisory Outreach Service (DAOS) project is focused on providing information and advice to people living with dementia and their families, unpaid carers, and the wider community. Telephone: **01642 257020**
Email: daos@teessidemind.org.uk

People First: Independents NHS Complaints Advocacy Service. Telephone: **0300 303 8037** www.wearepeoplefirst.co.uk

Healthwatch South Tees (Middlesbrough & Redcar & Cleveland) supporting people to find the right health and social care services for them and making sure their views and experiences of local services are heard. Freephone **0800 989 0080**
Email: healthwatchmiddlesbrough.org.uk / healthwatchredcarandcleveland.co.uk

We Care You Care, our website has lots of useful information, resources and further contact details for local services. You can also subscribe to receive fortnightly e-bulletins straight to your inbox. Visit: www.wecareyoucare.info

Financial Support



As a carer, there may be benefits, grants or other financial support available to you. You may be entitled to...

Attendance Allowance: This benefit is to help to pay for personal care for those that have reached the State Pension age and have a disability or illness that makes it hard to look after themselves. Therefore, this may be a benefit that would be granted to the person you care for but can contribute towards your support.

Carers Allowance: If you care for someone for at least 35 hours a week and they receive a qualifying disability benefit, you may be eligible for Carer's Allowance. The allowance is to support with additional costs associated with unpaid care and currently stands at £86.45 per week. If you're applying for Carer's Allowance, there's also an earnings cap: you must not earn more than £204 per week (after deductions like tax, National Insurance, and some allowable expenses).

Carer's Credit: If you are under the State Pension age and you are caring for someone for at least 20 hours a week. Carer's Credit is a National Insurance credit that helps with gaps in your National Insurance record and allows you to take on caring responsibilities without affecting your ability to qualify for the State Pension.

Universal Credit: If you are on a low income or unemployed, you may be able to claim Universal Credit (UC) which is a means-tested benefit (meaning the amount of income and capital you have can affect your eligibility).

Advice and Support

You can apply for any of these benefits directly yourself by visiting www.gov.uk or you can get help from a local service who can discuss your financial situation, impartially, with you and support you to maximise your benefit entitlement:

Free online benefits calculator: www.turn2us.org.uk

Local Support

Citizens Advice give advice to people for the problems that they face and work to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

The Welfare Rights Team provide specialist benefits advice via the advice phone line and home visits (housebound customers only).

Middlesbrough



Citizens Advice Bureau

Telephone: **01642 802282** Adviceline: **0344 499 4110** Email: advice@mcab.org.uk

Middlesbrough Council Welfare Rights

Telephone: **01642 729242**

Redcar and Cleveland



Citizens Advice Bureau

Telephone: **01642 030000** Adviceline: **0344 499 4110** Email: advice@mcab.org.uk

Redcar & Cleveland Council Money Advice

Portal Telephone: **01642 771166**

Looking After Children

Kinship Care

Kinship carers are relatives (such as grandparents, brothers or sisters, aunts, uncles, or other family members) and sometimes close family friends – who step in to care for a child when the parents cannot. These children are often called kinship kids, and almost half live with a disability or emotional difficulty.

Kinship care can be:

Informal – where parents place the child with relatives or friends, without the local authority being involved.

Formal – where the local authority is involved, and a court order gives the kinship carer parental responsibility.

Support and advice is available. Contact your local authority for more information:

Middlesbrough Council Kinship Support – 01642 726008

Redcar & Cleveland Kinship Team – 07909 906446

Parent Carers

Parent carers support their children, including adult children, who cannot manage without help. This may be due to illness, disability, mental health challenges, or substance misuse.

It can be hard for parents to see themselves as carers because looking after children often feels like “just what we do.” Recognising your role as a carer can help you access support and assistance when needed. Contact your local authority for support- **Middlesbrough: 01642**

065070 / Redcar & Cleveland: 01642 771500

Handy Phone Numbers

- **Accessing Change Together (ACT) Middlesbrough** (support with domestic abuse, homelessness, or substance use) **01642 726800**. Out of hours helpline: **07716 129395** (6pm –10pm weekdays, 11am –5pm weekends)
- **Alzheimer’s Society** (dementia support line) **0333 150 3456**
- **Contact** (for families with disabled children) **0808 808 3555**
- **Daisy Chain** (supporting autistic & neurodivergent individuals & families) **01642 531248**
- **Department for Work & Pensions (DWP)** **0843 515 8313**
- **Emergency Duty Care Team (EDT) Middlesbrough Council** **01642 524552**
- **Emergency Duty Care Team (EDT) Redcar & Cleveland Council** **01642 524552**
- **Kinship** (national charity) **0300 123 7015**
- **Main** (services for children who are autistic, neurodivergent, have learning disabilities or complex needs) **01642 608012**
- **Multi Agency Childrens Hub (MACH) Middlesbrough** **01642 726004**
- **Multi Agency Childrens Hub (MACH) Redcar & Cleveland** **01642 130700**
- **Neuro Key** (services for people who live or care for someone with a neurological condition) **01642 641825**
- **Tees Valley Buddies** (neurodiverse self-advocacy and peer support network) WhatsApp/ Text **0751 878 6726**
- **The Glowsticks Project** (supporting children and young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and ADHD) **0784 283 2697**
- **Mental Health Crisis NHS 111** (select mental health option)
- **Short Breaks Middlesbrough** **01642 726004**
- **Short Breaks Redcar and Cleveland** **01642 771247**
- **We Are With You Redcar & Cleveland** (advice and support for adults and young people about their own or a loved one's drug and alcohol use) **0300 303 3781**

Health and Wellbeing

Caring for someone else is important, but so is caring for yourself. Your health and wellbeing matter just as much as the person you support. If you don't look after yourself, it becomes harder to look after others.

Ways to look after yourself:

- Let your GP practice know you are a carer.
- Ask for a health check and explore self-care advice on the NHS Choices website.
- Notice your stress triggers and find healthy ways to manage them.
- Reach out for help if you're struggling with your own health or wellbeing.
- Visit our website for resources, information, and local support: www.wecareyoucare.info

Did you know?

Carers are eligible for a free flu vaccine. Speak to your GP practice for more details.





Being physically active might be far from your mind when you're a carer, but for your health and well-being, it's important to find time for yourself. Find an activity you enjoy and do something for yourself every day, no matter how small. A walk in the fresh air, doing some gentle exercise or increasing your activities at home all count **#doitforyou**.

**YOU'VE
GOT
THIS.**



**TEES VALLEY
SPORT**

Time Off From Your Caring Role

Caring for someone can be hard and getting time off isn't easy. Most carers need a break from time to time. It's important that you try to build in some time off for yourself, however hard that may seem.

You may want a short break of just an hour or two, a whole day or longer. What kind of break and for how long will depend on your circumstances and the type of care and support that the person you care for requires. Respite care can mean lots of different things and can mean the person you care for having a short stay in a care home, attending a day service, or receiving alternative care at home. Having a break from caring is important for you as an individual but can also be just as beneficial for the loved one you care for.

Where to start?

It may be the case that you are able to leave the person you care for, but you feel guilty about taking some time for yourself. Remember, you have needs too. If you can do something that you enjoy, it will 'recharge your batteries' and help sustain you in your caring role. Ultimately, both of you will benefit. Prioritising yourself is not selfish!

If you have family and friends around you, it may be worth asking if they can help. It can be hard to ask for help and it can also be hard for people to offer support if they are unsure of what is needed. All families and friendships are different but consider talking to them to express how you are feeling and what would help.

If arranging time off from your caring role isn't something you can organise yourself or with support from family and friends you will need a carer's assessment and the person you care for is eligible for a needs assessment which can give you access to funded or partially funded respite options. So, if you want the council to pay for respite care for either yourself as a carer or the person you look after, it's important that you both have an assessment (*see page 4*).

Short Breaks Services

Short breaks are available for disabled children and young people and are intended to have positive benefits for both children and young people and their parents and carers. Short breaks provision can range from a few hours a week to an allocated number of overnight breaks per year and anything in between.

Short breaks aim to provide parents and carers with:

- A necessary and valuable break from their caring responsibilities.
- A chance to rest and unwind.
- To spend time with other members of the family.

Contact your local team:

Middlesbrough Short Breaks: 01642 726004 /shortbreaks@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Redcar & Cleveland Short Breaks: 01642 771247/shortbreaks@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)

If you care for someone who currently manages their own affairs, their needs may change over time. Setting up a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) helps plan for the future, allowing you to act on their behalf if they can no longer make decisions themselves.

A Power of Attorney is a legal document authorising someone to handle matters for another person, such as paying bills or managing accounts.

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)

The most common type of attorney, it has no expiry date.

Can be used immediately with the person's permission or later if they lose mental capacity.

Must be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) (£82 per LPA in 2025).

Two types:

- Property and Financial Affairs LPA – for managing money and property.
- Health and Welfare LPA – for making decisions about health care and daily living.

You can set up one or both types.

Further Information & Support

Age UK Teesside – trained staff can help set up LPAs (charges apply): **01642 805500**

Carers Together – free 30-minute legal clinic: **01642 488977**

Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) – registers LPAs: **0300 456 0300**

We Care You Care – www.wecareyoucare.info

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All information is correct at the time of printing: November 2025.

For the latest information, advice, and self-signposting to local support, visit: **www.wecareyoucare.info**



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