



ARE YOU NEW TO CARING?

A resource to keep with you. What being a carer means, what the role can involve, and what to do next, from the Improving Lives carers team.

Introduction

If you are looking after someone else, or helping to look after them, and they couldn't manage without your support, then you are a carer.

The person you help could be a relative, partner or friend; and they might be ill, frail, disabled or have mental health or substance misuse problems.

People sometimes only realise they are 'a carer' after many years. In other situations, people can become carers overnight.

While being a carer doesn't define you, it may mean that you have some important legal rights including the right to certain types of financial support, practical help, assistance technology and rights in the workplace. Carers UK provide a useful guide [Looking after Someone](#) that explains your rights and how to get the support you are entitled to.

UPFRONT

Carers UK's Upfront is the first online guide of its kind to give tailored financial and practical information to those who are new to caring.

As well as the practical and financial support, you'll find information to help you manage the impact of caring on your health and relationships. Click the link below to give it a go and get your own personalised guide to caring!

UPFRONT

What does a carer do?

Each caring role is unique, and may encompass a range of tasks and responsibilities. The role of a carer might include, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Personal care** – support with dressing, washing, and toileting
- **Domestic care** – support with cooking, housework, and shopping
- **Physical care** – support with lifting, assisting, and helping when moving around
- **Financial care** – support with any financial affairs
- **Health care** – support with managing illness or a condition, or helping to administer medication
- **Emotional care** – support by being a listening ear, offering moral support, or simply providing company for someone who is feeling isolated
- **Communication care** – supporting or assisting with a listening or communication impairment, including translation, for example, when English is not the family's first language

What you need to know

There are some key things to know if you are new to caring or just realised you're a carer.

There is a lot of help available, and we're here to support you in every way we can.

- 1 **Acknowledge you ARE a carer** – it's a first step that opens up doors to help.
- 2 **Register with the Improving Lives carers team.** You can do this by telephoning 01752 201890, emailing caringforcarers@improvinglives.org.uk or using the online register as a carer service on the Plymouth Online Directory. We can provide a whole range of support and most importantly we can tell you what help you're entitled to, depending on your circumstances (such as benefits, or the right to a Carers Assessment). There's more explanation of the full range of support available to carers from Plymouth on our website.
- 3 **Tell your GP you are a carer.** Your role will be recorded on your notes and they can look to offer you flexible appointments and other help, like free flu jabs.
- 4 **Think about coming along to one of the Improving Lives carers team's events, workshops or support groups** – these activities can really help you.
- 5 **Look after yourself** – it's so important to take care of you. Yes, it's hard to find time, but try to look after your health, your emotions, your social life and hobbies. The better you feel, the better you can take care of your loved one.
- 6 **Check your entitlement to Carer's Allowance.** You may be eligible for Carer's Allowance if you are aged 16 or over and spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone who is receiving the higher or middle rate component of Disability Living Allowance. Visit gov.uk/carers-allowance for further information.

Talk to us

The Improving Lives carers team

Register with us to find out what help you're entitled to, and to hear about events, workshops and support groups.

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