



# WORKING & CARING

Juggling paid employment with a caring role: your rights at work, what to weigh up before leaving a job, and where to find help. From the Improving Lives carers team at Improving Lives Plymouth.

# Working and caring

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If you are trying to juggle caring with paid employment you are not alone. The UK has nearly five million working carers – 1 in 7 of all workers. You may feel under additional pressure and stress because of your caring role – and have extra needs.

It's up to you whether you tell your employer about your caring responsibilities. You may prefer not to. However, if you do tell them, they will better understand the pressures you are under and you will be able to access any support they provide.

Some companies have carer's policies for example, or workplace carers support groups. The help you need could be very simple and easy to arrange – e.g. the ability to a private space to make and take calls relating to the person you care for.

There are also statutory rights you are entitled to, and you are protected from discrimination – employers cannot treat you less favourably because of your caring role. Find out what support your employer has – check your staff handbook or intranet, or speak with your line manager or HR.

## Telling colleagues

Similarly your colleagues can be very supportive, once they know about your caring role. It can be helpful just to have someone to chat with. You may find others who are carers too.

## If you think you might need to leave your job to care

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If you are finding it difficult to juggle caring and work, you may be thinking of giving up your job. Before you do anything, do think about what you may be losing:

- **Income**

- **Skills**

- **Occupational pension**

- **Companionship of colleagues**

- **Independence and a sense of 'self'**

Have a think about your own personal circumstances and what you need to facilitate you to stay in work. Then, talk to your employer who may be able to accommodate the changes or suggest other ways of allowing you to continue working. For them, allowing you some flexibility could be less timeconsuming and more cost-effective than to recruit and train someone else.

Also contact Adult Social Care on 01752 668000 or the Improving Lives carers team on 01752 201890 to explain your caring situation and see if there are any support options that they may be able to provide. E.g. a care worker to visit and support the person you care for to take medication during the day to allow you to stay at work.

You could also find out if it is possible to take a career break, early retirement or voluntary redundancy.

# Thinking about returning to work?

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If you have given up work to care and are thinking about returning to work in the future or you are worried about how to apply for jobs, update your CV or where to start looking you can talk through any issues or concerns with someone from the Job centre.

Please email Vicky Martin [Vicky.martin@dp.gov.uk](mailto:Vicky.martin@dp.gov.uk) stating that you are a carer who would like some information and advice.

Vicky will reply as soon as possible to arrange a convenient date and time for a telephone, email or Skype conversation to answer your enquiry.

## Useful links to support people who are working and caring

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**[Carers UK - Working and caring – COVID19](#)**

**[Carers UK – A guide to requesting Flexible Working](#)**

**[Employers for Carers – Supporting Working Carers a Carers Guide](#)**

# Talk to us

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If you would like to talk through your options at work, or find support for the person you care for so that you can stay in your job, the Improving Lives carers team is happy to help.

## The Improving Lives carers team

Support, advice and information to help you and your family whilst you are caring.

**01752 201890**

[caringforcarers@improvinglives.org.uk](mailto:caringforcarers@improvinglives.org.uk)



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