



COMING HOME CARER SKILLS

Module 4: Respect, fairness and rights

A short guide for family carers, with questions to write in

Coming Home Carer Skills. For England, Wales, Scotland and
Northern Ireland

October 2026

About this course

Coming Home Carer Skills is our own free course for family carers. Its topics follow the 16 Care Certificate standards (2025) from Skills for Care, NHS England and Skills for Health. It is not the Care Certificate, it is not a qualification, and those organisations have not endorsed it.

This guide to Module 4, Respect, fairness and rights, is correct at October 2026. We've written it in good faith as general information to help family carers. It isn't legal, financial or medical advice, and it can't teach practical skills such as moving someone or first aid. For those, ask the person's nurse or therapist, or find an in-person course. To the extent the law allows, we can't accept liability for any errors or omissions, or for decisions made on the strength of this guide. In a medical emergency call 999. If you need advice quickly, call NHS 111. In Northern Ireland, contact your GP out of hours service.

Published by Caresque Limited, company number 16160381. 124 City Road, London, England, EC1V 2NX.

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How to use this guide

This guide goes with the online module. Read one section at a time. There are questions near the end, with space to write, and example answers at the back.

If you are worried about someone's health, contact their GP. If you need advice quickly, call NHS 111. In Northern Ireland, contact your GP out of hours service. In an emergency, call 999.

01

Everyone is different



Everyone has their own way of living. Faith, culture, food, language and family customs can matter even more when someone needs care.



Tip

Ask, do not guess. The best way to find out what matters is to ask the person, and listen. People from the same community, or the same faith, can want very different things.

Things to ask about.

- Faith: prayer times, fasting, festivals, and things they wear.
- Food: what they eat and do not eat, and how it is cooked.
- Language: which language they feel most at home in, especially when they are tired or unwell.
- Personal care: who they would like to help them wash and dress, for example a woman or a man.
- Routines: the times of day that matter to them.

Share what you know. With the person's agreement, tell paid carers and other services what matters. If they have a care plan, ask for it to be written there. A care plan is the written record of the help someone gets.

Respect goes both ways. Paid care workers come from many backgrounds too. They deserve the same respect.

Sources (read 8 Oct 2026): GOV.UK, "Discrimination: your rights", www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights; Equality Act 2010, section 4 (the protected characteristics), www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/4; NHS website, "Care and support plans" (a plan includes what is important to you), www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/help-from-social-services-and-charities/care-and-support-plans/; Care Quality Commission, "Culturally appropriate care", www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/adult-social-care/culturally-appropriate-care

02

Being fair



Being fair does not mean doing the same for everyone. It means everyone gets a fair chance, even if some people need things done differently.

What unfair behaviour by a service can look like.

- Refusing to help someone, or giving them a worse service, because of who they are. For example, because of their age, race, religion or disability.
- Making fun of someone's accent, age or disability. The law calls this harassment. It means unwanted behaviour that upsets or shames someone.
- Not making reasonable changes for a disabled person. The law calls these reasonable adjustments. For example, ignoring a request for large print or a ramp, or only letting someone book by phone when they are Deaf.

These can all be against the law. Discrimination means someone is put at a disadvantage because of who they are. It is not always done on purpose.

**Remember****What to do.**

1. Stay calm. Write down what happened, when, and who was there.
2. Talk to the person in charge, or use the service's complaints process. Module 3 explains how.
3. Get free advice. The Get help box says where.

Act quickly. If things are not sorted out, there are time limits for taking it further.

Notice the good, too. When a service gets it right, tell them.

Sources (read 8 Oct 2026): GOV.UK, "Discrimination: your rights", www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights; Equality Act 2010, sections 20, 26 and 29, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/20 , www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/26 and www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/29; Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, "Disability discrimination", equalityni.org/your-rights/disability-discrimination

03

Rights in plain words



This is general information, not legal advice.

England, Scotland and Wales. The Equality Act 2010 is the main law against discrimination. It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy or maternity leave
- race, including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The law calls these "protected characteristics". It applies at work, in education, in shops and other services, and in public services such as the NHS and councils.

Northern Ireland. The Equality Act 2010 does not cover Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland has its own laws. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland can tell you more. Their advice is free.

Human rights, across the UK. The Human Rights Act 1998 covers the whole UK. Public services, such as the NHS, councils and Health and Social Care Trusts, must respect people's human rights. These include respect for private and family life, home and letters; freedom of thought and religion; not being abused in a cruel or degrading way; and not being discriminated against in these rights.



Get help

Get advice early. See the Get help box.

Sources (read 8 Oct 2026): GOV.UK, "Discrimination: your rights", www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights; Equality Act 2010, section 217 (where it applies), www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/217; Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, "Your rights", www.equalityni.org/Individuals; Human Rights Act 1998, section 6, section 22 and Schedule 1, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/section/6 , www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/section/22 and www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/schedule/1

04

Your rights as a carer at work



If you work and care, the law gives you some rights. They are different in Northern Ireland.

Protection from discrimination. In England, Scotland and Wales, the Equality Act 2010 also protects you if you are linked to someone with a protected characteristic, such as a disabled family member. So your employer must not discriminate against you because you care for a disabled person. In Northern Ireland, ask the Equality Commission about your situation.

Flexible working. Flexible working could mean different start and finish times, fewer hours, different days, or working from home.

- England, Scotland and Wales: all employees can ask for flexible working from their first day in a job. Your employer must deal with your request reasonably, and can only say no for set business reasons.
- Northern Ireland: you can ask once you have worked for your employer for 26 weeks, and you can make one request in any 12 months. Your employer must think about it seriously, and can only say no for good business reasons.

Carer's leave. In England, Scotland and Wales, employees can take up to 1 week of unpaid carer's leave every 12 months, from their first day in a job. It is for giving or arranging care for someone who needs care because of illness, injury, disability or old age. In Northern Ireland, the rules are different. Ask your employer what leave they offer.



Try this

Talk to your employer. Many employers have their own policy for carers. Carers UK gives free advice about your rights at work.

Sources (read 8 Oct 2026): GOV.UK, "Discrimination: your rights", www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights; GOV.UK, "Flexible working", www.gov.uk/flexible-working and www.gov.uk/flexible-working/after-the-application; GOV.UK, "Unpaid carer's leave", www.gov.uk/carers-leave; nidirect, "Caring for someone while working", www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/caring-someone-while-working; Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland), "Introducing Carers Leave in NI" (May 2025), www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-05/UUEPC%20-%20Introducing%20Carers%20Leave%20in%20NI.PDF; Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service, "Support for Unpaid Carers in Northern Ireland" (2024), www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2022-2027/2024/economy/0824.pdf

05

Asking for what the person needs



You can ask services to make changes so the person can take part fully. It often helps to ask early, and to ask for it to be written down.

**Tip**

An interpreter. If English is hard for the person, ask the GP practice or hospital to book a professional interpreter, in person, by video or by phone. Ask when you book the appointment.

- England: NHS guidance says interpreting should be free, and family and friends should not usually be asked to interpret. Children under 16 should not interpret, except in an emergency.
- Scotland: you have the right to communication support in the NHS, including an interpreter or a sign language interpreter, if you tell staff beforehand.
- Wales: Welsh Government guidance says interpreting should be free, and you should not be asked to bring your own interpreter. Family and friends should not usually be asked to interpret.
- Northern Ireland: interpreting for health and social care appointments is free, at any time of day or night. Friends and relatives should not be used to interpret.

With an interpreter there, you can support the person, instead of having to translate.

Information they can use. In England, NHS and publicly funded adult social care services must take account of the Accessible Information Standard. This is a set of rules about giving disabled people, and people with sight or hearing loss, information they can use, such as large print, braille, easy read or a British Sign Language interpreter.

Reasonable changes. Services must make reasonable changes for disabled people. For example, a longer appointment, a quieter room, or information in an accessible format.

Get it written down. Ask for the person's needs to be written in their care plan or record, so they do not have to ask every time.

Sources (read 8 Oct 2026): NHS England, "Guidance for commissioners: Interpreting and Translation Services in Primary Care", www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/guidance-for-commissioners-interpreting-and-translation-services-in-primary-care.pdf; GOV.UK, "Language interpreting and translation: migrant health guide", www.gov.uk/guidance/language-interpretation-migrant-health-guide; Welsh Government, "Standard operating procedure: commissioning interpretation and translation services in primary and emergency healthcare", www.gov.wales/standard-operating-procedure-commissioning-interpretation-and-translation-services-primary-and-emergency-healthcare.html; Business Services Organisation (Northern Ireland Health and Social Care), interpreting service information page, bso.hscni.net/directorates/operations/regional-interpreting-service/information-for-patients/; NHS inform, "Communication and involving you", www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/health-rights/communication-and-consent/communication-and-involving-you/; NHS England, "Accessible Information Standard", www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/patient-equalities-programme/equality-frameworks-and-information-standards/accessibleinfo/; Equality Act 2010, section 20, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/20; Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, "Disability discrimination", equalityni.org/your-rights/disability-discrimination

06

Get help



- **The service itself:** ask to speak to the manager, and ask for their complaints process. Module 3 explains how to complain.
- **England, Scotland and Wales:** Equality Advisory and Support Service, free advice about discrimination and human rights. Phone 0808 800 0082, textphone 0808 800 0084. www.equalityadvisoryservice.com
- **Northern Ireland:** Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, free and confidential advice about discrimination. Phone 028 9050 0600. www.equalityni.org
- **Carers UK helpline:** 0808 808 7777 (free). Advice for carers in all four nations, including your rights at work. www.carersuk.org
- **Citizens Advice:** England and Wales, www.citizensadvice.org.uk ; Scotland, www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland ; Northern Ireland, Advice NI, www.adviceni.net
- **Interpreters and accessible information:** ask the GP practice, hospital, council or care agency directly. In Northern Ireland, ask your Health and Social Care Trust (www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/health-and-social-care-trusts).



Get help

Worried about someone's health? Contact their GP. If you need advice quickly, call NHS 111 (or go to 111.nhs.uk). In Northern Ireland, contact your GP out of hours service (www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/gp-out-hours-service). **If someone is in danger now, call 999.**

07

Your questions

**Write here**

Write your answers in the boxes. Take your time, and come back to them whenever you like. There are example answers at the back of this guide to compare with your own.

1. What matters most to the person you care for about their faith, culture or way of life?

2. Which language does the person feel most at home in? Does it change when they are tired or unwell?

3. Think of a time a service did not get things right for the person you care for. What happened, and what would have made it better?

4. A letter from a service is in a language the person cannot read. What could you ask for?

5. Write down what you would say to a care agency manager to explain what matters to the person you care for.

6. Which part of the UK do you live in? Which equality law applies there, and where could you get free advice?

7. If you work, what could help you balance work and caring? Who could you talk to?

8. Write down one thing you could ask a GP practice or hospital to do, so the person you care for can take part fully in their appointments.

08

Quick quiz



Tick one answer for each question. The answers, with the reasons, are at the back of this guide.

1. What is the best way to find out what matters to the person you care for, such as their faith, food or language?

- ☐ Guess from where they come from
- ☐ Ask them, and listen
- ☐ Do what you would want
- ☐ Ask the neighbours

2. Balbir would like a woman to help her wash. A man is sent. What is a good first step?

- ☐ Say nothing and put up with it
- ☐ Talk calmly to the care agency manager about her wishes
- ☐ Stop all her care straight away
- ☐ Post about it online

3. Which of these is an example of a service being unfair?

- ☐ A shop closes on a bank holiday
- ☐ A service gives someone a worse service because of their religion
- ☐ A GP surgery asks you to book ahead
- ☐ A bus is late in the snow

4. Which law is the main law against discrimination in England, Scotland and Wales?

- ☐ The Equality Act 2010
- ☐ The Highway Code
- ☐ The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- ☐ There is no law

5. Where does the Human Rights Act 1998 apply?

- ☐ England only
- ☐ The whole of the UK
- ☐ Scotland only
- ☐ Nowhere in the UK

6. You work and live in Wales. You care for your mum. What can you ask your employer for from your first day in the job?

- ☐ Flexible working
- ☐ Double pay
- ☐ A company car
- ☐ Nothing until you have worked there for 5 years

7. Your dad speaks Punjabi and little English. He has a GP appointment. What is the best thing to ask for?

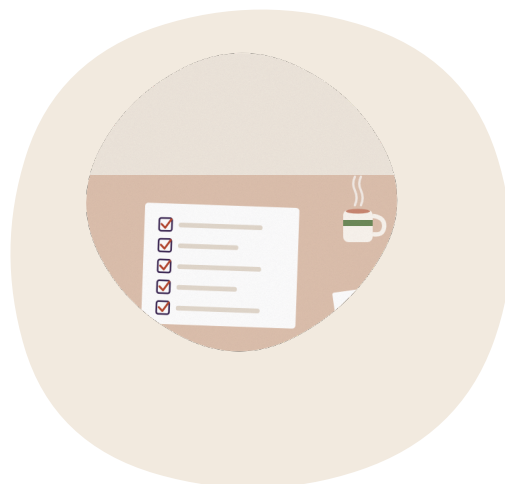
- ☐ A professional interpreter
- ☐ For a child in the family to interpret
- ☐ For the GP to speak more loudly
- ☐ Nothing, he will manage

8. You think a service has been unfair, and you live in Scotland. Where can you get free advice?

- ☐ The Equality Advisory and Support Service
- ☐ The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
- ☐ A bank
- ☐ Nowhere

09

Answers



Your questions

There are no wrong answers to most of these questions. These are examples to compare with your own.

1. There is no single right answer. You might write about prayer times, festivals, food, clothes, their language, music, or who they would like to help with washing and dressing. The best way to know is to ask them.
2. Many people find it easier to use their first language when they are tired, unwell or worried. If so, it may help to ask for a professional interpreter at appointments, even if they usually manage in English.
3. For example: a visit at a time that clashed with prayers, a letter in small print, or staff talking over the person. What could help: telling the manager what matters, asking for it to go in the care plan, and asking for reasonable changes.
4. Ask the service for the letter in a language or format the person can use, such as their own language, large print, braille or easy read. Ask for this to be noted, so future letters come the right way.
5. Keep it short and calm. For example: "My mum is vegetarian, she prays at 7 in the morning, and she would like a woman to help her wash. Please can visits come after 8, and can this go in her care plan?"

6. England, Scotland or Wales: the Equality Act 2010, and free advice from the Equality Advisory and Support Service (0808 800 0082). Northern Ireland: separate equality laws, and free advice from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (028 9050 0600). The Human Rights Act 1998 covers the whole UK.

7. You might ask for flexible working, such as different hours or working from home. In England, Scotland and Wales, you can ask from your first day and take up to 1 week of unpaid carer's leave every 12 months. In Northern Ireland, you can ask for flexible working once you have worked for your employer for 26 weeks, and only once every 12 months. The rules on carer's leave are different there. Talk to your manager, and get advice from Carers UK (0808 808 7777).

8. For example: book a professional interpreter, give a longer appointment, send letters in large print, or speak to the person directly rather than to you. You can ask for these needs to be written in their record.

Quick quiz

1. **Ask them, and listen.** Ask the person and listen. People from the same community can want very different things.

2. **Talk calmly to the care agency manager about her wishes.** Raise it with the agency manager and ask for her wishes to be written in the care plan.

3. **A service gives someone a worse service because of their religion.** Giving someone a worse service because of who they are, such as their religion, is discrimination.

4. **The Equality Act 2010.** In England, Scotland and Wales, the Equality Act 2010 is the main law against discrimination.

5. **The whole of the UK.** The Human Rights Act 1998 covers the whole UK. Public services must respect people's rights.

6. **Flexible working.** In England, Scotland and Wales, employees can ask for flexible working from their first day in a job.

7. A professional interpreter. Ask the practice to book a professional interpreter. NHS guidance says family should not usually interpret.

8. The Equality Advisory and Support Service. In England, Scotland and Wales, the Equality Advisory and Support Service gives free advice on discrimination.

10

Sources

Every source was read on 8 October 2026. Each section also lists its own sources at the end.

- **Section 1. Everyone is different.** GOV.UK, "Discrimination: your rights", www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights; Equality Act 2010, section 4 (the protected characteristics), www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/4; NHS website, "Care and support plans" (a plan includes what is important to you), www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/help-from-social-services-and-charities/care-and-support-plans/; Care Quality Commission, "Culturally appropriate care", www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/adult-social-care/culturally-appropriate-care
- **Section 2. Being fair.** GOV.UK, "Discrimination: your rights", www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights; Equality Act 2010, sections 20, 26 and 29, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/20 , www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/26 and www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/29; Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, "Disability discrimination", equalityni.org/your-rights/disability-discrimination
- **Section 3. Rights in plain words.** GOV.UK, "Discrimination: your rights", www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights; Equality Act 2010, section 217 (where it applies), www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/217; Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, "Your rights", www.equalityni.org/Individuals; Human Rights Act 1998, section 6, section 22 and Schedule 1, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/section/6 , www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/section/22 and www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/schedule/1

- Section 4. Your rights as a carer at work.** GOV.UK, "Discrimination: your rights", www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights; GOV.UK, "Flexible working", www.gov.uk/flexible-working and www.gov.uk/flexible-working/after-the-application; GOV.UK, "Unpaid carer's leave", www.gov.uk/carers-leave; nidirect, "Caring for someone while working", www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/caring-someone-while-working; Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland), "Introducing Carers Leave in NI" (May 2025), www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-05/UUEPC%20-%20Introducing%20Carers%20Leave%20in%20NI.PDF; Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service, "Support for Unpaid Carers in Northern Ireland" (2024), www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2022-2027/2024/economy/0824.pdf
- Section 5. Asking for what the person needs.** NHS England, "Guidance for commissioners: Interpreting and Translation Services in Primary Care", www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/guidance-for-commissioners-in-interpreting-and-translation-services-in-primary-care.pdf; GOV.UK, "Language interpreting and translation: migrant health guide", www.gov.uk/guidance/language-interpretation-migrant-health-guide; Welsh Government, "Standard operating procedure: commissioning interpretation and translation services in primary and emergency healthcare", www.gov.wales/standard-operating-procedure-commissioning-interpretation-and-translation-services-primary-and-emergency-healthcare; Business Services Organisation (Northern Ireland Health and Social Care), interpreting service information page, bsc.hscni.net/directorates/operations/regional-interpreting-service/information-for-patients/; NHS inform, "Communication and involving you", www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/health-rights/communication-and-consent/communication-and-involving-you/; NHS England, "Accessible Information Standard", www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/patient-equalities-programme/equality-frameworks-and-information-standards/accessibleinfo/; Equality Act 2010, section 20, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/20; Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, "Disability discrimination", equalityni.org/your-rights/disability-discrimination



Coming Home

Less to hold in your head.

[**www.cominghomecare.app**](http://www.cominghomecare.app)