



COMING HOME GUIDE

Looking after yourself as a carer: a family guide

For England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

Version 1.0.1 • October 2026. Next review: October 2027

About this guide

This guide is correct at October 2026, version 1.0.1. We've written it in good faith as general guidance to help carers and families. It isn't legal, financial or medical advice. Rules and rates change, so before you act, please make sure you have the latest version of this guide and look at the official sources: GOV.UK, Social Security Scotland, nidirect and your local council. 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. For urgent advice, contact NHS 111.

Published by Caresque Limited, company number 16160381.

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How to use this guide

Version 1.0.1. October 2026. Next review: October 2027. Information read on 4 October 2026. We review this guide every year, and straight away if a right, service or rule it describes changes.

Who this guide is for: you, if you help look after someone because of illness, disability, older age, a mental health condition or an addiction. That might be a partner, a parent, a child, a brother or sister, or a friend. You don't have to live with them, be related to them, or get Carer's Allowance. You can be any age. It covers England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

How to use it: read only the part you need. Sections 2 to 4 cover the help you can ask for. Section 5 is for young carers. Section 6 is about work. Sections 7 and 8 are about your own health and feelings. Every fact has a source and a date (see "Sources").

Guidance, not advice. This guide explains your rights and where to find help. It can't give medical, legal or counselling advice, and it doesn't say anything about the health of the person you care for. If you have a question about their care, ask their GP or care team.

If you're worried about their health, contact their GP or NHS 111. In an emergency call 999.

If you're struggling, you can speak to your own GP too.

If you need to talk to someone right now, call Samaritans on 116 123, any time, day or night. It costs nothing to call from any phone (see "Who to call").

01

You're a carer, even if you don't call yourself one



Many people who look after someone don't think of themselves as a carer. They're "just" a daughter, a husband or a friend doing what anyone would do.

The NHS says you're a carer if you look after someone regularly because they're ill, older or disabled, including family members. Helping with washing, dressing, medicines, appointments, shopping, cleaning, bills or paperwork all counts. So does keeping someone company or keeping an eye on them if they can't be left alone ([NHS, Carer's assessments, reviewed 1 Jul 2022, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

mygov.scot adds that you can be an unpaid carer even if you don't live with the person, aren't related to them, are only caring some of the time, or they don't get any help from the council ([mygov.scot, Who is a carer, updated 12 Sep 2025, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

Why the word matters. Calling yourself a carer opens doors: a carer's assessment, breaks, rights at work, carers' centres and money. None of it starts until someone knows you're caring.

Tell your GP. nidirect says your GP may not know you're a carer, so make sure you tell them. You can ask for extra time at an appointment, and ask about a home visit if it's hard to leave the person you care for ([nidirect, Looking after yourself as a carer, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). That's good advice wherever you live.

02

A carer's assessment, in all four nations



A carer's assessment is a conversation about **you**: how caring affects your health, work, sleep, relationships and time for yourself, and what would help. It's separate from any assessment of the person you care for, although you can usually ask for both at the same time.

England

The NHS says anyone over 18 who cares for someone can ask for a carer's assessment, and it costs nothing. Contact adult social services at your local council, by phone or online. It might lead to things like someone taking over so you can have a break, help with taxi fares, help with housework or gardening, training in how to help someone move safely, exercise classes, or being put in touch with local groups (NHS, Carer's assessments). Councils must assess carers who appear to need support under the Care Act 2014 ([Care Act 2014, section 10, legislation.gov.uk](#)).

The NHS says assessments are usually face to face and last at least an hour, though some councils do them by phone or online. If you qualify for help, the council writes a support plan with you. If you don't, the council should still tell you where to find help locally. You might be asked to have a financial assessment before the council pays towards some services (NHS, Carer's assessments).

Wales

The Welsh Government says your council must carry out a **carer's needs assessment** if you may need support. These rights are the same for all carers, whether you're a child, a young person or an adult. Your right to an assessment doesn't depend on how much money you have, though you may be asked to pay towards some support. You can have a friend or family member with you, and an independent advocate must be arranged if you can't speak up for yourself and have no one to help ([Welsh Government, Understanding your rights as a carer, leaflet updated Oct 2021, read 4 Oct 2026](#); [Welsh Government, Carers' rights](#)). The law is the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Scotland

In Scotland it's called an **Adult Carer Support Plan**, or a **Young Carer Statement** if you're under 18, or 18 and still at school. [mygov.scot](#) says you have the right to a plan from your council that sets out your caring role, your physical, mental and emotional needs, whether you're able and willing to keep caring, what support the council will give, and an emergency plan for if you're ill. Ask the council's social care department or your local carers' centre, and you should get a written copy ([mygov.scot, Get an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). These rights come from the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, and the Scottish Government's Carers' Charter explains them ([Scottish Government, Carers' charter](#)).

Northern Ireland

[nidirect](#) says that if you give a regular and significant amount of care, you're entitled to a **carer's assessment** from your Health and Social Care Trust. It can happen at your home or the home of the person you care for, and they don't need to be there. If two people in the household both give regular care, you can both have one. Your right to an assessment isn't linked to your income or savings, and you can ask for a re-assessment if things change ([nidirect, Assessments for carers, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

Getting ready for the assessment

nidirect suggests keeping a list or diary of everything you do for the person you care for (nidirect, Assessments for carers). It can help to think about:

- what you do in a typical day and night, including the things nobody sees
- whether you get enough sleep, and whether caring affects your health
- whether you can leave the person on their own, and for how long
- your work, study, or wish to work or study
- time for yourself, your friends and the rest of your family
- what would happen if you were ill or couldn't carry on
- what would make the biggest difference

Say how things really are, not how you manage on a good day. You can have someone with you. Ask for a copy of what's written down.

If you disagree with the outcome or how it was done, you can complain to the council (or the Trust in Northern Ireland). In England, if you're not happy with how the council deals with it, you can go to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (NHS, Carer's assessments). Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland each have their own public services ombudsman.



03

Breaks and respite



Everyone needs time off. The NHS says respite care means taking a break from caring while the person you care for is looked after by someone else, and that it helps you avoid becoming exhausted and run down ([NHS, Carers' breaks and respite care, reviewed 1 May 2026, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

What a break can look like

The NHS lists:

- a day centre for the person you care for
- a paid carer coming to their home, for a few hours a week or for a week while you go away
- a short stay in a care home
- friends and family stepping in
- breaks and holidays designed for carers and the people they look after
- sitting services, where a trained volunteer keeps the person company for a few hours

(NHS, Carers' breaks and respite care.) In Northern Ireland, nidirect says Trusts can arrange day or night sitting services, a short stay in a care home, time in a day centre, or outings for the person you care for, though not every service is available everywhere ([nidirect, Looking after yourself as a carer](#)).

A break doesn't have to mean going away. It might be one evening a week to see friends, or a full night's sleep.

How to get one

The NHS says councils only pay for breaks for people they've assessed as needing them, so it's worth both of you having an assessment: a carer's assessment for you, and a needs assessment for the person you care for. If the council agrees to help, it does a financial assessment to work out what it will pay, and you can ask it to arrange the break or take a direct payment and arrange it yourselves (NHS, Carers' breaks and respite care). Our guide to arranging care explains needs assessments and how charging works ([Coming Home, Arranging care](#)).

In Scotland, breaks are part of your Adult Carer Support Plan, and each council publishes a short breaks services statement setting out what's available (Scottish Government, Carers' charter). In Wales and Northern Ireland, ask about breaks at your carer's assessment.

Carers Trust's network of local carer services and Carers UK can tell you about charities that offer sitting services or grants towards a break (see section 4).

If you get Carer's Allowance, there are rules about breaks in caring. Our Carer's Allowance guide explains them ([Coming Home, Carer's Allowance](#)).

A plan for emergencies

The NHS suggests thinking now about who could step in if you suddenly couldn't be there, for example if you had an accident. Make sure they can get into the home, and write some notes about the care the person needs and leave them where they're easy to find (NHS, Carers' breaks and respite care). Your carer's assessment or support plan can include an emergency plan (mygov.scot, Get an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement; nidirect, Assessments for carers). Carers UK says some areas run carers' emergency card schemes; your local carers' organisation will know ([Carers UK, Helpline and other support, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

04

Carers' centres and local support



A local carers' centre or carers' service is a good first call. Carers UK says local carers' organisations have detailed information on support where you live, such as how to get a carer's assessment, emergency card schemes and local breaks (Carers UK, Helpline and other support). Many also run groups, offer someone to talk to, and help with forms.

How to find one:

- **Carers Trust** has a UK-wide network of local carer services. Enter your postcode on its "Carer services near you" page ([Carers Trust, Carer services near you, read 4 Oct 2026](#)), or call 0300 772 9600, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm ([Carers Trust, Contact us, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).
- **Carers UK** has a directory of local carers' organisations and council social services across the UK ([Carers UK, Support where you live, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).
- **Scotland:** mygov.scot says you can get support from your local carer centre, and you don't need to be on any register to get help ([mygov.scot, Help if you're a carer, updated 12 Sep 2025, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).
- **Wales:** the Welsh Government points carers to Carers Wales and Carers Trust Wales (Welsh Government, Carers' rights).
- **Northern Ireland:** nidirect points to Carers NI, and says some areas have carers' workers who coordinate groups and support ([nidirect, Looking after yourself as a carer](#)). Your Trust can tell you about its carers' services.

Online. Carers UK runs online meetups, and its online forum is open to members 24 hours a day. Joining Carers UK costs nothing; it asks for a donation if you can give one (Carers UK, Helpline and other support).

05

Young carers and young adult carers



This section is for you if you're under 18 and help look after someone, or if you're 16 to 25 and caring while you study, train or start work.

Caring can be something you're proud of. But you have a right to a childhood, an education and a life of your own too. The NHS says it's important you decide how much and what type of care you're willing or able to give, and that disabled adults are entitled to support from their council so they shouldn't have to rely on their children ([NHS, Being a young carer: your rights, reviewed 27 Mar 2024, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

England

If you or your parents ask, the council must arrange a **young carer's assessment**. It must look at your education, training, free time and hopes for the future, and ask what you want. Everyone involved should get a written record, including whether the council will give support and what to do if you disagree ([NHS, Being a young carer: your rights](#)).

If you're nearly 18 and still caring, the council must assess what support you're likely to need as an adult carer, where that would help you and you agree ([Care Act 2014, section 63, legislation.gov.uk](#)).

Wales

Young carers have the same right to a carer's needs assessment as adult carers (Welsh Government, Understanding your rights as a carer). Wales also has the **Young Carers ID Card**, which helps professionals such as doctors, teachers and pharmacists recognise and support young carers. Carers Trust Wales runs it with councils, and it's available in all 22 Welsh local authorities. Ask your council or your local young carers service ([Carers Trust Wales, Young Carers ID Card](#), read 4 Oct 2026).

Scotland

You're a young carer if you're under 18, or 18 and still at school, and you're entitled to a **Young Carer Statement**. You can share it with your school, and once your school knows, it must support you to stay in school and reach your goals. When you turn 19, ask for an Adult Carer Support Plan; your Young Carer Statement carries on until the new plan is agreed ([mygov.scot, Extra support for young carers, updated 12 Sep 2025, read 4 Oct 2026](#); mygov.scot, Get an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement).

Young Carer Grant (Scotland). A yearly payment for young carers aged 16, 17, 18 or 19 who care for an average of 16 hours a week (for 1, 2 or 3 people combined) and have done for at least the last 3 months. You can apply once a year until you turn 20, and you can spend it however you like. You can't get it if you already get Carer Support Payment or Carer's Allowance ([mygov.scot, Young Carer Grant, updated 10 Aug 2026, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

Young Carer Grant amount

£405.10 a year (mygov.scot, Young Carer Grant, read 4 Oct 2026)

Northern Ireland

nidirect says a young carer is under 18 and is entitled to a **young carer's needs assessment** from the Health and Social Care Trust or the Regional Young Carers Service. It should look at the care you give and whether you want to, how caring

affects school and free time, and how you feel about the future. You should get a written copy and be told what to do if you disagree ([nidirect](#), [Young carers](#), read 4 Oct 2026).

School, college and university

[nidirect](#) says schools can help in different ways, such as letting you use a phone at break times to call the person you look after, putting you in touch with a young carers service, or giving extra time for schoolwork when the person you care for is ill ([nidirect](#), [Young carers](#)). Colleges and universities usually have student support teams; tell them you're a carer.

Money while studying. If you're thinking about Carer's Allowance while you study, there are rules about full-time education. Our Carer's Allowance guide explains them ([Coming Home](#), [Carer's Allowance](#)). If you're disabled yourself, our PIP guide may help ([Coming Home](#), [PIP](#)).

Help for young carers: Carers Trust has local young carers services across the UK (Carers Trust, Carer services near you). In Northern Ireland, [nidirect](#) lists local young carers services run by children's charities ([nidirect](#), [Young carers](#)).



06

Working and caring



Many carers work, and many want to keep working. You have rights, and it can help to talk to your manager or HR team early.

Carer's leave (England, Scotland and Wales)

GOV.UK says employees can take up to one week of unpaid carer's leave every 12 months, from their first day in a job, to give or arrange care for someone with a long-term care need. A "week" means the time you usually work over 7 days, so if you work 3 days a week you can take 3 days. You can take it as a whole week, single days or half days. For a day or half a day, give at least 3 days' notice; for longer, give notice of at least twice the length of the leave. The request doesn't have to be in writing, and you don't need to give evidence. Your employer can't refuse, but can ask you to take it at another time if your absence would cause serious disruption ([GOV.UK, Unpaid carer's leave, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). The rules apply in England, Wales and Scotland ([The Carer's Leave Regulations 2024, legislation.gov.uk](#)).

Time off in an emergency

GOV.UK says employees can take a reasonable amount of time off to deal with an emergency involving someone who depends on them for care. There's no set amount, and your employer doesn't have to pay you for it ([GOV.UK, Time off for family and dependants, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

Flexible working

GOV.UK says all employees can ask for flexible working from their first day in a job: different hours, start and finish times, days or place of work. Employers must deal with requests in a reasonable way and can only refuse for a good business reason ([GOV.UK, Flexible working, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).

Northern Ireland has different rules

Time off in an emergency: you can take a reasonable amount of time off to deal with an emergency involving someone who depends on you, whatever your length of service ([nidirect, Time off for dependants \(compassionate leave\), read 4 Oct 2026](#); [legislation.gov.uk, Employment Rights \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1996, article 85A](#)).

nidirect also says:

- to ask for flexible working, you must have worked for your employer for 26 weeks in a row when you apply, and you can make one request in any 12 months
- some employers offer carer's leave, paid or unpaid, as well as compassionate leave, borrowing or buying leave and career breaks, but these depend on your employer

([nidirect, Caring for someone while working, read 4 Oct 2026](#).) Advice NI can help with your rights (see "Who to call").

Our cancer and end of life guides cover work in more detail ([Coming Home, Cancer](#); [Coming Home, End of life](#)).

Earnings, and thinking about giving up work

If you get Carer's Allowance, there's a limit on what you can earn. Our Carer's Allowance guide explains how it's counted ([Coming Home, Carer's Allowance](#)). Before you reduce your hours or leave work, it's worth asking your employer what's possible, asking for a carer's assessment (nidirect says it can look at what help you'd need to keep working), and getting advice on money and your State Pension, including Carer's Credit ([Coming Home, Carer's Allowance](#)).

07

Your own health



Your health matters as much as theirs. Caring can mean broken sleep, missed meals, a sore back and no time for your own appointments.

Your GP. Tell them you're a carer, and keep your own appointments where you can. [nidirect](#) says your GP can be a route to social services, counselling and organisations that can help, and that you can ask for prescriptions to be delivered if it's hard to get out ([nidirect](#), [Looking after yourself as a carer](#)).

The flu vaccine. In England, the NHS offers the flu vaccine every autumn or winter to people who are the main carer for an older or disabled person, or who get Carer's Allowance ([NHS, Flu vaccine, reviewed 29 Sep 2026, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). In Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, ask your GP or pharmacy whether you can have it as a carer.

Helping someone move. If you help the person you care for get up, wash or move around, ask for an occupational therapy assessment. An occupational therapist can suggest equipment and ways of doing things that are easier on both of you. Our guides to adapting a home and Disabled Facilities Grants explain how ([Coming Home, Adapting a home](#); [Coming Home, Disabled Facilities Grants](#)). The NHS says a carer's assessment can include training in how to help someone move safely ([NHS, Carer's assessments](#)).

Small things. Rest when you can. Eat something proper. Step outside, even for ten minutes. Say yes when someone offers to help, and tell them what would help most.

If you're worried about their health, contact their GP or NHS 111. In an emergency call 999.

If you're struggling, you can speak to your own GP too.

08

Feelings, guilt and grief



Caring can bring love, pride and closeness. It can also bring tiredness, loneliness, frustration, resentment, sadness and guilt, sometimes all in the same day. Many carers feel this. There's no right way to feel, and having hard feelings doesn't mean you care any less.

Guilt is one of the most common feelings carers talk about: guilt about wanting a break, about losing your temper, about feeling relieved when someone else takes over, or about a move into a care home. Feeling guilty doesn't mean you've done anything wrong.

Grief can start while the person is still alive. You might grieve for the life you had together, for how they used to be, or for plans that have changed. If the person you care for is dying, or has died, our end of life guide talks about grief and where to find support ([Coming Home, End of life](#)).

You don't have to carry this on your own. This guide can't offer counselling, but these people can listen:

- **Your local carers' centre** and carers' groups, where other people understand (section 4).
- **Carers UK Helpline**, for information and support about caring (see "Who to call").

- **Samaritans**, on 116 123, any time, day or night. Samaritans says it won't judge you or tell you what to do, and people call about all sorts of things, including family problems, money worries, loneliness and loss ([Samaritans, Contact a Samaritan, read 4 Oct 2026](#)).
- **Your GP**, who can talk with you about your own wellbeing and what support is available.

NHS and official support for your mental health

These are official services. They're listed here so you know they exist; it's your choice whether to use them.

- **England:** you can refer yourself to **NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression** without seeing a GP, if you're registered with a GP and aged 18 or over (16 or over in some areas), or ask your GP to refer you ([NHS, Find NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression, reviewed 14 Feb 2025, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). If you need help for your mental health quickly, the NHS says to use NHS 111 online or call 111 ([NHS, Mental health services, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). Carers UK says you can choose the mental health option when you call (Carers UK, Helpline and other support).
- **Wales:** call NHS 111 and press 2 to speak to a mental health professional in your area, at any time and at any age, including if you're concerned about a family member. It costs nothing from a landline or mobile, and calls are welcome in Welsh ([Welsh Government, NHS 111 Press 2, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). The CALL Mental Health Helpline for Wales offers a confidential listening and support service on 0800 132 737, 24 hours a day ([CALL Helpline, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). Your GP can tell you about local mental health support.
- **Scotland:** call NHS 24 on 111 and choose the mental health option to reach the NHS 24 Mental Health Hub, open to all ages ([NHS 24, Mental health services at NHS 24, read through search results 4 Oct 2026](#)). **Breathing Space**, run by NHS 24, is a confidential phone line for anyone in Scotland over 16 feeling low, anxious or depressed: 0800 83 85 87, Monday to Thursday 6pm to 2am, and from 6pm Friday to 6am Monday ([Breathing Space, Get in touch, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). Your GP can refer you to local psychological therapies.
- **Northern Ireland:** Lifeline is Northern Ireland's crisis response helpline, for everyone in Northern Ireland, open 24 hours every day, on 0808 808 8000. You can also call if you're concerned about a friend or family member, and

nidirect says it gives support and guidance to carers too ([nidirect](#), [Mental health emergency: if you're in crisis or despair, read 4 Oct 2026](#)). Your GP or the GP out of hours service can tell you about mental health services in your Trust area.

If you feel you can't keep yourself safe, call 999.



09

Money for carers, in brief



Money worries make everything harder. This guide doesn't explain the benefits in detail, but these are the main ones to look into:

- **Carer's Allowance** (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and **Carer Support Payment** (Scotland), if you care for someone for at least 35 hours a week ([Coming Home, Carer's Allowance](#); Northern Ireland: [Coming Home, Carer's Allowance](#)).
- **Carer's Credit**, which can protect your State Pension if you don't get Carer's Allowance ([Coming Home, Carer's Allowance](#)).
- **Young Carer Grant** in Scotland (section 5).
- **Help with Council Tax** (rates in Northern Ireland), energy bills and travel, and benefits for the person you care for ([Coming Home, Money and help](#)).

The Benefits finder asks 8 quick questions and points you to what might be worth claiming ([Coming Home, Benefits finder](#)).

10

When caring changes



Caring rarely stays the same. Your rights as a carer carry on as long as you're caring, and you can ask for your carer's assessment or support plan to be looked at again when things change (nidirect, Assessments for carers; mygov.scot, Get an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement).

- **Coming home from hospital.** You have rights as a carer when someone leaves hospital ([Coming Home](#), [Coming home from hospital](#)).
- **More help at home or a move into a care home.** Our guide to arranging care explains assessments, home care, care homes and paying for care ([Coming Home](#), [Arranging care](#)).
- **Caring for someone with a particular condition.** Our guides to dementia, stroke, MND and cancer each have a section on looking after yourself ([Coming Home](#), [Dementia](#); [Coming Home](#), [After a stroke](#); [Coming Home](#), [MND](#); [Coming Home](#), [Cancer](#)).
- **The end of life.** Our end of life guide covers caring for someone who is dying, and what happens after ([Coming Home](#), [End of life](#)).
- **When caring ends.** mygov.scot says there's support when your caring role ends too (mygov.scot, [Help if you're a carer](#)). Your carers' centre can help you think about what comes next.

11

Across the four nations



	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Carer's assessment	Carer's assessment from the council (Care Act 2014)	Carer's needs assessment from the council (Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014)	Adult Carer Support Plan from the council or carers' centre (Carers (Scotland) Act 2016)	Carer's assessment from the Health and Social Care Trust
Young carers	Young carer's assessment; adult carer assessment near 18	Carer's needs assessment at any age; Young Carers ID card	Young Carer Statement; Young Carer Grant	Young carer's needs assessment from the Trust or Regional Young Carers Service

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Work	Carer's leave and flexible working from day one	Carer's leave and flexible working from day one	Carer's leave and flexible working from day one	Carer's leave depends on your employer; flexible working after 26 weeks
Carer benefit	Carer's Allowance	Carer's Allowance	Carer Support Payment	Carer's Allowance
Mental health line	111, mental health option	111, press 2; CALL	111, mental health option; Breathing Space	Lifeline 0808 808 8000
Carers' charity	Carers UK, Carers Trust	Carers Wales, Carers Trust Wales	Carers Scotland, Carers Trust Scotland	Carers NI

Samaritans (116 123) is there for everyone, in every nation.

12

How Coming Home can help



Coming Home: Family Care is an iPhone app for families looking after someone. It's coming soon. It helps you organise. It isn't medical advice.

The care circle brings the family, friends and neighbours who help into one place, with shared notes, tasks and a calendar, so it isn't all on you and people can see where they can help.

The family care diary helps you note what you do and what's changed, which is useful when you're getting ready for a carer's assessment.

The document vault, stored in the UK, keeps your support plan, letters and important papers in one place.

To hear when Coming Home is ready, join the waitlist:

www.cominghomecare.app/?ref=guide-looking-after-yourself

Built by people who know home care.

13

Who to call



This guide is guidance, not advice. For support and advice:

- **Carers UK Helpline:** 0808 808 7777, Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm, including bank holidays, or email advice@carersuk.org ([Carers UK, Helpline and other support, read 4 Oct 2026](#))
- **Carers Scotland:** 0141 378 1065 ([Carers Scotland, Contact us, read 4 Oct 2026](#))
- **Carers Wales:** 029 2081 1370, Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm. If you leave a message, it calls back within 2 working days ([Carers Wales, Get in touch with us, read 4 Oct 2026](#))
- **Carers NI office:** 028 9043 9843 ([Carers NI, Contact us, read 4 Oct 2026](#))
- **Carers NI advice:** the Carers UK Helpline, 0808 808 7777, Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm, including bank holidays ([Carers NI, Helpline and other support, read 4 Oct 2026](#))
- **Carers Trust:** 0300 772 9600, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm (Carers Trust, Contact us). Find local carer services and young carers services by postcode (Carers Trust, Carer services near you)
- **Samaritans:** 116 123, any time, day or night. It costs nothing from any phone. Relay UK: 18001 44 116 123 (Samaritans, Contact a Samaritan)
- **Breathing Space (Scotland):** 0800 83 85 87, Monday to Thursday 6pm to 2am, and from 6pm Friday to 6am Monday (Breathing Space, Get in touch)
- **CALL Mental Health Helpline (Wales):** 0800 132 737, 24 hours a day (CALL Helpline)

- **Lifeline** (Northern Ireland's crisis response helpline): 0808 808 8000, 24 hours a day (nidirect, Mental health emergency)
- **Advice NI**: 0800 915 4604 ([Advice NI, Contact, read 4 Oct 2026](#))
- **Your council's adult social services** (children's services for young carers), or your **Health and Social Care Trust** in Northern Ireland, for a carer's assessment
- **Your GP, or NHS 111**. In an emergency call **999**

If you're worried about their health, contact their GP or NHS 111. In an emergency call 999.

If you're struggling, you can speak to your own GP too.



14

Sources

All read on 4 October 2026 unless another date is given. Dates in brackets are the page's own published, updated or reviewed date.

NHS

- NHS, Carer's assessments (reviewed 1 Jul 2022): www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carers-assessments/
- NHS, Carers' breaks and respite care (reviewed 1 May 2026): www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carers-breaks-and-respite-care/
- NHS, Being a young carer: your rights (reviewed 27 Mar 2024): www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/support-and-benefits-for-carers/being-a-young-carer-your-rights/
- NHS, Flu vaccine (reviewed 29 Sep 2026): www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine/
- NHS, Find NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression (reviewed 14 Feb 2025): www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/find-nhs-talking-therapies-for-anxiety-and-depression/
- NHS, Mental health services: www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/
- NHS 24, Mental health services at NHS 24 (read through search results): www.nhs24.scot/mental-health-services-at-nhs-24/
- Breathing Space (NHS 24), Get in touch: breathingspace.scot/get-in-touch/

Official

- Care Act 2014, sections 10 and 63, legislation.gov.uk:
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/10 and
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/63
- Welsh Government, Carers' rights (updated 14 Oct 2021):
www.gov.wales/carers-rights
- Welsh Government, Understanding your rights as a carer (leaflet, Oct 2021):
www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-10/carers-rights-a5-leaflet.pdf
- Welsh Government, NHS 111 Press 2: www.gov.wales/nhs-111-press-2
- mygov.scot, Help if you're a carer (updated 12 Sep 2025):
www.mygov.scot/help-for-carer
- mygov.scot, Who is a carer (updated 12 Sep 2025):
www.mygov.scot/help-for-carer/who-is-carer
- mygov.scot, Get an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement:
www.mygov.scot/help-for-carer/carers-support-plan
- mygov.scot, Extra support for young carers (updated 12 Sep 2025):
www.mygov.scot/help-for-carer/extra-support-for-young-carers
- mygov.scot, Young Carer Grant (updated 10 Aug 2026):
www.mygov.scot/young-carer-grant
- Scottish Government, Carers' charter:
www.gov.scot/publications/carers-charter/
- nidirect, Assessments for carers:
www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/assessments-carers
- nidirect, Looking after yourself as a carer:
www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/looking-after-yourself-carer
- nidirect, Young carers: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/young-carers
- nidirect, Caring for someone while working:
www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/caring-someone-while-working
- nidirect, Time off for dependants (compassionate leave):
www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/time-dependants-compassionate-leave
- legislation.gov.uk, Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, article 85A: www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1996/1919/article/85A

- nidirect, Mental health emergency: if you're in crisis or despair: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/mental-health-emergency-if-youre-crisis-or-despair
- GOV.UK, Unpaid carer's leave: www.gov.uk/carers-leave
- The Carer's Leave Regulations 2024, legislation.gov.uk: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2024/251/made
- GOV.UK, Time off for family and dependants: www.gov.uk/time-off-for-dependants
- GOV.UK, Flexible working: www.gov.uk/flexible-working

Charities

- Carers UK, Helpline and other support: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/helpline-and-other-support/
- Carers UK, Support where you live: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/support-where-you-live/
- Carers Scotland, Contact us: www.carersuk.org/scotland/contact-us/
- Carers Wales, Get in touch with us: www.carersuk.org/wales/help-and-advice/get-in-touch-with-us/
- Carers NI, Contact us: www.carersuk.org/ni/contact-us/
- Carers NI, Helpline and other support: www.carersuk.org/ni/help-and-advice/helpline-and-other-support/
- Carers Trust, Contact us: carers.org/home/contact-us-1
- Carers Trust, Carer services near you: carers.org/help-for-carers/carers-services-near-you
- Carers Trust Wales, Young Carers ID Card: carers.org/young-carers-and-education/ycid
- Samaritans, Contact a Samaritan: www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/
- CALL Mental Health Helpline for Wales: www.callhelpline.org.uk/
- Advice NI, Contact: www.adviceni.net/contact

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Changelog

Version	Date	What changed	Why
1.0	October 2026	First published	Information read on 4 October 2026
1.0.1	October 2026	Corrected section 6: in Northern Ireland, time off for dependants in an emergency has no qualifying period	Version 1.0 said a year's service was needed. The law (article 85A) and nidirect say it applies whatever your length of service

The next review is due in October 2027, or straight away if a right, service or rule changes. The latest version is always at

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This edition

Version	1.0.1
Published	October 2026
Next review	October 2027



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