



HM Government



Looking after family or friends after they leave hospital?



This leaflet lists useful advice for family and friends of people needing ongoing care or support with day-to-day life.

What kind of support could you give someone

Support may be in the home or remotely (e.g. by phone), such as:

- **Emotional support** like helping someone manage anxiety or mental health;
- **Housework** like cooking, cleaning or other chores;
- **Personal support** like help moving around, washing, eating or getting dressed;
- **Assistance with getting essential items** like medicine or food; or
- **Help to manage money, paid care or other services**



If you are not able to care, and/or need help, then you have a right to a carer's assessment to have your needs considered too.

Check what your council or local authority can offer. Find their websites using the online postcode tool at www.gov.uk/find-local-council. Services may change during the pandemic.

What to consider if you are looking after someone

1. Get help from others with caring and everyday tasks:

- **Go to the Carers UK and Carers Trust websites** for information about support available. Carers UK also have an online forum where you can speak to other carers, and a free helpline, open Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm on **0808 808 7777**. Carers UK website: www.carersuk.org/

See over...



- **If you are employed, talk to your employer** about managing work whilst caring. You may be able to arrange flexible working and many employers offer other support to make things easier.
- **If you are at school, college or university, let them know you are caring for someone** so they can help you manage your studies. Carers Trust has lots of helpful advice for young people looking after family members or friends. Carers Trust website: www.carers.org/
- **Get specialist advice about caring** from condition-related organisations like Alzheimer's Society, MIND and others. Also AgeUK: www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/arranging-care/homecare/
- **Try not to do everything yourself!** Speak to friends and family about what others can do to help. Can they share any tasks?

2. **Look after your health as well as the person you support:**

It is important to look after your own health and wellbeing. Eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep and try to make time each day for physical activity. Even taking a few breaths can relieve stress and help you manage each day. Check out the NHS 'Every Mind Matters' website for more tips: www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/. If your own health or the health of the person you support gets worse, with coronavirus or another illness, talk to your GP or call NHS **111**.

3. **Think ahead to make care manageable if things change:**

Write down what care the person needs and what others should do if you cannot continue providing care for any reason. It is important that others can easily find your plan and quickly understand what needs to be done if you aren't there. Carers UK have advice on their website on how to make your plan.

4. **Read the Government guidance for unpaid carers:**

For more detailed advice on caring for friends or family during coronavirus search for '**unpaid care coronavirus gov.uk**' online.

5. **Seek extra support from NHS Volunteer Responders:**

Carers as well as those they care for can get a range of help including with shopping and other support by calling **0808 196 3646**.