



CARERS FACT SHEET 8

Paid Work and Caring

Many carers want to continue working as well as caring – apart from the obvious financial benefits, you may find that work gives you a social outlet and helps you to feel less isolated.

The Government has recognised this and has launched many initiatives to enable you to carry on working. All employees are now entitled to time off to attend to ‘family emergencies’, and this means, for example, that you have the right to take time off to go with the person you care for to a hospital appointment. Your employer doesn’t have to pay you for this time, though, so you should check what their policy is first. In the case of large employers, it is worth seeing what options are available to enable you to change the way you work. You may be able to work reduced or different hours, or change your work base to make it easier to reach.

You should make sure you have regular and easy access to a telephone, so that you can check that all is well with the person you care for when you need to.

Increasingly, it is becoming possible to work from home, making use of modern technology, mobile phones and the Internet to keep in touch. Ask your employer about these options.

Remember that, if you choose to carry on working, the local Social Services Department and other agencies still have a duty to provide the care deemed necessary – you are not being selfish if you decide you don’t want to give up your job.

If you decide you want to return to work, you may need to improve your skills to cope with a more modern job market. See what courses your local Further Education College has on offer, or contact your local Job Centre Plus for advice.