

Some questions asked by carers

How can I relax?
Where can I get help?
When should I seek help?
Who will advocate for me?
What is meant by restraint?
Where can I get information?
What respite care is available?
How can I get help in the home?
How do I get help with transport?
How can I take more care of myself?
What allowances or pensions are there?
How do I access any modern technology?
How do I develop an emergency care plan?
How can I get advice on safety and security?
How do I know what financial help is available?
How can I prevent the person I care for being abused?
How do I recognise that the person I care about is being abused?
What will happen to the person I care for, if I have an accident?
What are our rights to refuse physical/chemical restraint?
Can I get discount on any services, supplies or goods?
How do I decide between restraint, risks and rights?
How do I decide between money and dignity?
How can I get help with Home Maintenance?
How can I get in touch with other carers?
What transport facilities are available?
What counselling am I entitled to?
How can I make my role easier?
How can I care safely at home?
Is there a retreat for carers?
What support is available?
How can I get training?
Who can help me?

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Carers

Thoughts and Questions

Many people do not really appreciate what carers do, or need or want, or how they want to be treated until they become carers themselves.

Carers Together is run by carers who know what it feels like to be a carer.

We may be able to help with benefits advice, other advice, information, advocacy or support.

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Carers Together

Charity No. 1051879

Some thoughts and ideas about carers

Caring, for the unpaid carer is not a job, a career or a vocation.

It is needs led and emotionally fuelled. It does not cease because someone goes into a home or hospital. If anything it becomes more difficult because a feeling of guilt is added to love, care and support.

Carers do not choose to become carers. They become carers because of the circumstances they find themselves in. This may be looking after a parent, who has developed behaviour or memory problems. It may mean giving extra time to a child with disabilities, and giving less time than you would wish to the other children in the family. It could be caring for an adult son or daughter when you are approaching retirement yourself.

Carers contend daily with divided loyalties, conflicting needs, and the extra strain of helping, or taking responsibility for, another person. This often prevents them having time for themselves, and can put other relationships under stress.

Carers are now recognised as essential 'providers' in their own right, and deserve to be consulted, informed, empowered, supported and listened to.

Carers cannot make decisions for the people they care for, if they are capable of making their own decisions; but carers are expected to support and help their dependents whatever they decide they want. In fact it is often implied that carers have a duty of care.

Carers cannot have their wishes and needs met, their desires fulfilled or their opinion respected unless they are able to access an assessment of their own needs, independent of the assessment of their dependent, with the results recorded.

Carers are expected to do what the dependent wants, look after them when they want, take responsibility for their care when the authorities want, but are seldom consulted by organisations planning and implementing services for them or the dependents.

Carers can collapse and still be made to feel guilty because they feel they cannot continue in an active caring role.

Many people do not really appreciate what carers do, or need or want, or how they want to be treated until they become carers (1 in 3 adults!) and by then they are a carer, and someone else does not appreciate them.

Some universal questions for all carers

How do you complain or make suggestions about services without affecting the life of the person you care for or making life difficult for them?

How can you have your say, or represent the needs of the person you care about, without being labelled a trouble causer?

Can carers break the chain of non-recognition, not being respected, not being really listened to, and not getting the support they really need from people who think they know best?

Do statutory/voluntary organisations take carers for granted?
Do they understand that carers need time to plan attendance at meetings, and cannot always change arrangements at short notice?

Do statutory/voluntary organisations understand that carers cannot assist health/social services to meet their legal obligations to consult with carers without adequate financial recompense for their alternate care and travel costs?

Do statutory/voluntary organisations consider and consult carers before, during and after planning and arranging services?

When will a range of flexible and imaginative services be available for carers to access and choose?

Will self directed support, personalisation, direct payments mean that carers will be able to access and choose the services best able to meet their needs?