

Who is a carer?

A carer is someone who, without pay, provides or arranges care for someone else who, because of long term illness, disability, or old age is not able to care for him or herself

or

A carer is a person who gives support and assistance to a relative, friend or neighbour who has an illness or chronic condition

A carer could be:

- A parent, sibling, relative or guardian looking after a disabled child.
- A son/daughter looking after a parent who is disabled either physically or mentally, some as young as 6 or 7, some as old as 76.
- A husband or wife caring for a spouse with a physical disability e.g. arthritis or stroke.
- A husband or wife caring for a spouse with mental illness e.g. Alzheimers.
- A parent looking after an adult son/daughter with mental health problems.
- A parent or sibling looking after an adult with learning difficulties.
- A relative, friend or neighbour who is caring for or about someone who is ill or disabled by health problems.
- A relative, friend or neighbour who is looking after, visiting or taking responsibility for the affairs of someone in residential care.

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Carers...

Can come from anywhere

Carers Together is an organisation of carers who know what it feels like to be a carer

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

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Carers Together

Charity No. 1051879



How do people become carers?

A carer is a carer because of compassion, duty, kindness, love and neighbourliness.

A carer is:

- Not paid
- Not chosen
- Not elected
- Not useless
- Not amateur
- Not ignorant
- Not incapable
- Not appointed
- Not uneducated
- Not unable to think
- Not lacking in skills
- Not unprofessional
- Not unable to speak
- Not in need of charity
- Not in need of a hair do
- Not there to be patronised
- Not able to live a 'normal' life
- Not always recognised by themselves
- Not free to do what they want when they want
- Not always treated well by statutory organisations
- Not always recognised by social, health or voluntary workers
- Not always consulted by statutory and voluntary organisations
- Not always appreciated by the person they care for or by others
- Not accepted as capable by some social, health or voluntary workers
- Not respected/considered by some social, health or voluntary workers

Just because people find themselves in a caring role, it does not mean they have lost their intelligence or become incapable of thinking, feeling or speaking for themselves. Carers retain their qualifications and their experience and do not suddenly become unprofessional because they are carers. Carers come from every walk of life and bring with them wide ranges of skills and experience.

Where do carers come from?

Carers do not come from outer space; they were not invented or manufactured. They could come from any career or profession and bring with them a varied range of knowledge and experience:

- A** Architect or Accountant
- B** Banker or Baker
- C** Councillor or Counsellor
- D** Doctor or Dentist
- E** Education Officer or Electrician
- F** Farmer or Fireman
- G** Geologist or General
- H** Hairdresser or Health Visitor
- I** Inventor or Intelligence Officer
- J** Judge or Joiner
- K** Kitchen Assistant or Knight
- L** Lawyer or Lecturer
- M** Model or Milliner
- N** Nurse or Nanny
- O** Optician or Orator
- P** Policeman or Pharmacist
- Q** Quantity Surveyor or Quiz Master
- R** Radiographer or Racing Driver
- S** Social Worker or Student
- T** Teacher or Tradesman
- U** Undertaker or Umpire
- V** Vicar or Veterinarian
- W** Writer or Window Dresser
- X** Xylophonist or X-ray Technician
- Y** Yachtsman or Yeoman
- Z** Zoo Keeper or Zoologist

Carers are not amateurs because they are unpaid and voluntary.

Carers do not need someone else to tell them what they want or need.

Carers do need a range of flexible support services to enable them to manage their own time effectively, and have a break from caring when, how and where needed.

