



A Pocket Guide for Employees

# Balancing work and being a carer

### **A pocket guide developed by Working Families**

Working Families is the UK's leading work-life organisation. We provide Practical evidence-based support to employees and the organisations for which they work.

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## **A Pocket Guide for Employees Balancing life and being a carer**

Written by Liz Morris with Susanne Jacobs

# Foreword

Working Families is the UK's leading work-life balance organisation. We are dedicated to building a future where individuals, families and organisations can thrive. We do this by:

- Conducting ground-breaking research to provide evidence for policy makers and employers to improve organisational performance and work-life balance
- Providing working parents and carers with advice and information, and help with negotiating flexible working arrangements
- Providing training and strategic consultancy to employers to develop high performance through employee engagement and wellbeing

- Campaigning for everyone to have the opportunity to find the balance they need between work and family life

With over 30 years of expertise in the field of work-life balance and flexible working, plus the support of employers and opinion formers, we can make a positive difference to organisations and to the lives of families.

This pocket guide represents a small part of what we do. We hope that you will find it useful, as many others have, in developing your own sense of balance together with a thriving family life and career.



Sarah Jackson, OBE  
CEO Working Families



## **Working Families**

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# 1. Introduction

A carer is someone who looks after or supports a friend, relative or neighbour who could not manage without their help. This could be due to age, or physical or mental illness, or disability.

Each caring situation is unique. Caring can involve a wide range of activities, for example: regular phone calls or visits, arranging medical appointments and ensuring medication is taken, arranging or providing meals and personal care, ensuring health and safety and providing emotional support.

If you are a carer, you are not alone. The latest census shows that there are over 6 million carers in the UK. It is very likely that one out of every seven of your colleagues is a carer, and that more than two thirds will become carers during their working lives. 42% of carers are men.

This pocket guide is designed to help carers of adults to balance a caring role with work. It contains an overview of your employment rights as well as practical tips and techniques.

# 2. My immediate needs and concerns

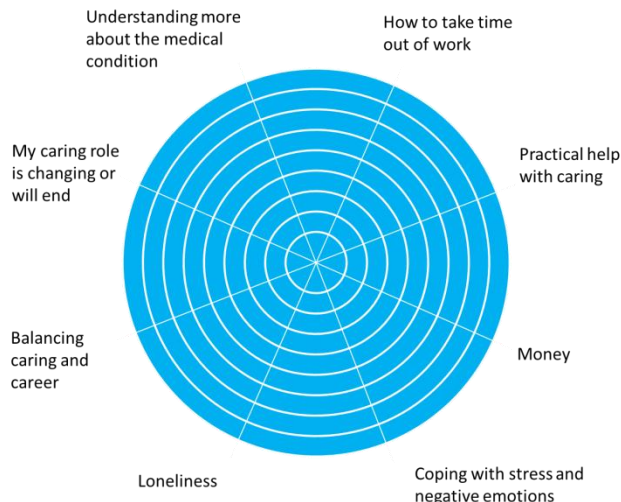
You may have been caring for some time, or you may have been “thrown” into caring through an unexpected event or diagnosis.

The most common immediate reaction to becoming a carer is a mix of feelings including fear, inadequacy, anger or being overwhelmed. A mix of feelings is a normal part of the emotional journey and there is much you can do to bring things back into balance.

Whatever your personal journey to this point, it is quite common to find yourself juggling lots of different commitments such as your job, your caring role, other family commitments as well as your own personal needs.

Use the exercise on the next page to help prioritise what to do next in order to bring things back into balance and feel more confident and in control.

What are your immediate needs or concerns?  
The wheel below shows common areas of immediate concern identified by many carers. Use this graphic to help prioritise your needs. Rate your immediate needs or concerns on a scale of 1 to 10.



Each of these areas relates to a chapter in this guide. Each chapter provides an overview, some practical tips and where to look for further advice and support.

### 3. Taking time out from work & flexible working

Becoming a carer no longer means an “either or” decision between working and caring. In many situations it is possible to do both if you want to.

This chapter covers options for time-off from work, or changing how your work to enable you to continue working as well as caring:

- Emergency time off for a dependant,
- Flexible working,
- Compassionate leave,
- Unpaid leave, and
- Career break / extended unpaid leave

For the most up to date information on rights visit the Working Families [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk) or call the helpline: 0300 012 0312

**TIP:** Many larger employers offer benefits beyond the legal minimum so make sure you check your contract or staff handbook. Other sources of information may be your occupational health advisor, HR department or employee assistance programme. Smaller employers may not offer as many occupational benefits but they often have a supportive culture which can enable options like short-term flexibility.

## Emergency time off for a dependant

Employees are entitled to take a “reasonable” amount of time off for a dependant in an emergency. This includes:

- making arrangements for the care of a dependant who is ill or injured,
- making arrangements if there is an unexpected disruption in care, or
- arranging or attending a funeral of a dependant.

In practice, “reasonable” usually means one or two days. Your employer is not required to pay you if you take time off in an emergency. However, your employer cannot discipline you for taking time off in these circumstances.

If you take time off for a dependant you need to tell your employer what is happening as soon as possible. This type of time off does not cover planned events, like medical appointments.

**TIP:** You can take “sick leave” if you become ill. To take sick leave to care for another person could result in disciplinary action.

## Compassionate leave

There is no legal right to compassionate leave. However, many employers will recognise that the shock and stress of becoming a carer, or a change in circumstances has a direct impact on performance. If this is the case, your employer may enable you to take compassionate leave for those who need longer than the one or two days covered by emergency time off for a dependant. Consult your employee handbook and keep an open and professional dialogue with your manager.

## Unpaid leave

There is no legal right to unpaid leave for carers. However, many employers will recognise that there are occasions when carers need to take planned time out of work to cover such things as significant medical appointments.

Remain professional and provide as much notice as possible when requesting unpaid leave. See things from your employer’s point of view and anticipate concerns. It may be that if you plan to make up the time later, a flexible working arrangement would be better than unpaid leave.

# Flexible working

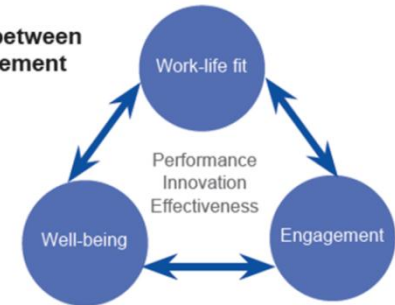
The term “Flexible Working” refers to an arrangement that changes where or when you work, or the number of hours you work. It can be temporary or on-going and it can be an ad hoc arrangement or formalised in a change of your employment contract.

Flexible working allows employees to balance different aspects of life and create a positive work-life-fit.

A flexible approach to work has many benefits to your employer:

- the organisation retains your skills and experience,
- a successful team is kept intact,
- time and money are saved on recruitment or training someone new,
- the organisation can potentially cover a wider span of hours,
- the impact of stress and personal issues on productivity are removed or reduced, and
- a commitment to employee well-being and corporate social responsibility is demonstrated.

**The relationship between well-being, engagement and work-life-fit**



There is a proven link between good work-life-fit and positive well-being and high engagement. The link between engagement and performance is also well established.

You have a statutory “Right to Request” a permanent flexible working arrangement in your current job if you are an employee, and have worked for your employer for 26 consecutive weeks, and you are a carer as defined by the Work and Families Act.

If you make a request using your statutory “Right to Request” then your employer has a duty to seriously consider it.



The Work and Families Act defines a carer as an employee who is, or expects to be caring for an adult who:

- is married to, or the partner or civil partner of the employee, or
- is a relative of the employee, or
- falls into neither category above but lives at the same address as the employee.

It is important to understand that any change granted under the statutory “Right to Request” is permanent. If you want a short-term change to the way you work this must be specifically negotiated with your employer. Many employers will be happy to arrange short term flexibility in order to avoid many unpredictable interruptions.

Even if you do not have a statutory “Right to Request” flexible working (e.g. you have not worked for your employer for long enough or you are caring for somebody who is not a close relative and does not live with you), you can still ask to change your pattern of work.

The most successful flexible working arrangements are worked out collaboratively in a way that maximises the benefits for the employee and the organisation.

There is no one single solution to flexible working. You will always be able to find a number of different options. Keep an open mind and use the information and exercise on the next few pages to help you think about how to meet your own needs and the requirements of your job.

Flexible working is now very common, with more than 90% of organisations in the UK offering some form of flexibility.

If you think that the culture of your organisation will not be supportive of flexible working, or you may have problems with your line manager, it can help to talk through your options with someone else before you make a request. People that can help or share experience include:

- other employees who are already working flexibly,
- Working Families: call the helpline 0300 012 0312,
- Citizens Advice Bureau: call the helpline in Wales 08444 772020, or in England 08444 111 445,
- trades union representative,
- a local Carers’ centre or Cross Roads branch in your area (visit [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org) ).

# Types of flexible working

Below are some common flexible working arrangements.

## Flexible time

### Compressed hours

The same number of hours are worked in a week but over a shorter number of days.

### Annualised hours

Working a fixed number of hours over a year but not evenly spread over the year. This can include term time working and seasonal working.

### Shifted day

Start and end times are both moved forward or back. The number of hours remains the same.

### Core hours

There is flexibility about when work is done with a requirement to be available during core hours.

### Flexitime

Hours can be accrued or “banked”, and then taken as “Time Off In Lieu (TOIL)”.

### Shift swapping

Employees negotiate their own working times by re-arranging shifts amongst themselves with the understanding that the required shifts must be covered. (Self-rostering is a similar arrangement where employees share their preferences, but it is the employer who decides on the final shift pattern to meet required staffing levels).

## Flexible location

### Ad hoc working from home

The employee’s main work location is still the employer’s premises but the employee may work at home when it is mutually convenient.

### Permanent working at home

The employee’s home is formally recognised as their place of work. This is sometimes called “teleworking”. Some work may still need to be done on employers premises

### Location independent or mobile working

Work is done at locations other than the employer’s offices or employee’s home. This is sometimes called “field based” or “anywhere working”.

## Flexible number of hours

### Part-time working

The employee requests a reduced number of hours. If this is to be an on-going arrangement then there is usually a change in the employment contract. Temporary part-time working could be used to take on a more intensive caring role, for example, toward the end of life of your loved one, or temporary part-time working can be used to phase back into work after bereavement.

### Job share

Where one role is shared by two or more people working on a part-time basis. The objectives of the role are shared.

### Job split

Where one role is split into independent elements and done by two or more people working on a part-time basis

**TIP:** These are just some of the variations of when and where work can be done or how it can be split into smaller chunks. For a handy web guide visit [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

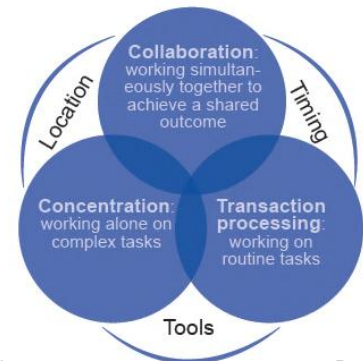
## Identifying flexible options

Each job will be able to support different levels of flexibility in where and when it can be done or how it can be split into small chunks to support part-time working, job sharing or job splitting.

The next couple of pages describe how to identify the potential for flexibility in your job. By taking a practical approach and identifying several options you will increase the likelihood of finding a solution that works for you and your employer.

Every job is made up of three basic types of activity. Each activity will be constrained by time and location in different ways. Each activity may also depend on specific tools.

### ***The activities that make up a role***



Use the following exercise to identify patterns and find the flexibility in your role.

1. Use copies of the table on the next page or set up a spreadsheet with the same column headings.
2. Use this to keep a diary for a week or month.
3. When you have completed your diary add the following columns and categorise each row
  - (i) "Work type" is it "collaboration", "concentration" or "transaction"?
  - (ii) "Time dependency" is it required in "real time" or can it be done in "batches"?
4. If you have not used a spreadsheet, then transfer the data now into a spreadsheet. Sort by "Task description". Can any of the rows be added together? If so sum the durations and make a note in the Time/ date column to capture if this is done daily, weekly or monthly.
5. Sort by "Time dependency". Simplify by adding rows together where possible.
6. Sort by "Work type" and "Tools". Set up a column for "Location dependency" and note down if each task can be done remotely.
7. What patterns emerge? Are there logical chunks where you can split your role for part-time working? Where can you flex start and finish times or split your working day? Where can you work from home to reduce commute time?

My diary

Time/ date	Task description	Key project/ stakeholder	Duration (hrs)	Other participants	Tools	Work type	Time dependency	Location dependency

"Work type" = "collaboration", "concentration" or "transaction". "Time dependency" = "real time" or "batch".  
 "Location dependency" = "remote" or "on site".

# Making a request for flexible working

The process you use to arrange flexible working will depend on:

- the type of flexibility you are considering (flexible time, location or number of hours),
- the duration of flexibility (short or long term),
- your statutory rights,
- your employers policies, and
- the culture of your organisation.

**TIPS:** Before you discuss flexible working with your manager ensure you have explored the following:

- ☐ Your employer's practices and policies.
- ☐ Your legal rights.
- ☐ The potential for flexibility in your role.
- ☐ Your immediate needs and several potential flexible working solutions.
- ☐ The benefits for your employer of supporting your flexible working
- ☐ Your manager's likely concerns and suggestions for dealing with them
- ☐ Your long term needs / aspirations.

Even if your agreement to work flexibility is made directly with your manager outside of the statutory process it is recommended that both you and your manager formalise it in a written agreement.

Arrange a time to discuss your situation and potential options with your manager. Be prepared and professional. Think about things from your manager's view point, this may be the first time they have had a flexible working request. Make it easy for your manager to manage you.

If you want a permanent change then there is a formal statutory process that can be used with a formal request taking up to 14 weeks to agree if there are appeals. The government provide a standard form to use which can be downloaded from [www.gov.uk/flexible-working](http://www.gov.uk/flexible-working).

After you have made a formal written request using this process, your employer must hold a meeting with you within 28 days, unless they are going to agree to what you have asked for.

At the meeting, you are allowed to be accompanied by a colleague or a trade union representative who works for your employer. If your employer agrees to your request, they should let you know in writing.

Following the meeting, your employer must send you a written decision within fourteen days. Your employer can either agree to your request, offer you a compromise or refuse.

If your employer refuses your request for flexible working, they must give you a written reason.

Your employer can only refuse your request for one of the following specific business reasons. Your employer should show why these reasons apply, and they must explain the appeal process.

The permitted business reasons are:

- burden of additional costs,
- detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand,
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff,
- inability to recruit additional staff,
- detrimental impact on quality,
- detrimental impact on performance,
- insufficiency of work during the periods you propose to work, or
- planned structural changes.

You have fourteen days from receiving the written reasons to appeal the decision.

If you would like advice on making a flexible working request call the Working Families helpline 0300 012 0312

## Adjustment leave / career break

There is no legal right to an adjustment leave / career break / extended unpaid leave, however many employers may offer this as an option.

If an employer provides this then they should have a policy which includes:

- eligibility and notice periods,
- how to apply and how long is allowed, and
- whether the employment contract's terms and conditions continue e.g. pensionable service, benefits such as a health care scheme and employee assistance programmes.

Your own situation is unique to you and your family. Caring rarely follows a predictable pattern, and it may not be possible to set a time frame on a break from work. If you are considering taking a break from work, use the list of common things to consider on the next page to help you weigh up the pros and cons.

Currently, there is no legal right to return to work after a career break or adjustment leave.

## Considerations for taking a break from work

### Shorter break

*Pros:* Skills remain fresh, easier to maintain your work profile and potentially easier to return to work, maintains your income level.

*Cons:* Possible emotional or physical exhaustion, less able to deal with work stress because of fatigue, possible emotional challenges such as guilt or separation anxiety.

### Longer break

*Pros:* More time to adjust mentally and physically to the demands of caring and in the case of end of life care, the potential greater demands toward the end of life and space to grieve.

*Cons:* Skills can degrade over time, more complicated to maintain your profile at work and potentially more difficult to return to work, reduction in family income,

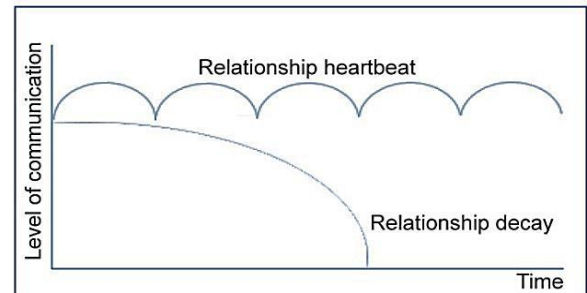
If you take a break from work to care for somebody for more than 20 hours a week then you are entitled to a weekly NI credit called Carer's Credit. You will receive this credit automatically if you are claiming Carer's Allowance. If you do not receive Carer's Allowance then you need to apply for Carers' Credit by calling the Carer's Allowance Unit on 0845 608 4321. For more information on benefits for carers contact Carers UK ([www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) or 0808 808 7777)

If you decide to take a break from work then try to keep in touch with your colleagues and your manager. This will help you to retain a "presence" at work and help you reintegrate at the end of your career break.

Regular planned communication provides a heartbeat to maintain positive working relationships. Long periods of silence can lead to decay in the quality of relationships.

Be proactive and agree a plan with your manager to keep in touch. Consider the frequency of contact, what you would like to know, who will initiate the contact and how the contact will be made, e.g. email, phone or letter.

### Develop a heartbeat to avoid relationship decay



## 4. Practical help with caring

Practical help with caring is often essential in order to enable you to look after yourself, both for your own wellbeing and to find the energy to continue caring. There are various sources of help depending on your situation. This chapter covers an overview, for further information contact Carers UK ([www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)):

- Carer's Assessment,
- Community Care Assessment, and
- Sources of support.

TIPS: There are several organisations providing further details on support and benefits for carers:

- Carers UK is a national charity that provides a network of support and a helpline that can advise on support and benefits: [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) , helpline 0808 802 0202
- Carers Direct provides information and support to carers: [www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect](http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect), and a helpline for people in England 0808 802 0202
- Carers Trust provide a national network of branches to support carers: [www.carer.org](http://www.carer.org).
- Age UK is a national age charity with information, advice and a support network for older people and carers [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) , helpline 0845 600 1090
- Independent Age is a national charity supporting older people and their carers: [www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org), advice line 0845 262 1863

## Carer's Assessment

If you currently have, or expect to take on a substantial caring role, then you are entitled to have your own needs assessed through a Carer's Assessment. Your Carer's Assessment does not depend on whether or not the person you care for is having their needs assessed. The Carer's Assessment is also independent of Carer's Allowance.

You can have a carer's assessment if you:

- live with the person you are looking after,
- live away from the person you are looking after,
- care for someone full time, or,
- care for someone as well as working full or part time.

A Carer's Assessment will look at your role as a carer and what you need to be effective, including how caring impacts your work. To request a Carer's Assessment you need to contact the social services department that covers the area in which the person you care for lives. This could be different from the area in which you live. You can find the details in the telephone directory or on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) or Carers UK ([www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org))



A Carer's Assessment will look at your needs:

- your physical health and safety e.g. if your caring role includes lifting and if you are getting enough sleep,
- your emotional well-being e.g. if you are able to have time with friends and family or time for yourself,
- how much caring you can realistically undertake whilst looking after yourself and other dependent family and allowing you to be involved in other things such as work,
- what support you need to enable you to be an effective carer. This support can include practical help at home, help with taxi fares, counselling and information about local support groups.

The output of a Carer's Assessment will be a care plan. It can open the way to financial support, such as Direct Payments (see section 5. Money).

**TIP:**

A Carer's Assessment can be requested by phone, email or in writing. If you request an assessment by phone it is always a good idea to back this up with a letter or email. For more information visit the Carers UK website [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) or call the helpline 0808 802 0202

## Community Care Assessment

If the person you care for needs help with day to day living such as mobility, cooking, washing or getting dressed they may be eligible to receive community care services from their local authority.

To access community care services the person you care for will need a Community Care Assessment. Normally services are not available until after assessment has been done. However, if the need is urgent the local authority can provide these services before this.

The local authority of the person you are looking after is obliged to carry out a Community Care Assessment as soon as they become aware that someone may need support via community care services. This means that you, as a carer, can inform the local authority and request a Community Care Assessment for the person you look after.

You can find contact details of the local authority at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) or in the phone book.

A Community Care Assessment is an assessment for the person you look after. It is different from a Carer's Assessment, which is an assessment of you in your role as carer.

The way local authorities carry out a community care assessment will depend on the type of care needs the person you are looking after has. They might need care because:

- they are an older person,
- they have mental health problems,
- they have learning disabilities, or
- they misuse drugs or alcohol.

You can appeal decisions if you disagree. Visit CarersUK ([www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)) for more information.

If you appeal, it is a good idea to keep a diary of who you talk or write to, when this is done and what the outcome or any agreed actions are. If the outcome of the assessment is that the person you care for needs community care services the local authority should not refuse to provide these services on grounds of cost.

The services may be provided directly by the local authority or the person you care for may be able to choose to receive **Direct Payment**. Direct Payments enable the person you care for to choose who provides the services they need. The use of Direct Payments is voluntary and nobody can be forced into using Direct Payments. If Direct Payments are used then they need to be managed and accounted for.

In some circumstances the Direct Payment can be used to pay family members to provide the services. Direct Payments cannot normally be used to pay a family member who is living with the person who needs care.

**TIP:**

For more information on using and managing Direct Payments to pay for services or to employ people visit

- Carers Direct [www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect](http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect) or call the helpline on 0808 802 0202
- CarersUK [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) or call the CarersUK advice line on 0808 808 7777

## Other sources of support

As well as your friends and family you may be able to find other sources of practical support locally.

Sometimes it can feel difficult to ask for support, but nobody can care alone. Most often people will be glad that you asked, and will want to help you or help to find others that can help you. Ask for specific practical things such as help with shopping or cooking. This will help people to support you care effectively.

Listed below are some organisations which may be able to help you find further support.

- local Carers' Centre or Cross Roads branch ([www.carer.org](http://www.carer.org)),
- charities related to the medical condition of the person that you care for e.g. Marie Curie Cancer Care,
- faith groups such as you church, mosque or synagogue,
- local branches of AgeUK or CarersUK

**TIP:**

Carers Trust offers a directory of local services visit [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

## 5. Money

Becoming a carer can impact finances, especially if you are considering a reduction in working hours. Working out what benefits you are entitled to can be complex and several benefits can overlap.

This chapter provides an overview of benefits available for carers, and where to look for other financial support. It is a good idea to contact an expert to help you work out which benefits to claim. See the TIPS box at the end of this chapter for organisations that can help.

This chapter covers:

- benefits that help to replace earnings,
- benefits that help with extra costs,
- benefits and credits that top up income,
- looking after your pension, and
- other sources of help with money.

## Help replacing earnings

### Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance is the main benefits available to carers. Carer's Allowance is not means tested and you don't have to be related to, or live with, the person you care for. To be eligible you need to meet the following criteria:

- are 16 years old or over,
- spend at least 35 hours a week caring,
- are resident in the UK and have been in the UK or the Isle of Man for at least 26 weeks in the 12 months before you claim,
- are not subject to immigration control,
- are not in full-time education, and
- do not earn more than £100 per week after taxes

To be able to claim Carer's Allowance the person you care for also needs to be in receipt of a qualifying benefit.

Qualifying benefits include:

- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance - the middle or highest care rate
- Constant Attendance Allowance at or above the normal maximum rate with an Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Constant Attendance Allowance at the basic (full day) rate with a War Disablement Pension

Claiming Carer's Allowance may affect other benefits you receive if they are income related. It can also affect the person you care for if they receive a severe disability premium.

To find the latest value of Carer's Allowance, and to work out if you are eligible to claim it or other earnings replacement benefits, visit the government online benefits adviser [www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser) or call the Benefits Enquiry Line on 0800 882200.

## Help with extra costs

Benefits to help with extra costs are paid in addition to earnings replacement benefits. These benefits tend to be available to the person you care for rather than you as a carer.

### Direct Payments

Direct Payments are made to individuals needing care to pay for services like home-help. In some instances carers may be eligible themselves for Direct Payments to enable them to continue to fulfil their caring role. The starting point is to get a Carers' Assessment (See section 4 of this guide.)

### Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Attendance Allowance (AA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

If the person you look after has difficulties with mobility or personal care such as cooking or washing they may be eligible for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Attendance Allowance (AA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

DLA is available to people aged under 16 with difficulties in mobility and/or personal care.

Personal Independence Payment is for people aged between 16 and 64. Attendance Allowance (AA) is for people over 65 experiencing difficulties with personal care.

To claim Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Attendance Allowance (AA) or, Personal Independence Payments (PIP) you can order a claim pack online at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) or by phone from the Benefits Enquiry Line 0800 882200.

A claim can take up to 40 working days to process. However, if the person you look after is terminally ill and not expected to live more than 6 months then the process can be quicker if form DS1500 is included when submitting the claim. You can get form DS1500 from the doctor, or specialist of the person you look after. It may be possible to backdate payments to the date on which you first requested the claim pack if you submit your claim within 6 weeks.

The person you look after may need a medical assessment as part of the claim process.

You can appeal the decision if you do not agree. Visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for details about this process.

You may need to help the person you look after complete the claim forms for DLA, AA or PIP. Make sure you give full details about what the person you look after can and cannot do or has difficulty with, never underestimate this. Even if every day activities just take longer, make sure that you explain how this impacts the life of the person you care for. Ensure details of all falls or accidents are also included.

You can seek help to complete your claim from your local Citizens Advice Bureau. For a list of local CABs visit the “Contact us” page on [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

If you are unwell yourself, you may also be eligible for Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in your own right.

Eligibility to DLA, AA or PIP may also open up eligibility to other benefits, phone the Benefits Enquiry Line 0800 882200 for further information or contact Carers UK ([www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) or 0808 808 7777)

## Benefits to top-up income

These benefits are income based. You may be eligible for one of four top-up benefits:

- **Income Support:** if you have a low income and your caring role means that you do not need to sign on as being unemployed,
- **Income Related Employment and Support Allowance:** if you have a limited ability to work because of illness or disability (It can help with the interest-only part of a mortgage payment),
- **Income Based Job Seekers Allowance:** if you are unemployed and actively seeking work (It can help with some mortgage payments), or
- **Pension Credit:** if you have reached the qualifying age (It can help with some mortgage payments).

Entitlement to means tested benefits may also enable you and your dependants to receive other benefits.

For further information on benefits visit the Carers UK website [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) or call the helpline on 0808 808 7777.

To check which benefits you may be able claim visit the UK Government online benefits adviser [www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser) or call the Benefits Enquiry Line on 0800 882200 or visit [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

In addition you may be entitled to Housing Benefit or a reduction in Council Tax.

You may be entitled to reduce the amount of Council Tax you are liable to pay if you are a carer and you:

- spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a disabled person who is not your spouse, partner or child aged under 18,
- live with the person you care for, and
- care for someone who receives either the highest rate of Disability Living Allowance care component, or higher rate Attendance Allowance or Constant Attendance Allowance.

You may be entitled to a Council Tax exemption if you have moved out of your home in order to provide care.

There may be other forms of help to pay less council tax if you are on a low income. Contact your local authority for further information about what may be available in your area.

## Looking after your pension

In order to qualify for a state pension you need to have a specific number of years of National Insurance contributions.

If you take a break from work in order to care for somebody for more than 20 hours a week then you are entitled to a weekly credit called Carer's Credit which ensures that your National Insurance contributions continue.

You will receive this Carer's Credit automatically if you are claiming Carer's Allowance.

If you do not receive Carer's Allowance then you need to apply for the Carer's Credit. To claim this credit call the Carer's Allowance Unit on 0845 608 4321 for more information.

## Other sources of help with money

Some employers, trade associations or occupationally focused charities can help directly with financial loans or grants for equipment, services or breaks for you or the person you care for.

There may be charitable trusts in your local area that have been set up to support carers

#### Useful contacts:

- Find out which benefits and grants you and the person you care for may be eligible for by visiting:
  - Turn2Us [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk) (a national organisation helping people access benefits, welfare. Loans and grants),
  - Carers UK [www.carersUK.org](http://www.carersUK.org) Helpline 0808 808 7777
  - The Association of Charity Officers (ACO) [www.aco.uk.net](http://www.aco.uk.net) (An umbrella organisation of over 200 charities providing grants and loans),
  - The Government on-line benefits advisor can help to identify which benefits you can claim [www.gov.uk/benefits-advisor](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-advisor) There is also a general benefits advice line 0800 882 200,
  - Jobcentre plus by phone on 0800 055 6688 or visit [www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus](http://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus).
- Help negotiating flexible working: Working Families helpline on 0300 012 0312 or [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)
- Help with budgeting: Money Advice Service provides calculators and useful information [www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)
- List of local CABs: visit the "Contact us" page on [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

## 6. Coping with stress and negative emotions

Caring for a loved one can have emotional highs and lows, whether it is an on-gong or end of life care. These feelings are normal and a natural part of adaption. The illustration below shows some common emotional reactions and how these can change over time. There is a very wide range of emotions. You may not experience them all or they may not be in this exact order.

#### How emotions can change when becoming a carer





Looking after “you” will help maintain your energy levels and emotional balance as well as strengthening your ability to deal with stressful situations. Take breaks from your caring role, keep your body healthy and nurture other important relationships. Looking after “you” includes eating healthily, maintaining a good routine of sleep and exercise as well as allowing yourself time to relax and be with friends and family and work.

If negative feelings persist or become overwhelming help is available.

- Your GP can refer you to a counsellor.
- Your employer may also have an employee assistance programme which includes counselling and other support for carers
- SANE is a national charity offering emotional support and advice to people suffering or affected by anxiety, depression or other common mental illness. Their helpline is available from 6pm to 11pm on 0845 767 8000
- RELATE is a national charity offering counselling to nurture positive relationships  
[www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

TIP: MEND ([www.mendcentral.org](http://www.mendcentral.org)) is a social enterprise dedicated to helping people lead happier healthy lifestyles. They also input to the CareWell project.

## Negative emotions and guilt

Looking after “you” may seem very good in theory, however, many carers experience guilt, doubt or anxiety about taking time out for themselves.

It is important to look after yourself both for your own well-being and also your ability to continue to care effectively.

There are many guilt traps as a carer. You will be bombarded with opinions about what you should, or should not, do to be a good carer or loving spouse, friend, son or daughter. It is difficult not to draw comparisons and then feel bad when we fail to reach the impossible idealised standard.

It can also be difficult to take time out if the person you care for only wants you. Carers often say that feelings of guilt are the biggest barrier to allowing time for “you”.

Use the exercises on the next page to help get to grips with feelings of guilt.

Guilt is situational. We feel guilt when our thoughts, actions or behaviours are in conflict with our values. It is also very easy to be guilt-tripped by values that society or somebody that we respect or love is saying that we should hold.

#### Getting to grips with guilt

1. Be aware of how you feel at a given moment. Recognising and labelling the emotion will help you regain control and release tension.
2. Ask yourself, "Is this guilt appropriate?" Are you feeling guilty because of conflict with your own values or the values others are trying to give you?
3. If the guilt is coming from conflict with your own values then act to resolve the conflict.
4. If the guilt is coming from conflict with values that others are giving you then ask yourself "Where is the evidence that I should feel guilty?" "What are the assumptions and what do we just not know? Is this feeling of guilt appropriate?" Inappropriate guilt is very harmful because it can rarely be resolved. Make the choice to let inappropriate guilt go.

#### TIPs

You are less likely to feel guilty when you have good emotional resilience.

- An exhausted you will struggle to care. Build into your week some moments to recharge your batteries.
- Focus on the positive. Each day write down five good things that have happened during the day. They can be big or small, such a smile or great cup of coffee. Over a short period of time you will start to see the positive. It will enhance your mood and enable you to cope with situations better.

In some situations, guilt can be stubborn. Learn to disassociate yourself by using your imagination: see yourself as an actor in a film or play. Analyse what's being played out and ask what advice you would give yourself in this situation. Consider how else you can see the situation. This will help quiet your emotions and help the rational part of your brain to regain control.

# Taking a break from caring

Allowing yourself to take regular breaks will help you to keep your emotional balance and remain physically strong. There are several different ways that you can take a break from caring, whether it is for a couple of hours or for a week. The person you look after may also like to take a break.

## Replacement care

Replacement care is designed to replace the care that you normally provide. You may already have access to this in the care plan developed either from your own Carer's Assessment or the Community Care Assessment done for the person you look after. If this is identified in your care plan then providing replacement care is the responsibility of the local authority of the person you are looking after. They can charge for this service

Longer periods of replacement care are sometimes called "respite" care. This can be residential. As with replacement care if this is identified in a care plan then it is the responsibility of the local authority of the person you are looking after to provide this. Sometimes local hospices provide respite care.

## Carer's breaks

A carer's break provides replacement care plus an opportunity to re-energise by doing something for you. If you are on a low income, there is some government funding available for carers' breaks. This can be identified through your local authority and may already be in your care plan. Some charities offer breaks or funding towards breaks. A good place to start is to visit the Carers Trust website

[www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

## Breaks for the person you look after

Breaks for the person you look after may also be identified in their care plan. If you are on a low income then funding may be available from your local authority. There are several charities that also offer breaks for people with disabilities, either on their own e.g. Vitalise ([www.vitalise.org.uk](http://www.vitalise.org.uk)), or, together with their family and usual carer e.g. Holidays for all ([www.holidaysforall.org.uk](http://www.holidaysforall.org.uk)). The Scope website ([www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)) has a useful directory of companies offering holidays.

### TIP:

Contact the local branch of the Carers Trust ([www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)) if you are finding it difficult to get respite care.

## 7. Loneliness

When you are caring full time, or balancing caring with many other responsibilities, it can feel very lonely. This can magnify the other emotions which you may be experiencing. Feeling connected and a sense of belonging and being valued in your own right are hugely important to our emotional stability, energy levels and strength.

It can be difficult to look after “you” if you are feeling isolated or don’t know what to do. Below are some organisations that can help bring you together with other people. Some are specifically for carers, others are more general:

- CarersUK provide an online forum and a network of local branches [www.carersUK.org](http://www.carersUK.org)
- CareWell provides an online forum and advice for carers [www.carerwelluk.org](http://www.carerwelluk.org) .
- Carers’ Trust has an online forum and network of 144 Carers Centres [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)
- Independent Age [www.independentage.org.uk](http://www.independentage.org.uk) has a network of branches to support older people and their carers.
- faith groups such as your church, mosque or synagogue
- interest groups such as the Ramblers Association [www.ramblers.co.uk](http://www.ramblers.co.uk)

## 8. Balancing caring and career

For many people working fulfils much more than a financial need. Once your caring duties settle down into a routine you may want to think about how you can balance your career aspirations with your caring role. It is possible in many instances to have a career and be a carer if this is what you want.

This chapter covers:

- how to identify your values and needs and understand how working and career help you meet these,
- how to identify your career stakeholders,
- how to develop a positive personal brand at work,

# Understanding my values

Your values are a small set of deeply held beliefs that guide your life. Values drive how we approach our relationships and activities. They are as unique to each one of us as our finger prints.

If you are planning or doing something that does not fit with your values your motivation and energy will be low. On the other hand, when you live in line with your values you will be energised and motivated.

Understanding your values will help you decide how to approach the journey through caring, including time away from work or flexible working.

Use the exercise on the opposite page to help identify your values.

Think about how working and caring fit with your values.

Here are some common words used to represent values. Highlight those which are most important to you. If you don't find a word or phrase that you are looking for then add it to the list. Then filter the words until you are left with between 5 and 7.

Test yourself: are these really YOUR values? If the world were to penalise you for holding these values would you continue to hold them?

Health	Selflessness	Achievement
Respect	Fun	Learning
Recognition	Growth	Development
Freedom	Happiness	Experience
Altruism	Helpfulness	Integrity
Honesty	Courage	Creativity
Significance	Order	Involvement
Sincerity	Trust	Loyalty
Spirituality	Authenticity	Carefulness
Trust	Empathy	Mastery
Openness	Prudence	Mindfulness
Self-reliance	Harmony	Motivation
Thankfulness	Accuracy	Rigor
Humility	Self-control	Restraint
Curiosity	Understanding	Faithfulness

# Understanding my needs

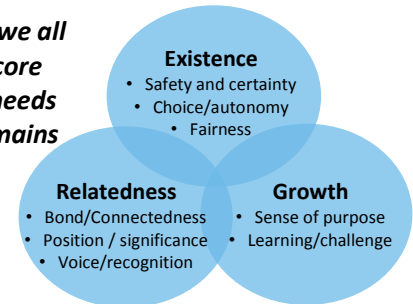
For most of us work fulfils more needs than money for food and shelter. It can also fulfil deep emotional needs such as a sense of belonging and connectedness, intellectual satisfaction and a feeling of being able to influence and being valued for our contribution.

Values guide how you do something, whereas needs guide what you do, often unconsciously. Understanding your needs will help you design a positive work-life-fit for you and your family.

If your needs are not being met, you will become pre-occupied and find it increasingly difficult to focus. When your needs are being met then you are able to be where you are both in mind and body (whether it is at work, with your family or taking time out to re-energise).

Our human needs can be grouped together into eight broad categories within three domains: existence, relatedness and growth.

***As humans we all have eight core emotional needs in three domains***



SOURCE: Jacobs  
2011 and Alderfer  
1969/2005

Use the exercise below to understand how your needs are being met now, and how they could be met in the future.

For each of the eight categories of needs ask yourself:

- How do I feel and act when this need is met?
- How do I feel and act when this need is not met?
- How is this need being met at the moment?
- How effectively is this need being met at the moment? (Score out of 10)
- How else could I meet this need right now?
- How does being a carer influence the way I meet this need?

# My goals and aspirations

Take a moment to dream; if money and time were limitless what would you do? What is it that you most desire?

With this dream in mind, take a look back at your values and needs. How does this dream fit with your values and needs? The goals that inspire you most will be based on your values.

Now bring your dreams back to the present. Use the space below to write down the priorities for your life right now, emotionally, spiritually, physically and intellectually.

1. Emotional

2. Spiritual

3. Physical

4. Intellectual

Now think about your future goals. Make each as specific as possible so that you can relate to this future state.

In 2 years I want to be...

In 10 years I want to be...

Now ask yourself:

- How does this resonate with my values and needs?
- What is the first step I need to take to reach this goal?
- What does this mean for work, career and family?

# Managing my Personal Brand

A brand is a promise. It is a promise that comes to mind as soon as you hear a name or see a picture.

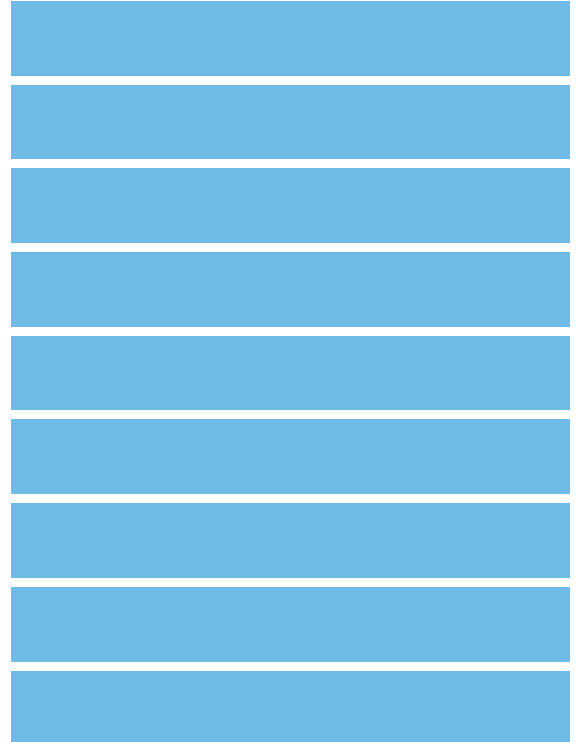
Your Personal Brand is what others believe to be true of you whether you are physically with them or not. Actively managing your Personal Brand will smooth the path through this period of caring.

Consider these questions and use the space opposite to jot down your ideas:

- What do you want others to think when they hear your name?
- What is it that you want your colleagues, clients and manager to be thinking of you if you are taking time out to care?

Think about how you currently act. Does this reinforce or undermine what you want your Personal Brand to be?

What do I want others to think when they hear my name?

A series of ten horizontal blue bars, stacked vertically, intended for writing answers to the questions on the left page.



## Personal Brand and taking a break from work

If you are taking a break from work to care, or moving into a flexible working pattern, remember that this will also be a time of adjustment for the people that you work with. Their own work might change as a result of your break or new work pattern.

Work with your manager to plan when you will tell different people. Be willing to talk about concerns they may have about handover plans. Reassure them of your on-going commitment. It's a good idea to write down and practice your response to common questions in order to avoid having to think on the spot.

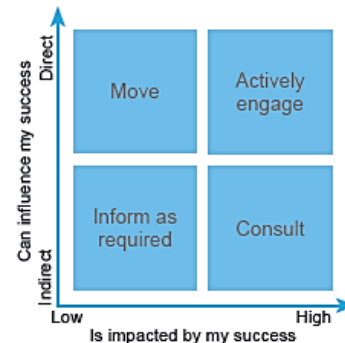
## Managing career stakeholders

As well as the people that you work with directly there may be others who are influential in the success of your on-going career. The way in which you share your news and handover plan helps to reinforce a positive and professional Personal Brand.

Use the exercise on the next page to work out who your career stakeholders are.

## Identifying career stakeholders

Who is it that can facilitate or block your career? Use the grid below to map out who has influence over your career and who will be impacted, positively and negatively by your success.



For each of the 'stakeholders' with direct influence over your career and/or who are impacted by your success, identify how you can share your news in a way that reinforces your Personal Brand.

## 9. Understanding more about a medical condition

As a carer you have a right to be consulted about the care and treatment of the person you are looking after. But, when you become a carer you may not know very much about the medical condition or potential treatments.

Often there are charities which focus on specific conditions or families of conditions. These either provide more information on the illness itself or signpost sources of quality information. Be careful when researching specific conditions using the internet. The quality of information on the internet is very variable and can be misleading.

Ask your GP, consultant or other medical professional for more information on the condition. CarersUK ([www.carersUK.org](http://www.carersUK.org)) also has a directory of condition specific organisations in the section on help and advice and CarersDirect ([www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect](http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect)) provides information pages on specific conditions and a link to the NHS A-Z of Health.

### TIPS:

- If you don't understand what your medical professionals are telling you then ask for an explanation, sometimes drawing a picture might help with understanding.
- Contact one of the condition specific organisations for an independent view of the options available for care and treatment
- Before you visit a medical professional or doctor write down the questions that you would like to ask.
- During the appointment write down the answers and check your understanding before ending the appointment.
- Question you might like to ask include
  - Do we need to have any specific tests?
  - How does the condition develop and what stage is it at?
  - How common is this illness?
  - What are the treatment options?
  - What is the aim of the treatment?
  - What are the side effects of treatment?
  - How can diet or lifestyle be changed to help?
  - What follow up care and support services are available?
- If you would like a second opinion, let your doctor know. Most medical professionals understand the need this, they may even be able to suggest another doctor.

## 10. When a caring role changes or ends

Your caring role will probably change over time. The person you look after may get better or experience a remission, or their condition may deteriorate.

If you find that you are no longer able to provide the care needed then contact your local authority. You and the person you look after may be entitled to greater support.

If caring has become very difficult it may be best for both of you to consider a residential care home. You might feel guilty considering this option, but if caring is overwhelming you then you must seek alternatives, both for your own well-being and that of the person you look after.

AgeUK ([www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)) provide a useful guide to choosing a care home and also considering differing housing options

### TIPS for finding a care home:

- Don't feel pressured into choosing one particular provider.
- Ensure that you, and anyone else you are sharing caring responsibility with, have a common understanding of the quality and features of the care you are seeking.
- Read the latest inspection report from the Care Quality Commission ([www.cqc.com](http://www.cqc.com)) .
- Check ratings and comments on the Good Care Guide website [www.goodcareguide.co.uk](http://www.goodcareguide.co.uk) .
- Follow-up references and recommendations.
- Visit as many of your shortlisted care homes as possible.
- Use the AgeUK ([www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)) care home checklist to help you think about options and questions.
- Consider the following questions:
  - Is it a safe clean environment?
  - Do the residents look motivated, happy and cared for?
  - Are the staff happy and conscientious?
  - What is the staff-turnover?
  - Is it possible to create a phased start with a number of day visits?

## End of life care

There may also come a time when your caring role changes dramatically because the person you look after is nearing the end of their life. You may need to decide between nursing support in your home or a hospice.

### Nursing care at home

Your local authority can provide social services and equipment to make caring at home more effective. If you have not had a Carer's Assessment for yourself, or a Community Care Assessment for the person you look after, contact your local authority to request this (see Chapter 4 of this guide for further information). These assessments will determine what you need in order to be able to care effectively at home.

If the person you are looking after needs specialist medical support contact your GP who will put you in touch with your district nurse.

There are a number of hospices and NHS palliative care teams that provide "hospice at home" services. Specialist support such as

Macmillan and Marie Curie nurses can be accessed through your district nurse.

You may need to adapt your home e.g. convert a room downstairs into a bedroom. The local authority of the person you look after may be able to help with the cost of this and any specialist equipment highlighted through the care assessment.

### Hospice Care

Hospices provide care and support to improve the lives of people whose illness is not curable. The GP of the person you look after can refer you to a hospice. Referrals are usually made to hospices closest to their home but out of areas referrals are possible. Hospice care is free.

The national charity, Help the Hospices ([www.helpthehospices.org.uk](http://www.helpthehospices.org.uk)) has information about hospices and other services as well as a directory of UK hospices.

#### TIP:

Many employers understand the challenges of end of life care and provide the opportunity for short term flexible working or unpaid leave. (see Chapter 3 of this guide)

# Bereavement

When the person you look after dies, it can feel like a double blow. You are losing a loved one, and as a carer, you may also lose some of your sense of purpose.

Death is part of life, and grieving is a normal process of healing after a loved one dies.

There are no time limits on grief and no set pattern to the emotions that you may feel. Because of all the tasks that need to be done following the death of the person you have been looking after, it may be that the grieving process does not start for a while.

The process of grieving can throw your emotions and physical wellbeing out of balance. It is also quite common to find it difficult to concentrate. The way each one of us grieves is unique; there is no right or wrong way to grieve. You may experience a mix of emotions including sadness, guilt, anger, loneliness and relief.

It is often helpful to talk about your feelings when the person you care for dies.

# Bereavement support

All carers are now routinely offered counselling through the NHS when the person they look after dies. There are also national charities like Cruse Bereavement Care ([www.Cruse.org](http://www.Cruse.org)) with a network of local branches to support people through bereavement.

The Cruse helplines are

- In England and Wales, 0844 477 9400
- In Scotland, 0845 600 2227
- In Northern Ireland, 0844 477 9400

TIP: It may be easier to talk with others who have shared a similar experience.

- Carers Trust ([www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org))
- Compassionate Friends ([www.tcf.org.uk](http://www.tcf.org.uk)) is a national self-help organisation offering friendship and support to bereaved parents, grandparents, and their families. Their helpline is 0845 123 2304
- Winston's Wish ([www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)) offers support, information and guidance to people caring for a bereaved child or young person.
- London Friend LGBT Bereavement Helpline ([www.londonfriend.org.uk](http://www.londonfriend.org.uk)) provides support to callers from anywhere in the UK who have been bereaved or are preparing for bereavement. Their helpline is 020 7837 3337

## Practical issues following death

When someone you look after dies there are a number of practical things that need to be sorted out. These include:

- medical certificate of cause of death,
- notification and registration of death,
- arrangement of the funeral,
- administration of the deceased one's estate,
- notification of various organisations, and
- sorting out of your own finances as a carer.

The Carers Trust ([www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)) has a useful check list of the practical things that need to be done.

The Bereavement Advice Centre ([www.bereavementadvice.org](http://www.bereavementadvice.org)) provides detailed practical guidance and help on what to do when somebody dies. Their helpline is 0800 634 9494.

## Working after bereavement

Talk to your manager or HR department about compassionate leave and the possibility of a phased return. Most people will understand that it will be difficult to give 100% immediately after the death of a loved one.

For some people, a return to normal as quickly as possible will help to cope with bereavement, others may require some space before returning to work. Each of us is unique and there is no right or wrong. Listen to your own feelings and resist what others tell you about what you should and should not be feeling.

Help your colleagues and manager to work with you. They will not automatically know how best to support you unless you tell them.

Our ability to cope and adapt as human beings is immense. Many people see work as something solid and predictable when the rest of life feels like it has been “thrown up in the air”. Carers often say that their experience of caring has made them stronger and more resilient, attributes that are of value at work as well as in the rest of life.

# Balancing work and being a carer – you can do it!

More than 60% of employees will become carers during their working lives. With our aging population this is set to increase dramatically. Many employees successfully combine a caring role with a career.

Increasingly, employers are recognising the need to support carers in the workforce through options such as flexible working. Many larger employers provide workshops for carers, training for managers, employee networks and an employee assistance programme.

The caring journey is one of the most challenging in life. Help and support are available to help you find your own balance between work, caring and the many other aspects of life.

For further information on how you can develop a positive work-life-fit visit the Working Families website [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk) .

## 11. Useful Contacts

**Working Families**  
For help combining work and family including advice on benefits and rights  
[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)  
Helpline 0300 012 0312

**Carers UK**  
Provides advice, support and a voice for carers.  
[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)  
Helpline 0808 802 0202

**CareWell**  
Online forum, advice and information for carers  
[www.carewell.org](http://www.carewell.org)

**Carers Trust**  
A national network of branches to support carers, including a directory of local services [www.carer.org](http://www.carer.org)  
Head office 0844 800 4361

**Carers Direct**  
Provides information and support to carers  
[www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect](http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect).  
Helpline England 0808 802 0202

**Independent Age**  
Supporting older people and their carers  
[www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org)  
Advice line 0845 262 1863

**Age UK**  
Information, advice and a support network for older people and carers  
[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)  
Helpline 0845 600 1090

### Benefits and Money

**UK Government**  
online benefits adviser  
[www.gov.uk/benefits-advisor](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-advisor)  
Benefits Enquiry Line  
0800 882200

**Turn2Us**  
Helping people access benefits, welfare, loans and grants [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

**The Association of Charity Officers (ACO)**  
Umbrella organisation of over 200 charities providing grants and loans [www.aco.uk.net](http://www.aco.uk.net)

Money Advice Service  
Help with budgeting including  
useful online calculators  
[www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)

Jobcentre plus  
[www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus](http://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus)  
Helpline 0800 055 6688 or visit

Citizens Advice  
Helping to solve legal, money and  
other problems through free,  
confidential advice  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)  
Helpline Wales 08444 772020  
Helpline England 08444 111 445

ACAS  
Promoting good employee  
relations  
[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)  
Helpline 08457 474747

## Counselling

SANE  
Support and advice for people  
suffering, or affected by anxiety,  
depression or other common  
mental illness.  
[www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)  
Helpline available 6pm to 11pm on  
0845 767 8000

RELATE is a national charity  
offering counselling to nurture  
positive relationships  
[www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

## Bereavement

Cruse Bereavement Care  
Network of local branches to  
support people through  
bereavement.  
[www.Cruse.org](http://www.Cruse.org)  
England and Wales,  
0844 477 9400  
Scotland, 0845 600 2227  
Northern Ireland, 0844 477 9400

The Bereavement Advice Centre  
Detailed practical guidance and  
help on what to do when  
somebody dies.  
[www.bereavementadvice.org](http://www.bereavementadvice.org)  
Helpline is 0800 634 9494

Compassionate Friends  
Self-help organisation offering  
friendship and support to bereaved  
parents, grandparents, and their  
families.  
[www.tcf.org.uk](http://www.tcf.org.uk)  
Helpline is 0845 123 2304

Winston's Wish  
Support, information and  
guidance to people caring for a  
bereaved child or young person.  
[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)

London Friend LGBT  
Bereavement Helpline. Support  
for callers from anywhere in the  
UK who have been bereaved or  
are preparing for bereavement.  
[www.londonfriend.org.uk](http://www.londonfriend.org.uk)  
Helpline is 020 7837 3337

## Replacement care and breaks

Vitalise  
Short breaks / respite for  
people with disabilities  
[www.vitalise.org.uk](http://www.vitalise.org.uk)

Holidays for All  
Holidays for the cared for  
together with their family and  
usual carer  
[www.holidaysforall.org.uk](http://www.holidaysforall.org.uk)

The Scope website has a useful  
directory of companies offering  
accessible holidays.  
[www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

## Palliative care and care homes

Help the Hospices  
Information and a directory of  
hospices and their  
services  
[www.helpthehospices.org.uk](http://www.helpthehospices.org.uk)

Care Quality Commission  
Inspection reports on care  
homes and hospitals  
[www.cqc.com](http://www.cqc.com)

Good Care Guide  
Online directory of caring  
establishments including  
comments and rating by  
carers and service users  
[www.goodcareguide.co.uk](http://www.goodcareguide.co.uk)

## Wellbeing

MEND  
A social enterprise dedicated  
to helping people lead  
happier healthy lifestyles.  
They also input to the  
CareWell project.  
[www.mendcentral.org](http://www.mendcentral.org)



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A Pocket Guide for Employees

# Balancing work and being a carer

This practical pocket guide provides an essential toolkit for working carers from the moment you know you are a carer to when your caring role ends. Packed with tips, exercises, checklists and signposting, this pocket guide helps you balance your responsibilities at work and your caring role.

Working Families is the UK's leading work-life organisation providing evidence-based practical support to working families, organisations and policy makers.

[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)