

UNPAID CARERS

Working for Carers supports unpaid carers and former carers to move closer to employment. Participants can access free support, tailored to meet their individual needs.

The project is led by Carers Trust and delivered across all London boroughs by four Carers Trust Network Partners (carer services). Working for Carers is jointly funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund.

Who is this for?

Organisations working with local communities.

Who are unpaid carers?

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

Caring for someone can take up a few hours each week, or a carer may be caring for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Some carers live with, or near to, the person they are caring for, whereas others provide more remote support. Some look after more than one person.

The support provided by unpaid carers is varied and might include:

- Helping someone wash and dress themselves and with other personal care.
- Housework, food shopping and picking up and administering medication.
- Taking someone to hospital and GP appointments.
- Providing company and emotional support.

There are around **seven million** carers in the UK – that is one in ten people. Carers save the state **£132bn** worth of care every year.

Carers' support needs

Although for many carers, caring can have positive and rewarding aspects, there are lots of reasons why caring can also leave carers needing support. This may include needing practical help with their caring role, replacement care so they can take a break, help with their finances, emotional and wellbeing support, and access to information and advice. Some may need practical and emotional support if their caring role changes or comes to an end.

Carers have the right to a free **carer's assessment**, which is a chance to discuss their needs with their local council.

Carer services also provide a range of local support.

Many people do not identify as a carer and may not access the support they need. Local organisations have an important role to play in signposting.



Carers and employment

Balancing work and caring can be difficult. As a result, many carers have had to leave employment. This can impact on both their finances and confidence.

Carers' **rights in the workplace** include requesting flexible working and taking time off for emergencies involving dependents. Some employers offer additional benefits and support for employees with caring responsibilities, such as carer's leave.

Carers may be entitled to **benefits** if they are not working or on a low income, such as Carer's Allowance and Universal Credit.

Working for Carers supports carers and former carers, aged 25 or over, in London who are looking to move into, or closer to, employment. Working for Carers has created a series of factsheets for carers, including 'Carers' rights at work' and 'Flexible working'.

Carers Trust's Social Care Survey (2020) found that **Coronavirus** has exacerbated an already dire situation for many carers. 54% said they had to give up, or reduce, paid work.

Further information

Carers Trust: www.carers.org – including finding your local carer service

Carers UK: www.carersuk.org

UK Government: www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities/carers

Carer's Assessment: carers.org/carers-assessment/carers-assessment

Working for Carers: www.carers.org/workingforcarers

Contact a Family: www.contact.org.uk – for families with disabled children

"I didn't identify as a carer. I think it was a whole year before I got some support".

Working for Carers participant