

Carers checklist: Carer Friendly Communities



Are you providing unpaid care to someone with an illness or disability? You could be a family member or friend looking after someone close to you.

In communities throughout the UK, 6.5 million carers are supporting their relatives, friends and neighbours. Whether you begin caring gradually or your life changes overnight, new caring responsibilities bring new challenges and you will need support from those around you.

This year, Carers Week is calling on local communities to become more Carer Friendly so that you don't feel you have to cope alone. There are practical steps that every part of your community can take to better support you as a carer.

8-14 June 2015

Using this checklist:

This checklist sets out some of the things that you should be able to expect from your community. We hope it will help you think about your community and what additional support might improve your life.

Could you ask for that support, maybe by taking this checklist along to help explain what you need?

Could your local group or carers network use this checklist to start a conversation with local services or organisations about what they can do to better support carers?



Health checklist

The NHS and health services recognise my caring role, involve and consult me about the treatment of the person I care for, where this is possible, and help me to stay healthy too.



I am offered doctor's appointments that fit around my caring responsibilities

I am involved in discussions around discharge planning early on during my loved one's stay in hospital and the right support is put in place for my caring role

NHS and health services staff make sure I know where to go for advice and information about caring and, if I need it, training to help me care safely and well

"A proactive GP practice should support a carer to consider all aspects of their health and wellbeing, like regular exercise and stress management."

– Sue, carer from Lincoln

"A Carer Friendly Community would have a joined up NHS and social care service that is easy and simple to negotiate to get the care your loved one needs."

– Alan, carer from Kent

Care services checklist

Care services involve and consult me about the care of the person I look after and recognise that I might need support too.



It is easy to get a carer's assessment of the impact of caring on my life from my local council

I am given information by my local council about what support is available to help me care safely and well and live a life of my own outside my caring role

I am treated with respect by care workers and social workers who value my expertise on the needs and preferences of the person I care for

"If we are acknowledged, listened to, and can have a conversation regarding our needs with health and social care services - then the future could be better." – Emily, carer from Edinburgh

Education checklist



When I am in education, the impact that caring can have on my ability to study is recognised and there is help to cope with this.

My school, college or university encourages positive discussions about caring, ageing and disability

My school, college or university has clear policies in place to support pupils and students with caring responsibilities

My school, college or university takes steps to identify pupils and students who are caring and let them know how they can get help and support

“Educate primary and secondary school children about caring... so they understand better how being a carer affects the person’s whole life...”

– Carer of parent with dementia

“There could be an understanding that extra time may be helpful for assignments at university!”

– Young student carer

Employment checklist



My employer respects family commitments and promotes awareness at all levels of the organisation about Carer Friendly policies.

My line manager makes it easy to talk about my caring responsibilities at work and ask for support if I need it

My employer has policies in place to support me as a carer, such as care leave, flexible working policies, a carers’ staff network or an employee assistance programme

My employer tells me about my rights, including my right to request flexible working and take emergency time off to care for dependents when I need it

“Employers with a positive approach to supporting carers in their workplace, see real returns. Whilst carers may need more flexibility, they are also likely to be even more loyal and dedicated as a result.”

– Kate, carer from Bristol

Top tip: Find out if your organisation offers support to carers such as a network, carers policy or is a member of Employers for Carers.

Local community checklist



When I am on the high street, local shops and services are disability and age friendly and understand about carers too.

Important services like pharmacies identify me as a carer and help provide me with information and advice and signpost me to other support when I need it.

Local services and businesses like supermarkets, restaurants, cafes and important public spaces are age, disability and carer friendly.

Carers Week 2015 is brought to you by six major charities joining together:

*these services are free of charge



Information Line:
0800 169 6565*
ageuk.org.uk



Carers Trust:
0844 800 4361
carers.org



Adviceline:
0808 808 7777*
carersuk.org



Advice service:
0800 319 6789*
independentage.org



Support Line:
0808 808 00 00*
macmillan.org.uk



MS Helpline:
0808 800 8000*
mssociety.org.uk

Find out more: www.carersweek.org



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