



**barnetcarers.org**

Get support on your carers  
journey at our website 24/7



## PROVIDING UNPAID CARE FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

### Am I a Carer?

A carer can be anyone, of any age who looks after a relative or friend who needs help. Being a carer can be rewarding but it can also be hard work and challenging. If you are a carer it is important that you get the support you need.

### Being a Carer

Many people with care and support needs rely on friends and family, they may also want to stay in their own home even if their circumstances make it difficult.

If you are providing care and support it is important that you:

- know what care they need and what tasks you are responsible for, be honest with the person (and yourself) about what you can do;
- how they can get help to manage their care and support needs or prevent their needs worsening;
- know how to give care in a way that keeps the person healthy and safe;

### Keeping people safe

Carers are important in keeping people safe. Sometimes they can see harm done to the people they care for - whether it was meant or not. Sometimes they can also harm or neglect the person they care for even if they do not mean to.

### Understanding Care and Medical Needs

When helping the person to meet their health needs it is important to do the following:

1. Speaking to the GP or District Nurse to understand what treatment/ care is required.
2. Get training from district nurses or other specialists so you know how to care for the person and maintain your own wellbeing.
3. There may be special requirements to ensure the person gets their medication at the right time/ dose. It is also important to know how to give medication to avoid risks (e.g. choking) and to recognise signs of deteriorating health, such as dehydration, constipation or infection.
4. If their limited mobility means they spend long periods of time lying or sitting down, it is important to speak to the GP to understand exactly how to provide the right level of care and support to avoid pressure ulcers.

### Consent to share information

Usually practitioners will seek the person's consent before sharing medical or social care personal information. However, information can be shared with carers as necessary as part of a care and support plan [s.25(3c) Care Act] or if the person lacks capacity to consent and it is in their best interests [s4 Mental Capacity Act].

### Emergency Planning

A plan can be created to use if you are prevented from providing care or support for any reason. This is particularly important if you become unwell or have to self-isolate due to Covid-19.



**barnetcarers.org**

Get support on your carers  
journey at our website 24/7



- **The plan** will include details of the care and treatment plans, medication and any appointments they need to attend regularly.
- It should also include contact details for GP and social worker, or any other professionals who know them well and anyone who should be contacted in an emergency.
- A copy of the plan in an accessible place in your home, the home of the person you are caring for. Emergency services often look in people's fridge for such information. It may be helpful to give a copy to their GP or social worker.
- Barnet Carers Centre can also help and will provide you with a card to carry with you. This will indicate to any emergency service that you are a carer, and they can access the plan.

### **Fire Safety for Carers**

Whether you help a loved one maintain their independence or spend your working days caring for others, we're here to support you keep them safe.

There are 4 main reasons why it is important to consider their risk from fire:

- They may not be able respond to a fire as quickly.
- They may not be able to escape a fire.
- They may be more at risk due to mobility, or if they smoke.
- They may use healthcare equipment such as oxygen or emollient creams that are flammable.

If you are worried about what would happen if there was a fire, you can contact the London Fire Brigade for a home fire safety visit on [London Fire Brigade - Fire Safety for Carers](#)  
They can advise on fire hazards and individual evacuation plans for carers and for

### **Getting Support in Barnet**

If at any time the person's health is deteriorating or if you, the carer, are unavailable and the person needs support contact their social worker, GP or Social Care Direct at Barnet council as the point of first contact: Tel: 02083595000

or email: [socialcaredirect@barnet.Gov.Uk](mailto:socialcaredirect@barnet.Gov.Uk)

We are here to support you.

Anyone providing unpaid care or support is entitled to request a Carer's Assessment. Following the Carers Assessment, you might then complete a Carers Support Plan. This will consider the Carers wellbeing, and the Council may provide support. Carers Assessments and more information, help and advice are available from the [Barnet Carers](#)