# What is a Carer?

Carers provide unpaid care or support to an adult family member or friend, either in their own home or somewhere else. This care may cover lots of different things like helping with their washing, dressing or eating, taking them to regular appointments or keeping them company when they feel lonely or anxious. If this sounds like you, you are considered to be a ‘Carer’.

From April 2015, care and support is changing for the better, and if the person you care for is an adult (aged 18 or over) you may be able to get more help to carry on caring and look after your own wellbeing.

# What is meant by ‘support for Carers’?

‘Support for Carers’ means help and advice that Carers can get from the council, national services and local networks. If you are a Carer, you may be able to get more help so that you can carry on caring and look after your own wellbeing.

# What is changing?

From April 2015 you may be eligible for support such as a Direct Payment (see below) to spend on things that make caring easier or practical support like arranging for someone to step in when you need a short break. Alternatively you may want to ask for the support that has been agreed to be arranged for you.

Information and advice including local support contact details will be provided so that you have people to talk to and share your concerns with. The council¹ can help you find the right support and you can ask them for a Carer’s assessment.

# What is a Direct Payment?

A Direct Payment means that the money the council contributes towards meeting your care and support needs is paid directly to you, for example into your bank account or the bank account of someone else you choose, to give you control over how it is spent.

# What is a Carer’s assessment?

A Carer’s assessment will look at the different ways that caring affects your life and works out how you can carry on doing the things that are important to you and your family. Your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing will be at the heart of this assessment. As a result of the assessment, you may be eligible for support from the council¹, who will also offer you advice and guidance to help you with your caring responsibilities. You can have a Carer’s assessment even if the person you care for does not get any help from the council, and they will not need to be assessed.

# How might a Carer’s assessment help me?

A Carer’s assessment will consider the impact the care and support you provide is having on your own wellbeing and important aspects of the rest of your life.

# How will I know if I am eligible for support?

The Carer’s assessment will help to decide what care and support you need and what help the council¹ can give you.

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¹ The council covering the area where the person you care for lives.
**When can I request a Carer’s assessment?**

You can ask for a Carer’s assessment at any time. Cambridgeshire County Council works closely in partnership with a number of organisations and Carers are supported in the first instance via Carers Trust Cambridgeshire [http://www.carerstrustcambridgeshire.org/](http://www.carerstrustcambridgeshire.org/). You can also contact the Carers Trust Cambridgeshire if you don’t want a Carer’s assessment but are looking for advice and information about local care and support.

**What will the Carer’s assessment cover?**

Your Carer’s assessment will look at the different ways caring affects your life and work out how you can carry on doing the things that are important to you and your family. It should cover your caring role, your feelings about caring, your physical, mental and emotional health, and how caring affects your work, leisure, education, wider family and relationships.

Your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing will be at the heart of the assessment. This means that you will be able to tell the council how caring for your family member or friend is affecting your life and what could make things better for you and for the person you care for.

**Will I be asked about my finances?**

You won’t be asked to do a financial means test as part of the Carer’s assessment but you might be asked about what impact the cost of caring is having on your finances.

There may be a charge for some of the support services offered to the cared for person if this were linked to replacement care. This would not affect the Carer though and it would be the cared for person following an assessment of their need that would be charged for the service subject to eligible need.

**Is there a charge for a Carer’s assessment?**

There is no charge for a Carer’s assessment.

**The person I care for does not get help from the council can I still have a Carer’s assessment?**

You can have a Carer’s assessment even if the person you care for does not get any help from the council, and they will not need to be assessed. You do not need the permission of the person you are caring for to request a Carer’s assessment. You are entitled to ask for one in your own right.

**Will having a Carer’s assessment affect my right to a Carer’s allowance?**

Having a Carer’s assessment will not affect your right to receive a Carer’s allowance.

**If I have a Carer’s assessment will the council judge the quality of care that I provide?**

A Carer’s assessment is about you and your wellbeing. It will consider the impact that caring has on your life and wellbeing and what support may be available to you. The purpose of a Carer’s assessment is not to judge the care that you provide.

**I share care with other family members/friends. Can I still request a Carer’s assessment?**

Everyone who provides unpaid care to an adult over 18 who needs support can request a Carer’s assessment. They do not have to be done together but the situation and joint caring responsibilities will be documented in order to determine individual eligibility.

**What, if after my Carer’s assessment, I am not eligible for support?**

If your needs are not eligible for support from the council, they will give you information and advice about the types of support that are available in your area. This may include putting you in touch with local charities or community organisations.

1. The council covering the area where the person you care for lives.
What if the assessment recommends replacement care/respite as a break from caring? Who will pay for the services and support needed to cover my caring role?

The cost of providing replacement personal care to the person you care for will be determined by a needs and financial assessment of the cared for person and, depending on the outcome/individual situation, a contribution may need to be made by the person receiving that replacement care.

As a Carer you will not be charged for any support provided directly to the person you care for even if that support is to enable you to take a break from caring.

What if my needs change or I think I need more support?

You should contact Carers Trust Cambridgeshire or Cambridgeshire County Council who will discuss your situation with you and agree the next steps to take.

What about parents caring for disabled children, or young Carers who are under 18?

If you are a young Carer, or if you are a parent caring for a disabled child, you have similar rights to assessment and support but they are covered by the Children and Families Act not the Care Act.

If you or the person you are caring for is about to reach age 18 you will be able to get a ‘transition assessment’ which will tell you whether you or they are likely to be eligible for support as an adult caring for another adult.

Where can I find out more about support for Carers?

Contact Carers Trust Cambridgeshire [www.carerstrustcambridgeshire.org](http://www.carerstrustcambridgeshire.org)
Tel: 0845 241 0954 or 01480 499090
Email: care@carerstrustcambridgeshire.org

Visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or [www.nhs.uk/Carersdirect](http://www.nhs.uk/Carersdirect)


1 The council covering the area where the person you care for lives.

Find out more about the Care Act on the County Council’s website, visit: [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/careact](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/careact)