

# Support for carers in Dudley

Helping you if you care for a relative or friend of any age with a disability or long term illness





## About this booklet

This booklet provides you with a guide to the advice, practical help and support that is available to carers living in the Dudley Borough.

The booklet explains:

- what we mean by 'a carer'
- carers rights as defined by the Care Act 2014
- how to request a carers' assessment from the council and receive support
- the other types of support available to carers (for example from other organisations and carers groups)

Contact details for useful support and organisations are listed at the back of this booklet.

## Who is a carer?

A carer is someone who looks after a relative, neighbour or friend of any age who has a long term illness or disability, or is older and frail.

As a carer you could provide some or all of the following:

- help with personal care such as washing or dressing
- cooking, shopping cleaning
- help with money matters
- help with medication
- helping someone get out and about
- keeping an eye on someone
- offering emotional support

This leaflet is for unpaid carers who provide care and support to a partner, relative, neighbour or friend.

## Rights for carers

The Care Act 2014 came into force in April 2015 and brought some of the biggest changes to carers' rights in a generation. For the first time carers are recognised in law the same way as the person they care for and have new rights within the social care system.

Although the Care Act 2014 mainly relates to adult carers (people over the age of 18 years) who provide care to another adult, the Care Act does place a duty on the council to carry out assessments to: a young carer or a disabled child approaching their 18th birthday; or an adult carer of a child approaching their 18th birthday; to ensure they are supported during the move from Children to Adult Services through timely and effective planning.

Existing law for carers has been developed bit by bit and placed the rights of carers under different pieces of legislation. The Care Act 2014 brings together all the existing pieces of legislation into one Act.

## What does the Act do for carers?

The Care Act strengthens the rights of carers and the people they care for.

From the 6 April 2015, the council will have a duty to carers to:

- Promote a carers **wellbeing** as well as the wellbeing of the person they care for.
- Provide **information and advice**, including information on advocacy.
- Carry out an **assessment of the carers needs** for support, where the carer appears to have such needs.
- provide **support to a carer to meet their eligible needs** based on the Carers National Eligibility.
- **support transition to adult care** for young carers and parent carers of a child approaching their 18th birthday.

## Wellbeing

The Care Act 2014, recognises the importance of an individual's wellbeing, and places a duty on the council to promote a person's wellbeing when carrying out any care and support functions or making a decision in relation to a person.

The Act defines 'wellbeing' as relating to:

- personal dignity (including respect for the individual)
- physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing
- protection from abuse and neglect
- control by the individual over day to day life
- participation in work, education, training or recreation
- social and economic wellbeing
- domestic, family and personal circumstances
- suitability of living accommodation
- the individual's contribution to society.

The concept of wellbeing applies to all areas of a carer's life. When assessing a person's wellbeing the council must take into account:

- the individual is best-placed to judge their own wellbeing
- the individual's view, wishes, feelings and beliefs should be taken into account





- the importance of preventing or delaying the development of needs for care and support
- the need to make sure that decisions are made with regard to all of the individual's circumstances and without assumptions
- the importance of the individual to be involved as fully as possible in decisions
- the needs of the carer and cared for persons need to be balanced
- the need to protect people from abuse and neglect
- the need to ensure that any restrictions on a person's rights or freedom are kept to a minimum.

Considering these areas should lead to an approach that looks at a person's life holistically, taking into account their skills, ambitions and priorities.

The focus should be to support people to live independently for as long as possible.

### Carers' assessments and support

If you provide unpaid care for a relative or friend and it appears you have needs arising as a result of the care you are providing you have a legal right to a carers' assessment. You can have an assessment whether or not the person you care for has had an assessment of their needs or whether they are, or not eligible for support from adult care.



The assessment can be carried out separately or as combined assessment with the person you care for. If you do not want a separate assessment you can discuss your needs as part of the assessment for the person you care for this is referred to as a joint assessment.

New rules under the Care Act states that an assessment should be appropriate and proportionate to your needs and circumstances. You may therefore be offered a carers 'first contact' assessment to gather initial information about you and your caring role and any needs for support you may have. This may be completed over the telephone if you agree, at a time to suit you.

The carers needs assessment will look at how caring affects various areas of your life, including your physical, mental and emotional health, what you would like to achieve in your daily life and whether you are able and willing to continue caring. The assessment will be carried out by a trained professional, and can either be done through a face to face meeting or over the telephone at a time and place that is convenient to you.

Remember:

- The assessment is a discussion of your needs, not a test of how well you care.
- You may request an assessment even if the person you care for refuses help.
- You can ask for an assessment later if you feel that now isn't the right time.
- We do have to prioritise assessments and carry out the most urgent work first.
- Many services to help you are available without an assessment or while you are waiting for one.

To discuss carers' assessments or to make a referral for an assessment contact the Dudley Carers Network on **01384 818723** or email **[carers.network@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:carers.network@dudley.gov.uk)**

### [Carers national eligibility criteria](#)

From April 2015, a new national eligibility criteria for carers came into force, which the council must use when deciding if a carer has needs which are eligible for support. As a carer you will meet the eligibility criteria if there is likely to be a significant impact on your wellbeing as a result of the care you provide to another person. There are three

questions which the local authority must consider when making its decision:

- Are your needs the result of you providing necessary care
- Does your caring role affect your physical or mental health and/or your ability to achieve any of the eight outcomes defined in the Act.
- Is there, or is there likely to be, a significant impact on your wellbeing.

If the answer is yes, to all three questions, then you will have eligible needs. Further information on the national eligibility criteria is available at [www.dudley.gov.uk/carers](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/carers)

## How will the assessment work in Dudley?

If you have never had a carers' assessment within Dudley, you will be offered a 'carers first contact assessment', which will give you the opportunity to discuss what support you are looking for; what care you are providing to the cared for person; the impact your caring role is having on your day to day life.

If you feel that your needs can be met through the provision of information and advice or referral to preventative services and/or carer support groups, you may not require a full carers needs assessment.

If, without support, you would have 'substantial difficulty' in communicating your wishes; understanding or retaining and assessing information during the assessment and there is no appropriate person able and willing to help you, the council will also provide you with an **independent advocate** to assist you in your assessment.

Whilst assessments will mostly be carried out by the council you may be referred to a local organisation who will carry out an assessment on behalf of Dudley council. This will only be done with your consent. A carers needs assessment will only be carried out by a trained professional.

## Support for carers following a carers' assessment

All carers, including carers who are considered as not having eligible needs are entitled to receive information and advice on the following areas:

- details of the needs that have been identified whether they are eligible or not
- how to access care and support
- the care providers and services they can choose from in their area





- how to obtain financial advice
- how to raise concerns about safeguarding issues. For example what to do if you are worried a vulnerable person is at risk of harm or neglect
- how to access preventative services that could delay or prevent your needs from increasing
- the information provided should be relevant to your circumstances and the local area in which you live and may include information about local carers support groups

If the council decides you have eligible needs, you can ask them to meet some or all of your eligible needs. This will be done through a support plan which will identify which of your needs are eligible for support; information and advice to support you in your caring role; the outcomes you wish to achieve; information on how your needs can be met and information about the personal budget available to you.

In many cases the end result of a carer's assessment is that more support is given to the person you care for (often a priority for carers). This support is usually now given in the form of a personal budget to help the person to pay for the support they need. There is help available to help people plan their support and manage the budget.

If needs cannot be met through the provision of support to the person you care for, the council may support you through a

- directly provided service, including preventative services
- through support from external providers such as charities
- a direct payment so you can arrange your own support, if your needs cannot be met through the above

### Young carers - Are you a young carer?

Aged under 18 years, a young carer provides physical and/or emotional support to a family member who is sick, disabled, has mental health problems or is misusing drugs or alcohol. This support will include;

- staying at home so that someone is around
- looking after a younger brother or sister
- doing the cooking and cleaning
- shopping
- helping someone to get up and dressed
- being a shoulder to cry on

The responsibilities may only last a few hours a week or be part of everyday life but may have an impact on school, careers and social activities.

There is support available if a young person is identified as a young carer. For more information or to arrange a carers' assessment contact the Spurgeons on **01902 877 550** or see **[www.spurgeons.org](http://www.spurgeons.org)** .

### Parent carers of disabled children

Parent carers of disabled children under 18 years also have a stand alone right to assessments and services under the Children and Families Act 2014. This assessment can be combined alongside the disabled child's assessment and carried out by the same person. The council must be satisfied that the child and their family fall within the scope of the Children's Act 1989 - that the child is in need. The council has a duty to assess parent carers on the appearance of need or where an assessment is requested by the parent.



For more information contact the Children's Disability Team - **01384 815813** or email **cdn@dudley.gov.uk** .

## Dudley Carers' Network - support for all carers

All carers in Dudley can join Dudley Council's Carers' Network free of charge.

As a member you can get information and advice about the support on offer to you and the person you care for.

You can also:

- have access to a carers' advice line **01384 818723**
- request a carers' assessment
- receive our newsletter The Dudley Carer, keeping you up to date with all news and information to do with carers and services and support available in the borough
- request fact sheets on a wide range of topics
- receive e-bulletins with up-to-the minute information
- join our carers peace of mind emergency scheme
- apply for the council's Options+ leisure card

To become a member you, or the person you care for, must live within the borough. To join the network or for advice call the Carers' Network Team on **01384 818723**, email **carers.network@dudley.gov.uk** or go to **www.dudley.gov.uk/carers**

- **Carers' advice line**

The carers' advice line is available to all carers. Call **01384 818723** or email [carers.network@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:carers.network@dudley.gov.uk) for advice, information and guidance about services and support.

There is a 24 hour answering machine where messages can be left.

- **Carers' peace of mind emergency support card scheme**

We understand you may worry about what will happen to the person you care for if for some reason, such as a medical or other emergency, you are unable to provide care.

If you provide details about the person you care for as well as the help they may need, we will store this on the secure database held within the Dudley Telecare Service.



We will give you a card with a unique code and an emergency helpline number that operates 24/7 all year round. In an emergency, one call to this number will enable our staff to make necessary arrangements to ensure that the person you care for receives appropriate support.

This is a free service, designed to give carers and the people they care for 'peace of mind'. Contact the Carers' Network on **01384 818723** or email **carers.network@dudley.gov.uk**

- **Options+ leisure card**

As a member of the network you qualify for the Options+ leisure card, which offers 50% discount on council run activities and events at borough leisure centres, museums and halls.

- **Benefits advice**

Benefits advice is available from the Carer's Network Team who will advise you about other agencies who provide more in-depth support if needed. These include

- o Care and disability line (CADAL)

This freephone advice line is part of Dudley Citizens Advice. CADAL's aim is to give advice and information to people of any age with a long term illness, a disability, or who are older and frail. There is currently a specific worker within CADAL who focuses on offering advice and practical help to carers of people within these groups. CADAL specialises in benefits and debt advice but can also advise on other disability related issues including access to health and social care services.

The service offers a helpline staffed 30 hours per week Monday to Friday 9.30am - 4.30pm with the aim of promoting people's independence and social inclusion with quality advice and information.

Contact: the Care and Disability Advice Line Free phone **08080 486486** or email **cadal@dudleycabx.org**

- **Carer Aware on-line training and resource**

If you would like to know more about the carer's role, their rights and the services available to support them, go to our carer aware e-learning course at **www.dudley.gov.uk/careraaware**

## Support groups

There are many groups across the borough who meet regularly to provide support for you as a carer as well as the person you care for. Many of these groups are run by volunteer carers. For a list of groups call the Carers' Network **01384 818723**, email **carers.network@dudley.gov.uk** or go to our website **www.dudley.gov.uk/carers**

## Complaints, compliments, comments

We offer a clear complaint, comment or compliment process. We like to know when we are getting things right and we also need to know if we have made mistakes or could have done something better.

You can raise any issue or tell us about something we have done well by filling in a form available on our website, by writing to the manager of the service, or by directly writing to the:

Quality and Complaints Team

Council House, Priory Road, Dudley DY1 1HF

Phone: **01384 813067**

Email: **complaints.dachs@dudley.gov.uk**

## Need more information?

To join the Carers' Network, for more information or if you would like to request a carers' assessment contact the Carers' Network Team on **01384 818723**, Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm (answer phone message service at all other times and bank holidays) email **cares.network@dudley.gov.uk** or go to our website **www.dudley.gov.uk/carers**

An emergency duty team is available on **0300 555 8574** outside of office hours.

### Other publications in this series

*Adult social care and support - what social care services are available to me?*

*Adult social care and support - arranging and paying for care at home*

*Adult social care and support - residential care, choosing and paying for residential and nursing home care*

*Adult social care and support - housing options, where can I live?*

*Adult social care and support - keeping safe*

*Adult social care and support - having your say*

## Useful contact details

**Dudley community information directory**  
[www.dudleyci.co.uk](http://www.dudleyci.co.uk)

**Care Quality Commission (CQC)**  
Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA  
**03000 61 61 61**  
email - [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)  
[www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

**Carers UK** [www.carersuk.org/](http://www.carersuk.org/)

**Carers Trust** [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

**Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust**  
2nd Floor, Trafalgar House, Dudley DY2 8PS  
Freephone: **0300 555 0535**  
email - [Sed@dwmh.nhs.uk](mailto:Sed@dwmh.nhs.uk)  
[www.dwmh.nhs.uk](http://www.dwmh.nhs.uk)

**NHS Choices**, [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)



# Further information

**For further information please contact our  
access to adult social care helpline**



## Telephone

**0300 555 0055** (Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm)

An emergency duty team is available on **0300 555 8574**, at all other times

## Web

**[www.dudley.gov.uk/asc](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/asc)**

## Email

**[accessteam.dachs@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:accessteam.dachs@dudley.gov.uk)**

## Post

**Brierley Hill Health & Social Care Centre  
Venture Way, Brierley Hill DY5 1RU**

If you are a carer telephone **01384 818723**  
or email **[carers.network@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:carers.network@dudley.gov.uk)**

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If you require any assistance with regards to this document or would like to request an interpreter, large print or audio version, please contact the equality and diversity unit on 01384 813400