Support for carers in Leeds from April 2015

If you help care for a family member, friend or neighbour and you need a little support yourself sometimes, this is the leaflet for you.
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Introduction

Within Leeds, we know that there are about 71,500 people who are unpaid carers; these are people who help care for a friend or family member who due to an illness, a disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot cope without their support.

Caring for a partner, or parent, a friend or neighbour, is often seen as what you do when you love or care for someone. Sometimes, however, carers need some support themselves as caring is often rewarding but it can also be challenging too.

From April 2015 the way that care and support is provided is changing for the better, and not just for the person being cared for. The Care Act 2014 is a new piece of legislation which helps to support carers too. If you support someone as a carer, you could benefit from these changes and this leaflet describes what those benefits might be and where to get the information you might need. We’re calling it the “Leeds Carers Offer”.

How do I know if I’m a carer?

A carer is someone who provides care and support to a person who cannot manage on their own without that support, due to their physical or mental health condition, disability, sensory impairment or the effects of old age or an alcohol or substance misuse. They may be caring for a family member such as an adult child, their spouse or partner, a sibling or a parent. It could
also be a friend or neighbour. Carers are male or female and are of all ages (See page 13 for a section about young carers under age 18 years).

The Care Act is all about supporting people who look after their family members, friend or neighbour on an unpaid basis so that they can continue to be a carer without damaging their own health and wellbeing. This leaflet is not for people who provide care as a paid job, such as a home help or personal assistant.

Who should I contact?
The best place to start with is Carers Leeds, who provide a free advice, information and support service on behalf of Leeds City Council.

If you want to talk things over, their carers support workers can offer support by listening to you. If you want to know about the services available to you or what you may be entitled to receive, they can guide you in the right direction. If you don't know where to turn to, they can offer

As a working carer, I recently realised that I needed the support of Carers Leeds – I was desperate and didn’t know where to turn. They understand the conflicting pressures involved in juggling work and caring. Their course on dementia has enabled me to understand so much about what it is like for the person I care for. Carers Leeds are there to help and support. Thank you for all that you do for carers.
advice to help you make the right choices for you.

They also provide social activities and groups for carers and information sessions on all the challenges of life as a carer. You can also keep up to date with developments by signing up for their bi-monthly newsletter which is also completely free.

**How do I contact them?**

**Telephone Carers Leeds**

on **0113 3804300**, 9am – 4.30pm, Monday – Friday.

**Email them at**

info@carersleeds.org.uk.

**Visit their website at**

www.carersleeds.org.uk and read their latest newsletter or join the chat room.

**Visit them at Facebook**

(www.facebook.com/CarersLeeds) or Twitter (@CarersLeeds).

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**Appointments are available and you can drop in to their offices at 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds, LS2 6PT.**

Or, if you or the person you care for is already in touch with Adult Social Care and you want to talk about their services you can contact them through the council’s contact centre on **0113 2224401**.

**How do I get some help for myself? The Carers Assessments**

The first step is to have a Carers Assessment. This is a simple form where you can tell us what kind of care and support you are giving and what effect it is having on your life. Based on this information, we can then arrange support to reduce the impact that caring has on your life and your wellbeing and help you to continue in your caring role (if that is what you want to do). Anyone who is caring for
someone can have a Carers Assessment, regardless of whether the person they care for is receiving care services themselves.

To have a Carers Assessment, you will need to approach the council where the person you care for lives. If this is Leeds, you can telephone Carers Leeds who will send you the Carers Self-Assessment form, or you can return the request slip at the back of this leaflet.

Carers Leeds can provide help to fill the form in, if you need it.

There are other ways to get the assessment form:

- You can complete it online from either the Carers Leeds website (www.carersleeds.org.uk) or from the carer’s pages on the council’s website (www.leeds.gov.uk).

- You can also call the council on 0113 2224401.

**What happens next? The Leeds Carers Offer**

After you’ve completed and submitted the form, the council will check if you are eligible for support and we will then discuss with you the best options to maintain your wellbeing.

**What sort of support can I expect?**

The “Leeds Carers Offer”

If you are in the early stages of caring we will focus on helping you to look after your own health and wellbeing, staying active and maintaining your own independent life. You may need advice and information about the practicalities of care-giving, simple equipment or referral to community services e.g. home delivery meals services; luncheon clubs and social activities.

If things become more difficult and caring is having a significant impact on your physical or mental health, your home life,
work or career, the council can carry out an assessment of the person you are caring for and offer some care and support to them, in order to support you.

**Getting a break from caring**

There are a number of ways that we could help you to have a short break from caring on a regular basis. This could be for a few hours weekly or fortnightly, in the home of the person you are caring for so that you can have some time to yourself or go out and do the things that you want to do. Or it might be by arranging a residential care home stay for your loved one so that you can take a short holiday or a weekend break.

For those carers whose caring role is more intensive and challenging, our health and social care teams will work with the whole family to find a package of care services that will help you all maintain your health and wellbeing. This, for example, may include a full day of care for the person you care for.

You may also find it useful to register with the Carers Emergency Plan scheme which will step in for a few days if an emergency prevents you looking after the person you care for, such as an accident or illness (for more details see page 10).

**Personal budgets – what are they?**

Following the completion of a Carers Self-Assessment, if the council decides you are eligible for support, they will work with you to decide on an appropriate support plan based on the needs
you have to maintain your wellbeing. The support plan will state clearly what you’ve agreed and what support the council and their partner organisations can provide.

At this point, funds will be allocated to you based on the cost of the support services you will need. This is your personal budget. You can choose whether to use a service provided by the council or have the money paid to you as a direct payment to organise and purchase those services yourself.

If the council decides to provide a respite or a personal care service directly to the person you care for, then the personal budget will be in their name and they will choose to take a service or a direct payment to arrange their own care service.

This is a very brief description of personal budgets and it will be fully explained to you at the right time. Or you can read more about them on the council website (www.leeds.gov.uk).

The council provides a service to support people to use direct payments.

**What other support is there for me as a carer?**

**Carers Support Groups**

Carers Leeds has a number of popular carer support groups which meet around the city and provide an opportunity for carers to get together and share their experiences. Some groups are for carers of people with specific
health issues, some are open to all carers and other groups are activity focussed. There are also a number of self-run carers groups. For details of these groups contact Carers Leeds on 0113 3804300 or you can look them up on the council website (www.leeds.gov.uk).

Help at difficult times

If your caring situation is causing you emotional stress or anxiety, including bereavement, there are a number of ways to get help:

- Talk to a carers support worker at Carers Leeds.
- Talk to your GP – they need to know that you are having problems and may refer you for some more expert help.
- Talk to any health or social care professional who knows the person you care for – they may have helpful advice about managing the person you care for.
- You can refer yourself to the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies service (IAPT) on 0113 8434388.

Looking after your own health – what you can do

- Take up the offers of an NHS health check and a flu-jab in the winter.
- Make sure your GP has recorded that you are a carer. They will know what support is on offer to help keep you healthy and maintain your wellbeing.
- Try to keep up some physical activity such as walking, swimming or any other hobby you may enjoy, especially if it involves other people. There are a lot of schemes offering healthy living activities, one of the biggest is www.leedsletsgetactive.co.uk.
- Your local library also keeps information about leisure groups and societies.
- Make sure you make time to eat properly.
Carers are also entitled to the LeedsCard extra from Leeds City Council. This is a scheme to help you have fun and save money by offering a discount at various council sport and leisure facilities, theatres, museums, shops and cafes. You can apply at any One Stop Centre or library or the Leeds Card Office at 2 Great George Street, opposite the Merrion Centre in Leeds city centre. Or you can phone for a form on 0113 2243636.

What would happen in a carer’s emergency situation?

If you are living with the person you care for or are spending most days with them, and you don’t have anyone else who can step in, you may be worried about what would happen if you were suddenly called away, or if you had an accident or were admitted to hospital in an emergency. If the person you look after could not be left alone and you don’t have any other family who could step in, you may like to join the Carers Emergency Plan scheme.

This service will provide up to 48 hours of care in such an emergency, but you must be registered in advance. You can do this by contacting Housing 21 on 0303 1231921 or email them at cesregistrations@housing21.co.uk.

Keeping yourself and others safe

Sometimes the health condition of people who are ill can make them aggressive or say hurtful things. If you have any concerns about your own safety you should discuss them with the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Partnership. They will listen to your concerns and advise on the best way to help the situation, contact them on 0113 2243511.

If you have any concern about how the person you care for or any other vulnerable person is being treated, you should also
Financial help and benefits for carers

There is only one benefit specifically for carers called a Carers Allowance and this is paid for by the Department of Work and Pensions. See [www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Disability/Pages/Carers.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Disability/Pages/Carers.aspx) for further information and an application form.

However, carers who are on a very low income may also be entitled to additional amounts of income support and housing benefit or council tax benefit. Entitlement to these benefits is usually dependent on the person you care for being in receipt of certain disability benefits. You could get more information and advice by contacting Carers Leeds; Citizens Advice Bureau; or Leeds City Council’s benefits advice service on 0113 3760452 or by emailing Welfare.Rights@leeds.gov.uk.

Finding out about what other services are available

The adult social care pages on the Leeds City Council website describe the full range of services, which agency is responsible for delivery and how to contact them ([www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Adult-Social-Care.aspx](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Adult-Social-Care.aspx)).

The Leeds Care Directory is an easy way to find reliable, flexible services in your area. Over 1,700 organisations are registered with this ‘not-for-profit’ service run by
an organisation called Care & Repair and funded by Leeds City Council. You can search for a service online at www.leedsdirectory.org/ or phone Leeds Directory on 0113 3918333 or email info@leedsdirectory.org.

Leeds City Council also produce a book called the ‘A-Z of health and social care services’ which can be obtained from the Leeds City Council website or by telephoning 0113 2478630.

Leeds City Council and MIND have a website where you can find out about mental health, mental illness and mental health services in Leeds (www.leedsmhdirectory.co.uk).

**What if I look after a child with a disability or special needs?**

There is support in Leeds for carers who look after a child with a disability or special needs.

Carers Leeds (0113 3804300) supports parents/carers of children and young people with special needs.

For advice and information about support or services available for you and your child and how to get them, contact the Family Information Service on Freephone 0800 7310640 or 0113 2474386, by email at family.info@leeds.gov.uk. Their website www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk has information relating to education, health, family support, child minding and play, short breaks for carers of children and young people with
special educational needs, mental illness and emotional or behaviour problems.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is an information service for parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 with additional needs. If you are worried that your child may be having difficulties at school, or have any questions around your child’s education, they can support you in a number of ways.

The Leeds SEND Information Advice Support Service officers offer impartial advice and support based on available information. They do not advocate for parents at school meetings.

For further information phone their helpline on 0113 3951200 or visit www.leedssendiass.co.uk.

For information about short breaks and caring for a child with additional needs contact SCOPE on 0113 3876408, and they will come to your home or local area, or email leeds.inclusionISW@scope.org.uk.

What if I’m a young carer looking after an adult?

A young carer is someone under the age of 18 years who is helping to care for or support another person who has care needs as a result of their health condition. This may be their brother or sister or an adult.

It is very important that children and young people can continue to have friendships, interests and participate fully in school whilst also helping out their mum, dad or another relative. However, we know that doesn’t always happen and we have a service called Willow Young Carers to provide support and help to young carers in Leeds. They provide someone to talk to if you need it, activities and fun with other young carers.
and they can help you to talk to the social workers or health professionals involved with you or your family. You can contact them on 0113 2622851, or visit them at www.barnardos.org.uk/willow, or email them at willow.youngcarers@barnardos.org.uk.

This is a small service and they work closely with other professionals in health and social care agencies, schools and colleges to help them support young carers.

**Useful national organisations**

**Carers UK**
Helpline  0808 808 7777  
Website  www.carersuk.org

**The Carers Trust** (Formerly Princess Royal Trust for carers & Crossroads)
Website  www.carers.org

**NHS Choices/Carers Direct**
Helpline  0300 123 1053  
Website  www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

**Contact a Family**
Helpline:  0808 808 3555  
Website  www.cafamily.org.uk
Carers Assessment request slip

Data Protection and confidentiality information
We collect information under the principles of the 1998 Data protection Act and hold information about you in confidence. If we need to share information about you with others this will be so that the support to you is effective. This may include Leeds City Council Adult Social Care, Leeds Children’s Services or an NHS health professional. It will not be shared for any other reasons. You have a right to see information we hold about you at any stage.

Please enter your details below and return to:
Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds, LS1 6PT

I am helping to look after someone with disability or healthcare needs. Their name is:

..........................................................................................................................

Date of birth........................................................................................................

I would like a Carers Assessment.

My name is............................................................................................................

Address...................................................................................................................

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Tel...........................................Date of birth..........................................

Email.....................................................................................................................