

A guide for employers and
carers wishing to work



Caring for carers



NHS
County Durham and Darlington



A guide for employers and carers

This leaflet provides information and advice relating to employing carers, supporting working carers and guidance on flexible working options which may assist carers in gaining and maintaining employment.

What is a carer?

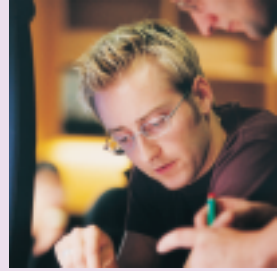
A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has a mental health or substance misuse problem. Many people do not see themselves as carers because, first and foremost, they may be husbands, wives, partners, siblings or friends. Carers are not paid to provide care - they take on this role because of love, friendship or duty.

Statistics suggest that:

- There are almost 6 million carers in the UK
- There are an estimated 57,225 in County Durham alone, 14,000 of whom are providing 50 hours or more care a week*
- Carers account for 10% of the population of the United Kingdom and 12% of its workforce
- Approximately 10% of male employees and 14% of female employees are carers
- 8 out of 10 carers are of working age (between 16 and 65 years)

*2001 Census





Different kinds of carers

Whilst there are three broad carer groups, it is recognised that all carers are individuals and as such have differing and diverse needs.

Adult carers are adults caring for adults over the age of 18, this includes parents caring for their adult children.

Parent carers are parents caring for a child or young person under the age of 18 who has a disability.

Young carers are children or young people under the age of 18 who are caring for either another child or young person or an adult.

Working carers - the benefits to employers

There are clear business benefits to employers supporting working carers by offering flexible working options. A flexible approach:

- Attracts new employees and helps retain existing staff
- Reduces sick leave, stress and the costs of recruitment and training
- Increases morale, productivity and improves service delivery
- Paid leave (for both emergency and scheduled caring) can reduce staff turnover and absence, cutting employment costs
- Flexible working benefits carers because it addresses the diversity of individual's circumstances, rather than stereotyping them as problem employees

While caring for someone, carers may have developed new skills that may benefit many employers. Skills may include good time management, handling unexpected situations, dealing with professionals and providing support to vulnerable adults and children.

Employers can support working carers in their organisation by:

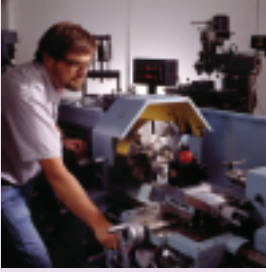
- Promoting local carers centre services to staff through notice boards and staff newsletters
- Promoting flexible working options available as possible solutions to balancing work and caring responsibilities

Benefits to working carers include making it easier to balance your caring responsibilities and your career. Small changes to work patterns can be a major help to carers, helping you to manage the unpredictable nature of your caring role. Working carers have the legal right to request support, including flexible working arrangements and leave entitlement, under the Work and Families Act 2006 and the Employment Rights Act 1996.

Flexible working options

An employee has the legal right to ask their employer for flexible working if they are caring for an adult who is a relative or lives at the same address. There are a number of options which may be available, making it easier for carers to balance caring responsibilities with their career. Employers may not offer all of these possible solutions – carers should check their organisation's policies, contact their union or company's human resources department for more information.

Carers Centres across County Durham will support working carers in gaining and maintaining employment – their details are listed in the useful contacts and information section of this leaflet.



Flexible working options can include:

Flexi-time

Flexi-time schemes provide flexibility in arranging of working hours to meet the needs of the employers business and to enable employees to adjust their working hours to reflect personal circumstances. Sometimes employees may be required to work 'core hours' to meet the requirements of their role, however outside of these hours, may be able to start and finish work at earlier and later times. A carer or a parent with a child under 5, or a disabled child under 18, who has 26 weeks continuous employment at the time of application has the right to request flexible working.

Part-time working

Working less hours in order to provide care (or for other reasons).

Job-share

Normally, two employees sharing the full-time workload of one member of staff on a part-time basis.

Working from home

Technology enables employees to communicate with their workplace and customers from home via email, internet, fax and telephone.

Parental leave

Employees with a minimum service of one year with their employer are entitled to 13 weeks unpaid parental leave for every child up to the child's 5th birthday. Parents of children with a disability can take eighteen weeks unpaid leave up to the child's 18th birthday.

Compressed working hours

Working normal hours over less days. For example: A five day working week compressed over four days.

Term-time working

An employee on a permanent contract takes paid or unpaid leave during school holidays. Often the salary can be paid pro-rata, so that if term-time workers are not paid for the holidays, their wages are spread across the year to cover the unpaid periods.

Compassionate leave

In the event of an involving a dependant an employee has the right to take a 'reasonable' amount of time off work. A dependant can be a husband, wife, partner, child, parent, or anyone living in the household as a member of the family. An emergency can be any unexpected or sudden problem involving someone who depends on help or care from the employee.

This can include:

- A dependant falling ill or being injured or assaulted
- A disruption or breakdown in care arrangements
- The death of a dependant
- When a dependant is having a baby

Time off may be paid or unpaid, at the employer's discretion and employees must inform their employer as soon as possible after the emergency has happened.

Your employer may offer other forms of support such as career breaks or access to counselling services or advice.

For more information on statutory employment rights, you can call Carers UK advice line on 0808 808 7777.



How can Jobcentre Plus help...

Carers

Jobcentre Plus offers a number of programmes and services to help Jobseekers, unemployed people (particularly long-term unemployed people), people with disabilities and others who may need extra help in finding work.

Carers have access to additional support to take part in employment and training programmes. In some cases, funding is made available for replacement care for carers who participate in activities which have been agreed with a Jobcentre Plus Adviser. If you are a carer and would like to know more about the support available, please contact the Jobcentre Plus Care Partnership Manager on 0191 382 4192.

You can find out more about other programmes and services Jobcentre Plus offer at www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/

Employers

Whether you want to fill one vacancy or many, Jobcentre Plus can help you to reach the talent you need by advertising your jobs to over 2 million people each week. Jobcentre Plus provides a number of programmes to help you in your recruitment, and help people return to and remain in work. In return for agreeing to work with Jobcentre Plus and our candidates, we offer a wide range of support.

The support Jobcentre Plus offer can include financial help, training recruits without the necessary experience, practical advice on making reasonable workplace adjustments and helping retain staff who become disabled:

- £1000 cashback on your new recruit – payable by Jobcentre Plus to your business whenever you recruit someone who has been claiming Jobseekers Allowance for six months or more *
- Work trials offer employers a risk-free way to try out a potential employee for up to 30 days at no cost to the business
- Access to Work offers support for employers and individuals to help them return to, or stay in work
- The Job Introduction Scheme offers a weekly grant to employers to help with employment costs for the first few weeks of employing a disabled person
- Train to Gain offers employers in England the opportunity to develop the skills of their workforce with help from the Learning and Skills Council

* In line with terms and conditions available at www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/£1000

Employers can contact Jobcentre Plus:

Online

Use the Employer Direct online service to register and manage your vacancies, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, giving you total control. Visit www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/employers or e-mail your vacancies to Jobcentre Plus at employerdirectvacancies@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk and they will register the details on their systems for you.

By telephone

Call Jobcentre Plus on 0845 601 2001 and within 10 minutes your vacancies could be online and accessible to millions of potential applicants through Jobcentre Plus, the UK's No.1 recruitment website.

Alternatively, fax your vacancy details through to Jobcentre Plus on 0845 601 2004 and we will place your vacancies for you.

* In line with terms and conditions available at www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/£1000

Useful contacts and information

Durham County Council contacts and information

www.durham.gov.uk/carers

Carers information on the Durham County Council website.

Community Information Online

www.durhamcommunity.info

Our Community Information Online database, which is free to access, contains countywide, regional and national information - all relevant to people who live and work in County Durham.

Social Care Direct

Many people at some point in their lives, need social care help and support. If you feel that you, or someone close to you, is losing their independence or the ability to remain in the local community, there are a range of support services which may be able to assist you. Social Care Direct is a dedicated team of officers who are the first point of contact if you feel you need help.

Tel: 0845 850 5010

E-mail: scd@durham.gov.uk

Fax: 0191 383 5752

Textphone: 0142 988 4124

Carers mailing list

The Durham County Council carers mailing list is a list of people in County Durham who are currently unpaid carers. By joining the mailing list, carers in County Durham have chosen to receive information about services and support for carers, including a free quarterly newsletter called 'The Carers Echo', packed with interesting and informative articles and sent directly to them. Mailing list members will also be given the opportunity to share their views about carer related issues and this information will then be used to influence and improve new and existing services.

There is no charge for receiving The Carers Echo or being on the mailing list. Durham County Council carefully selects the information to be used in the carers mailing list. You will receive only information relevant to helping you as a carer and your details will not be used for any other purpose.

For more information, telephone 0191 370 8838.

Lifelong Learning team

Durham County Council's Lifelong Learning team could provide you with the opportunity to balance your caring responsibilities with training. The service delivers learning opportunities in libraries and community centres across County Durham and works around individual's needs at flexible times and locations to suit. For further information on Lifelong Learning Projects, please contact 0191 370 8806 or e-mail lifelong.learning@durham.gov.uk

Welfare Rights

Durham County Council Welfare Rights can help you with Social Security Benefits. They can:

- Give advice on starting work and the benefits and credits that can help you back into work
- Provide advice and information about benefits and tax credits
- Check your benefits to make sure that you are getting all the benefits you are due
- Represent you at appeal tribunals and afterwards

The service also works with partners as well as producing information and providing information to make sure that everyone in County Durham gets their full entitlement to benefits.

Tel: 0191 370 8787

E-mail: welfare.rights@durham.gov.uk

WorkAble Solutions

More than 80% of carers say that caring has damaged their health*. WorkAble Solutions is a supported employment service for County Durham residents aged 16 years and over, who have a disability or health condition. WorkAble Solutions can provide support to people who want to achieve or maintain employment – full or part time, and can offer support with any of the following:

- Basic skills assessment
- Pre-employment training
- Short vocational courses
- Welfare benefits advice
- Work placements and work trials
- Preparing a CV
- Job searching
- Interview preparation and support
- Access to work
- One-to-one support in the workplace

This support is provided by dedicated teams of staff across the county who tailor help to meet your individual needs. We will job search and job match in the type of employment you are interested in. We do not have a bank of jobs to slot you into but we will help you find the job to suit your skills and abilities.

*source: Supporting Carers: An Action Guide for General Practitioners and their Teams, 2008

WorkAble Solutions
Adults, Wellbeing and Health
Barnfield Centre, Barnfield Road
Spennymoor, County Durham DL16 6EA

Telephone/textphone: 01388 812451
E-mail: workablesolutions@durham.gov.uk
www.durham.gov.uk/workablesolutions

Further contacts and information

Carers centres

The carers centres in County Durham offer a wide range of local, confidential support services to adult and parent carers, such as:

- One-to-one support, including home visits
- Information and advice
- Informal advocacy support
- Carer training and support with employment issues
- Support to access other services
- Supporting carers' health and wellbeing
- Breaks for carers
- Complementary therapies
- Social events and activities
- Local support groups

More information on these carers centres is available at www.durham.gov.uk/carerscentres

Derwentside Carers Centre

Tel: 01207 502 688

E-mail: carerscenter@aol.com

Durham Dales Action for Carers

Tel: 01833 630 202 or 01388 451 400

E-mail: info@durhamdalescarers.org.uk

Easington District Carers Support

Tel: 0191 586 9134

E-mail: admin@easington-carers.co.uk

Durham and Chester-le-Street Carers Support

Tel: 0191 387 1991

E-mail: info@dccarers.org

Sedgefield Locality Carers Centre

Tel: 01325 313 123

E-mail: admin@sedgefieldcarers.org.uk

Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus have additional services in place specifically designed to help carers obtain a balance between their caring responsibilities and looking for, or returning to, work. This could include financial assistance to cover the cost of replacement care whilst you take part in an interview, training or some other work related activity.

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Tel: Jobcentre Plus Care Partnership Manager on 0191 382 4192

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers - the largest provider of comprehensive carers support services in the UK.

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

Unit 14, Bourne Court

Southend Road

Woodford Green

Essex

IG8 8HD

www.carers.org

Tel: 0844 800 4361

Fax: 0844 800 4362

E-mail: info@carers.org

Carers' UK

This organisation provides information and advice on all aspects of caring for both carers and professionals.

www.carersuk.org

Tel: 0808 808 7777

Crossroads Caring for Carers

Provides support for carers by giving them a break from their caring responsibilities.

www.crossroads.org.uk

Tel: 0845 450 0350

Employers for Carers

Employers for Carers ensure that employers have the support to retain employees with caring responsibilities.

Employers for Carers
20 Great Dover Street
London
SE1 4LX

www.employersforcarers.org

Tel: 020 7378 4956

E-mail: employers@carersuk.org

ACAS

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) aims to improve organisations and working life through better employment relations.

ACAS helpline: 08457 474747

www.acas.org.uk

Direct.gov.uk

There is a range of information for carers on Direct.gov.uk – the website address below provides information regarding Carers and Employment.

www.direct.gov.uk/en/CaringForSomeone/CarersAndEmployment/index.htm

Local offices:

The Dales

- Galgate, Barnard Castle DL12 8HA
- 1 Kensington, Cockton Hill Road, Bishop Auckland DL14 6HX
- Croft Street, Crook DL15 8QF

Derwentside

- 1 Woodland Court, Greencroft Industrial Park, Annfield Plain, Stanley DH9 7BF

Durham and Chester-le-Street

- Hopper House, Atherton Street, Durham DH1 4DL
- 129 Front Street, Chester-le-Street DH3 3BL

Easington

- Essington House, Essington Way, Peterlee SR8 5AZ
- Caroline House, St John's Square, Seaham SR7 0JR

Sedgefield

- Council Offices, Green Lane, Spennymoor DL16 6JQ
- 21/27 Upper Beveridge Way, Newton Aycliffe DL5 4EB

Local offices are open Monday - Thursday 8.30am to 5.00pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm.

How to access Social Care Services

To get in touch for the first time about services in this booklet contact:

Social Care Direct

Telephone:

0845 8 50 50 10

Textphone:

01429 884 124

Text Messaging:

07786 027 280

E-mail:

scd@durham.gov.uk

Website:

www.durham.gov.uk

For your convenience, or if you don't wish to use your own telephone, you will find the addresses of local offices, on page 15 which you can visit to make a phone call to Social Care Direct.

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

العربية (Arabic) (中文 (繁體字)) (Chinese) اردو (Urdu)

polski (Polish) ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi) Español (Spanish)

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