



**MAKING
EVERY
CONTACT
COUNT**

Support for carers



Key messages

- Across the UK there are an estimated 10.6 million people providing unpaid care and support to someone living with a long-term illness, disability or due to frailty.
- In the 2021 Census, 31,516 (10.3%) Dudley residents identified themselves as a carer, however this figure is likely to be much higher as many people do not recognise or identify themselves as a carer.
- It is estimated the value of unpaid care in England and Wales is £162 billion per year, locally this equates to an estimated £1 billion.
- 9,775 carers in the borough are providing 50 hours or more unpaid care per week, 20% of these carers are aged 65 or over with 8% aged 85 or more.
- Carers are more likely to experience health, financial and social inequality than someone who is a non-carer.

What it means to be a carer?

A carer is *anyone (of any age) who provides or intends to provide care, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot manage without their support (Carers Trust).*

One of the biggest barriers is people recognising themselves as a carer, resulting in them not accessing services.

Caring responsibilities could include:

- helping someone to manage their personal hygiene (i.e. washing, bathing, toileting),
- making sure someone has enough to eat and drink (i.e. food shopping, meal preparation, support with eating and drinking),
- helping someone to get around their home, doing household jobs or taking them to a GP or hospital appointment as they cannot manage on their own,
- making sure someone takes their medication at the right time (i.e. ordering prescriptions, giving medication),
- helping someone with their budgeting and finances,
- providing regular emotional and social support for someone (i.e. telephone calls, home visit),
- helping someone to stay in contact with their family or friends or to attend social activities.

Why is it important?

Caring can be a positive and rewarding experience, however at times it can become hard work, emotionally draining and may seem overwhelming for the individual as it can impact a carers own health and life outside of caring, including work, family life, and hobbies.

Encourage carers to:

- recognise and register themselves as a carer to find out about what support is available for them in managing the caring role alongside their own life,
- look after their own health, physical, mental and emotional, carers will often neglect their own health needs due to concerns about who will take over the caring role,
- talk to family members and friends about how they are feeling and how the caring role may be affecting them,
- give themselves time and space from caring by engage in activities they like to do,
- connect with others (i.e. friends) and their local community, either by joining a carer or social group or participating in community activities (i.e. park activities),
- plan for the future and consider the legal aspects of caring (i.e. Power of Attorney, Appointeeships),
- consider emergency arrangements in case they are not able to provide care due to ill health or an emergency,
- not be afraid of asking for help or asking questions when speaking to professionals about the care for the person they look after,
- be clear on what and how much care they can do and seek help if they start to struggle.

Helpful contacts

Dudley Carers Hub & Wellbeing Service 01384 818723 or email dudleycarershub@dudley.gov.uk or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/carers to register as a carer and access information, advice and support if the carer or the person they care for lives in Dudley borough.

Russell Hall Hospital Carers Coordinator 07435 754386 or visit www.dgft.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/support-for-carers/ to access information and advice if the person being cared for is in hospital.

Dudley Young Carers Service 01384 886429 or email info@crossroads-caringforcarers.org support for children and young people 5 - 17 years who provide care and support to a parent, sibling or family member.

Adult Social Care in Dudley www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/care-and-health/adult-health-social-care/ or call 0300 555 0055 (Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm). An emergency duty team is available on 0300 555 8574 outside of these times.

Mobilise www.mobiliseonline.co.uk offering free online carer support 24/7.

Dudley Self-Management Programme 07976 637404 or email smp@dudleycab.org Self-Management programmes for people who are caring or have a long term health condition.

Later life planning www.healthydudley.co.uk/ageing-well/later-life-planning

Just Straight Talk - Yours Truly 07486 380590 or email stuart@juststraighttalk.org support for carer to identify and achieve personal and vocational goals for self-development outside of their caring role.

We Love Carers 01384 396626 or email hello@welovecarers.org information, advice and support for parent carers and adult carers.

Dudley Crossroads 01384 298513 or email dudleycrossroads@gmail.com carers and elderly support service.



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