



# *Taking care of someone?*

*Information for those who help look after  
a family member or friend*



*Help and support available*

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## Who is this for?

Carers in Southampton is an information, advice and support service for anyone who looks after a family member, a friend or a neighbour who needs additional support.

Carers in Southampton has prepared this booklet to inform you of services, advice, support and how to access them.



You may be:

- Regularly providing practical household tasks, personal care or emotional support
- Helping with paperwork
- Making and attending appointments

### Do you provide these services without pay?

We offer a free informative and interactive service via a packed website [carersinsouthampton.co.uk](http://carersinsouthampton.co.uk) and an experienced staff team who you may call on 023 8058 2387.

We also host a dedicated resources room within our Carers' Centre and provide training to carers on relevant topics e.g. legal, financial, computing, health and first aid. We organise recreational activities too.



For more information please visit our website [carersinsouthampton.co.uk](http://carersinsouthampton.co.uk) or call us on 023 8058 2387

## Carers' Assessments

Many carers share the same worries; they include concerns about transport to and from appointments, meal and diet preparation, managing medication, sorting out day care, adapting a home to meet new needs, juggling the needs of other family members, physical therapy and access to relevant resources and charities. Sometimes there are issues with your own health and wellbeing, including your own employment situation.

As of 1st April 2015, under the Care Act 2014, you have a statutory right to an assessment of your own needs as a carer, regardless of the number of hours you provide in that role. Your local authority is also now responsible for providing information and advice to all carers, whatever their needs and eligibility. You can complete an online self-assessment on SID (Southampton Information Directory) by visiting: <http://bit.ly/1WW8FQs>

*An assessment will look at how your health and wellbeing are affected by being a carer and what might improve your wellbeing. You may be eligible for additional support from your Local Authority.*



It is an opportunity to:

- Talk and reflect on your own needs as a carer
- Share your experience of caring
- Recognise your role as a carer
- Identify and discuss any difficulties you have
- Find solutions to help you continue your caring role and remain well yourself
- Receive information and advice



## Benefits

**Do you know what you and the person you care for could be entitled to?**

We suggest you check your situation against the entitlements below. Since the benefits system is complicated and can be time consuming, it is only worth pursuing if you meet the eligibility criteria. Further and more detailed information is available from our website here:

[carersinsouthampton.co.uk](http://carersinsouthampton.co.uk) and from GOV.UK here: <http://bit.ly/1hJOim8>

### Carer's Allowance

This is the main benefit available to carers. You may be eligible if you support/look after someone for more than 35 hours a week. See GOV.UK for more information here: <http://bit.ly/1qFdLCV>

### Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

DLA is a state benefit that helps with the extra costs of long-term illness or disability, which can be either physical and/or mental. Please note that you can only make a new claim for DLA if you are claiming for a child under 16. In special circumstances you may claim if you are over 65. See GOV.UK for more information here: <http://bit.ly/1Gm22CU>

### Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

PIP is a new benefit paid to people who have daily living and/or mobility needs to help with the extra costs of long-term illness or disability. See GOV.UK for more information: <http://bit.ly/1IEflxQ>

### Attendance Allowance

This is a benefit paid to people who are 65 or over who have care needs. It is to help with the extra costs of long term illness or disability. See GOV.UK for more information here: <http://bit.ly/M6s2H7>

### Changes to the benefits system; time to check!

There have been wide scale changes to the benefits system recently. It is important to stay up to date and check to make sure you are claiming the benefits to which you are entitled. You can complete a simple online tool to do this at: [entitledto.co.uk](http://entitledto.co.uk) <http://bit.ly/1jqsnoE>



## Your Health and Wellbeing

With limited time, it can be easy to ignore your own needs as a carer but it is important for you and the person in your care that you find a balance. Many carers are unaware of the help available.

### Replacement care

If you need to take a break for your own wellbeing then alternative care arrangements can be made, either for a few hours or for long-term breaks. Your entitlement will depend on your situation and the situation of the person in your care. To learn about respite for yourself, visit our website [carersinsouthampton.co.uk](http://carersinsouthampton.co.uk) or call us on 023 8058 2387.

### Leisure and Learning

Join other carers in the city at social activities, support groups or at training opportunities. For a current schedule of what you can access and for other adult education courses, visit our website [carersinsouthampton.co.uk](http://carersinsouthampton.co.uk) or call us on 023 8058 2387.

### Caring with Confidence Café

Open to all carers, currently running at Southampton General Hospital. Specialists rotate weekly, speaking to carers about issues and answering questions on nutrition, self-care, medication and the prevention of falls. More information available at [www.nhs.uk/carers](http://www.nhs.uk/carers) or email [carewithconfidence@nhs.co.uk](mailto:carewithconfidence@nhs.co.uk)

You can register as a carer with your GP to make them aware of your caring responsibilities. It may help your GP plan for your health needs whilst considering any impact on the person in your care. This will also help your GP assess and monitor the level of support that is offered to you and direct you to the right information, support and services to which you are entitled e.g. free flu inoculation. Ask the GP receptionist to register you as a carer.



## Employment

If you work, then as a carer you have a number of rights and entitlements to protect you in the workplace:



- Right to request flexible working or changing hours to reflect caring responsibilities, including job sharing, working from home, part time or flexitime, although decision is at employer's discretion
- 'Reasonable' amount of time off for emergencies, although it is at the employer's discretion if this is paid or unpaid
- Up to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave until the child is 18 years of age if your child is disabled and receiving DLA or PIP
- Protection under The Equality Act 2010 so employers cannot treat carers less favourably than non-carers
- The Act seeks to help carers either stay in work or develop routes back to employment in the interests of short and long term well being

Jobcentre Plus can provide Work Preparation Support for Carers to help with training, job hunting and applications. You may also be able to get help with replacement care while you train or attend interviews.

Further information, including guidance about working while receiving a Carer's Allowance, is available via [carersinsouthampton.co.uk](http://carersinsouthampton.co.uk) or call us on 023 8058 2387.



## Planning Ahead

### Short term planning

From time to time there will be situations when you need cover for your role as a carer, especially if you need to be away for a short stay in hospital yourself or to visit other family members at long distance.

### Long term planning

It is important to ensure that care is in place if you are unable to continue to provide care yourself.

### Planning for unplanned situations

Of course, sometimes things happen that might mean you cannot be where you expected. So it is sensible to have a back-up plan in case you end up delayed by traffic jams, accidents and other situations beyond your control.



### Emergency Action Plan

We can work through these scenarios and help you prepare an 'Emergency Action Plan'. This includes a free keyring which you can give to a 'back-up' carer in case of emergency. We hold regular Emergency Action Planning sessions. Please contact us to book your place.



## Southampton Carers' Strategy

A locally developed strategy for 2016-2020 is the work of a strong partnership and unified vision between local carers, Southampton City Council, Health services such as Solent NHS and Southern Health, local charities and other interested parties. The strategy will be developed over 2015 and launched by January 2016.

There are six main areas of focus for the strategy:

### Carer identification, recognition and contribution

Increasing awareness of carer issues and needs by involving them in shaping services and encouraging identification of people as carers.

### Information and advice

Signposting and providing carers access to important information in a variety of formats to ensure ease of access.

### Collaborative and innovative support

Joined up thinking and planning from all professionals and agencies and ensuring easy access to the right support for both carers and the person in their care.

### Support in maintaining health, wellbeing and safety

Encouraging carers to take care of their own health and wellbeing with support from services where needed.

### Planned and unplanned breaks from caring

Providing high quality and appropriate respite for both carers and the person in their care.

### Young carers protected and supported to learn and thrive

Providing support to young carers and enabling them to understand their rights and entitlements.



## Top Tips

1. Look after yourself by taking care of your own wellbeing and happiness. Take time out for yourself to do the things you love. This could be through pursuing a hobby, spending time with family and friends, taking time to exercise or simply finding a bit of time for yourself to relax.



2. Connect with friends and family and never be afraid to ask for help from them or from Carers in Southampton. Coming along to events for carers is a great way to meet new people who understand your caring role and can offer experience and advice in a relaxed and social environment.

3. Always say you are a carer as there are many places that offer concessions to carers and those with disabilities. This includes cinemas, theatres, sports facilities, amusement parks, country parks, museums and libraries, as well as travel providers. This means you can get out and do something you enjoy for less!

4. Keep a folder of all the documents you need for meetings and assessments both for yourself and the person in your care so that they are all in one place when you need them. Photocopy any forms you are asked to complete both before you fill them in and once they are completed so that if you make a mistake you can start again and you can use the details on multiple forms without having to look them up every time.

5. Keep a list of important telephone numbers so that it is always easy to contact someone if you have questions, when you need help or if there is an emergency.



## Contacts

**Southampton City Council Adult Social Care Contact Centre – 023 8083 3003**  
or (Out of Hours) 023 8023 3344.

**NHS 111 Service – 111**

If you are in need of medical advice or assistance and it is not an emergency situation.  
If it is an emergency call 999.

**NHS Choices Carers Direct Helpline – 0300 123 1053**

If you need help with your caring role and want to talk to someone.  
You can request a call back in 170 languages. The helpline is open from 9am-8pm Monday to Friday and from 11am- 4pm at weekends.

**Carers UK – 0808 808 7777**

Telephone advice and support service if you want to talk about caring.



**Carers in Southampton**  
Meon House, Rear of 189 Portswood Road  
Southampton SO17 2NF

 @carersinsoton  
 Carers-in-Southampton

To access resources please visit  
 <http://carersinsouthampton.co.uk>

Or call:  
 023 8058 2387  
 [enquiries@carersinsouthampton.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@carersinsouthampton.co.uk)



*Carers in Southampton is a project within Southampton Mencap*

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*Empowering the 'Silent Army' of carers in Southampton by providing support, advice, guidance and learning opportunities to improve carers' choice, control and independence.*