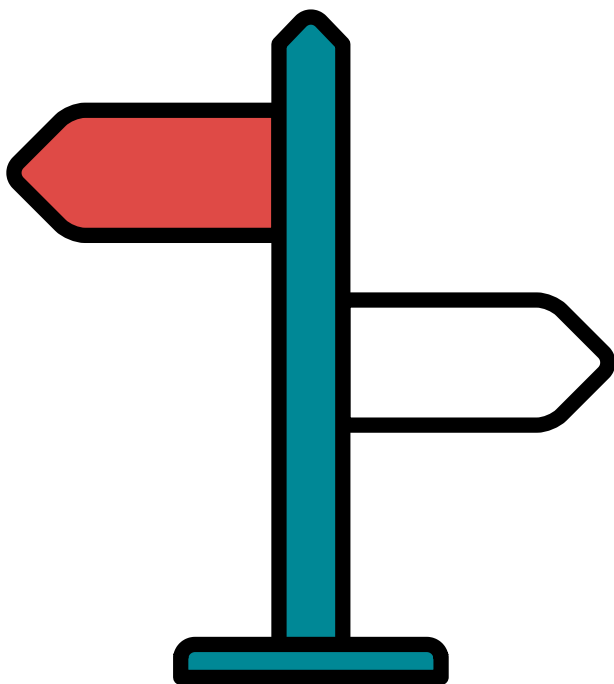


Respite Care Factsheet



Respite care

‘Respite care’ gives carers time away from their responsibilities to rest, so they can continue to look after their loved ones should they choose to continue doing so.

Across the UK today 6.5 million people are carers, supporting a loved one who is older, disabled or seriously ill, often juggling this role with work or schooling. A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who cannot cope without their support.

Caring can be an isolating experience which leaves the person physically and emotionally exhausted. It can lead to

stress, depression and other mental ill health issues and may affect relationships with others. But there is help and support out there through local authorities and specialist organisations.

As Almoner you should remember that a carer may need your support or assistance in order to understand the types of respite care and how to access them, as well as guidance on carrying out a Carer’s Assessment and how to pay for care if support is awarded.

The types of respite care

The main types of respite care are:

- **Domiciliary Respite Care.** Suitable if the family member depends on the carer for help with personal tasks. It could be arranged for another carer to visit at home and provide support with difficult activities such as dressing and showering.
- **Day Respite Care.** Suitable if the family member lives at home but is isolated or lonely. They could attend a local Day Centre.
- **Residential Respite Care.** Suitable if the 'carer' needs a short break to look after his/her own health and wellbeing. The person being cared for will go for a short stay in a residential or nursing home.

Accessing respite care

If a carer is in need of support they should have a Carer's Assessment which is a chance for them to discuss their needs with their local authority. This is free and the local authority will use it to decide what support to give. This should happen even if the carer doesn't ask for one. However, if they think they should have had a Carer's Assessment but haven't been offered one, they should contact their local council to find out what support they qualify for.

The assessment will look at how caring affects the carer's life, including for example, physical, mental and emotional needs, and whether they are able or willing to carry on caring. The need may be for regular support or for the carer to have a short break or holiday time. Find the local authority on www.gov.uk and get in touch with them to find out more.

After the assessment the local authority will decide if the carer is entitled to any support from them. If support is offered they will write a care plan with the carer that sets out how their needs will be met. This could include getting help with transport or with technology so they can keep in touch with family and friends. As part of the care plan a personal budget will be allocated. This is a statement showing the cost of meeting the carer's needs. They can choose to take this personal budget in the form of direct payments.

If the carer is not entitled to help then the local authority must give a reason for their decision. Even if somebody doesn't qualify for support the council should give them information about other organisations that might be able to help.



Affording care

In most cases, local authorities do not charge for providing support to carers because of the valuable contribution that carers make. However, this is left to their own discretion. If the local authority does decide to charge a carer then it must carry out a financial assessment to determine whether or not the carer can afford to pay for it. A carer should only be charged for the services they use themselves, not for the services which are used by a person receiving care.

If supporting a carer means that providing care to the person in receipt of care, and the local authority chooses to charge for that type of care, then the local authority must carry out a financial assessment of the person receiving that care. This is because the care would be provided directly to that person rather than the carer.

(Source: NHS Choices)

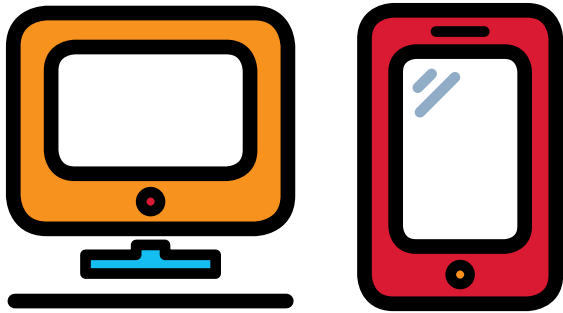


Masonic support

The Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) has an arrangement with the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution (RMBI) to offer short stays in a residential or nursing home for Freemasons and family members.

More recently this help has been extended to provide respite care in the home using agency personnel for a night, day or a weekend. This support is financially assessed and an enquiry should be made to MCF directly (see Getting help). A Carer's Assessment will be required before any application for respite care will be considered by the MCF. If there is a problem with securing accommodation in an RMBI home, the local authority holds a register of local homes in the area including the type of care available - nursing, residential or dementia care which you can request from them.





Getting help

- **Age UK: Nationwide authority on issues related to ageing.** Deals with the needs and aspirations of older people and provides advice for carers – www.ageuk.org.uk or call 0800 169 2081.
- **Carers Trust:** Improving support, service, and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring for a loved one – www.carers.org or call 0300 772 9600.
- **Carers UK:** Giving expert advice, information, and support to carers – www.carersuk.org or call 020 7378 4999.
- **The Masonic Charitable Foundation:** www.mcf.org.uk or call 0800 035 60 90 to gain access to the Counselling Careline.
- **The MCF's Advice and Support Team** are able to offer advice, guidance and support on a range of issues and organisations that can help. Contact them by calling 0800 035 60 90.