



RESPITE CARE

Factsheet

Respite care gives carers' time away from their caring responsibilities to rest, so they have time to look after themselves. This also helps enable them to continue looking after their loved ones as long as they choose to do so.

Across the UK today around 5 million people are unpaid carers. This might mean supporting a loved one who is older, disabled or seriously ill, often juggling this role alongside 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 often leaving the carer physically and emotionally exhausted. This can lead to stress, depression and other mental ill health issues, including affecting personal relationships.

But there is help and support out there for carers, through local and specialist organisations.

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. If current circumstances permit, 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 if current circumstances permit.

- **Residential Respite Care**

Suitable if the 'carer' needs a short break to look after his/her own health and wellbeing. If current circumstances permit, 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 an opportunity 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 the carer thinks 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 everyday 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 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 support. If support is offered they will write a care plan, with the carer, setting 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

There are two main ways of getting help with the cost of respite care:

- from the council
- from a charity

Or, you can pay for it yourself.

Councils will only pay for respite care for people who they have assessed as needing it, following a needs assessment and carer's assessment.

If the carer or the person they care for qualifies for respite care, the council will do a financial assessment to work out if they will pay towards it. If the carer or the person they care for qualifies for council-funded respite care, they can ask the council to arrange it for them, or they can do it through a personal budget or direct payment.

The [Carers Trust](#) offers some grants to carers who need respite. The charity, [Turn2us](#), can help to find grants for people who need respite care but can't afford it.

If the person receiving care has to pay for their own respite care, they might be able to raise money towards this from:

- income from pensions, work, investments or property

- savings
- benefits, such as Attendance Allowance

Masonic support

The Masonic Charitable Foundation has an arrangement with the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution Care Company (RMBICC) to offer stays in a residential or nursing home for Freemasons and their partners/widows.

This support is financially assessed and the RMBICC is solely responsible for considering applications for who can enter one of their homes. A Carer's Assessment will be required before any application for respite care will be considered. If there is a problem with securing accommodation in an RMBICC 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.

Find out more

The following list is a small selection of the wide range of organisations which publish information on Respite care. *The MCF does not endorse or recommend any of the organisations listed.*

- **Age UK**
Deals with the needs and aspirations of older people and provides advice for carers.
0800 055 6112
www.ageuk.org.uk
- **Carers Trust**
Improves support, services, and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring for a loved one.
0300 772 9600
www.carers.org
- **Carers UK**
Gives expert advice, information, and support to carers.
020 7378 4999
www.carersuk.org
- **Care Home UK**
Advice on sources of support for respite breaks
0800 808 5852
<https://www.carehome.co.uk/advice/who-pays-for-respite-care>
- **Independent Age**
Information on how to apply for respite care
<https://www.independentage.org/get-advice/family-friends-and-carers/support-for-carers/respite-care>

- **Macmillan**

Information on cancer care and helpful resources

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/supporting-someone/practical-support-for-carers/taking-a-break-from-caring>

- **Sense**

Information on locating respite care options

<https://www.sense.org.uk/support-for-carers/respite-care-short-breaks-for-carers/>

Other information

Masonic Charitable Foundation

The MCF provides grants and support for Freemasons and their family members. A wide range of help is available for daily living costs; health, care and wellbeing; and education-related costs for children and young people.

Call 0800 035 60 90 or visit www.mcf.org.uk

You may also be interested in the following Masonic Charitable Foundation resources.

MCF Factsheets

- **Dementia**
- **Intermediate Care**
- **Power of Attorney**
- **A Good Death**

Scan the QR code below or visit mcf.org.uk/resources/almoner-resources



Whilst every care has been taken to verify accuracy, the information in this factsheet is for guidance only.

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