

Are you a carer?

Do you look after somebody who couldn't manage without you?

A “carer” is someone who provides or intends to provide care to family or friends/neighbours who could not manage without this support. This could be caring for a relative, partner, child or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. All the care they give is unpaid.

Anyone can become a carer. Carers come from all walks of life, all cultures and can be any age. Many feel they are doing what anyone else would in the same situation; looking after their mother, son, or best friend and just getting on with it.

Caring can have a big impact on your life, and this may increase as time goes by. So it's important that you know there is support out there to help you care for someone you love. This doesn't always mean someone else will provide paid care instead of you, it can mean just having someone to talk to, support to understand what your options are in terms of supporting your income if you have to stop work or allowing you to have a much needed break.

Many individuals, when they begin to look after another person, do not necessarily consider themselves as a carer. The task they undertake is often carried out because of the love and respect they have for the person they care for or in friendship for another person they know well. For many it will be a gradual process or it could happen when you least expect it. For others it may come with the birth of a disabled child and will bring about a lifetime of caring. Whatever your situation there is support out there for you and we hope that by reading this guide it will help you know where to find it when you need it.

You may also be a young carer a person under the age of 18 caring for a family member and there are specific services for young people that can support and help give them the support they need.

Services for carers in Flintshire

Services to support you in your caring role include:

- Providing advice and information
- Help to claim carer's allowance
- Directing you to voluntary organisations that provide grants and support for carers
- Assistance with gardening, cleaning or purchase of equipment
- Providing a break from caring
- Direct payments which give you greater choice and control over the services you want
- Support Groups and Counselling
- Volunteering
- Peer Support
- Carer Training
- Specialist support – Dementia, Mental Health, Brain Injury, Substance Misuse etc.
- Help getting back to work
- Re-assessing the support provided to the person you care for to ensure your own assessed needs are met
- Young Carers Support

For more details of the range of services available in Flintshire, please call us in Social Services on **01352 803444** or North East Wales Carer Information Service (NEWCIS) on **01352 752525** or Barnardo's Young Carers on **01352 755422**.

You can also contact us via email spoa@flintshire.gov.uk or look at the Dewis online service directory at www.dewis.wales

Carer Assessments

Whilst some services and support can be arranged directly with a voluntary organisation or community group, many are provided following a Carer's Assessment.

A carer's assessment is an opportunity to discuss with the local council what support or services you may need. The assessment will look at how caring can affect your life, including for example, physical, mental and emotional needs, and whether you are able or willing to carry on caring.

Sometimes people feel they are not ready for support or a more in-depth assessment and that's fine too. The Carer's assessment can still help people to think about what support they have outside of formal services that could help them at this time and it can also give them the important information they need for accessing support in the future.

If you are a young carer, or if a child under 18 is caring for you, then you can have a Young Carers Assessment from Barnardo's Young Carers Service or Social Services.

Anyone who is looking after someone is legally entitled to a Carers Assessment and you should be offered one from us at Social Services or from NEWCIS/ Barnardo's our Carers and Young Carers Assessment & Support Service.

Once you're initial assessment is completed, you may receive information and advice or be referred on to Carer services that will provide you with the support that you need. At this time it may be identified that you need a more in-depth assessment at which point someone will come out and speak to you or have a more detailed phone conversation with you to further consider your needs and what support would benefit you.

This assessment can be carried out even if the person you care for refuses services, as it is specifically to look at your needs. You can also have a joint assessment with the person you care for so that both of your needs can be assessed at the same time and you can both contribute.

Once your assessment is completed we will support you to get the right support in place for you. You will also be offered a review assessment within a year to check how you are finding the support and discuss if your needs have changed. If your circumstances change in the meantime you can request an earlier review assessment.

If you are unhappy with any decision made by social services you can appeal.

Carer Assessment Key Points:

- Any carer who appears to have a need for support should be offered an assessment.
- You will be entitled to an assessment regardless of the amount or type of care you provide, your financial means or your level of need for support. You don't necessarily have to live with the person you are looking after or be caring full-time to have an assessment. You may be juggling work and care and this is having a big impact on your life.

- You can have an assessment whether or not the person you are looking after has had a needs assessment, or if the Council has decided they are not eligible for support.
- If you and the person you are looking after agree, a combined assessment of both your needs can be undertaken at the same time.
- If you are sharing caring responsibilities with another person, or more than one person, including a child under 18, you can each have an assessment (although for a child under 18 the assessment will be different).
- Your assessment will be completed in 2 parts. Part 1 to provide information and advice or to direct you to voluntary or community services. Part 2 an in-depth assessment to look at your needs in more detail. You have the right to both parts but you may feel you would only want Part 1 depending on the level of support you require. Part 2 is always available to you should your needs increase.

Young Carers

Young carers are children who help look after a member of the family (can include siblings) who is sick, disabled or has mental health problem, or is misusing drugs or alcohol.

Their day to day responsibilities often include: cooking, cleaning, shopping, providing nursing and personal care and giving emotional support.

With so many adult responsibilities, young carers often miss out on opportunities that other children have to play and learn. Many struggle educationally and are often bullied for being 'different'. They can become isolated, with no relief from the pressures at home, and no chance to enjoy a normal childhood. They are often afraid to ask for help as they fear letting the family down or being taken into care. So it's really important they know we can support them.

Young Carers are entitled to Young Carers Assessments. This means that Barnardo's or Social Services will want to meet with the family and try to understand the caring role the child is undertaking, how this might be affecting them and what support we could help them and the family with.

The assessment must involve speaking with the child, their parents and any other person that the child requests to be part of the assessment.

The assessment itself must look at whether or not the young carer wishes to continue caring, and whether it is appropriate for them to continue caring.

When completing an assessment we will look at any education, training, work or recreational activities the young carer is or wishes to participate in.

Where a young carer's eligible needs are identified as requiring support we can provide the following services through Barnardo's:

- 1.1 support and counselling
- Training and activities
- Peer support
- Linking young people with local clubs and groups
- Advice and Information
- Support to meet the outcomes the young carer wants to achieve.

If you are under 18 and looking after someone, we are keen to make sure that your family gets the support they need. Contact **Barnardo's** on **01352 755422** or **Social Services** for Children on **01352 701000**.

Specialist Services

Newcis

NEWCIS delivers a wide range of information and support to adults caring for a person in Flintshire for free and in confidence. **01352 752525**
www.newcis.org.uk

Hafal

Hafal supports carers who care for people with serious mental illness. They provide a range of flexible short breaks to support carers in their caring role. For further details contact Hafal on **07487 254019** or **07966 017647** or www.hafal.org

Carers Trust North Wales Crossroads Care Services

Provides respite care services for carers caring for people of all ages including children. For further details contact Crossroads on **01492 542212** or www.nwcrossroads.org.uk

British Red Cross

Provides access to the Carers Emergency Card, emergency home assistance and a Carers sitting service. For further details contact the British Red Cross on **01352 718374**

Neuro Therapy Centre

The Neuro Therapy Centre in Saltney supports people with a range of neurological conditions and their carers. Carer can access social events, carer groups, tailored workshops/ group sessions on relaxation, mental health awareness, manual handling and Pilates and support networks. For further details contact the Neuro Therapy Centre **01244 678619** or www.neurotherapycentre.org

Daffodils

Daffodils are a self-help group for disabled children and young people aged 0-25 years old and their immediate families. Daffodils provide over 175 events and activities each year which include weekly youth clubs, sports centre activities, soft play, themed workshops and school holiday excursions. All activities are supervised by Daffodils staff and volunteers which allow parents / carers to mingle, chat and learn from each other too. (Parents must attend with their child/young person at all events.) For details please contact Daffodils on **01352 250147**

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