

How to get help if you are looking after someone

Information for Carers

Community Care Services for Adults

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What is a carer?

Carers are people who provide voluntary care and support to a relative or friend who need support because of age, physical or learning disability; or illness, including mental illness.

Carers can be married to, in a civil partnership, partners*, parents, elderly carers, young carers, family members, neighbours or someone identified by the person receiving care. They may or may not live in the same home as the person they are caring for.

In this leaflet the word “carer” does not mean care workers who are paid to provide care as part of a work contract, or volunteers placed into the caring role by a voluntary organisation.

** Partner meaning the other member of a couple consisting of a man and woman who are not married to each other, but are living together as if they were husband and wife; or two people of the same-sex couple who are not civil partners of each other but are living together as if they were civil partners.*

Definition of care

Care is defined broadly to include emotional and administrative support as well as physical and domestic tasks.

Caring responsibilities may include regular help or supervising someone with everyday activities such as shopping, cooking, laundry, bathing, dressing and providing emotional support and advocacy.

Care can be where the cared for person has irregular mental health problems or serious illness.

What is a parent carer?

A parent carer is a parent of a child who has a disability. Carers will often see themselves as parents rather than carers, but their child will have additional care needs and you may be entitled to additional services.

What is a young carer?

Young carers are under the age of 18. The person receiving care is often a parent but can be a brother or sister, who needs support.

Help and support

Being a carer can be worrying and tiring; many people find they need support in order to manage. To address this, Merton's Community Care Department work in partnership with the Health Service and Voluntary Sector Organisations to provide help, support and advice.

As a carer you have a right to a carer's assessment. This right to a carer's assessment is triggered once you as the carer have requested that one take place.

What kind of help is provided?

In the first instance you can talk to your Care Manager who can offer advice and support and arrange services if needed.

The support available for carers is divided into two types, both of which aim to make things easier for the carer.

The first type is services that are provided directly to the carer and may include:

- Short breaks away from caring
- Help with housework
- Emotional support from other carers
- Benefits advice
- Information about local voluntary groups and services
- Education and employment training
- Leisure opportunities

The second type is services that are provided to the person cared for, but still aiming to make things easier for the carer. These may include:

- Home care
- Meals
- Emergency call system
- Occupational therapists

Is there a charge?

In the borough of Merton services to carers are currently provided free.

If the person you care for has additional services to give you a break from your caring role, these services fall within Merton's charging policy and the cared for person will be financially assessed and may need to contribute towards the cost.

To make sure that services go to those with the greatest need, Merton Council work to a set of eligibility criteria. To receive any type of service the cared for person must meet these criteria.

Further information can be obtained from social services booklet: Who can get Community Care Services?

How do I get a service?

You may be able to receive services through the person you care for. To decide whether the person you care for is eligible to receive services we would need to discuss the help that is needed and the help that you are currently providing.

This process is called a community care assessment, which will consider the impact of the caring role upon the carer and used to determine what services would be most helpful. This could include potential break down in the caring role, risk to or carer's health, impact on work, leisure or social opportunities.

What if the person I care for refuses an assessment?

Carers who provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis can request a 'carers act' assessment in their own right. This can be completed at the same time as the cared for persons community care assessment or separately if preferred.

Carers act assessment

What is a carers act assessment?

A carers act assessment may have many outcomes and provides you (the carer) with an opportunity to:

- Talk and reflect on your own needs as a carer
- Share your experience of caring and to recognise your role as a carer
- Be given information and advice
- Identify and discuss any difficulties that you may have
- Make contingency plans if you are ill or cannot continue in your caring role

It may be useful to think about the things listed below before attending a carers assessment meeting:

- Do you get enough sleep?
- Is your health affected?
- Can you get out and about?
- Do you get time to yourself?
- Are your relationships affected?
- Do you want information about benefits?
- Are you worried that you may have to give up work?
- Do you want to return to work but need some training?
- Is the person you care for getting enough help?

Am I eligible?

To be eligible for a carers assessment the carer:

- Must be over 16 years old (under 16 years are assessed under the Children Act 1989)
- Must provide or intend to provide both substantial and regular care as below
- Merton Community Care Department must be satisfied that the cared for person is eligible for support within the agreed criteria
- The person you care for must be over 18 years old

To be eligible for assessment and services, we consider:

- The impact on the carer
- The definition of carers
- The definition of care

Criteria of care for eligibility

Regular care

- Carer can be regular contact with the cared for person
or
- Provides short-term intensive care and support
and
- If no contact is provided by the carer, the cared for person would be at risk

Substantial Care

- Care (physical, personal and emotional support) is provided or is anticipated to be provided over a long period
or
- The cared for person has a chronic illness

What if I am not eligible?

If you are not eligible for services, we can still provide information and advice and help you to link with other organisations, which can support you in your caring role.

What if my needs change?

You can contact your Care Manager/Social Worker and ask for a review of your carers assessment.

Information

Where to get it

For further advice and information contact Merton Social Services or CareConnect.

CareConnect is a local information centre providing confidential, free and impartial information about the wide range of health and care services; available both locally and nationally, that is provided by social services, health care services voluntary organisations and private care agencies.

Confidentiality

As we work in partnership with the Health Service and other agencies to provide a package of services, there is often a need to share your personal information with other organisations involved in your care. If necessary we may ask you to sign a form giving us permission to share your personal information with other organisations.

Have your say

We welcome your comments about our services. If you have anything to say, such as complaints, or compliments about Social Services, or would like to see a copy of any records Social Services keep about you, please contact:

**Customers Services
Community and Housing**
Merton Civic Centre,
3rd Floor,
London Road, Morden, SM4 5DX
Telephone: 020 8545 3509
Fax: 020 8545 3637
Web: www.merton.gov.uk/complaints

You can request further copies of this leaflet by telephoning: 020 8545 3430 or visit www.merton.gov.uk

Safeguarding and carer wellbeing

- If the carer is at risk of harm / abuse from the person for whom they are caring
- or
- It is becoming more difficult for the carer to continue to provide care

If you are being abused or have concerns about someone you know, call Merton's **Safeguarding Adults hotline on: 0845 618 9762.**

All calls are treated with strict confidentiality.

If it is becoming more difficult to continue in your caring role please call the Community Care Department (numbers listed in the next section).

Contacts

Community Care Department

For more information about the following services telephone:

Older People	020 8545 4360
Children & Families	020 8545 4226/7
People with learning disabilities	020 8545 4529
People with physical impairment	020 8545 4528
People with a sensory impairment	020 8545 4528
Services for people with HIV	020 8545 4556/7

For people with mental health problems please phone:

Wimbledon Team	020 8544 9799
Morden Team	020 8254 1000
East Mitcham	020 8687 4714
West Mitcham	020 8687 4766

CareConnect

Merton Civic Centre,
London Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 5DX
Telephone: 020 8545 4710
Fax: 020 8545 3637
Email: info@care-connect.info
Website: www.care-connect.info
Opens: Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm

Carers UK

CAN Mezzanine,
32-36 Loman Street, Southwark, London SE1 0EE
Telephone: 020 7490 8818
Email: info@ukcarers.org
Web: www.carersonline.org.uk

If you need advise about your caring situation call Carers Line
Telephone: 0808 808 7777

Carers Support Merton (CSM) and Young Carers Project

1st Floor, Unit 2,
24 Deer Park Road, London SW19 3UA
Telephone: 020 8543 0347
Fax: 020 8542 6874
Email: info@carerssupportmerton.org.uk
Web: www.carerssupportmerton.org.uk

Provides support for carers and information on services available to them locally and nationally.

Carers Support Merton also run the Young Carers Project providing support and activities for young carers.

Merton & Sutton Crossroads

The Vestry Hall,
London Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3UD
Telephone: 020 8648 9677
Fax: 020 8687 1846
Email: admin@mertonand suttoncrossroads.org
Contact: Barbara Price or Rhona Bourke

The scheme provides a home based respite care service with trained care support workers, relieve carers of older people, disabled people, or those suffering from acute or long term illness including mental health. The service is available seven days a week to give carers a few hours to call their own. A stay awake all night service is also available to offer carers undisturbed sleep. There is no charge for these services.

Merton MENCAP

The Wilson Hospital,
Cranmer Road, Mitcham CR4 4TP
Telephone: 020 8686 0965
Email: info.merton@swlondonmencap.nhs.uk

Merton MENCAP works on behalf of people with learning disabilities and their families to improve services and to change attitudes. Family Support Workers provides information, advice and advocacy support. They carry out Carer's Assessments on referral from the Learning Disabilities Team.

Merton MIND

The Vestry Hall,
London Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3UD
Telephone: 020 8648 6565
Email: merton.mind@virgin.net

Provides information and advice on all aspects of mental health and campaigns for increased public awareness.

For more information about local health, housing and social services and the standards you can expect from these services please see Merton's 'Better Care, Higher Standards' charter. You can get a copy of this charter from your local social services office or from CareConnect.

Online resources

www.ukonline.gov.uk

An information service aimed at carers is available on this web site by clicking the Life Episodes button and selecting “looking after someone”.

www.direct.gov.uk

Public services website with information on caring for someone and direct links to Carers Allowance applications.

www.dh.gov.uk

Department of Health Carers Website.

www.ageconcernni.org

Age Concern.

www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk

Help and information for those who need to use NHS services, and for their carers. You will find advice on how to make use of services as well as what to expect if you are coming into hospital for the first time.

www.alzheimers.org.uk

Alzheimer’s Society. National and local information, advice and support for people with Alzheimer’s and their carers.

www.cafamily.org.uk

Contact a Family. Information and support for parents and families who care for children with a disability or special need.

www.dlf.org.uk

Disabled Living Foundation gives advice and information on equipment for independent living.

If you would like more information in your own language, please contact us at the address shown in the box below.

Albanian

Nese deshironi me shume informacion ne gjuhen tuaj, ju lutemi te na kontaktoni ne adresen e dhene ne kutine me poshte.

Arabic

إذا أردت معلومات إضافية بلغتك الأصلية الرجاء الاتصال بنا في العنوان المدون ضمن الإطار أدناه.

Bengali

যদি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় লেখা আরও তথ্য চান তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন, তথ্য বক্ সে আমাদের ঠিকানা রয়েছে।

Chinese

如果你需要用中文印成的資料，請按低端方格內提供的地址與我們聯繫。

Farsi

اگر مایل به اطلاعات بیشتر به زبان خود هستید، لطفاً با ما از طریق آدرس زیر تماس بگیرید.

French

Pour tout renseignement complémentaire dans votre propre langue, veuillez nous contacter à l'adresse figurant dans l'encadré du bas.

Polish

Jeśli zyczy sobie Pan/i więcej informacji w swoim języku, proszę się z nami skontaktować pod adresem podanym w dolnej ramce.

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਵਰਕੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Somali

Hadii aad u baahan tahay faahfaahin intaa kabadan oo ku soobsan afkaaka hooyo ama Af Somali fadlan lana soo xiira cinwaanka hoos ku qoran.

Spanish

Si usted desea más información en su propia lengua, por favor contáctenos en la dirección al pie del formato.

Tamil

உங்கள் மொழியில் மேலதிக தகவலைப் பெற விரும்பினால், அடியிலுள்ள பெட்டிக்குள் தரப்பட்டுள்ள விலாசத்தில் எம்முடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ளுங்கள்.

Urdu

اگر آپ اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم ہم سے اس پتے پر رابطہ قائم کریں جو کہ نیچے کے بکس میں درج ہے۔

You can also get this information in large print, in Braille and on audiotape.

Contact telephone:
020 8545 3430