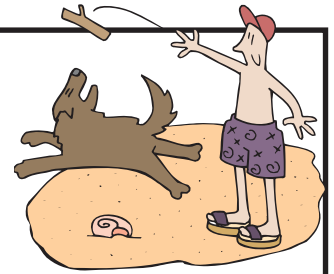




Getting time off



Looking after a relative or friend can be exhausting and time off is vital. Carers who provide high levels of care are more than twice as likely to have poor health than people with no caring responsibilities.

Occasionally, we all need some time to ourselves, whether it's an hour every day, a couple of hours a week, or a two-week holiday.

Looking after yourself if you're a carer is important. There are many ways to do this, from talking to friends about your experiences, to arranging a break for the person you're looking after - known as respite care. If you combine a paid job with caring, it's important to keep healthy while working.

Your friends and family may be able to help you with caring at home. If you need more help than that, you can ask the local authority of the person you're looking after to give you a carer's assessment.

Your needs

You can have your own needs assessed even if the person you're looking after isn't assessed. The social services department will then produce a care plan with details of the support and services you need to help you continue caring.

If you're the main carer of the person you look after, respite care is one way for you to have time off and look after yourself. You can use respite care to take a holiday or a break, or to recover from an illness of your own. These breaks can last for a week or two, or a morning every week, or both.

If there is something that would really help to make your life as a carer easier, eg a short break, gym membership, there may be some help available to enable you to do this. Talk to the Care Manager when you discuss your carers assessment, or you can ring us on **01883 745057** for more information.