

## 4. Caring for someone else

Being a carer has its rewards, but it can also be hard work.

A carer is someone who looks after family, partners, friends or neighbours in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. This includes carers of people with substance or alcohol addiction.

The care they provide is unpaid – this means they might, or might not, receive carers' allowance, but they are not employed as a carer, or provide care as a volunteer for a voluntary organisation.

Did you know that one in eight of us are unpaid carers? This adds up to around six million people in the UK. In the next 30 years we expect this to rise to as many as nine million people. For someone aged 24 now, their chances of becoming a carer will have trebled by the time they are 59.

Every caring situation is different and not all carers are the same. For example, some carers might provide a few hours support a week. Other carers might care full-time. Carers can be of any age. Some carers of older people might be older themselves and some carers might have a disability.

Recognising yourself as a carer is the very first step to getting the support you need. Many of us do not see ourselves as carers straight away: we are mums and dads, husbands, wives, partners, brothers, sisters, friends and neighbours.

We are simply doing what anyone would, looking after, unpaid, a loved one or friend, helping them through when they are unable to do things for themselves. The fact is you are also a carer and you are not alone – there are approximately 40,000 unpaid carers living in Kirklees and there is help and support available to you.

Kirklees Council Carers Gateway and Gateway to care can offer a wide range of support and advice including:

- carers assessments
- carers support services
- carers networks
- a chance to meet other carers
- information on how to get a well earned short-break
- social activity information
- information on how to get the benefits you have a right to
- advice on how to get back into training and employment
- quarterly newsletter with useful information aimed at carers
- a Carers Emergency Card
- signpost you to help in your local community
- 'Looking after me' course (see below)
- Carers Emergency Support Service



## Looking after me

Looking after me is a free course for adults who care for someone living with a long-term health condition or disability. As its name suggests, the course is about you making time to look after your own health needs. It aims to help you to take more control of your situation and make a difference to your life. The course covers relaxation techniques, dealing with tiredness, healthy eating, coping with feelings of depression, communicating with family, friends and professionals and planning for the future.

For more information call:

- Gateway to care Tel: 01484 414933 or text 0778148231 email [gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk) or visit [www.kirklees.gov.uk](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk) and click on the health and social care link
- Carers can also call Kirklees Council Carers Gateway, Tel: 01484 226050 email [carers.gateway@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:carers.gateway@kirklees.gov.uk) or visit [www.kirklees.gov.uk/carers](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/carers)

## Carers' advocacy

Sometimes you might need help to find information about your rights and services available. You might need someone to talk things through with, to find out what you want to say or someone to help you say what you want. You might also need support to be more involved in decisions etc.

Cloverleaf Advocacy is a free, confidential and independent service for carers. If you think they might be able to help you, contact:

- Cloverleaf Advocacy, Tel: 01924 438438  
1st Floor, 9 Wellington Road,  
Dewsbury, WF13 1HF, email  
[advocacy@cloverleaf-advocacy.co.uk](mailto:advocacy@cloverleaf-advocacy.co.uk)

There is also useful information for carers at:

- CarersLine Tel: 0808 808 7777  
[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) or  
[www.direct.gov.uk/en/caringforsomeone](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/caringforsomeone)

