

Carer Support - *Factsheet*

Dementia web 
Information resource for carers, professionals and you

www.dementiaweb.org.uk



Acknowledging your needs

- Sometimes, there is such a gradual build up of caring responsibilities that you hardly notice the shift from being a spouse, partner, child or friend to becoming a 'carer'.
- By the time you acknowledge this role for yourself, you may have been looking after a loved one who has dementia for many years.
- 1 in 8 adults in the UK is a carer – that's about 6 million people. As a carer, you're part of a very large group that also saves this country £87 billion pounds each year!

Entitlements

In this vital role of carer, what are you entitled to?

- **Carers Assessment:**

Carers have a legal right to an assessment if the care they give to someone is for 'a substantial amount of time on a regular basis'. (Carers (Recognition & Services) Act 1995 and the Carers & Disabled Children Act 2000). If the person you care for is known to the local Social Services department, you may be offered a carer's assessment.

If not, you can ask for one. The purpose would be to discuss with social services the help you need with caring, plus help to maintain your own health and balance caring with your life, work and family commitments.

- **Financial Benefits:**

There are many benefits aimed at helping people with a disability and their carers – but eligibility conditions vary widely and individuals need to approach this subject with patience and persistence!

If you would like to know more about what to claim and how to claim try to get in touch with a local Carers support group (see contact details below), an Age UK branch or local Citizens' Advice Bureau.

- **Time off:**

The local authority social services department has a responsibility for arranging services that help you to take a break from caring. This is usually done via a carer's assessment or may be part of the 'cared for' person's care package.

You will need to ask for information on the range of providers of services which will help you to take a break, and how they can help to pay for break services.

Who cares for me?

- It may be hard to do this – but as a carer, you need to care for yourself too. Looking after your own health and well being is vital to the continuation of your caring role. Try to take time out that's just for **YOU**.
- There are support organisations nationally and locally which recognise the role of carers. Carers UK, Tel: **020 7378 4999**. Carers UK has an on-line carers forum and information sheets. They can also put you in touch with your local carers groups or give information about what is available in your county.
- Most areas now have courses to support and advise carers. A recent Government initiative is 'Caring with Confidence' – a series of locally delivered sessions for carers that inform and provide support. For more information, Tel **0800 849 2349** (Carer Information Line).

Dementia Information Service for Carers

Helpline Number **0845 1204048**

Call in normal office hours. Answer phone at other times.

Email: info@dementiaweb.org.uk

Web: www.dementiaweb.org.uk

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