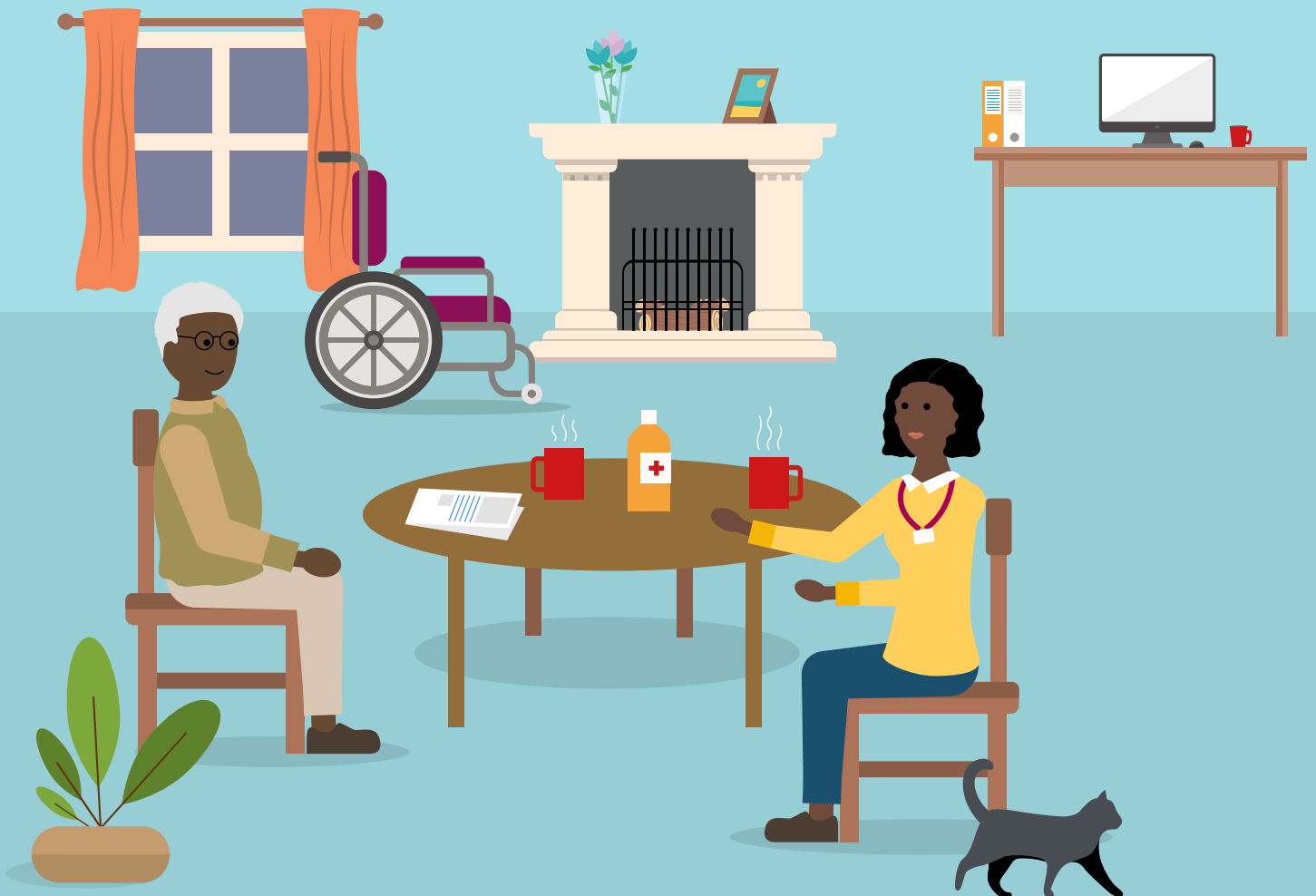


# Supporting people who provide unpaid care for adults with health or social care needs

A quick guide for social care practitioners



*Good quality, consistent support helps the health, wellbeing and resilience of adult carers*

# Carers are key members of the team around the person they support but taking on a caring role can have a significant impact on their life, health and wellbeing.

Accessing rel services

Practitioners should actively identify carers and let anyone providing unpaid care know that they have the right to an assessment of their own needs, separate to any assessment for the person they support. This is a statutory requirement under the Care Act 2014, which strengthens the recognition and rights of adult carers.

Communication skills



## Carer's assessments

During an assessment, encourage carers to discuss what matters most to them, including their own health, wellbeing and social care needs, as well as support needed for their work, education or training. If the carer has an advocate or wishes to involve a family member or friend, include them in the conversation. If, following the assessment, any eligible needs are identified, the Local Authority must provide a support plan setting out how those needs will be met. The support plan should be regularly reviewed.



## Carer's breaks

Regularly talk to carers about the value of having a break and explain their options. These range from a short break in their usual routine through to time away from home with replacement care. Breaks must be personalised and should:

- Meet the carer's preferences for length, timing, frequency, and type of break
- Be arranged in a way that provides reliable, consistent support, and avoids creating additional stress



## Peer support

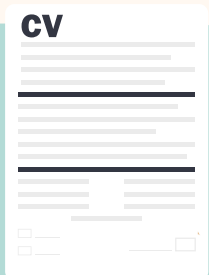
Explain the benefits of peer support and tell carers how to access it, including locally and online. Sharing experiences, practical advice and information with other carers can provide social and emotional support and reduce isolation. Voluntary organisations, support groups and online networks are some of the ways peer support can be found.

## Work, education and training

Make sure you have the skills and knowledge to talk to carers about the options to remain in, start or return to work, training or education and any support they would need to do so.

### This might include:

- Flexible replacement care
- Adjustments to their current working arrangements
- Signposting to available community services or support including benefits and welfare advice



## Training, advice and skills development

Offer a structured training programme or 1:1 advice and guidance from a practitioner with the right skills and knowledge. The aim is to help carers provide care safely and improve their ability to cope. Training should be accessible and available in a range of formats – for example, printed materials, online or face to face. Training should also be inclusive, addressing the needs and preferences of carers who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and those from diverse ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

Any training programme should be an opportunity to meet other carers and benefit from peer support. It should cover:

**Looking after yourself**

**Accessing relevant services**

**Planning enjoyable and meaningful activities**

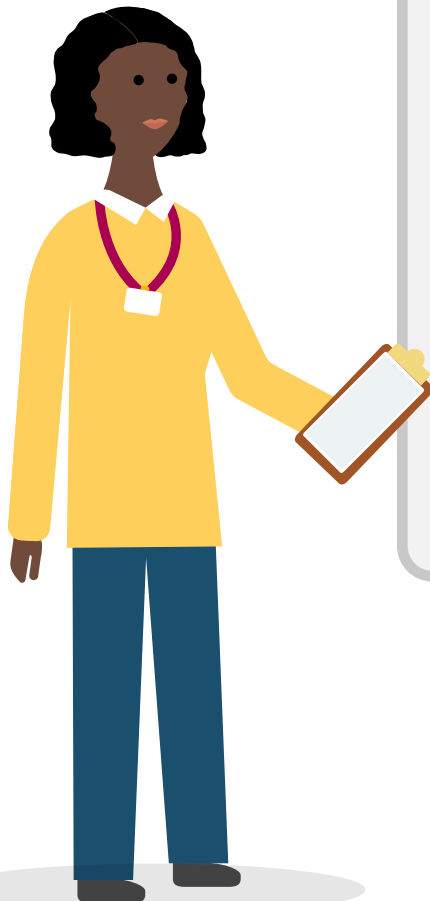
**The condition, disability and needs of the person being cared for**

**Providing care, including understanding and responding to changes in mood and behaviour**

**Planning for the future, including preparing for transitions and changes to the caring role**

**Safe moving and handling, including using equipment and adaptations**

**Communication skills**



### The training might also include:

- Managing medicines
- Eating well
- Personal care
- Managing behaviour that challenges
- Digital and assistive technology
- Specific information about staying safe in the caring role

Encourage people to stay in touch when the programme ends and suggest how they could do so.

## Psychological and emotional support

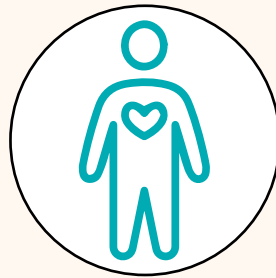
Have regular conversations with carers about their emotional wellbeing. This is particularly important because their support needs may change at different stages of their caring role.

Be aware of emotional and psychological support available locally, such as talking therapies. Any support offered should include group-based options.

Carers may benefit from support that helps them to:



Develop personalised plans and approaches to best meet any need for practical or emotional support



Better understand how to look after their own physical and mental health, and emotional and spiritual wellbeing



Build skills



Know what emotional support services and psychological therapies are available and how to access them

When arranging support, make sure you consider:

- The carer's work, caring and family responsibilities
- Their preferred format, location and time
- Any support they will need to attend
- If replacement care is needed
- If transport is needed
- Cultural appropriateness
- If follow up will be needed

## Further information

[Supporting adult carers \(NG150\)](#) – NICE guideline

[Supporting adult carers \(QS200\)](#) – NICE quality standard

[People's experience in adult social care services \(NG86\)](#) – NICE guideline

[Webinar: Supporting adult carers](#) – NICE and SCIE

[Supporting carers: guidance and case studies](#) – LGA

[Social work practice with carers](#) – RiPfa

[Carers UK](#) and [Carers Trust](#)