



## Who is a carer?

Carers provide support and assistance for their friends and/or family who have an illness, chronic condition, disability, substance dependency, or who is frail and needs additional support. Some carers work full-time to look after a loved one with a severe disability or illness while others provide ad hoc support with day-to-day activities like grocery shopping and transport. Carers don't always live with the person they are helping. Some carers are as young as seven or eight, helping their parents or siblings. Others may be in their nineties, offering support to their elderly partner or looking after a dependent child or grandchild. Most carers are not paid for the help they give and do this in addition to or instead of paid work.

## A few facts about carers

A primary carer is the person who provides the majority of care to the person in need of support

More than two thirds of primary carers are female

Approximately 10% of carers are under the age of 25

The unpaid care provided by carers each year amounts to billions of dollars

## What do carers do?

All carers have different responsibilities. Some care for people who are severely disabled or require 24/7 support for an illness. This can involve bathing, feeding, dressing, lifting, toileting, managing and administering medications. Others care for people who are mostly independent but require support for daily tasks like shopping, transport, managing finances and cooking, or generally ensuring their safety throughout their day. Most carers provide emotional support as well as any mental or physical support. A lot of carers provide support and assistance for more than 40 hours per week.





## Help yourself

Being a carer is a difficult job that can come with physical, mental, emotional and financial challenges. Recognising when you need to help yourself could help you provide more or better care to your loved one.

### 1 STAY SOCIAL

Social interactions are an important part of emotional and mental wellbeing. Focussing all your time and energy on the person you are caring for can be isolating – make time to see your family and friends regularly. This may help to give you some respite from being a carer, especially if you are a primary carer or provide full- time care.

### 2 FIND SUPPORT

There are many support groups and charities dedicated to supporting carers. Search for these in your local area. You may take advantage of a meal service, or go on short training programmes to increase your knowledge and support network.

### 3 TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

Don't forget that you also have needs and you need to take care of yourself to be able to care for your loved one. Take some time to give yourself a break from caring. Go for a long walk, see a movie, have a well-deserved bubble bath, or anything else that you find relaxing.

### 4 STAY POSITIVE

Caring can be demanding and stressful, but it can also be rewarding. Take time to find the positive aspects of the care you are giving your loved one rather than focussing on the difficult parts of your role. You are making someone's life better by caring for them. Recognise the small moments in your day that make it worthwhile – a thank you, a smile, a small milestone in recovery, or perhaps even a period of time where something didn't go 'wrong'.

### 5 LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Carers often put the needs of others before their own. Prioritising your own health and wellbeing will help you cope with the demands of caring. Eat well, exercise regularly and try to maintain a healthy sleep pattern.

### 6 ASK FOR HELP

Don't be afraid to reach out to a professional or someone you trust for assistance. If you have friends or family that are willing and able to share the caring role, let them know that it is appreciated and welcome.

## NEED ASSISTANCE?

The Benestar® team are here to support you.

If you would like some coaching around strategies to better manage stress don't hesitate to be in touch - we're here for you! Or, why not try some of the resources available to you on the BeneHub portal.

Call Benestar  
or visit [Benestar.com](https://www.benestar.com)

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