

**Do you provide care for someone?**  
You may be a parent, a partner, a son or daughter, a sister or brother or friend to someone who needs support as a result of their illness (physical or mental illness and substance misuse), condition or disability. If you provide them with help and support to manage their life – you are a carer.

## What to expect... The Carers (Scotland) Act

### What is the Carers Act?

The Carers Act is a law which enhances the rights of carers in Scotland. The Act is intended to recognise the valuable role that carers play in supporting people with care needs as a result of their illness, condition or disability.

Getting carer support starts with a good conversation. Every carer will have different things that are important to them in their life. The diagram on the right helps to explain the carer pathway to support under the Act.



## The Carers (Scotland) Act Carer Pathway to Support

**Information and Advice** Every carer is entitled to information about their rights as a carer and the support available to them locally. Your local carer centre is a good place to start



**A good conversation** The first step to receiving support as a carer is completing an adult carer support plan or young carer statement. It starts with a good conversation with your worker about your caring role and what is important to you. Your completed plan will set out what your needs and outcomes are



**Support for the person you care for** Support provided to the person you care for can help you as a carer. You have a right to be involved in the cared-for person's assessment and following reviews as far as reasonable or practical



**Are your needs being met?** Your needs may be met through the support provided to the person you care for and by support readily available to you, such as the support you receive from local carer support organisations. If this is the case there will be no further action. Your plan will let you know the circumstances that your plan will be reviewed



**If your needs aren't met** If there are things that you need support with as a carer then the local authority will apply their eligibility criteria for carers. This means they will assess the impact your caring role has on your life and decide if you meet the threshold for support



### Do you meet the threshold?

**YES-** the local authority has a **duty to support you**. They will discuss self-directed support options with you in relation to your support needs.

**NO-** the local authority can still use their **power to provide you with support**. This includes access to information, advice and available support services and may in some areas also include additional support such as a short break. This will be discussed with you

## What happens if I'm entitled to support as a carer?

Once you complete an adult carer support plan or young carer statement there will be agreed actions. If you meet the local eligibility criteria, you should be supported to choose the services and/or support that are right for you and best meet your **outcomes**.

Outcomes are a way of describing what is important to you and what you are trying to achieve. Some examples of outcomes are:

- My health is improved and is as well as it can be
- I feel valued and listened to
- I am able to spend more time with my friends and grandchildren

There is no duty for the local authority to provide a **short break**, however they must consider whether support to you as a carer should take the form of or include a break from caring.

**Self-directed Support** offers 4 different ways of delivering and managing support and is used to help work out with you how and when the support will be delivered. Self-directed support gives you as much choice and control of your support as you want.



## Involvement

A key feature of the Act relates to carer involvement, there is a **duty to involve carers in the assessment of the cared-for person, as far as is reasonable and practical**. Once an assessment is completed, arrangements will be made for regular reviews and the duty to involve carers still applies.

Local Health Boards also have a **duty to involve carers, as far as reasonable and practical, when the person they care for is being discharged from hospital**. Please see our hospital discharge leaflet for further details.

Carer involvement also relates to the planning and development of services. Carers must be involved in the development of the local Carer Strategy as well the local Short Break Services Statement. If you would like to find out more in being involved in local carer strategy development, your local carer centre is a good place to find out more.

## Where can I find out more about getting support as a carer?

Each local area makes their own decisions about how best to fulfil the duties in the Act. Your local carer organisation, which is usually a Carers Centre is a good place to find out what local arrangements there are for accessing support as a carer to meet your needs and help you achieve your outcomes.

“It should not be a slog to get our rights. I hope the Carers Act will help to change that.”

To find out more about different parts of the Act and what they could mean to you as a carer please see our 'What to expect' leaflets. We have worked together with a variety of carers across Scotland to jointly develop a series of information leaflets answering the questions carers asked about the Act.

The range of **What to expect when** leaflets include:

1. You make an adult carer support plan
2. The person you care for is being assessed
3. You are considering a short break
4. You decide which self directed support option is right for you
5. You make an emergency plan
6. The person you care for is being discharged from hospital

The Scottish Government has published a Carers' charter summarising carers' rights under the Act.

For more information, please contact:

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More support is available for you as a carer. For more information about our other 'What to expect when...' leaflets or visit our

[www.fifehealthandsocialcare.org/](http://www.fifehealthandsocialcare.org/)