

A Guide for Carers in Brent



Adapted and updated by
Brent Carers Board



Welcome

Who is a carer?

A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to a family member, relative, partner or friend who may be ill, frail, disabled or has mental health issues, and could not otherwise manage without this help.

Three out of five people will become carers at some point during their lifetime, and every day another 6,000 people take on a caring responsibility and start to care for a family member or friend.

Caring can be extremely rewarding, and, if you are new to caring, you may already be starting to discover that it can come with its challenges. People who have been caring for some time often say they need help with things like a break from the caring they do, someone to talk to confidentially about how they are feeling, advice about services, benefits and support for them and the person they are caring for, some extra financial help to cope with the increased costs they experience due to caring for someone, advice on housing needs and adaptations training courses.

Caring responsibilities can have an adverse impact on physical and mental health and supporting carers with their health and wellbeing is key to maintaining a person's ability to provide care.

It's important that carers feel confident, safe and supported and your GP surgery carers support organisations within Brent, as they can provide an invaluable source of support, advice and information.

As a carer there is lots of help, advice and support available, the problem is knowing where to find the information. This guide will outline your rights as a carer, give you details and information and guide you to where you can get practical help and support in Brent.

Getting the right advice and support as soon as you start caring can make all the difference. Even if you have been caring for a long time it's important to make sure you are aware of all the help and support you are entitled to.

Who are young carers?

A young carer is anyone under the age of 18 who provides essential and ongoing care and emotional support to someone who:

- is physically or mentally ill
- has a learning disability
- is disabled
- has an alcohol or drug addiction

Whether it's caring for a mum, dad, brother, sister, or grandparent, young carers are there to lend a helping hand. They do it all, from bathing and dressing their loved one to administering medication and preparing meals. However they do it with love, patience, and dedication.

It's not an easy job, and often carers have to sacrifice their own needs and desires to ensure their loved one is well-cared for. But they do it anyway because they know how important it is to provide support to those in need.

For further information please visit the Brent website www.brent.gov.uk/adult-social-care/caring-for-someone#areyouacarer

Brent Borough Based Partnership

GPs, primary care teams and wider health and Social Care services have a major role to play in identifying and formally recognising carers, initiating discussions about carer support needs and in supporting and maintaining carer health and wellbeing.

The Borough Based Partnership in Brent is a partnership of organisations that support the health, care and wellbeing of the citizens in Brent – NHS providers, including General Practice services, social care, other Local Authority services and our voluntary and community sector.

Help you get from your GP

What to expect from your GP surgery for you as a carer.

As soon as you become a carer, it is vital that you inform your GP surgery. This will ensure that you have additional support available to you, so that you are kept well in your caring role. The additional support for you as a carer may include:

- Seasonal vaccines – such as Flu / Covid
- An annual health check
- Appointments at convenient times or same day for carers
- Offering longer appointments for carers
- Involving you in the planning of the care for the person you look after

Many carers prioritise the person they are caring for and are at risk of neglecting their own needs. Your surgery will want to support your health. It is important that you are recognised and valued as an integral part of the healthcare system.

Being a Carer



Caring for someone can be difficult when trying to access care or find out information on their behalf. Please speak to the GP reception desk about a consent form which allows you to act on the person's behalf. This should ensure smoother communication when trying to get help.

GP surgeries now function as a Primary Care Team of professionals with broad skills, many of which overlap with each other. When contacting the surgery, it is wise to give the details of your needs to reception. They can then refer you to a range of professionals who may be able to help. The Primary Care Team at your surgery may include;

Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) or Advanced Clinical Practitioners (ACP)

These professionals have studied to Masters level and can manage many of the conditions that GPs have traditionally seen. They can also prescribe medications.

Enhanced Practice Nurses

These are nurses based at your surgery who care for complex cases or those who may be housebound. They connect regularly with the patients known to them and ensure good links with their named GP and can carry out clinical assessments and referrals to other services.

Clinical Pharmacist

These professionals can help with any issues to do with your medicines. Many are trained in managing minor ailments and are able to prescribe and alter your medications to maximise benefits for you, and minimise side effects

Care Co-ordinators

These people are trained in planning your care and appointments to ensure all aspects of your care are looked after. They can help with social services referrals and with linking you to other organisations. They are also based in the surgery and therefore have easy access to the GP if there is a query.

Social Prescribers

These people help you to link with local organisations and schemes to support your non-medical needs i.e., food bank, local luncheon clubs or other voluntary sector activities that may assist you in staying connected with people.

Many surgeries may also have access to physiotherapists, dieticians and occupational therapists which may be offered to you. To get the best from your Primary Care Team and avoid any unnecessary waiting at your surgery, it is wise to ask to connect to the wider team and not to just request a GP appointment.

Your surgery may provide:

- A designated phone line during opening hours for you to contact reception or an email address of either a care coordinator or enhanced practice nurse 'flag' on your notes that defines you as a carer.
- Documented evidence on the notes of the person you care for that states you have consent to act on their behalf when arranging appointments or raising concerns.
- The ability to request a longer appointment due to complex needs and to be flexible as possible with timings.
- Good signposting to other professionals and organisations that can support you.

Brent Health Matters/Public Health Team



Don't know where to turn for help with your health or wellbeing needs ?

Call the Brent Health Matters advice line **020 8102 3456** (Choose option 4) (Helpline open Monday – Friday between 9am-5pm)

The advice line is open to any resident in Brent. You can ask any non-clinical questions about health and social care, and you will be signposted and supported to access services.

You can also receive advice to better manage your health conditions.

Carers support services in Brent

Brent Gateway

The Brent Gateway service offer carers support services around young carers, parent carers of a person with a disability and carers of older people with mental health issues e.g. Dementia or a functional/organic mental health condition.

Services offered by Brent Gateway include:

- Carer specific information and advice, proactive outreach, support with forms
- Support groups and carers training, volunteering and help into work
- Time Banking scheme for carers and support for isolated carers
- Assessment, signposting to other support services
- Develop social, health and cultural interventions

Brent Gateway can be contacted on Tel: **0203 948 0600** or by email: **info@brentgateway.org**

Brent Carers Centre

Brent Carers is an independent charity and voluntary organisation and has been the lead carers' support agency in Brent since 1994. Brent Carers provides a comprehensive package of services for carers and is the focal point for carers in Brent to obtain information, support and advice.

Services offered at the Carers Centre include:

- Information and advice
- Benefit application support including form filling
- Home visits / one-to-one help
- Advocacy: support & representation to challenge a decision that has been made by other agencies which you feel are not fair or right

- Carer support including drop-ins and experienced staff who will listen and understand your situation
- Activities such as: yoga, with new activities introduced regularly
- Training and events including computer classes, first aid and back care
- Complementary Therapies and Wellbeing sessions, including positive psychology and mindfulness – and access to CNWL Recovery and Wellbeing College courses eg. Understanding mental health Counselling
- Support for young carers Respite care
- Grants for carers Breaks and equipment
- Carer Emergency Card & emergency planning

This service is available to anyone who provides care and support for a friend or relative in the community, regardless of the amount of care you provide.

Brent Carers Centre can be contacted on Tel: **0203 8027070** or by email: **email@brentcarerscentre.org.uk**

Brent Family Wellbeing Centres

Provide a wide range of support services from pregnancy until your child is 18 (or up to 25 for young people with additional needs). Support for young carers is available at the centres, and this includes drop-ins with a range of fun activities. For more information on what's on offer, or to register, please go to

www.brent.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/support-for-parents-and-families/family-wellbeing-centres

Dementia Cafes Brent

Dementia Cafes Brent is an umbrella organisation which includes a number of dementia cafés and memory lounges in Brent. These are places for people living with dementia and their carers, family and friends to come together to socialise, get information and support.

Dementia Club UK

People with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia can join this club with their carers, friends and families. Also, people who have lost someone with dementia and are now lonely can join the club. Dementia Club UK provides people with another lifeline, giving care and support, professional advice, fun activities daily and above all hope. Their services can be accessed through their website -

www.dementioclubuk.org.uk

Brent outdoor gyms

Carers can maintain their physical health by using the free gym equipment in Brent parks. Find your nearest outdoor gym at - **www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/culture-leisure-and-parks/sports-and-wellbeing/outdoor-sport-facilities/outdoor-gyms**

Befriending services for Carers from CNWL

Befriending services for carer from CNWL: Check in and Chat and digital support services

Carers UK

Carers UK offers a daily telephone advice line dedicated to carers offering advice, information and guidance to unpaid carer. The telephone Helpline is available on 0808 808 7777 from Monday to Friday, 9am – 6pm or you can contact them by email advice@carersuk.org

Talking Therapies

Brent Talking Therapies is a service that people can refer themselves to by phoning 020 8206 3924. You can also make a self-referral online by visiting our CNWL Talking Therapies Service website. A referral can also be made by a GP or any health or social care professional.

NHS talking therapies - NHS talking therapies or psychological therapies are effective and confidential treatments delivered by fully trained and accredited NHS practitioners. They can help with common mental health problems like stress, anxiety and depression.

You can access talking therapies for free on the NHS. You can do self-referral to an NHS talking therapies service without a referral from a GP, or a GP can refer you. You can also refer yourself directly to an NHS talking therapies service online. If your first language is not English, talking therapies can be delivered in your chosen language through multi-lingual therapists or confidential translators. Talking therapies are also available in British Sign Language (BSL) through Sign Health Psychological Therapy Service.

Children and young people who are not able to access adult talking therapies can get support with mental and emotional problems from their local children and young people's mental health service (CYPMHS). www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/nhs-talking-therapies/

Money and Benefits

The benefits system can be complicated and confusing. Finding out what you are entitled to can often be difficult to understand and many people may miss out. You can get further information on benefits including the criteria from the Department of Works and Pension (DWP), website: www.gov.uk/browse/benefits or contact a carers support organization, who can guide you through the process.

For the Carer

Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers and is extra money for you to use as you want or need to

- You could get Carer's Allowance if you care for someone for at least 35 hours a week
- The person you care for must be in receipt of a relevant disability benefit
- You don't have to be related to, or live with, the person you care for. You won't be paid extra if you care for more than one person

Carer Premium

You may be able to get extra money added to your existing benefits or credits if you claim Carer's Allowance (or have an underlying entitlement to it). This is called the Carer Premium. This is part of the calculation that works out how much money you are entitled to and it is added to the other amounts.

Carer's Credit

Carer's Credit is a National Insurance credit that helps with gaps in your National Insurance record. Your State Pension is based on your National Insurance record.

For the person you care for

If you are caring for someone, they may be entitled to disability benefits.

Attendance Allowance

Attendance Allowance is a benefit for those over state pension age that helps with the extra costs of living with a longterm illness or disability.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

PIP is a benefit paid to those who are between 16 years old and state pension age, who have daily living and/or mobility needs, to help with the extra costs of living with a long-term illness or disability.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a benefit for children and some parents, which may help with the extra costs of looking after a child who is under 16 and has difficulties walking, or needs much more looking after than a child of the same age who does not have a disability.

Other Benefits

If you had to give up work to care, or are in receipt of a low income, then there are other benefits that you and your partner may be able to claim.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a means-tested benefit for people of working age who are on a low income.

It replaces existing means-tested benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
Housing Benefit
- Child Tax Credit Working Tax Credit

Universal Credit is intended to be simpler than the current system of benefits and tax credits and is paid on a monthly basis. Entitlement is worked out by comparing your basic financial needs that the government says you need to live on with your financial resources. Universal Credit is still in its roll-out phase and there are some exceptions to claiming Universal Credit, and you may instead be required to claim one of the existing means-tested benefits.

Pension Credit

Pension Credit is an income-related benefit to give you some extra money in retirement, if you are on a low income. You can claim pension credit as soon as you reach state pension age.

Other Benefit Help

If you are in receipt of any means tested benefit, then you may also receive assistance or additional payments such as:

- Support for mortgage interest if you are a homeowner (SMI)
- A Christmas bonus payable if you are in receipt of some benefits cold weather payments

And other benefits:

Including:

- Free eye tests
- Free dental check ups
- Traveling expenses
- Free prescriptions

A Carer's Testimony

Am I the only one going through this?



"I really like being part of the young carers. The people and staff are all really nice and caring. If you ever need to talk to someone or need to help they are always there. Being a young carer can be hard at times, but overall it's not too bad. I can still get my homework and studying done but with young carers it definitely makes it easier."

Stephan.

Help from the council

Brent Carers' Needs Assessment: What you need to know

What is a Carer's Assessment?

- It starts with completing a Carer's Assessment form
- The information collected in the form gives an idea of how your caring role may affect wellbeing and lifestyle
- It helps determine whether you qualify under the Care Act 2014 for preventative or individual support from the council to help you with your caring role

How do we help you find the right level of support?

- We look at your circumstances against a set of national criteria looking at how your caring role is impacting your life
- From the information provided we will be able to consider what information and/or support you may need
- If you are eligible for support, we will discuss with you the sort of support we can offer and agree on a support plan to put this into place.

How do you complete this form?

Your social services contact will have a discussion with you about the questions in the form.

This can be done in a way that suits you:

- At the same time as the cared for person's assessment
- With your social services contact in private away from the person you care for

- By yourself or with a friend or family member
- With the help of Brent Advocacy services if you need more help
- With independent support from a carers support

If you require a translator during your assessment, please tell your allocated worker.

What happens after you've completed the form:

After you've completed the form, your social services contact might then ask for further details. All the information you provide will be kept confidential. If we do need to share your information with third parties, such as a health advisor or GP, we will obtain your consent before doing so.

If you completed the form on your own, please return to your social services contact:

- Email it using the details on the form
- Post it using a clearly addresses envelope to the address overleaf:

**Adult Social Care
Brent Civic Centre
Engineers Way
Wembley
HA9 0FJ**

Council Tax Benefits/Reductions

Depending on your circumstances you may be eligible for a discount or reduction on your council tax bill, for example if you are:

- In receipt of benefits or a low income A single person living alone (25% reduction)
- Living with someone who has a severe disability such as Alzheimer's (25% reduction)
- Reduction if certain adaptations have been completed in the home (reduced to a lower band).

Careline Personal Alarm Service

Telecare services that can provide an alarm and pendant for use in an emergency, this can give you peace of mind when you are away from the person you care for.

Blue Badge

A Blue Badge enables people whose ability to walk is seriously impaired, or those registered severely visually impaired, either as a passenger or driver, to park close to their destination.

Freedom Pass

A Freedom Pass gives people with disabilities or visual impairments and older people (state pension age) free travel on buses, underground, trains, trams and DLR services.

London Taxi-card Scheme

The Taxicard is a London-wide door- to-door licensed taxi and private hire vehicle service. Brent members can take a maximum of 40 trips per year. It is available for those who have difficulty in using mainstream public transport such as tubes, buses and trains, and serious long-term mobility problems, or severe sight impairment.

Help at work for carers



Carers have statutory rights and employers have a duty to offer assistance to carers who work.

The statutory rights are:

- The right to request flexible working arrangements, which may include working flexible hours, working from home or a job share
- The right to request time off in emergencies, where there has been a breakdown of care, or to deal with an emergency with the person you care for
- Protection from discrimination; the reason that carers are protected against direct discrimination and harassment is because they are counted as being 'associated' with someone who is protected by the law because of their age or disability

Carers have statutory rights and employers have a duty to offer assistance to carers who work.

If you care for a disabled child, you could have up to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave up until they are 18.

The requests above cannot be rejected unreasonably.

Your employer may also offer additional support and benefits to carers above and beyond the statutory rights. Your employer may have a carer's policy. You can find out more from your HR department.

What other benefits can I get as a carer?

Cinema Exhibitor's Association (CEA)

The CEA Card is a national card scheme developed for UK cinemas by the UK Cinema Association (UKCA).

The Card enables a disabled cinema guest to receive a complimentary ticket for someone to go with them when they visit a participating cinema. You can find more information at their website: www.ceacard.co.uk

Disabled Person's Railcard

If the person you care for is in receipt of certain benefits, then they may be eligible to apply for a disabled person's railcard, which will entitle them and their carer to up to a third off train tickets.

Free Entrance to Tourist Attractions/Parks

Many tourist attractions or leisure parks will offer free or reduced entrance to carers if they are accompanying the person they care for.

Priority Services Register for energy supplies e.g. electricity and gas

The Priority Services Register allows customers who need extra support or additional services, such as different bill formats like Braille or advanced warning when there's a planned interruption of power supply.

If the person you care for has a disability, illness or is above state pension age you can apply to your energy providers to be added to the Priority Services Register.

Warm Home Discount Scheme

The Warm Home Discount scheme offers a one off payment towards the energy bills of households that need it most. The discount is provided to eligible customers as a payment credited to their energy account, or as a credit on their prepayment card or key, during the winter.

If you are in receipt of pension credit or in receipt of a low income, then you may qualify. Please contact your energy supplier for further information.

Useful contacts

Brent Carers Centre

Tel: **0203 8027070**

Email: **email@brentcarerscentre.org.uk**

Ashford place

Tel: **020 8208 8590**

Email: **info@ashfordplace.org.uk**

Carers UK Helpline

Tel: **0808 808 7777**

Email: **advice@carersuk.org**

Carers Trust Network Partner for local support for unpaid carers on - Tel: **0300 772 9600** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm). Email **info@carers.org**

Brent Council

Tel: **020 8901 2680**

Email: **ahadultsservices@brent.gov.uk**

Website: **www.brent.gov.uk**

Alzheimer's Society

Tel: **0333 150 3456**

Novus Homeshare

Tel: **0330 0882225**

Website: **www.novus-homeshare.org.uk**

Brent Community Transport

Tel: **020 8427 6619**

Email: **admin@brentct.gov.uk**

Brent Parent Carer Forum

Tel: **07928 577689**

Email: **<https://brentparentforum.org>**

Dial-a-ride

Tel: **08459 991 999**

Brent Concessionary Travel (blue badge, freedom pass and taxi card) Tel: **020 8901 2680**

Email: **concessionarytravel@brent.gov.uk**

NHS Support and benefits for carers Website: **www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers**

DWP

Website: **www.gov.uk/browse/benefits**

Turn2Us (online benefits calculator)

www.turn2us.org.uk