

Who Cares

Last Thursday was Carers Rights Day, a national event that emphasises the importance of ensuring that unpaid carers and the wider public, are aware of the rights of unpaid carers.

Are you an unpaid carer? This is someone who willingly takes on the care of a relative or friend who could not manage without their support. The type of care provided will vary depending on the illness or disability of the person who needs the care. The length and intensity of the caring role will also vary. At Carers Outreach Service we understand that no two caring roles are identical and the needs of the carers fulfilling those roles will most definitely depend on the individual circumstances. However, there is one constant factor – all unpaid carers have rights and are entitled to:

- A carers assessment
- Ask their employer about flexible working
- Time off from caring for health and wellbeing
- Support and information

At Carers Outreach we regularly speak to carers who don't know their rights. There is a big difference between not knowing your rights and choosing to exercise your rights when you need to. For example, some carers choose not to have a Carers Assessment, while other carers don't know that it is their right to be offered one!

A Carers Assessment is based around the Social Services 'What matters to you' conversation, which is used to assess your situation. In a nutshell, this ensures that the assessment is person centred, providing a picture of how you live your life and what is important to you for your well-being. At Carers Outreach we always look at what matters to the carer in everything we do. And we will always strive to ensure that carers know their rights and are able to make choices they are happy with.

It is your right to have a life outside of your caring role if you choose to and your decision as to how you choose to apply it.

Unpaid carers can access free and confidential support and information from Carers Outreach Service. Telephone 01248 370797, email help@carersoutreach.org.uk or visit www.carersoutreach.org.uk.