

Have you met a carer today?

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A carer is someone who, without payment, provides support to a relative or friend who could not manage without help. This could be due to age, physical or mental illness, addiction or disability.

Don't confuse carers with paid carers (who are paid and work for a company that provides care at home).

Does someone keep asking for help for someone else?

- If so then they may be caring for this person (carers rarely ask for help for themselves).
- Many carers do not see themselves as a carer. For example, carers tend to simply see themselves as a wife, son, sibling or friend and so on.
- Sometimes it is very clear that someone is, or has, a carer. However it can be very difficult to spot if the disability is not visible (for example mental health).

Remember...

- Anyone can be a carer – the carer might be under 18, a parent, a relative or have health problems themselves.
- Carers are often very busy – carers often juggle other responsibilities with caring; this could be working, school or having a young family.

Why do carers need identifying?

It is important to identify carers, and their families, so that they can be offered appropriate support. This helps carers to stay happy and healthy so that they are better able to carry on caring for as long as they want to. It helps to reduce:

- Carers' loneliness and isolation
- Carers' poverty and housing problems
- Hospital admissions and NHS spending
- Carers' mental ill health

Support for carers also benefits the whole family and the person who is being cared for.

So you have met a carer – what next?

If you think that someone may be a carer talk to them and ask them if they look after someone else (try not to use the word carer). This can be done informally or as part of your registration process. Use the Start here checklist for carers on www.yorkcarerscentre.co.uk

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www.york.gov.uk/carers