**Carers’ guidance**

Even the most established care arrangements may be challenged by the disruption of COVID-19. [Carers UK](https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/coronavirus-covid-19) has produced a range of guidance to assist you and those you care for during this difficult period.

The [Carers UK](https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/coronavirus-covid-19) website sets out the current government guidance as it relates to carers and offers suggestions for making plans and answers common questions many carers have been asking. It deals with immediate practical issues such as:

* Do I need to stay away from the person I care for?
* How do I protect someone I care for?

It also provides advice on creating a [contingency plan](https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/practical-support/planning-for-emergencies) if you must self-isolate or your working hours change and you cannot provide care in the same way before, including:

* Key factors to consider.
* Involving others in the plan.
* How technology can help.

Importantly, it provides some practical tips on how to protect your own [mental wellbeing](https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/health/looking-after-your-health/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-mental-wellbeing) to help both you and those you care for. These tailored tips suggest that you:

* Combat any rising anxiety levels by setting a strict time limit on how much you read about coronavirus on social media and in the news.
* Allocate a time slot in your day for an activity you enjoy.
* Try to find moments for yourself – exercising [mindfulness](https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/guidance/security/emergencies/coronavirus-guidance/keeping-well/mindfulness/), even just by listening to music, is a great way to find calmness and peace of mind.
* Finding a programme, routine or structure to follow can be a good way to keep your emotions in check and it may be helpful to devise a routine for the person you look after, if they need support to do so.
* Get enough sleep.
* Keep in touch with friends.
* Connect with other carers facing the same challenges.
* Keep in mind that some people may look to exploit those in vulnerable circumstances.
* Get some fresh air by opening your windows, walking round the garden or going for a walk or a jog.

Another good source on online support can be found at [Mobilise](https://www.mobiliseonline.co.uk/) – once you’ve signed up for the app and provided some information about your role as a carer you’ll receive daily emails offering advice and information. You can also take part in a virtual ‘cuppa for carers’ at 4pm each day where people can share experiences and ask question via an online chat

Other guidance includes:

* [Dementia UK:](https://www.dementiauk.org/get-support/coronavirus-covid-19/) Coronavirus (COVID-19): information for families looking after someone with dementia.
* [Age UK](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/discover/2020/03/ways-to-help-older-people-coronavirus/): Practical ways to help older people
* [National Autistic Society](https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus.aspx): Coronavirus: Everything you need to know
* The [Alzheimer’s Society](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/coronavirus): Information and support for anyone affected by dementia
* [Silverline](https://www.thesilverline.org.uk/): Provides a free, 24-hour helpline for older people and also offers a telephone befriending service to prevent isolation and loneliness

**\*Please note that not all links to internal intranet sites will work from home computers.**