

If you look after someone, who looks after you?



Since COVID-19, the number of unpaid carers in Devon has increased by almost 50% to approximately 130,000 (source: Devon County Council). It has never been more important to identify and support carers than now. Devon Carers are passionate about helping those who support others.

A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to family, friends or neighbours who could not manage without their help on a regular basis. Anyone can become a carer at any time. It may happen gradually as a person's health deteriorates or instantly, as a result of an accident or unexpected health condition. Quite often a person does not recognise themselves as a carer, even though they have a caring responsibility. No matter who a person is caring for and whether they have the same condition as somebody else, their situation is unique to them.

Devon Carers is an organisation who support unpaid carers to maintain their own health, wellbeing and independence to care safely, confidently and effectively. The service has been commissioned jointly by Devon County Council and NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group. They provide a range of services to over 20,000 carers across Devon, excluding Plymouth and Torbay. These include:-

- Website – an excellent information resource <https://devoncarers.org.uk/>
- Quarterly magazine – with the latest news, carer stories and training courses
- Helpline and webchat – available Mon-Fri 8am-6pm Sat 9am-1pm. Call **03456 434 435**
- Alert Card – to alert others if they become unexpectedly ill or taken to hospital that they are unable to care for their loved ones and to summon help for them
- Training – opportunities to learn skills to assist with their caring role
- Peer Support – connecting carers to mutually support each other
- Emergency Plan – a record containing important and useful information to help others if a carer is unexpectedly unable to carry out their caring role
- Hospital services – additional support following a stay in hospital
- Carer assessments – a personalised assessment of how caring affects your health and wellbeing and how we can support you with one-to-one assistance if required.

They treat each carer as an individual, taking time to find out what's important to them, and work out together how they can support them in their caring role. The challenges carers face in different parts of the county can vary greatly, so having local teams enables them to provide specific advice and support. The teams also liaise closely with health and social care services and have strong links with voluntary and community organisations.

If you think you are an unpaid carer, or know someone who is, please get in touch with Devon Carers to find out more: <https://devoncarers.org.uk/> or **03456 434 435**

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