

# Carers First

## Dementia Carers Checklist

Whether you've been looking after someone with dementia for a while or someone you know has recently received a diagnosis, it's a lot to take in and you may not know where to start. We have created this checklist with carers and our Carers First teams to help care for someone with dementia.



# Your caring role



## Getting a diagnosis for someone you know

A formal diagnosis of dementia can help both you and the person you care for access the vital support you need, such as specialist support and financial support. If the person you care for does not have a diagnosis make an appointment with your GP. For more information on getting a diagnosis, visit our article [online](#).



## Do your research

Once you have a diagnosis of dementia for the person you care for, it's important to get a good understanding of the condition. This will ensure you're more familiar with what to expect, how dementia may affect the person and others around them. For more information on dementia, visit our page article – [An introduction to caring for someone with dementia](#).



## Read our practical tips on supporting someone with dementia.

These topics include [talking to friends and family](#), [sundowning](#), and [how to understand and respond to behaviour that challenges](#). You will also be able to read what other carers have said helps them to manage in their caring role.



## Register your interest to attend Carers First caring confidently

This is a course to give carers tools and resources to support them in their caring role. For more information see our [course page](#).



# Managing at home

**Whether you live with the person you care for or not, they will need adjustments to be made at home in order to ensure their safety and comfort and your peace of mind.**

## **Making your/their home safe**

Begin by thinking about the current behaviour, abilities, and health of the person with dementia. For example, can they safely use stairs? Does he or she get up at night? Has he or she fallen before? Then check each room for potential hazards and make a note of changes you'd like to make. Due to the nature of dementia, changes in abilities will need to be re-evaluated regularly. You could also complete a quick assessment with the tool Ask Sara. Ask Sara is an online self-help guide providing expert advice aimed at making life easier at home. You and the person you care for can complete an assessment [here](#).

## **Arrange a Safe and Well Check**

A Safe and Well Check consists of members of your local fire and rescue service visiting your home, to carry out an inspection of your home (or the home of the person you care for) to ensure maximum safety. Arrange a visit by contacting your [local fire and rescue service](#).

## **Priority Services Register**

The Priority Services Register is a free support service offered by energy suppliers and network operators which supports vulnerable people if there happens to be power issues at your/their property. Contact your energy or network providers to find out more.

## **Put an emergency plan in place**

We often don't want to think about emergencies happening but it's important to have plans in place in case of something going wrong or in case you're involved in an accident or a situation which means you're unable to carry out your caring role. Read our guide on how to plan for an emergency. Here we discuss the importance of replacement care, preparing for emergency hospitalisation and your rights as a carer if you need to take time off from your caring role.

## **Join the Herbert Protocol scheme**

The Herbert Protocol is a national scheme that encourages carers to put together useful information which can be used in the event of a vulnerable person going missing. You can find more information on the Herbert Protocol and a link to the form [here](#).

# Looking after yourself

When you're caring for someone, it's easy to get caught up in your caring role and forget the importance of looking after yourself. But self-care is vital for your wellbeing and you deserve a break. Afterall, you can't pour from an empty cup.

## **Register as a carer with your GP**

This will give you access to an annual health check and annual vaccination programmes like the flu vaccination. Your GP will also be aware of your situation and will be able to support you with your mental wellbeing.

## **Create a wellbeing plan**

Have a think about the things that relax you and try to fit them into your weekly routine. Have a look at our [local support](#) section for things like yoga classes, breathwork classes, walking groups and peer support groups. Every group is geared towards carers and is completely free.

## **Rest**

If you get an opportunity to rest, take it and if someone offers to help, try to accept the help if you can.



# Finances

## **Get a benefits check**

Using the easy tool provided by [Turn2us](#), complete a quick and easy assessment to see what benefits or support you may be eligible to apply for.

## **Check if you're eligible for a reduction on household bills**

If you are in receipt of benefits such as Attendance Allowance or a Personal Independence payment you may be eligible for a reduction on some household bills such as your utility bills.

## **Check if you're eligible for a council tax reduction**

If you live with the person you care for and they have received a formal diagnosis, speak to your local authority about a potential reduction in your council tax. If you live separately, but the person you care for has made adjustments to their home to accommodate for their diagnosis, they can also apply.

## **Plan for the future**

We would recommend you start thinking about planning for the future and finances. To think about your own future needs but also for the person you are supporting. For more information on power of attorney for a time when you may need to manage the person you are supporting's finances, please see our article [Lasting power of attorney](#). We also have some great advice available about [future care planning](#) to support you both.

## Notes

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