Carers First

Older and Frail Carers Checklist

Caring for someone who is older and frail can bring a mixture of rewarding moments and significant challenges. As the person's needs change over time, you may find yourself taking on more responsibilities, making adjustments at home and navigating decisions about their safety, independence and wellbeing. This guide has been created to help you feel more confident in your caring role, understand the practical steps you can take and ensure your own wellbeing remains protected as you support someone whose strength and mobility may be gradually declining.



Your caring role

Understand the effects of ageing and frailty

Recognising how frailty affects mobility, energy levels and day to day functioning can help you plan the right kind of support. Frailty can bring increased fatigue, muscle weakness and a greater risk of falls. Understanding these changes will help you feel more prepared in your role.

Involve the person in decisions about their care

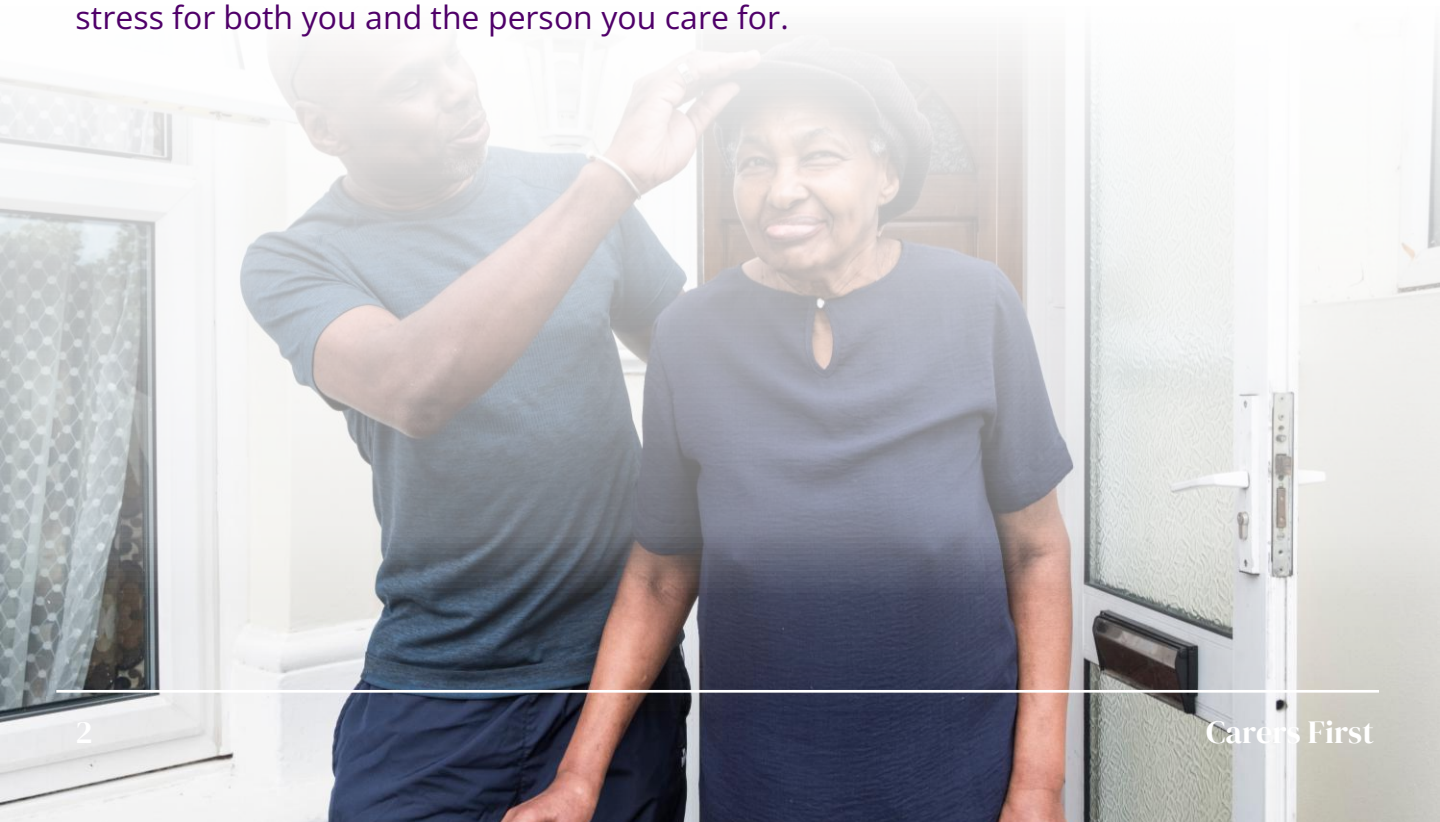
Talk with the person you care for about their preferences, goals and future plans. Open conversations can help them feel included and respected, as well as gives you clarity about what matters most to them as their needs change.

Encourage safe activity and independence where possible

Keeping physically active, even in small ways, can help reduce fatigue and weakness and support a sense of independence. Supporting them to move safely, with the right adaptations, can improve wellbeing for both of you.

Plan ahead for practical challenges

As frailty progresses, tasks such as attending appointments or managing personal care may become harder. Understanding how to arrange home appointments or alternative access to services can help you stay ahead of difficulties and reduce stress for both you and the person you care for.





Put an emergency plan in place

When caring for someone who is at the end of their life, it can be extremely stressful to think what would happen if you are unable to care due to an emergency. You can use our emergency plan template. This can help you prepare by outlining essential information such as their preferences, medications and a simple guide to their daily care needs.

Sign up for the Caring Confidently course

This course has been designed to help you understand the basics of caring for someone. It includes topics such as your wellbeing, finances and self-advocacy. For more information, see our course page.

Looking after yourself

It is really easy to get caught up in your caring role and forget to look after yourself. But looking after your wellbeing is key for both you and the person you care for.

Register as a carer with your GP

By registering with your GP as a carer you will get access to an annual health check and annual vaccination programmes, such as the flu vaccination. Your GP will also be aware of your situation and will be able to support you in other areas, such as your mental wellbeing.

Recognise the emotional impact of your caring role

Supporting someone who is older and frail can be emotionally demanding, especially as their needs gradually increase. It is important to acknowledge your feelings, including frustration, worry or sadness, and seek support from a counsellor or other professional if you feel overwhelmed. Reflecting on emotions can help you understand responses and cope more effectively with long-term caring.

Build a strong support network

Caring for someone who is older and frail can continue for many years, making it important not to carry everything alone. Connecting with friends, family, professionals or local support groups can give you reassurance, reduce isolation and provide both emotional and practical help when you need it.

Maintain a sustainable caring relationship

Focusing on shared moments of connection, like enjoying an activity together or spending time without the pressure of tasks, can help maintain a positive relationship and prevent your caring role from overshadowing your bond. Taking regular breaks and setting healthy boundaries supports both your wellbeing and the sustainability of your role.



Make time for yourself

Try to prioritise regular time to look after yourself. This could be something which relaxes you, brings you joy or connects you with other people. It could be helpful to take a look at our online wellbeing sessions and consider joining a peer support group or events in your local area. These groups are a great way to create a support network of people around you who understand the challenges of being a carer.

Take a break

Taking a break from your caring role will enable you to recharge. Regular respite breaks, either a few hours or even few days will support you and your own wellbeing, You could ask for friends and family or look into finding replacement or respite care for a short while.

Managing at home

Reduce the risk of falls

People who are older and frail are more likely to fall due to reduced strength, balance and stability. Understanding the common causes and making simple changes at home, such as reducing trip hazards or supporting safe movement, can significantly lower risks and improve confidence.

Support save mobility and daily routines

Helping with movement, transfers or walking aids may be part of daily life. Being aware of fatigue, pacing activities and adapting routines to match the person's energy levels can help them stay comfortable and safe.

Use helpful technology to support safer and easier care

Simple technology can make caring at home safer and more manageable. Voice-activated devices, reminder tools or call-assist functions can help with daily routines and communication. Basic sensors or alert systems can offer reassurance if the person becomes unsteady or is at risk of falls, and shared digital notes or apps can help you keep track of appointments, changes and tasks alongside others involved in their care.

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.





Enable access to services when leaving home is difficult

If the person finds it hard or unsafe to leave home, you may need to arrange home-based appointments or community services that can visit. Knowing what options exist can reduce stress and ensure the person continues to receive the care they need without unnecessary strain.

Introduce paid care when additional support is needed

As the person's needs increase, it may be helpful to introduce paid care to support daily routines and reduce the pressure on you. This could include help with personal care, mobility, meals or household tasks. Bringing in a paid carer can make the home environment safer, ensure the person's needs are met consistently and allow you to focus on the parts of caring that matter most to you, while protecting your own wellbeing. You can read more about arranging paid care in our article.

Managing 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 are eligible for utility bills reduction

If you are in receipt of benefits such as Attendance Allowance or a Personal Independence payment, it may be worth exploring if you are eligible to a reduction on some household bills, such as electricity, gas or council tax.



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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