



Are you an unpaid adult carer?

Support is available in Midlothian.

We will talk about

- How being a carer affects you
- How much caring you are willing and able to do
- Whether you have a life outside of caring
- What's working well and how we can build on that
- Any extra help you feel you may need
- Whether you are eligible for support from the Adults and Social Care Team.

We might also talk about your health and your relationships, things that are not going well or any changes you have to make to your life because of your caring role. Having these conversations can be difficult but the aim is to establish how you feel the caring role impacts you and how we can reduce that impact, so it's important for us to build an accurate picture of your current situation.

You are welcome to have someone accompany you to offer support during this conversation. This could be a family member, friend or a VOCAL Carers' Support Worker.

Putting together a plan

This is **your** Adult Carer Support Plan and it is important that you have had a think about your role prior to this conversation. You may want to think about:

- What is important to you
- What is working well for you
- What is not working so well
- What could be improved in your life
- What you want to achieve
- What supports you have at the moment (family, friends, neighbours)
- Who could help support you in the future
- What you need support with and who you would like to provide this
- If there is anything you are worried about
- If you have any other questions

Introduction

You may be in an unpaid caring role because you are caring for someone with illness, disability, mental health issues or addiction – whatever the reason, we want to make sure you are getting the best possible support. This leaflet helps guide you to that support.

Where do we start?

We start with a conversation, which is the first step in developing your Adult Carer Support Plan.

How will I be supported?

Your Adult Carer Support Plan will be recorded from the conversation(s) you have had. It will outline the actions and supports you have agreed to reduce the impact of caring on you.

Many carers find they can draw on existing supports in the local community, whether that be support from friends and family, local support groups or their local carer centre. Where more support is needed it may be we can look to do this through social work funding. Each case is assessed individually and we use eligibility criteria to determine what qualifies for social work funding. An up to date copy of our eligibility criteria can be found on our website at www.midlothian.gov.uk

How is support given?

If your outcomes are eligible for individualised support there are a number of ways to organise this through what is known as Self Directed Support.

There are four Self Directed Support Options.

Option 1 – This is a cash payment called a Direct Payment. You can use this payment to purchase your own support. This option gives you the most choice, control and flexibility but it also includes you taking on more responsibilities. (You can get help with this).

Option 2 – You choose the support which best meets your identified needs and the council arranges the support for you. This means you don't have the responsibilities of a Direct Payment (Option 1) but you still have an active role in organising and managing your own support.

Option 3 – You ask Midlothian Council to choose and arrange your support.

Option 4 – This option is a mixture of options 1, 2 and 3.

There are a number of ways to get in touch:

- You can contact the Adults and Social Care Team directly on 0131 271 3900
- If you have a Carer Support Worker in VOCAL they can assist you to get in touch with us
- Health Professionals involved with you can normally also make a referral on your behalf

Frequently asked questions

What if I am not happy about the Adult Carer Support Plan or its outcome?

You should speak to the person who supported you to create your plan in the first place and discuss your concerns. If you are still not happy, you can discuss it with their team leader and/or raise a complaint using our complaints process which can be found on the Midlothian Council website. Support organisations may also be able to help you to do this.

Who gets to see my Adult Carer Support Plan?

Only people who are involved in providing your support are allowed to see your plan. In order to provide the best support we can, we may ask you if we can share information with other agencies. Your contact at the Council will explain information sharing to you and ask for your permission to share information.

Will the person I care for need to be assessed?

Not necessarily, it will depend on the circumstances. If the person you care for has eligible care needs which are not being met or their needs have changed since their last assessment then we would arrange a separate assessment for this.

Information and Support

If you have any questions you can contact Midlothian Council's Adult and Social Care Team on 0131 271 3900.

Information and support is also available from the following organisations:

- **VOCAL** (Voice of Carers Across Lothian) – Provides information, advice, support, counseling and advocacy for carers in Midlothian.
Tel: **0131 663 6869**
www.vocal.org.uk
- **LCIL** (Lothian Council for Inclusive Living) – An independent user led organization which provides information to disabled people including advice and support on managing their self-directed support package.
Tel: **0131 475 2350**
www.lothiancil.org.uk
- **CAPS** – An independent advocacy organisation for people who use or have used mental health services.
www.capsadvocacy.org
- **People 1st Scotland** – A self advocacy organisation for people with Learning Difficulties.
Tel: **0131 478 7707**
www.peoplefirstscotland.org
- **EARS** – An independent advocacy service for older people, people affected by stroke and people with a physical disability or acquired brain injury.
Tel: **0131 478 8866**
www.ears-advocacy.org.uk/
- **Forward Mid** – A group for people with physical disabilities in Midlothian that aims to raise the awareness of challenges and opportunities which exist for disabled people.
www.forwardmid.org.uk

Giving feedback

Please do not hesitate to give feedback on your experience – tell us what was good and what could have been done better. Call Midlothian Council on: **0131 561 5444** or go to our website at **www.midlothian.gov.uk**

