

Listening Support Service: Service Agreement

The Listening Support Service aims to provide short-term emotional support to unpaid carers. The service offers carers, who may be feeling isolated or overwhelmed a chance to talk to someone who understands. Our callers (trained volunteers) will be from a variety of backgrounds and experiences and will have an understanding of the issues facing carers.

Who can take part?

- You must be 18 or over and living in the UK.
- You must be an unpaid carer, that is, not undertaking caring as a form of employment (if you are in receipt of Carer's Allowance or a direct payment from a local council, you are still considered to be an unpaid carer).
- As the support is provided by phone, you will need access to a landline or mobile phone.

What you can expect

- Our callers will provide emotional support and, where appropriate, offer suggestions of useful information/services.
- You can choose to talk about issues relating to your caring role or just have a chat with someone about your life/things you enjoy – how you use the time is up to you.
- If you require practical support, counselling, or advice please see our FAQs for more guidance on where you can get support (weblink).
- We aim to call you within two weeks of receiving your completed referral form.
- The caller will try to call you at a time you have indicated as being available in the referral form. Any further calls will usually take place on the same day and time-period each week/fortnight until you have received up to four calls.
- The calls will be provided by the same caller each week/fortnight (where possible).
- Calls will be made between 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday and will last a maximum of 30 minutes each.
- You can receive this support from the Listening Support Service more than once. However, you can only apply to receive this support once every six months.
- If you need to reschedule a call, please let us know as soon as you can by emailing listeningsupport@carersuk.org. Your call will be rescheduled for the same day and time-period the following week/fortnight. (The time period will usually be a two to three hour window in which the caller will contact you. If they cannot reach you the first time, they will leave a voicemail (if you have given consent) and try again within two hours. If you are unable to take the call on the second attempt, the caller will call within the same timeframe the following week/fortnight.)

Terms of use

- We will not cover the cost of any call charges incurred by you as part of this service.

- Please make sure that you are in a suitable place to receive the calls, i.e at home, in a place where you can talk openly.

Communication

- We will give opportunities to provide feedback about the service in the form of surveys by email or phone. Your feedback is optional but would be greatly appreciated to help us plan and improve our services and raise funds to continue them.
- If you have any concerns or questions whilst taking part in this service, please contact us on listeningsupport@carersuk.org

Confidentiality/Data Protection

- The service is confidential, although there are times when confidentiality may need to be broken in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy, for example if we are concerned about your or someone else's safety.
- Calls and content discussed are recorded for monitoring and training purposes and will be kept in accordance with our [Privacy Notice](#).

Code of Conduct

To keep the Listening Support Service a welcoming, supportive and safe place for carers, we ask that all carers follow the guidelines below:

- We want everyone who comes into contact with Carers UK to be treated in a friendly and welcoming manner.
- We expect courtesy and respect to be shown towards all callers and staff in all interactions and language to be non-discriminatory and non-abusive.
- Our callers are unable to accept gifts or gratuities from the people they support and will not be able to share their personal information including their own phone numbers, locations or other contact details.
- The callers may not be contacted outside of Carers UK channels, including on social media.

We hope both the callers and carers have a positive experience from the Listening Support Service. We ask that our 'Code of Conduct' is kindly respected; otherwise we may need to suspend or end the service.

If you would like to challenge a decision or make a complaint, please see our [website](#) for more details.