



# Carer standards

**What we expect from you and what you can expect from us to ensure everyone gets the care they deserve.**

As always, we're happy to help.  
Simply contact us:  
[carers@elder.org](mailto:carers@elder.org) | 0333 150 2350



# How to succeed as Elder-approved carer

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**Our mission is to reinvent what it means to age. This means improving quality of life and bringing peace of mind for families - but we can't do this without you.**

Carers like you, who are committed to providing person-centred care and companionship are the heart of Elder. By supporting clients with daily activities of living, and being reliable, honest, and proactive, you can help older people maintain control, choice and independence over their own lives, in their own homes.

As an Elder-approved carer, you're a professional in your own right. We're sure you take immense pride in what you do, and know you'll approach every client with respect and dignity.

These standards have been created to help you succeed as an Elder-approved carer, and to ensure every client receives best in class care, in their own home. They outline what we expect from you, and what you can expect from us on a day to day basis.

We've also shared guidance to help you settle into your placement, and build positive relationships with your client, and their family.

Remember, when you care with Elder, we care for you too. If you have any worries or questions our Carer Success Team is here to help, and you can find their contact details below.

Finally, before you start your first placement, please ensure we have accurate emergency contact details for you, so that we can look after you at every moment.

# What we consider to be great care

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We expect all the carers we work with to go above and beyond, the Elder way.

The carers we work with improve the lives of older people by:



Deliver professional, person-centred care



Communicating clearly, and thoughtfully



Encouraging independent, active living



Showing companionship and kindness



Respecting boundaries and showing flexibility



Being reliable and competent while delivering care

While all the carers we work with are committed to providing great care, we know that sometimes clients have difficult behaviours, or may not want help. As a carer, we will always do everything we can to support carers through these challenges.

In extreme cases, if we feel there is a safeguarding concern – we may need to refer a carer to the DBS, which may affect their future working in industry. However, as long as you do everything you can to follow the standards in this guide, this shouldn't happen.

# What we expect from you

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We're your biggest supporter and want to see you shine.

While caring for the elderly, we believe it's really important to show the following behaviours in everything you do:



**Honesty**



**Integrity**



**Reliability**



**Organisation**



**Flexibility**

Before starting your first placement we ask that you read our terms and conditions, so you understand your rights as an Elder-approved carer, and ours as your introductory agency. We also encourage you to keep your profile on MyElder accurate and up to date while you're not on a placement, and remain mindful of the standards in this guide, as this will make it easier to match you with the right client.

# What you can expect from us

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As a carer, you are the future of our care. Your work can ease pressure on families, and give them more meaningful time together. You're the blueprint for great care, and we promise to do right by you.

Being a self-employed carer with Elder means we will:



Ensure you are properly paid and rewarded for the care you provide



Listen and be there for you – ensuring you always know where to go for help, and feel part of our active community



Support you so you can grow as a self-employed care, and be empowered to change lives



Care about your wellbeing by granting access to an external platform to help you feel emotionally, mentally, and physically able to care for others

# Carer of the Month

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**We love hearing stories from families that shine a light on the different ways their carers help and support them.**

Words rarely describe just how grateful we are to work with such passionate carers, and often these words go unshared. Our 'Carer of the Month' initiative helps us recognise carers that have gone that extra mile.

Each month, we invite families to nominate carers that they feel have been exceptional. We will then carefully select the carer that we believe exceeds our standards and deserves recognition.

As Carer of the Month, your story would be highlighted in our monthly newsletter, and you'll receive a badge to display on your profile, letting customers know about your achievement.



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# Before you join a placement

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## Make your profile shine

Being a successful carer starts before you start caring.

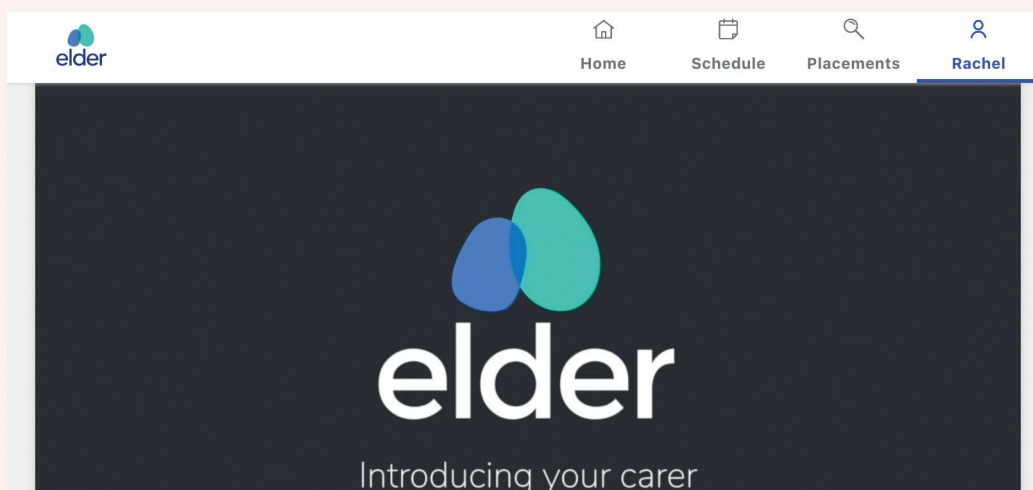
Keeping your profile updated is key to finding opportunities on the My Elder platform.

Keeping your profile updated is key to finding opportunities on the My Elder platform.

Your profile is not only how a family understands your professional background, it's how they get to know you – what you like, what's important to you, and the reasons why you care.

Keeping your profile updated, and sharing as much information about yourself as possible is the best way to find a fulfilling placement through My Elder.

Sometimes, we may need to restrict your access to our platform if your profile is not accurate, or if it's missing information that families need to know. But, don't worry, our Carer Success team will work with you, and give you plenty of opportunities to improve your profile before this happens.



## **What you can do with your profile**

As well as helping us to match you with the right placements, your profile is where you can update your contact information, notification preferences, and other details quickly and easily.

It's also where you update your work preferences. These help us know what type of placements you're looking for.

We may also be able to offer you e-learning modules through our external provider Elfy, which you could add to your profile.

## **What families look for in a profile**

Families like to get to know who you are as a person, as well your background in care. A profile that includes a friendly photo, and a video that shows not only your experiences, but your passion for care, and your personality, can really help the matching process.

Don't forget to share any documents of your care-related skills or qualifications with us too. We can highlight these on your profile, which will give you a real advantage. It's really about presenting yourself as the kind of person you'd like looking after your own mum or dad. So be genuine, show your personality, and make sure you update your profile regularly.

## **Need help updating your profile?**

If you're not sure where to start with your profile, simply contact [carers@elder.org](mailto:carers@elder.org). We have a dedicated team who know what our customers look for, and can help you make your profile stand out.

## **Let us know when you need to change secure details**

Reach out if you ever need to change your name, contact details, and/or nationality. For security, you're unable to edit these yourself.



## Keeping your DBS updated

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### **Your DBS shows us that you're safe to provide care**

All Elder-approved Care need an Enhanced DBS certificate on their account at all times, as it helps us understand your records, and that you're safe to provide care to others.

### **Don't forget, your DBS can expire**

We ask that your DBS is less than two years, and six months old. If your DBS expires while you're caring through our platform, you'll be unable to accept placements so it's really important to remember when your DBS runs out, so that you can renew it in plenty of time.

We can also remind you when it's expiring, but it's ultimately up to you to update it, so it's a good idea to keep track of when you'll need to do this.

### **Sign up for the Update Service**

The update service is an online subscription service that lets you keep your standard and enhanced DBS certificates up-to-date. It's a really useful service that can take away the stress of managing your DBS renewal yourself.

With your consent, we'll be able to check your certificate online, rather than having you send anything in. For a small annual fee, your DBS would always be updated automatically. Although many carers like to use this service, it's optional, so you don't have to use it to be able to care through the Elder Platform

### **We can only check certain DBS**

Due to GDPR regulations, we can't check the update service for a DBS with a 'Children's Barred List' check. If you have a DBS of this kind, you'll need to get a new DBS to work on the Elder platform.

### **Keeping your records up to date**

If at any point you expect your record don't reflect reality – if you've had a run in with the law, for example – it's important you let us know, so that we can ensure the health and safety of our customers. If you don't do this, we'd treat it as a very serious breach of our standards and would likely result in you being removed from the Elder Platform.



# Travelling to your placements

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**We've made it easy to arrange cost-effective and flexible transport.**

We know travel booking can be confusing, especially if you're travelling somewhere you've never been before, and if you're travelling at short notice, it can sometimes cost a lot of money too. Luckily, we have a solution in place to help you with all of your travel worries.

We've partnered with ClickTravel to give you access to a travel booking platform which includes a variety of benefits such as no booking fees, reduced cancellation fees, live train updates and much more.

While it's up to you to book your own travel to and from placements and ensure you arrive and leave on time, our carer team can help with any questions or worries you may have.

Whatever way you choose to travel, it's important that you arrive at your placement in time for the handover, which should begin at 12:30 and end around 14:00.

## **Paying for your travel**

At Elder we'll cover your travel costs to and from your placement. Whether you use ClickTravel, or book through a different platform, claiming the cost of your travel back from us is easy – you just need to send your payment receipt to [carers@elder.org](mailto:carers@elder.org)



## Always aim to stick with the plan

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We understand plans change, and sometimes things are simply out of your control. However, it's really important that once your placement has been confirmed by a family, you do everything you can to arrive on time.

### **Not showing up puts people in danger**

We trust that our customers are in good hands with you. Not showing up could put our care recipients in danger if we're unable to find another carer in time.

If you're ever unable to attend the placement or arrive on time, please do tell us as soon as possible, ideally before placement sign-off. However, we do understand that this is not always possible.

### **You may be unable to use our platform in the future if you drop out of a placement**

Dropping out without good reason, or without letting us know is a serious breach of these standards.

While we are of course committed to helping and supporting you, we need to protect the wellbeing of our care recipients too. Therefore, if you drop out of a placement after it has been signed off, we do maintain the right to remove you from our platform. However, we will always approach this fairly and work with you to understand the reasons why you couldn't attend your placement, as we know that sometimes there is a valid explanation for a drop out.

## **What happens when carers are removed**

Our Quality Assurance team is responsible for reviewing dropouts. If they can't see a reasonable explanation for why you couldn't attend your placement, they will have no choice but to remove your access to the platform. Carers that are removed will always be notified of their status, likely via email.

If you're removed from our platform but believe you do have a valid reason for being unable to attend your placement, you may be able to get your access reinstated. It's important that you speak to us as soon as possible to explain your situation so that we have all the facts. If you are reinstated, you'll likely receive a warning that any future drop outs will lead to removal.

## **Falling ill while on a placement**

Looking after yourself is just as important as looking after your care recipient. Your wellbeing matters, and you need to take time to rest and recover if you're feeling unwell.

If you fall ill while on a placement, please contact Elder as soon as you can so we can find another carer to cover for you.



# Keeping in touch with Elder

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We like to check in with you while you're on your placement to make sure everything is going smoothly for you, so please keep your contact information up to date, and keep an eye on your emails and texts.

Remember, we're here to support you throughout your Elder journey. It's important that we hear about the highs and the lows, so don't be afraid to reach out to us too if you have any questions, concerns, or would like to share something with us.



# Handing over to a new carer

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Now that we've covered the basics of starting a placement, it's important to know what to do when your placement has come to an end.

Whether you're temporarily handing over to a respite carer whilst you take a break, or your short-term placement has finished, the biggest thing to remember is to talk to the new carer coming into the placement.

Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to share any relevant and necessary information about your care recipient, the home, and their routine with the new carer. You'll want to give them as much information as possible so that they feel confident in taking over from you.

What to discuss with the new carer (as well as anything else you think is relevant):



**Your client** – their routines, their likes and dislikes, the things they like to eat, the activities that make them smile.



**The household** – the facilities, any specialist equipment, the carer's accommodation, the kitchen, and bathroom.



**The local area** – the nearest pharmacy, shopping area, park, bus stop, and anywhere else you feel is relevant.

## Getting the timing right

Handovers need to be completed in person, to allow enough time for conversation and questions. You shouldn't plan travel before 2pm on the day you leave, and the incoming carer should plan to arrive by 12.30pm.

Making sure the home is comfortable and welcoming for the new carer is key, as their first day will be spent settling in and getting to know the care recipient. Doing the following before you leave is really important:



**Bedroom** – make sure fresh bedding and towels are available for the incoming carer.



**Kitchen** – clean surfaces, cupboard doors, hob etc.



**Washing** – ensure all the linens, towels and clothes are clean.



**Washroom** - clean the bathroom sink, mirror, bath and toilet, and don't forget to check there's enough toilet paper



**Meals** - stock the fridge to ensure at least one day's worth of food and supplies are available.



**Floors** - Hoover and mop the floors.

# Personal care – intimate support that keeps people clean, happy and safe

## A professional, person-centred approach

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Our care recipients deserve to live their own life, on their own terms, in their own home. As a live-in carer you can bring colour to their lives with your own personal, yet professional twist and encourage them to live fully. Always offer choice and support their independence when possible.

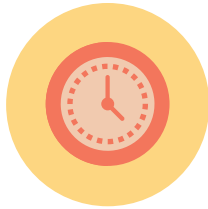
Take time to discover their daily routine, and respect their personal boundaries and preferences.

This is particularly important when it comes to personal care - things like, washing, grooming, and toileting. It's essential to build trust and provide personal care in a discreet, dignified way. Involve the client in their care by providing choice and asking how they want to be supported.



## Examples of person-centred care

Person-centred care is all about putting your client's wishes at the heart of what you do. It's about having a conversation with them and their family and following a routine they're comfortable with. When thinking about how to provide care, it's helpful to consider the key parts of daily life that you'd like to have a say over if you were being cared for:



The time they  
get up



The type of personal care  
tasks you provide



What they like  
to eat



What they want  
to wear



How they want  
to be washed



The activities they  
enjoy doing

## Washing, grooming and other forms of personal care

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Find out more about supporting the person you're caring for with their personal hygiene, dressing, and grooming, while helping them to maintain as much independence as possible.

## Helping with daily hygiene

There are lots of things we all do everyday to stay clean and comfortable – such as bathing, showering, dressing, oral hygiene, shaving, foot care, and applying lotions and creams.

While they may not need help with all of these things, be sure to talk to your care recipient and their family about how you can assist them best.

## Assessing skin health

Skin becomes more fragile as we get older. Your care recipient's skin should be kept dry, while still moisturised, and it's important to keep a close eye on it's condition each day.

Report any changes such as redness, signs of pressure sores, and skin breakdown to the family and GP, or the client's district nursing team. If your placement offers care logs and incident management tracking via the Elder Hub, you can keep track of these changes on a daily basis directly through the portal. This is also an easy way to keep the family up-to-speed too.



# Support with toileting

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Find out more about supporting your care recipient with their toileting needs, and helping them to stick to their normal routine and patterns.

## Using a commode

Using commodes and urine bottles – both upstairs and downstairs can help reduce the risk of your care recipient falling while trying to get to the toilet, especially at night. We highly recommend them to the families on our platform.

After each use, please give commodes and all toileting equipment a thorough clean.

## Supporting a healthy diet

To support healthy elimination, ensure the person you are caring for consumes enough fluids and has a healthy diet, rich in fibre to avoid constipation. As you know, dehydration and fluid retention can lead to infections, which is why it's important to keep your client hydrated. You should monitor your client's elimination patterns, and if there is anything you are at all concerned about, it's best to seek the support of a health professional, such as the client's GP, the pharmacy or 111.

These changes could include diarrhoea, constipation, or signs of a urinary tract infection, for example.

## Handling advanced toileting tasks

As a live-in carer you will not need to support your care recipient with advanced toileting tasks such as catheter changing, stoma management and suppository administration. In most cases, these will need to be completed by district nurses, but it differs from client to client. Always review the care appraisal prior to your arrival and confirm it's correct. If not, clarify with the family and speak to us if you're ever unsure about anything to do with advanced toileting.

# Nutrition and hydration

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Helping the person you're caring for to get the right nutrition and hydration is a really crucial part of being a live-in carer. Nutritional deficiencies – for example, vitamin D – have been linked to increased falls, skin problems, changes in behaviour and depression. When caring for your clients, you have the unique opportunity to support their health and wellbeing with a careful and personalised approach.

## Foods high in vitamins

- **Vitamin A** – Eggs, milk, carrots, sweet potatoes, and cantaloupe
- **Vitamin B** – brown rice, red meat, poultry, fish, milk, cheese, beans, lentils, sunflower seeds, almonds, broccoli, spinach, citrus fruits, avocados, bananas
- **Vitamin C** – Oranges, strawberries, tomatoes, kiwi, broccoli, and red and green bell peppers
- **Vitamin D** – Oily fish, such as salmon, sardines, herring and mackerel, along with red meat and, fortified foods, such as spreads and breakfast cereals.
- **Vitamin E** – Avocados, nuts, seeds, whole-grain foods, and spinach and other dark leafy greens

## Preparing fresh meals

Many families choose live-in care as it allows their loved ones to stay in control of the little things – such as what they have for dinner.

Always ask the person you're caring for about their likes and dislikes and what they would prefer to eat. Perhaps they have a favourite meal you could prepare for them? Or an old family recipe they'd like to share with you?



It's important to adapt your cooking to their preferences as much as you can. If that's not possible, strive to offer a few different choices and let them select their preferred option.

If you're replacing a carer on a placement, always ask the outbound carer about the care recipient's meal preferences, so you can start to think about meals you can make that they'll enjoy.

### **High-fibre food**

- Breakfast cereals such as plain wholewheat biscuits (like Weetabix), plain shredded whole grain (like Shredded wheat), and porridge (such as oats) are also a good source of fibre.
- Wholemeal or granary breads, along with white bread, and wholegrains like wholewheat pasta, bulgur wheat and brown rice are all high in fibre.
- Potatoes with their skins on, which could be served as a baked potato or boiled potatoes.
- Beans, lentils and chickpeas, which could be added to stews, curries and salads.
- Serve vegetables with as many meals as possible, either as a side dish or added to stews or curries.
- Prepare fresh or dried fruit, or offer fruit canned in natural juice (not sugar!) for dessert.
- For snacks, you can offer fresh fruit, vegetable sticks, rye crackers, oatcakes and unsalted nuts or seeds.

### **Encouraging eating at regular intervals**

Encourage your care recipient to eat and hydrate regularly – they should aim for six to eight glasses of water a day. If you have access to Care Logs through the Elder Hub, you can keep track of any change in their intake there.

## Helping them to eat

If cooking and offering support at mealtimes is part of your placement duties, it means the person you're caring for can keep, chew and swallow food or fluid in the mouth. Remember, you will never need to assist with PEG feeding as a live-in carer with Elder.

If your care recipient is unable to eat unaided, then you can support them through direct feeding using a spoon or a straw, if needed, but monitor their swallowing to prevent choking.

### **Concerned about how they're eating?**

If you ever have concerns around your care recipients eating habits, or believe they are not eating or drinking enough, please immediately communicate this to the family and to us. If thickeners or dietary supplements are used, an appropriate specialist (e.g. Speech and Language Therapy professional) should always be involved.

### **Cooking for your client**

You're not expected to cook for the household or provide meals for the whole family, unless this is specified to you prior to accepting the placement or agreed while on placement. You should clean all utensils and the area after eating and preparing food to ensure cleanliness and prevent spread of infection.



# Sleep and night time

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As a live-in carer you can make a huge difference to the wellbeing of your care recipient by helping them with their night time routine, and maintaining their usual patterns.

## **Ensuring safety and consistency**

Encourage your care recipient to have a regular bedtime, as a healthy routine leads to a restful night. Preparing the environment can be helpful, such as making the bed or space to sleep, adjusting the temperature, and securing the home by locking windows, closing doors and turning off electronics.

## **Preparing for a good night's sleep**

Before bedtime, you may need to help them with changing into night time clothes and ensure that all necessary items are accessible – such as a urine bottle, commode next to their bed, and a glass of water on the bedside table.

Prompt the client to take their nightly medication as applicable, but do not administer, they have to do this themselves. If they don't want to take their medication, please contact us as soon as possible.



Help your care recipient into bed as required, and ensure they are comfortable by helping them position themselves well. Be mindful that the position they sleep in doesn't put them at risk of falling out of bed during the night.

Some clients might need reassurance and your help to fall asleep. Playing light music or sitting by their side may help them relax and feel restful.

### **Assisting during the night**

Your own sleep is hugely important while you're on placement, however night time disturbances do happen. While you may not need to provide night time support on some placements, for care recipients with more complex needs, you should prepare to assist with disturbances up to three times per night, for around 15 minutes on average.

However, we recommend that steps are taken to minimise the need for the person you're caring for to get out of bed – such as ensuring the commode or any toileting equipment is easily accessible.

### **Getting enough rest yourself**

If you find you're being woken up too often by the person you're caring for, please let us know so that we can make additional care arrangements with the family.

It's really crucial that you feel well rested enough to be able to provide the care needed. It's fine to build in additional breaks for yourself the following day if you have had to offer overnight support.

# Help to get about

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Find out more about supporting your care recipient to safely around the house for all day-to-day activities.

## **Moving the person you're caring for safely**

Moving your care recipient can sometimes include the use of specialist equipment, such as hoists and walking aids, but don't worry, you'll be told about any equipment before you begin your placement. You should familiarise yourself with the equipment, and if you're unsure how to use it properly contacting the manufacturer is a really good place to start, as they will be able to provide instructions.

You need to ensure correct and safe moving and handling techniques, as not following correct procedures can lead to injuries for the person you're caring for, and yourself. Remember, you must not manually lift your care recipient at any point.

## **Dealing with reduced mobility**

If your client's mobility is reduced, they should be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT). The OT can advise on how you can help them move around safely.

You might need to use a wheelchair to help them access the community. If it's an electric wheelchair, always make sure the batteries are fully charged before leaving the house. This will prevent inconveniences while out, bringing peace of mind for both you and your care recipient.

## **Helping someone who's bedbound**

If your client spends most of their time in bed, we encourage you to help them to change positions regularly, to ensure comfort and prevent pressure sores. It's also a good idea to reach out to their community nurses to explore whether or not a pressure relieving mattress or aid could be used.

# Medication monitoring

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As a live-in carer you can support your care recipient by collecting their prescriptions and reminding them to take their medication.

## Prompting use of medication

As previously mentioned in this guide, you should never directly administer prescription medication and as such, you don't need to fill out a MAR chart. You can, however, request a MAR chart from the care recipients pharmacy to help them keep track of their medication, but this is simply to make life easier for you.

## Reporting any concerns

It's really important to monitor medication taking and report any concerns immediately – such as an adverse reaction to medication or a missed dose – to the GP and Elder. As always, in case of an emergency, please dial 999 immediately.

Do not hesitate to reach out to the family or Elder if you have concerns around taking medications. We're here to help you in every way we can.



# Domestic duties – help to make life as happy and comfortable as possible

## Activities and companionship

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A big part of live-in care is getting to know the person you're caring for – understanding their likes and dislikes, and what hobbies they would like your support with.

### Understanding what they enjoy

We like to match carers on hobbies and interests, so you may find you share the same passions as your care recipient, or, you could have a brilliant opportunity to try your hand at something new.

Whatever the case, helping the person you're caring for to keep up with their hobbies helps them remain independent, healthy and happy for as long as possible.

### Forming a bond

It's easy to bond and form a close relationship with your client when you're living with them, and this connection is often why families and carers choose live-in care. However, it's important to keep professional boundaries, and respect each other's privacy too.

## **Can you accept gifts from your client?**

While it's always lovely to receive a gift, we strongly advise that you don't accept gifts from your care recipient as it can cause problems, especially if the person you are caring for doesn't have the mental capacity to know what they're giving away. If you are offered a gift, please let Elder know.

## **Planning activities**

Whenever you're planning an activity for your care recipient, their abilities and wishes should always be your top priority.

Planning activities to help them relax or restore peace of mind is a great place to start. Always aim to help your care recipient feel comfortable too - you could do this by playing their favourite music and encouraging their desire to sing, and of course, it's even better if you can join in too.

## **Ideas for activities**

The activities you do with your client will always depend on their physical and mental capacity. But here are some ideas:

- Board games and jigsaws
- Quizzes, crosswords and brain games
- Gardening and flower arranging
- Walks around the local park
- Looking through photo albums
- Making a scrapbook
- Seated exercises and stretches
- Planning the week's meals



## Supporting worship

We understand your beliefs may differ from your care recipient's, so you aren't expected to participate directly in the client's religious practices (unless you wish to do so). However, you should support them in getting to their place of worship safely, and accompanying them during service if they would like you to do so. Your client might want to be visited by a chaplain if they're not able to visit their place of worship, so you should support their wishes and help them to organise this.



## Going to community activities

Staying active within the local community can really help an older person's mental wellbeing. As a live-in carer you can travel with your care recipient to day centres, tea mornings and other community interactions, if the family agrees in advance. It's important to help your care recipient prepare for their trip so that they can get the most out of it – this includes bringing things like this could include medications, wipes, toileting supplies.

Be ready to help with transport to any activities, such as using public or private transportation, driving (if agreed prior to the placement) or walking, and get familiar with your route before you go.

## Planning the diary

As a carer, you play a big role in helping your care recipient plan their week ahead. Making sure there's always something to look forward to, such as family gatherings to days out, helps everyone stay happier. But, you should also always assist them in keeping on top of more practical dates in the diary such as medical appointments.



# Shopping and household activities

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You may be asked to run short errands, such as shopping for groceries or other household items while on your placement.

## Doing the shopping

It's always best to put a shopping list together before you head out to the shops. Involving the person you're caring for in making a list can help them feel in control, and can also help you learn more about their likes and dislikes.

Remember to think about practical items for the house too, such as cleaning products and toilet paper. And think about how you'll get the items back home. Remember, grocery shopping can be done online and delivered directly to the home which may be easier. And, always complete responsible money transactions as agreed by the family.

## Budgeting with the family

We always recommend families provide a prepaid card for shopping, and offer some guidance to help you know what you need to buy. You'll usually have a weekly food budget to do the shopping, and in some cases, a separate arrangement that could also include a personal weekly food budget. We recommend to families that your personal food budget should be around £30 per week.



## **Counting the pennies**

You should always keep receipts for every transaction and agree the budget with the family, asking for guidance when necessary. You should not engage in other cash transactions, or enter into other financial arrangements with the family.

## **Keeping proof of purchases**

If you're given a budget by the family to pay for shopping or other items, it's very important to keep all your receipts. If there are ever concerns or confusion around money, you can easily show a complete history of your spending and clear any concerns with the receipts.

Please understand that you should not purchase items for your own benefit from the budget you're given. If in doubt, please call Elder to discuss finances. As always, we're here for you.

# **A tidy house**

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**Find out how you can help keep a clean environment to ensure the client's safety and wellbeing.**

## **Ensuring a safe environment**

This includes light cleaning and tidying around your care duties, to keep the house hazard free and pleasant to live in. As you know, older adults are more susceptible to bacterial infections, so it's important to clean the living areas every day with water and detergent to ensure good infection control.

## **Doing the laundry**

You should also aim to keep on top of your care recipient's laundry, and your own. This includes regular washing of linens, towels and clothes. Don't worry, you're not required to do the washing of any other members of the household unless this has been explicitly agreed prior to starting the placement.

## Getting help with deep cleaning

While an important part of your role is to help keep the home clean and tidy, we encourage families to use professional cleaning services for deep cleaning. If you ever feel that the home or care environment does not match the care appraisal, or that you're being asked to do more cleaning than expected, please let us know so we can help.

### What's the difference between regular and deep cleaning?

**Regular cleaning** maintains a good level of cleanliness around the house, such as hoovering and mopping the floors, cleaning the bathroom sink, mirror, bath and toilet, tidying up, and cleaning the kitchen surfaces, cupboard doors, hob etc. to ensure the home environment is both clean and comfortable.

**Deep cleaning** covers areas which aren't usually included in a regular clean, such as cleaning behind large pieces of furniture and kitchen appliances like the washing machine and oven, under the sink, inside the oven, inside of window frames, and inside and outside of all windows. It would also include scale removal from bathroom tiles, kitchen tiles, taps, shower heads etc.



## **Understanding how to use appliances**

Upon arrival, you should be shown how to use and maintain personal and household possessions (this could include white goods and appliances, for example). You should also be given the contact for someone to call if any of these possessions should stop working. This may occur during the handover process, or by the family.

# **Communication**

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**Communication is really important to ensure everyone is happy with the live-in care arrangement.**

## **Staying in touch with family**

We recommend you share regular updates with your care recipient's family on any changes in care needs, and events that occur either out of the norm, or that are simply worth sharing.

In case of an emergency or change in the care appraisal, please notify the family members first (after emergency services), then Elder.



## **Sharing the moments of joy**

If you're having a special moment, such as a day out, a special meal, or a celebration, why not send a photo to the family? It can be stressful when a loved one is receiving care, especially for a family member who used to be the primary caregiver, so it's nice to show them the happy moments.

## **Letting us know if the care appraisal isn't right**

You'll be provided with a care appraisal before starting any placement. Upon arrival and throughout your time on the placement, if you notice that the care appraisal is not up to date for some reason, please send us an email to [carers@elder.org](mailto:carers@elder.org) outlining any changes and updates so that we can ask the family to update it.

## **Keeping the care appraisal updated**

You should always go over the care appraisal with the outgoing carer during the handover to ensure it's accurate and no information is missing. If the care appraisal is not accurate, please inform the family and Elder.

You should make the family and Elder aware if there are any differences between the reality of care needs and the care appraisal for the placement, so that this can be updated and sorted accordingly.



# Taking a break

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Caring can be tough. It's essential you give yourself some down time to rest and recharge during your placement, because your wellbeing matters.

## **Splitting up your breaks**

It's up to you how you manage your breaks during your placement – when planning the day ahead with your care recipient, remember to build in your breaks at times when it's safe to do so.

We recommend taking breaks of around two hours in total over the working day, which are split into several breaks. This is in addition to your own time in the evening and night-time.

## **Planning breaks with the family**

You should always arrange breaks around the needs of the person you're caring for. Unless specified otherwise in the care appraisal, they should never be left alone, as this could potentially be dangerous.

Agreeing the time of your breaks with your care recipient or their family is really important, as it allows you to get adequate rest, while knowing the person you're caring for is safe. The more flexible you can be with when you take your breaks, the easier it will be to maintain a positive routine for your care recipient.

## **Raising concerns about breaks**

If you have any issues with taking adequate breaks, please do speak to the family, and report this to Elder too.

Again, it's really important not to leave your care recipient alone while on placement unless the care appraisal says it's safe to do so. Not only would this be dangerous for the care recipient, but it could cause you to be liable for neglect.



# Taking time off

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Being a live-in carer doesn't mean giving up your work life balance. As a live-in carer your commitment and compassion makes such a difference to others – it's only right that you have plenty of opportunities to take time for yourself.

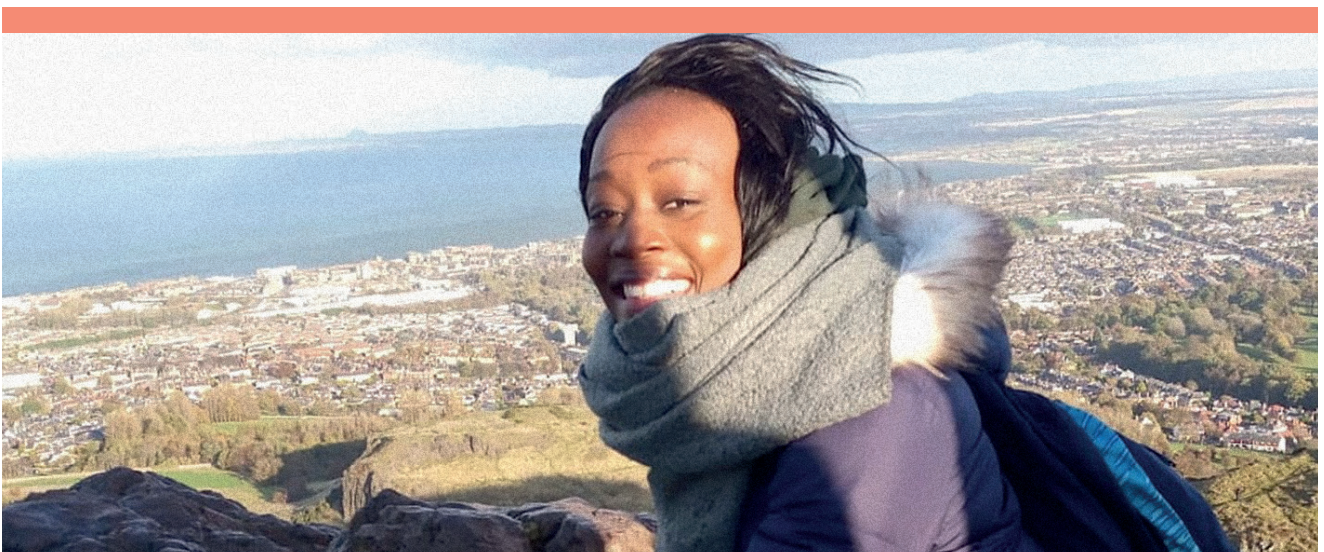
Whether you're a primary or respite carer, during your period away, a replacement carer will take over.

## **Giving us plenty of notice**

In order to ensure a safe handover, we do ask that you give us a minimum of two weeks' notice before booking a long-term break. This allows us enough time to secure another carer for the handover.

## **Communicating with the family**

Ideally respite breaks will be planned out in advance, in agreement with your care recipient and their family – for example, when the placement starts. We know it's not always possible, but the more time everyone has to plan, the smoother the handover will be and, ultimately, the happier and safer the person you're caring for will be.



Through collaboration between primary and respite carers, we can work together to deliver the best care experience for those who need it most. Whether you prefer being a primary or respite carer, here's what it means for you on the Elder platform:

**Primary care:**

As a primary carer providing continuous, ongoing care, you'll be better placed to build strong relationships with your care recipient. Over time, you'll really get to know their personality and preferences, and gain confidence in meeting their unique care needs. We'll always ask that your upcoming breaks are scheduled so that we can sort out care while you're away. If you ever need to make a change to your schedule, please let us know well in advance.

**Respite care:**

As a respite carer, you'll help to ensure a care recipient receives the continuity of care they deserve whilst a primary carer is away. Though you may spend less time with clients, you'll still be building strong relationships when returning to cover scheduled breaks. It's also important that you schedule your return well in advance too, so that we can help you return to care recipients you know.



## **Reacting to a fall**

In the event of a fall, we recommend that you do not physically intervene, as this can cause further injury to your care recipient, and could put you at risk too. Instead, assess the injury and put your care recipient in a recovery position if possible to do so. Then call an emergency service – even if all appears to be fine.

If the client doesn't want you to call an ambulance, contact the non-emergency service on 111 for advice. They may wish to speak to the person you're caring for, or encourage them to accept help from an ambulance. Always keep the family and Elder informed after a fall.

## **Contacting the GP**

If at any point during your placement your care recipient appears unwell, or you notice changes in their behaviour and normal routine, or suspect an infection, call their GP for advice and share your concerns with the family. Even the smallest changes are worth flagging when it comes to your care recipient's health.

We strongly advise that you ask the family to put together an emergency contact list at the start of your placement for any potential crisis.



# What to expect from the family

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## **Arriving to everything working**

The shower, washing machine and cooker should be in full working order, and we always ask the family to check this before you arrive. If there are any security cameras operating on the property, you should be made aware of these beforehand too.

## **Having your own private space**

You should always have access to a comfortable, clean and private room, with some storage for clothes and personal possessions, and fresh sheets and towels for when you first arrive.

## **You should only care for your client**

Please be aware that Elder approved carers are not expected to provide care for other members of the family aside from the primary client(s).

Elder-approved carers should not arrange or supervise care for others, so if in doubt, please contact us and we'll help sort it. We hope you'll take our recommendations to heart.

# Our Standards: Recap and Next Steps

We're your biggest supporter and want to do everything we can to see you succeed, and find fulfillment as an Elder approved carer.

While caring, it's important that you treat your care recipients, their family members and other stakeholders with the utmost respect and professionalism. This means being honest, organised, committed and flexible. We ask that families extend the same values towards you, and of course, everyone at Elder is committed to extending these values to you, at all times too.

While off placement, we encourage you to keep your profile accurate and to follow the guidelines outlined in these Standards.

As a self-employed live-in carer, you may be faced with a number of challenges related to entering a person's home, providing care, or getting along with the care recipient and their family. We're always available to provide clarity if there are issues around the standards you're uncertain about. It's important that you let us know if issues arise while on a placement, so that we can offer help and assistance as soon as possible.



We're all human, and can all can make mistakes from time to time. If you have mistakenly done something which you think may not meet these standards, then it's important you tell us about it as soon as possible. If we're reviewing a potential breach, we would take this into account. However, Whereas if an incident came to light and you had not flagged it, that may well make it more serious. Dealing with issues promptly and transparently from the start will increase the chances it can be resolved quickly, and in a fair way.

In some events, a family may contact Elder to lodge a complaint. We will do our best to investigate the validity of these on a case by case basis and communicate them to you. Complaints are never easy to receive, and we understand it can be upsetting, but in the event of a complaint it's really important to co-operate in any investigation if requested, so that we can understand the situation from both sides.

As Elder-approved carers should always maintain professional standards, we recommend that you avoid consuming alcohol and other drugs whilst on placement. It's also recommended that you do not have visitors whilst on placement, unless agreed upon with the person you're caring for, and their family. We recommend that you notify Elder beforehand too. Where we have any concerns about these standards not being met, we may review a carer's performance - both on and off placements - by asking a Carer Quality panel to monitor, review and discuss any issues and incidents. This panel will advise on any suggested actions to help ensure that all Elder-approved carers meet the minimum standards, and where necessary, make changes to their behaviours.

Due to the nature of live-in care, we may restrict your access to our platform during this review process. Please note, Elder does have the right to remove you from using the Elder platform at any time, however we will always email you to let you know that you've been removed from the platform.

You may be removed from a placement at any time if the care recipient or their family requests this. Where any complaint has been lodged against you, we would ordinarily expect the placement to be ended immediately (although we would always check this with the care recipient). If your placement is terminated, you should leave promptly and professionally when requested, typically when another carer arrives on site. You will be able to gather your personal belongings from your room, and if appropriate say your goodbyes to the person you're caring for. We understand that leaving a placement in this way can be emotional, and you may feel you're being removed unfairly, however it's really important that you remain professional. Our care team will be available after you leave to talk through how you're feeling.

As always, we recommend that you familiarise yourself with the terms and conditions located on the Elder Hub before your first placement, and that you be transparent with us. We'll always offer the same level of transparency throughout your journey with us.

Remember, you can always refer back to the terms and conditions and these standards throughout your time with Elder - these documents exist to help you succeed.



## **We look forward to supporting you throughout your journey as an Elder-approved carer.**

Have questions? No worries! If there's anything you don't understand or you're unsure about, drop us an email or reach us by phone and we'll happily help:

**[carers@elder.org](mailto:carers@elder.org) | 0333 150 2350**

