



## A carer's story ...

*I suppose what struck me first, was that I hadn't realised I'd become a carer!*

I'd always supported my parents, but when my dad developed vascular dementia, I just found myself doing more, helping out with hospital appointments, being at home so my mum could go shopping, being there when my elderly mum who developed mental health issues herself, wasn't coping, helping both my parents navigate the help available.

It wasn't until I became unwell that someone said to me 'you're doing a lot, working, maintaining your family and caring for your parents'

But wouldn't anyone do this? I was just the same as everyone else! It was my duty! It's what I wanted to do! I was coping ... *well clearly I wasn't.*

**there are currently 6.5mil people in the UK who are carers & this is expected to rise to 9mil by 2037**



Realistically I couldn't stop caring for my parents but something had to give, I'd used up most of my annual leave, but still had lots of hospital appointments and was struggling with the umpteen texts I got a day, from my mum!

Interestingly my employer had noticed a change in me, so when I went to him to tell him I was thinking I would have to leave, I was shocked when he said 'let's sit down and talk about this'

He told me – You've worked here a long time, you have a lot of knowledge and skills and I'm not sure you're going to be that easy to replace. That made me cry, (in a good way!). But he agreed I couldn't go on trying to juggle my current workload, work routines and my caring responsibilities'.



For more information and to find out about support available if you're in work or interested in looking for work or training, get in touch.

Impact Workability, T: 01903 730044 | E: [workability@impact-initiatives.org.uk](mailto:workability@impact-initiatives.org.uk) or visit our website [www.impact-initiatives.org.uk](http://www.impact-initiatives.org.uk)



Impact Initiatives, 19 Queens Road, Brighton BN1 3XA | 01273 322940  
Charity Commission No. 276669 Company limited by guarantee no. 1402692

# So what changed?

My employer put me in touch with an Employment Specialist at Impact Workability and together we came up with a short list of ideas that might help me:

- Flexible Working (If you've been employed for 6 months or more you have a right to ask for flexible working to be considered!)
- Regular agreed breaks to respond to text messages
- Working at home one day a week (this would cut down on my long commute and I often find I end up getting more done, this could also be the day I attended hospital appointments with my parents, I would just work later)
- Reducing hours (either temporarily or permanently)
- Having a peer mentor (someone to talk to, who understood a little of what it's like)

He then also pointed me in the direction of some practical resources like Carers Support West Sussex and Carers UK that he'd heard about, it was then that I realised 'I was not alone' and more than anything what I appreciated was someone actually being interested in me.

there are *resources* available to help

juggling work with *caring* for a loved one can be *exhausting*

3mil people *combine* caring for a *loved* one with paid work

