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# Legal Matters

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## Working Carers

Sometimes a carer may need to take responsibility for the financial and legal affairs of the person they care for. Forward planning can save time, effort and money. Some things to consider are:

- Benefits – carers can become an ‘agent’ or ‘appointee’. Contact the Department for Work and Pensions. Go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for more information.
- Bank and building society accounts – it may be possible to change to joint accounts or to take out a ‘Third party mandate’. Contact the relevant bank or building society.
- Lasting Power of Attorney – this is a legal procedure which enables people to give someone else responsibility to make decisions about financial and health matters. For more information contact the Public Guardianship Office on 0300 456 0300 or visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

## Making a Will

For some people, the thought of writing a will can be upsetting, as they do not want to think about what will happen when they or the person they care for dies. A will allows you to set out what you want to happen when you die and makes sure your wishes are followed and you can choose who you want to deal with things on your behalf.

If you write your own will, you must make sure it is signed, dated and witnessed correctly otherwise it will be invalid. Most solicitors will help draw up wills and most work on a fixed fee basis so you know how much it will cost before going ahead.

## **Legal Advice**

Free legal advice is available from organisations such as Citizens Advice who have an advice line 0808 278 7925 or go to their website [www.cacv.org.uk](http://www.cacv.org.uk).

## **Mental Capacity**

Some people cannot make decisions for themselves, including choices about their care. Dementia, brain injury, severe mental and physical illness or substance misuse can cause someone to lack mental capacity. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 puts emphasis on supporting and enabling individuals to make their own decisions. For more information go to [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk).



Cardiff and Vale University Health Board  
**Unpaid Carers Information Service**

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**Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Ofalwyr Di-dâ**

# We are here to help



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