

Distance carers

1. **A distance carer** provides support to someone who lives at a distance from them. There are lots of different ways of thinking about distance (miles, time to travel). Some people define distance carers as carers who need to travel for at least one hour when visiting (although there are other definitions). Types of caring tasks might be giving emotional support over the phone, looking information up online, ordering shopping, visiting and giving practical support, and much more. Are you a distance carer as a sibling?
2. **There can be significant challenges** as a result of the distance. It can be difficult to respond to small problems, or respond quickly. You can't just pop in, you can't just be there at the drop of a hat.
3. **There can also be positives to distance caring** such as valuing the time you have together and making the most of it; appreciating your own space; drawing boundaries around caring time.
4. **Advice from distance carers:** Build up local sources of support in your brother/sister's area – talk to the neighbours when you visit, get in touch with the local carers centre; Consider introducing new technology before it's needed – it will help when the time comes; Look after yourself as much as possible – this is a marathon, not a sprint.
5. **The pandemic turned many local carers into 'distance' carers too** and many had to find new ways of keeping in touch. Advice from distance carers during this time: Be creative! Read stories online, sing together, send a photo printed on a cushion; build a relationship with care home staff; be persistent and ask for regular updates.