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**Working carers case studies**

Case study 1

Tom works full time in Leeds, commuting from home outside Leeds. He enjoys his work, finding it rewarding and interesting. His salary is essential to providing for him and his family. His intention has always been to carry on working for as long as he can.

He has an elderly mother who lives on her own. Over recent years she has developed signs of Dementia and this appears to be getting steadily more pronounced.

His mother doesn’t have any other family who can help or provide care so Tom has to visit his mum more regularly to provide care and to ensure that she is safe.

Inevitably this starts to cause conflict at work because Tom is now juggling the needs of the job with the needs of his mum.

Tom has to start to visit his mum after work for a few hours each day but sometimes he has to take time off to accompany his mum to health specialists or to deal with minor crisis at home. One of the main challenges is the coordination of the external carer services to ensure that his mum is safe and can continue to live at home.

Tom is feeling guilty about not being able to perform to his usual standard at work and is considering resigning.

Case study 2

Sarah works in a call centre full time in Leeds and is 30. She and her mother look after her grandmother who is in her eighties and has Dementia. Her grandmother still lives independently in Huddersfield on her own. Sarah and her mother take it in turns to care for her, every other day. Social services call round 3 times a day to provide food and medication.

One of the issues is that her grandmother is prone to leave her house and wander off, ending up lost and confused. To counter this they have installed an alarm when the house door opens during the day. When the alarm is activated Sarah is contacted and goes to the house in Huddersfield to find her grandmother.

Sarah has made her work aware of the situation and that she may have to leave occasionally at short notice. Over the last 6 months there have been 3 occasions when Sarah has had to leave work immediately. Each time she explained the situation to her manager, although Sarah feels they didn’t understand what caring involved.

On the third occasion Sarah was told that her absences were unauthorised and that any further absence would invoke the disciplinary procedure. Sarah felt that she had no option and resigned.