

Aileen
HMRC (Serving)
Carer's Passport



Story Summary:

Aileen is certain that she wouldn't still be working today and would be facing a life on benefits for her and her family if she hadn't been able to use the Charity's Carer's Passport.

Currently caring for her husband after a stroke and her 25 year-old daughter who has regular seizures, Aileen is using her second Passport in a number of years to help her continue to work as well as take care of her family.

Her first Passport was necessary so she could support and care for her father through three years of cancer treatment which eventually took his life a few years ago.

Now her husband and eldest child need her support and having the Passport means that Aileen is able to respond to the needs of her family as well as continue to progress in her job.

Aileen also believes it is important to give back to the Charity and has paid in monthly donations since she first received assistance to buy a washing machine over fifteen years ago. At the time following the break-up of her marriage and living alone with three young children Aileen was thankful both for the monetary as well as the emotional support she felt the Charity gave her.

Full Story with Quotes:

Aileen is certain that she wouldn't still be working today and would be facing a life on benefits for her and her family if she hadn't been able to use the Charity's Carer's Passport.

The first time she applied for a Passport was to help her care for her father. Two days after her mother's funeral, Aileen's father was in hospital having an operation to treat bowel cancer. For the next three years Aileen cared for her father through operations, hospital appointments and memory loss until he sadly also passed away.

Throughout this time Aileen was able to use the flexible hour's system at her job in HMRC to help her be on hand whenever she was needed. It was, however, her Carer's Passport that helped to ease the stress during a tough period.

Aileen said: "My manager at the time told me about the Passport. She said it helps me and it will help you. I was able to be really flexible and didn't have to explain each time I had to do something like take my dad into hospital."

Aileen was just getting her life back on track after the death of her father when her husband had a stroke. Once again Aileen found herself in a caring role as his medical needs increased.

So she reapplied for a Carer's Passport, which is helping her to juggle her responsibilities at home as well as continuing to do a good job at work. Aileen attributes the fact that she is also able to continue to build her skills at work and progress in her career to the difference the Passport has made and the support her colleagues give her.

"If I didn't have the Passport in place I don't think I would be working at the moment. I would have had to leave and that would have put me on benefits. I wouldn't be able to be this flexible elsewhere. My team have been so understanding regarding not holding me back and there is still some career progression possible. I feel supported and encouraged."

Aileen also believes it is important to give back to the Charity and has paid in monthly donations since she first received assistance to buy a washing machine over fifteen years ago. At the time following the break-up of her marriage and living alone with three young children Aileen was thankful both for the monetary as well as the emotional support she felt the Charity provided.

Additional quotes:

"During my dad's illness it was such a relief not having to worry about my job at the same time, not having to explain every little thing to my manager."

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"Dad also had a wee bit of dementia, he would phone when I was at work and he didn't know where he was. To be able to go and help him instantly was wonderful."

"I was just back at work, getting back to normality after my father died and then my partner had a stroke. A lot of medical problems started to happen very quickly."

"If I didn't have the Passport in place I don't think I would be working at the

"My Passport had run out but then I again had to fit in hospital

appointments, phone-calls because of seizures etc. My children were at home, college and school and I felt they were really taking the brunt of it. I re-applied for another Passport so this is now my second one."

"We change managers a lot in the Revenue. You may have a very helpful manger but then you move groups and you might not get someone as understanding. I had this in mind."

"It's very difficult, most of the time I can deal with it and sometimes you have a really bad night and you have to go into work and you can be a wee bit tearful. It's difficult."

"Things have got steadily worse for my husband, he has seizures and also a cancer scare. He hasn't worked for years now. Also my daughter is 25 and out the blue she started getting epileptic seizures, which happen about once a week. She lives nearby and can't go to work now."

"I've got flexi-time. The Passport stops the questions like why you are asking for leave at short notice. It doesn't give you time though so I have to manage it and I make up a few hours when Alec is feeling well."

"If I had been in the private sector I wouldn't have been able to hold down

a job. With the flexi time at CS I have been able to do it and work round it."

"I also pay into the Charity, started years ago after I first got some help. I split up from my first husband about fifteen years ago and I asked for help then when I was with 3 young children. I had to leave the family home because I had to sell the house. The accommodation we rented didn't have a washing machine and I had three young children so they gave me £250 to buy it. When I asked for it I got a phone call back it was great because the girl also asked me how I was and how I was coping, there were a few tears and she listened. It was great. It wasn't just financial as it was such a lonely time and her help really made a difference to me."

"So as soon as I was back up on my feet I set up a payment to the Charity."

"Because I am the breadwinner in the family I have been building my competencies at the same time to go for promotion. I have had help and I am now a trainer. I train people in self-assessment within HMRC. My team have been so understanding regarding not holding me back and there is still some career progression possible. I feel supported and encouraged."

Manager quote:

"The Carer's passport has been great since Aileen moved to my team. It gives me all the information I need and means that Aileen doesn't have to continually explain the situation to any new mangers"

*"The passport allows me to support Aileen and approve leave, sometimes at short notice, without worrying about getting approval from senior management." **Jim Dyer***

How did we help?

Fifteen years ago we helped Aileen to buy a washing machine when she moved into rented accommodation with three young children after separating from her then husband. Years later we assisted with a Carer's Passport whilst her father was very ill and again currently as her husband and daughter both have medical problems.