



I C O P E

INTEGRATED CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

**SUPPORT  
CARERS**



## Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain the care pathway to support the carers.
- Describe the various types of support to be provided to carers.





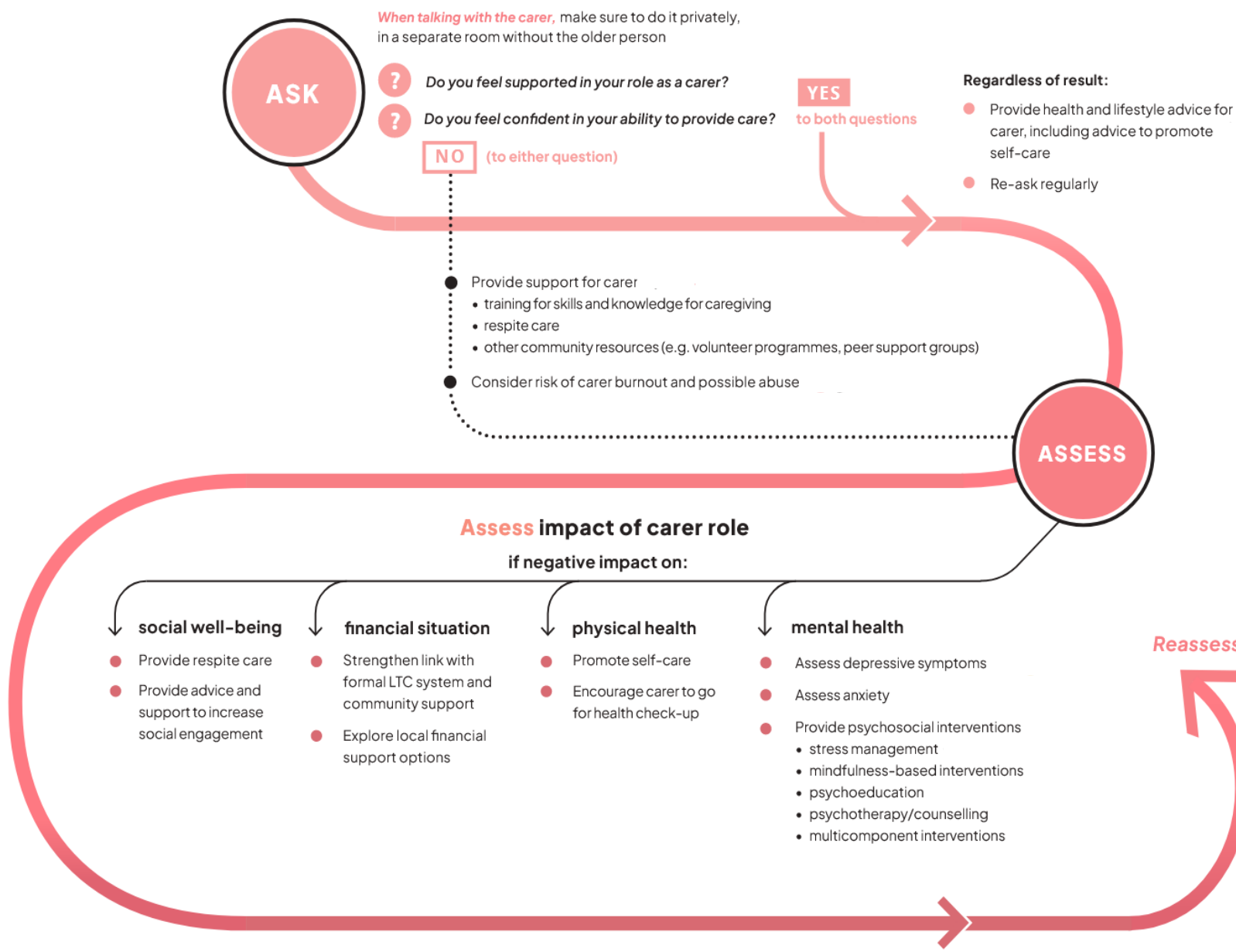
## Supporting Carers' Well-being

When intrinsic capacity and functional ability decline, caregiving responsibilities usually fall to a spouse, family member, or other household member.

The care provided to the older person can impact the well-being of the carer, depending on the specific needs of the care recipient.

Community health and social care workers can monitor the well-being of carers and ensure they receive support for their own health and caregiving responsibilities.

# Care pathway to support carers







## Assess the impact of the carer's role

Assessments should be conducted regularly, as a caregiver's need for support may evolve over time.

**Social well-being**



**Physical health**



**Mental health**

Depressive symptoms and anxiety



**Financial situation**





## Health and lifestyle advice

**Caring for someone can be exhausting and stressful, especially for family carers.**



*Return to or do activities you enjoy.  
Maintain a regular sleep routine.  
Stay as physically active as possible.  
Follow a healthy diet and have regular meals.  
Spend time with friends and family.  
Get involved in community and social activities.  
Take regular breaks to recharge.*







## Community-based health care

- In supportive countries, carers can access benefits like paid leave and cash-for-care transfers.
- Community organisations help identify carers in need through peer groups and social events.
- Easy access to information about local support resources, especially respite care, is crucial.
- Home-based care organisations offer advice and respite care to ease the burden on family carers.
- Community health workers provide immediate support, including health advice and stress reduction for struggling carers.





## Support for carers

### Training

- Understand the carer's needs and observe care aspects that can be improved
- Support and advice on how to provide good quality care

### Respite care

- To keep the caring relationship healthy and sustainable
- Explore whether another person can temporarily supervise and care
- Advice on available services

### Psychological interventions

- Stress management
- Mindfulness-based interventions
- Psychoeducation
- Psychotherapy, counselling
- Multicomponent interventions

### Support physical health and social well-being

- Advise the carer to look after their own health
- Advice on how to tackle loneliness and isolation
- If the carer is an older person, advise to get an ICOPE basic assessment

### Financial support

- Provide advice and link the carer to available sources of information and support
- Check eligibility for financial support through social protection schemes



Consider the risk of carer burnout and possible abuse



## Summary

- Community health workers can identify carers' needs and support their well-being.
- Interventions such as advice, training, respite care, financial help, and psychological support can enable carers to maintain their health while providing quality care.
- For older carers, assessing their own health is recommended.
- Health workers should look for signs of abuse during assessments of older persons and their carers, ensuring the carer's role is recognized and supported.
- Community stakeholders can advocate for carers and provide ongoing training and support.

# References

*Long-term care for older people: package for universal health coverage.* World Health Organization (Geneva, Switzerland), 2024. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/376585>.

*Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) guideline for mental, neurological and substance use disorders.* World Health Organization (Geneva, Switzerland), 2023. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/374250>.

*iSupport for dementia: training and support manual for carers of people with dementia.* World Health Organization (Geneva, Switzerland), 2019. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/324794>