

## Your Legal Questions

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Solicitor



**Q. My husband has suffered with Dementia for many years. I'm really struggling to cope with looking after him; I am no longer strong enough to attend to his physical needs and his behaviour is getting more and more erratic and sometimes I fear for my safety. Is there anything that I can do?**

A. This must be a very difficult time for you indeed. Being a carer can be physically and mentally difficult and at times lonely. You must not feel guilty about how you feel and you must get some help soon. Your health and wellbeing is just as important as your husband's. No doubt you feel morally responsible for the care of your husband but it might surprise you to hear that it is the Social Services Department of the Local Authority that are legally responsible if your husband has care needs. From your question I am confident that your husband does have care needs and that you will be able to turn to Social Services for help.

I suggest that you contact Social Services as soon as possible and ask for their support. They will visit you and your husband at home and will assess your husband's care needs. They will also carry out a financial assessment. More help at home may be offered but the Social Worker may decide that your husband should reside in a care home where he can be adequately cared for. In that case you will be able to look for a local home but the social services will have to be satisfied that the home meets your husband's needs.

If you can no longer cope no pressure should be put upon you to change your mind. For additional guidance and support you can also contact Charities such as the Alzheimer's Society or Age UK.

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