



What I can carry - and what I cannot

A boundary-setting worksheet for the family member coordinating care from a step removed

Republic of Ireland only | Last reviewed: 18 July 2026

Before you begin

A boundary is not a punishment. It is a clear statement of what you can realistically do.

You may live further away, have a job or children, or be the person everyone rings because you answered first. This sheet helps you decide what you can offer, what needs to be shared and what needs professional support.

This is not a mental-health assessment. If stress, low mood, anxiety or exhaustion is affecting your daily life, speak to your GP or an appropriate professional.

1. What am I carrying now?

Calls and messages: _____

Appointments and transport: _____

Forms, services and paperwork: _____

Money or household admin: _____

Emotional check-ins: _____

Tasks nobody has formally asked me to do: _____

The part taking the most out of me: _____

2. My capacity this month

Hours per week I can reliably offer: _____

Days or times: _____

Tasks I can do remotely: _____

Tasks I can do in person: _____

Work or study time I am protecting: _____

My household or family time: _____

Rest, health or appointments: _____

3. Sort the next request

Questions to consider

- ☐ Is anyone in immediate danger?
- ☐ Does this require a healthcare or service professional?
- ☐ Am I the right person, or simply the person who answered?
- ☐ Can it wait until my available time?
- ☐ Who else could own or share it?

Choose the answer that fits

- ☐ Yes, I can take this
- ☐ Yes, but not until
- ☐ I can do part of it

- ☐ Someone else needs to take this
- ☐ We need outside support

4. Write the boundary before saying it

A useful structure

what I can do + what I cannot do + the next practical step

Examples in plain English

- ☐ I can make the call on Thursday. I cannot make it today. If it needs action sooner, we need someone else to take it.
- ☐ I can manage the appointment list. I cannot also provide the transport. Who can take that part?
- ☐ I am not available after 7pm for routine calls. If there is an immediate emergency, call 112 or 999. Otherwise, message me and I will reply tomorrow.
- ☐ I do not have enough information to agree to that now. Please send it in writing and I will come back to you.

I can: _____

I cannot: _____

The next step is: _____

Who needs to hear it?: _____

When will I say it?: _____

5. Build a backup

If I am unavailable, the first family contact is: _____

Their number: _____

The professional or service contact is: _____

Their number: _____

Tasks that need a new owner: _____

Person I can talk to outside the family: _____

6. Review

Date I will review this boundary: _____

Is the boundary clear?: _____

Is it being respected?: _____

Is an essential care need still uncovered?: _____

Does that gap need family help or outside support?:

Am I repeatedly giving more than I wrote down?: _____

Useful contacts

Family Carers Ireland

1800 24 07 24

Important

This resource is general information, not a medical assessment and not medical, legal or financial advice.

For health concerns affecting you, contact your GP.

If someone needs immediate medical help or is at immediate risk of harm, call 112 or 999.

Sources checked 18 July 2026: [Family Carers Ireland National Freephone Careline](#) | [Family Carers Ireland - your Carer Supports Manager](#) | [Family Carers Ireland carer support groups](#) | [Family Carers Ireland counselling](#)