



Western Health
and Social Care Trust



The Carers Handbook

**An essential source of help and support for
people who are looking after someone**

Produced in association with



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Welcome

Dear Carers

In the Western Health and Social Care Trust (Western Trust) 32,493 people identified themselves as providing an informal caring role according to the 2011 Census figures. We know this may be an underestimate as many people don't see themselves as carers. They simply see themselves as a parent, brother, sister, daughter or son and it is their responsibility to support their loved one.

Through the Western Trust Carers Strategy we aim to improve key areas of support for carers. One of these key areas is information. We hope that the development of this Carers Handbook in partnership with Carers Northern Ireland will help you to source the support you need.

As the Western Trust lead for Carers Support I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the selfless role you play in providing help and support to your loved ones.

Kind regards,

Alan Corry-Finn
Director of Primary Care
and Older Peoples Services



'Many people don't see themselves as carers. They simply see themselves as a parent, brother, sister, daughter, son...'

Looking after yourself

Keeping well

As a carer it's important to look after yourself and stay as healthy as possible. Your caring may be very demanding, or may be increasing gradually as time goes by. You may be one of the 31,000 people each year who have just become a carer and are facing new challenges and demands.

It is important that you do not forget your own needs. Caring can be rewarding but it can also be very tiring, placing demands on your physical and emotional energy. It is easy to forget about your own wellbeing when you're simply coping day to day and responding to the needs of others. Keep well by taking a 'hands on' approach to your own health.

Tell your GP that you are a carer

As soon as you can, tell your GP that you are a carer. Most GPs now have a system in place for identifying carers. If they know you are a carer and are likely to be under pressure at times, they will find it easier to diagnose and treat you. It will also help them offer the advice and support you need. Your GP and other primary care staff can be an invaluable source of help and can also put you in touch with other services that can support you and the person you care for.

Have regular check-ups

Although your life is very busy and your attention focused on caring, don't ignore your own health needs. Try not to miss medical appointments and attend regular check-ups and screenings. If you have not seen your GP for some time, why not arrange a health check? This will involve checking your blood pressure, weight and urine as well as a general discussion about your health.

Get support if you need it

There are many professionals and organisations that can provide support to you as a Carer and to the person you are caring for. See the 'Getting help and support' section.

If you are ill, visit your GP

Many carers carry on regardless through coughs, flu, stomach upsets and worse. However it's important that you don't put off seeing your doctor when you need to - especially if you feel faint, dizzy or have unexplained pains. The sooner you see your doctor, the more effectively you can be treated.

With any illness, try and take some time to rest. Your body will have a better chance of making a quick recovery and you will have less chance of the illness lingering on. Also, remember that as a carer you are eligible to receive the flu jab for free each winter.



For more information:
www.carersuk.org/health

Eating well

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is essential to provide your body with all the nutrients it needs. A balanced diet will keep your body strong and give you enough energy to provide the best care for the person you are caring for, as well as for yourself.

Caring for someone can make it difficult to eat well. You may feel that you don't have the time or that, after preparing a special diet for the person you care for, you are too tired to cook for yourself. However, a healthy diet will give you the energy you need for caring and protect your immune system, reducing the likelihood of you becoming unwell.

Eating healthily may be easier than you think. Based on the 'Eat Well' plate you should try to eat:



plenty of starchy food such as bread, breakfast cereals, potatoes and pasta which are a good source of energy.



plenty of fruit and vegetables (aim for five portions a day)



some protein such as meat, fish, eggs or beans



some milk and dairy foods such as cheese or yogurt



limit the amount of foods high in fat or sugar such as crisps, chocolate, sweets

Sleeping well

Carers can often find it difficult to have a good night's sleep. You may be looking after someone who needs care during the night or you may have too much on your mind to relax. It is important to find out the reasons behind a lack of sleep and to try and find ways around the problem. Lack of exercise, an unhealthy diet, stress and depression can be factors in an inability to sleep.

The tips below may help with sleeping problems but, if sleeplessness becomes intolerable, a visit to your GP may help.



Get some regular exercise, such as swimming or walking



Try not to eat or drink a lot late at night.



Try to keep a regular pattern of going to bed and rising at the same time every day, even if you are not tired.



If you still cannot sleep, try not to lie there worrying. Get up and do something you find relaxing like reading, watching TV or listening to quiet music, or something useful. After a while you may feel tired enough to go to bed again.



Find out more:

www.westerntrust.hscni.net/livewell/EatWell.htm
www.carersuk.org/nutrition



Find out more:

www.carersuk.org/sleep

Looking after your back

You may find that moving and handling the person you care for, such as helping them dress or move around, may place a strain on your back.

If you are currently experiencing pain or strain, contact your GP. They may prescribe anti-inflammatory medication to relax your muscles or suggest physiotherapy or an alternative/complimentary therapy such as chiropractic. It may be impossible to avoid moving and handling the person you care for but you can get advice on guidelines to follow that may reduce the risk of injury.

Your district nurse or an occupational therapist may be able to show you ways to do this more safely. Your key worker can refer you to an occupational therapist for advice and support if you are experiencing difficulties. There are also ways to minimise strain and there is equipment and support available to assist with this.



For more information:
www.carersuk.org/sleep

Equipment

Ask your GP, district nurse or occupational therapist to advise you on aids to assist you.

These could include:

- moving and handling equipment such as a hoist to move the person you care for from their bed to a chair
- mobility aids to help the person you care for move around the house more easily without your assistance
- bath aids such as a motorised bath seat that raises and lowers the person you care for in and out of the bath or, a level access shower suitable for wheelchair users
- grab rails beside the bed or toilet to help the person you care for pull themselves up

Practical support

Your local social work (Integrated Service Delivery) team may be able to arrange for someone to help the person you care for.

There are a number of ways that they can help minimise the amount of moving and handling you may have to do. These could include helping the person you care for to have a bath, get up in the morning or go to bed (see the 'Getting help and support' section).

The Community Occupational Health Team also provide a service to clients of all ages and types of disability. Occupational Therapists play a key role in the provision of equipment, adaptations to the home, specialist seats and wheelchairs.



For more information:
www.carersuk.org/equipment

'This is an example quote. A quote of roughly twenty or so words to add to the main content...'

Exercise

Building more exercise into your daily life can help you keep healthy. When you're caring for someone you may feel tired or that you simply do not have the time. However, being more active makes you feel better both physically and mentally.

At Western Health and Social Care Trust we run Carers Walking Groups where you can meet others in a similar situation and make new friends, while getting some exercise.

The Carers Support Team currently runs two Carers Walking Groups:

Derry



Call Laura on
02866 344180
to find out more.

Fermanagh



Call Geraldine on
02871 355023
to find out more



Stress, depression and difficult emotions

Being a carer can be very rewarding, but can also be emotionally and physically demanding.

For example, you may be finding it difficult to cope with the level of care you are providing and don't know where to turn – perhaps feeling resentful that you have little time to yourself. Or, you may be facing the fact that you have suddenly become a carer after the illness of your partner – perhaps feeling anxious and depressed about these changes in your life. It is important to acknowledge these feelings – they are normal.



Speak to your GP or keyworker – It's important to talk to your GP or keyworker about how you are feeling, so they can give you the treatment, advice or information you need.



Counselling and psychotherapy – It can be helpful to talk things over with someone outside your family and friends. Counselling and psychotherapy give a chance to talk through difficult emotions, and can help you to learn how to manage your stress or depression by using a variety of techniques.



Self-help – You might find it helpful to meet with other people who have experience of stress or depression and hear how they coped. Voluntary organisations offer advice and information about the condition of person you are looking after and may offer a condition-specific support group for carers. You might also find it helpful talking to other carers from one of the local carers' support groups. See the useful contacts pages for details.



Online support – Joining an online community is a convenient way to connect with other carers from the comfort of your own home, so you can share support, advice and understanding.



Information and advice organisations – Local organisations may be able to help you tackle some of the causes of stress in your life:

- independent advice centres may be able to help you sort out financial matters and ensure that you are claiming all the financial help you are entitled to
- carers organisation, such as Carers NI, can keep you up-to-date on everything you need to know as a carer
- your local social care team may be able to provide services to support you in your caring role (see the 'Getting help and support' section)



For more information:
www.carersuk.org/emotions
www.carersuk.org/forum



Support groups and outside help

Carers' projects and support groups

Your area may have a carers' project or a support group. Many carers find voluntary groups an invaluable source of help and support, providing a range of support to carers including:



- Support groups for carers, where you can meet other carers, share your experiences and enjoy social and leisure activities.
- Assistance in applying for benefits.
- Information and advice on all aspects of caring and on the disability or illness that affects the person you care for.
- Complementary therapies through regular sessions or by arranging pampering days for carers where you can try out a range of therapies.
- Training opportunities covering topics to assist you in caring such as first aid, lifting more safely, stress reduction and general interest topics such as computing.

As well as general carer support groups, there may be specific groups based around who you are caring for, your age or gender – for example, male carers, young carers and those caring for people with mental health problems, dementia or drug and alcohol dependency.

Carers' projects and support groups

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Carers NI is the lead organisation supporting carers here and can provide general information on carer's rights and entitlements as well as welfare/benefits checks. You can contact them on 02890 439843 or advice@carersni.org.

Local information and advice organisations can help. These include:



- Independent advice centres to help you sort out financial matters and ensure that you are claiming all the financial help to which you are entitled.
- Carers organisations, such as Carers NI, to help you find out what help is available to support you in your caring role.
- Local social care teams, which may be able to help by providing services to support you in your caring role (see pages xx).

There are many voluntary organisations throughout Northern Ireland that can provide information and support on particular illnesses, conditions and disabilities. They will be able to provide leaflets and advice and may also offer support groups and services to you and the person you care for. A list of some of these organisations can be found on page xx of this handbook.

Counselling and psychotherapy



It can be helpful to talk things over with someone outside your family and friends. Counselling and psychotherapy give a chance to talk through difficulties and feelings and can help you to learn how to manage your stress or depression by using a variety of techniques.

Complementary therapies



Complementary therapies – or alternative therapies – may work well alongside more conventional treatments and help improve your health and wellbeing. Complementary therapies (such as aromatherapy or homeopathy) use a holistic method, where the whole person is looked at, not just a particular symptom or illness.

When your caring role changes

We all cope with life changes in different ways. It's important to get advice and support to help you if you need it.

You may have put your life on hold because of your caring commitments and therefore you can feel there is a huge void in your life if your caring role ends or changes significantly. You will know when the time is right for you to seek advice or make changes in your life.

You may wish to seek advice or support from:



Your GP or practice nurse



Lifeline

Tel: 0808 808 8000



Aisling Centre, Enniskillen

(Counselling, Complimentary therapies etc.)

Tel: 028 6632 5811



Tara Centre, Omagh

(Counselling, Complimentary therapies etc.)

Tel: 028 8225 0024



Cruse Bereavement Care (Omagh/Fermanagh Area)

Tel: 028 82 244414

Foyle Tel. 02871 262941



Western Urgent Care (GP Out of Hours)

Tel. 02871 865195

Getting help and support

Support from your GP and primary care team

When you're caring for someone, it's easy to feel isolated and you may not know what help is available. Your GP and primary care team can provide you with invaluable support, advice and information.

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Below are just some of those who are involved in primary care but there are many other services provided by primary care and by the wider NHS that can support you in your caring role and in looking after your own health.

These include occupational therapists, physiotherapists, continence advisors and dieticians. Your GP, district nurse, health visitor or practice can provide more information and refer you to these services. They can also refer you to your social services team who can provide services to support you in your caring role (see pages xx-xx).



General Practitioner

Remember to tell your GP you are a carer. This can be recorded on your medical record. Your GP may be able to help you as a carer by:

- Providing information and advice on medical conditions of and treatments for the person you care for to help you feel more confident in your caring role.
- Carrying out home visits to you or the person you care for if your caring responsibilities make it difficult to attend appointments at the surgery.
- Arranging appointments for both you and the person you care for at the same time to avoid having to visit the surgery twice.
- Arranging for repeat prescriptions to be delivered to your local pharmacy to save you picking them up.

- Putting you in touch with other sources of support and advice, including the social work department and local voluntary agencies.
- Providing information on services provided by the NHS such as continence services and patient transport to hospital appointments.
- Providing supporting letters and information to enable you and the person you care for to access benefits such as Attendance Allowance or blue badge scheme.



District Nurse

District Nurses provide support to individuals and carers in their own home, for those patients who are housebound. District nursing teams are based at either local GP surgery or at Trust Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) facilities. Contact details can be accessed at the GP surgery. District nurses will visit housebound patients with an identified nursing need. This could include:

- Wound care, injections, management of specialised drains/tubes.
- Provision of equipment as per the Trust's access criteria.
- Moving and handling assessment.
- Palliative and terminal illness.
- Patients undergoing cancer treatment requiring care of specialist devices/subcutaneous fluids.
- Continence management/Catheter care.
- Medication management.
- Diabetes advice and support.
- Pressure area care.
- Support to carers and completion of carers assessment.

District Nurses also have links with other community, social and voluntary services and can assist you in contacting relevant services.



Health Visitor

Health Visitors primarily provide support to parents of infants and young children and will normally be based at your GP's surgery. Your health visitor may be able help you as a carer by:

- Providing information on health and illness prevention.
 - Providing access to screening services.
 - Providing support to parent carers and advice on care, support services, benefits and adaptations for disabled children.
-



Pharmacy

Chemists are trained professionals qualified to advise on all aspects of medication. Your local pharmacy may be help you in caring by:

- Arranging to collect repeat prescriptions for the person you care for from your GP surgery, so you only need to make a visit to the pharmacy without needing to first visit the surgery.
 - Giving you advice on the side effects of medicine, the best time to take them and how they should be stored.
 - Helping with simple systems for organising medicines on a daily or weekly basis.
 - Giving you advice and information on your own health or medical concerns.
 - Providing a delivery service to have your prescription delivered to your door.
-

Community Care Support

Support from your GP and primary care team

The Western Health and Social Care Trust may be able to provide a range of support for the person you care for and to help you in your caring role.

This support can include:

- Providing paid care workers to help with bathing, eating or dressing.
 - Providing meals on wheels.
 - Providing adaptations and equipment in your home.
 - Providing short breaks from caring.
-

Community Care Assessments

To access help from the Western Trust, ask them to carry out a community care assessment of the person you care for. This is an assessment of their needs, which can result in s/he being offered a range of services including day care, equipment, counselling or residential care. If the person you care for has already had a community care assessment and their needs have changed, ask the keyworker for a re-assessment. The telephone numbers for the relevant teams are at the back of this booklet, if you aren't sure who to contact.

Assessments for children with disabilities

If you are caring for a disabled child the Trust will assess their needs using a process called 'Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland', or 'UNOCINI' for short. This same process will be used to record the needs that are identified through your Carers Assessment.

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The Carers Support Team

The Western Trust Carers Support Team consists of a full-time Carers Support Coordinator, two part-time Carers Development workers and a part-time Administrator.

The primary role of the Carers Support Coordinator is to assist with the implementation of the Northern Ireland regional Carers Strategy and the Western Trust Strategy. This includes ensuring:

- Carers are identified at the point of referral.
- Hidden carers are identified.
- Carers are offered Carers Support Needs planning.
- Information for Carers is accurate and up to date and available in a wide range of formats.
- Raising awareness of Carers Issues.
- Delivering Carers Support Needs planning and Carers awareness training.
- Involving Carers in service review and development.

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The primary role of the Carers Support Coordinator is to assist with the implementation of the Northern Ireland regional Carers Strategy and the Western Trust Strategy. This includes ensuring:

Carers Support Plan

If you regularly provide or intend to provide a substantial amount of care for a friend or relative, or you have a disabled child, you have a legal right to ask the Western Trust for a carer's support needs assessment.

This assessment will consider your caring role and responsibilities and willingness to continue caring. The assessment is not a test of your ability to care but aims to make caring easier for you by finding out and providing the support you need, even if the person you are looking after is not receiving services from the Trust.

What happens in a Carers Support Plan?

The Support Needs Planning process should be as simple and informal as possible. It can be done somewhere convenient, such as your home or in the home of the person you are caring for. Carers often find it is better to talk confidentially to the person carrying out the planning process, without the person you are caring for being present. Normally a social worker will carry out the planning process; however it could be a community or community psychiatric nurse or someone else who is qualified. They may involve your GP or nurse as well if a lot of care is needed.

The purpose of your support plan discussion is to make sure that social services listens to you and, where they can, offer the help you need to make caring easier for you or so that you can go on caring. This could be help and support directly to you, or help to the person you are looking after. You can also consider Self-Directed Support (see page xx), where you make your own arrangements for care.

If either you or the person you care for has difficulty communicating you should let social services know – they will provide help.



Find out more:
carersuk.org/ni/assessments

Thinking about what you need

It helps to have a think about the kind of help that would make it easier for you to look after the person you care for.



Where you live

Do you and the person you care for live together or apart? Is this arrangement satisfactory? Does the person you care for have any difficulty moving about in the home? (For example, can they climb the stairs, or have a bath on their own?) Special equipment (aids or adaptations) could make life easier for the person you look after and caring easier for you.



Health

Does the person you care for have any health problems you find hard to deal with? Do you have any health problems? For example if you have a bad back you might be able to get moving and handling equipment.)

Are you getting enough sleep?

Do you feel you are suffering from stress or depression?



Time and tasks

Think about all the things you do to help the person you are caring for and how often you do it. For example, how much time do you spend do the following?

- cooking for the person you are caring for
- arranging medications
- bathing the person you are caring for, or helping them to get dressed
- shopping or collecting their pension for them
- offering emotional support, accompanying them to appointments or meetings
- supervising someone so that they don't hurt themselves
- helping them up and down stairs
- doing the housework



Time and tasks cont.

Thinking about this will give you an idea of how many hours a week you are caring - when you include everything, the answer may surprise you!

- Do you have to help during the day, or night, or both?
- Does anyone else help? If so, who and for how long?
- Would you like some help (or some extra help) with these jobs?

List the tasks you would most like some help with, putting the most important first.

Are there things that you find enjoyable and relaxing which you can't do any more because of your caring responsibilities? (For example, you may have given up a hobby or you may want to visit friends, or miss going to the cinema or church).

When was the last time you had a whole day to yourself to do as you pleased?



Feelings

Do you feel that you don't have a choice about providing care? (You may feel that you cannot carry on at all, or only if you reduce the amount that you do. It is not unusual to feel that way. Tell the social worker about these feelings.)

What would you most like to change about your situation?
Anything else

Put down anything else you need which is not on the list including whether you wish to continue working, if you are in work, or want to return to work and whether you have children or another person that you look after. Thinking this through will give you a clearer idea of what your needs and priorities are. During the assessment, you should be able to talk about the services that might help, such as:

- Changes to home and equipment to help you
- Someone to help with personal care (like bathing)
- A few hours' break for yourself regularly, or an occasional short break
- A discussion about permanent residential care
- Counselling/talking to someone
- To be put in touch with other carers
- Information about what additional supports are available through the Western Trust and any costs involved.

Every effort should be made to provide a time to suit you and the person you care for. You do not have to accept all of the services offered to you. You may decide to accept some and not others. Remember, if your situation changes and you need more help you can ask the Trust for a review of your support plan.

Taking a break

Everyone needs a change and time off occasionally, whether it's for an hour, a day or a week. This can be especially true when you're caring for someone.

Taking a break from caring is a sensible and realistic thing to do if you want to carry on caring. Without an occasional break, you may become exhausted or unwell.

A break can allow you to do all the things you cannot do when you are caring, to catch up with friends or family or just to have a rest. It may mean that the person you care for has the benefit of a break from you: other people to talk to and other things to talk about.

What you arrange will depend on what you and the person you care for need, what is available locally and the cost. There are several ways of arranging a break.

You can find out more information on taking a break by downloading Carers NI's factsheet: carersuk.org/ni/break

You may be able to get help through the Western Trust. When they carry out a community care assessment of the person you care for or a Carers Support Plan for yourself, ask about arranging alternative care so that you can have a break. This could include:

- Day care away from home - Day centres, lunch clubs, social centres or day hospital can provide care for a few hours or days each week to give you a break.
- Residential respite care - Care homes and nursing homes can provide short-term care for the person you care for to give you a break. There are also separate residential facilities for children.
- Flexicare Project - The main aim of Flexicare is to promote and assist the older population to maintain their independence whilst living within their own home environment. This is provided through a range of low-level services such as befriending, chaperoning, sitting services, shopping, handy help, and assistance in accessing healthy living services. This support is time limited and based on assessed need.

Self Directed Support

Self Directed Support (SDS) is a change in the way social care services are provided to offer much more choice, control and flexibility to individuals and families.

It enables them to tailor a package of support that best suits their lifestyle and allows the individual and family to live their life in the way that they want to. SDS provides informed choice about how support is provided with a focus on 'working together' to achieve outcomes or goals. It also gives the individual as much control as they want over their personal budget. SDS includes a number of options for getting support. The personal budget can be:

- a direct payment
- a managed budget
- a service arranged by the Trust
- a mixture of all three

Self Directed Support is available to those who have been assessed as being in need of social care support. If the individual does not already have social care support they can ask for an assessment from their social worker or keyworker to ensure they are eligible.

Following this assessment a personal budget will be agreed to meet the individual's support needs. The individual can develop their own support plan which will then be agreed with their social worker or keyworker. When developing their support plan the individual can consider the options available to direct their support. In this way individuals are empowered to exercise choice, control and flexibility over their social care support, promoting independence.

For further information on Self Directed Support please contact your social worker, keyworker or the Trust Implementation Officer:

Trust Implementation Officer
Self Directed Support
Riverview House
Abercorn Road
L/Derry
BT48 6SB
Telephone: 028 7127 2125

Getting help in an emergency

It's important you know what to do to get help in an emergency. Remember that if you have an urgent medical emergency, you should contact your own doctor, district nurse or the emergency services on 999 depending on the situation.

Social work 'duty system'

When contacting the social worker involved with your loved one's case by phone, you may go through to voicemail. This can be for a number of reasons. It may be that the member of staff is on the phone to someone else or has stepped out of the office for a few minutes. If the member of staff is out of the office for an extended period of time e.g. on training or leave, the greeting on the voicemail will advise you of this. The greeting will also advise you that if your query is urgent then you should re-dial and ask to speak to the duty social worker.

This service is for urgent situations that cannot wait until your own social worker is back in the office. Please note that duty can be busy so if you get the duty social worker's voicemail, please leave a clear message with your name and telephone number and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Out-of-hours emergency social work service

Social Services operate an emergency response service after normal working hours, which means after 5pm each day and all day at weekends. Carers who find themselves in a crisis may contact the service to discuss their situation and find out if any advice or practical help may be available. This service is designed to cover emergency situations only and staff will not be able to deal with routine matters that can wait until carers are able to contact their keyworker (Social Worker) on the next working day.



Carers can contact the out-of-hours service (ask for the Duty Social Worker) on 028 9504 9999 or the Western Urgent Care Out of Hours GP on 028 71865195

Making a complaint

The Western Trust needs to know if you are unhappy with how you have been treated or if the Trust's performance is not up to standard, so they can improve.

The Western Trust promise to treat complaints seriously and confidentially, and guarantee that no-one will lose a service they are assessed as needing because they have made a complaint.

You can make your complaint face-to-face, on the telephone or by letter or email, as soon as possible after the problem occurs. Ideally the member of staff you first raise your complaint with will be able to resolve it to your satisfaction, but if not, the Trust has a whole complaints process laid out.

Contact the Complaints Department on **028 7134 5171 Ext: 214130** or **028 71 61 1226** or email complaints.department@westerntrust.hscni.net to find out what to do next.

Alternatively you can write to:

Complaints Department
Trust Headquarters
MDEC Building
Altnagelvin Area Hospital
Londonderry
BT47 6SB



The Patient Client Council can also provide free advice and help to anyone making a complaint. Call free on **0800 907 0222** or visit their website on www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net

Help for young carers

There are services designed specifically to provide help and support to young carers.

The Regional Young Carers Project

- Are you a young person looking after a parent or a relative who is ill or has a physical or mental health disability?
- Do you help them with personal care and doing the housework?
- Are you up at night and end up feeling tired, unable to get up for school?
- Are you falling behind with schoolwork, have few friends and don't go out much?
- Are your thoughts taken up by worrying about the person you care for?
- Do you feel isolated and different from other young people?

If this sounds like you, why not check out these websites?



www.youngcarers.net

**The
Children's
Society**

www.childrenssociety.org.uk



www.niccy.org

The Regional Young Carers Project

The regional young carer's project is delivered by Barnardo's in the WHSCT area.

The Trust and Barnardo's work together to provide a regional young carers service as 1 in 10 young people said they personally looked after someone who was living with them.

Barnardo's offers a listening ear, peer support, a break from caring and the opportunity for social and recreational activities with other young carers. Contact **Barnardo's Young Carers** on 028 7963 1344 or email dougie.tyler@barnardos.co.uk

If you'd like to speak to someone in the **Western Trust** about your situation, contact the Carers support office in Enniskillen on 028 6634 4000 or Derry on 028 7135 5023.

Other information

Welfare reform and financial support

Carers and the people they look after are often entitled to support from the benefits system. Even if you think you are not entitled or have been turned down in the past, it's important to check in case your eligibility has changed.

Welfare reform is due to be implemented in Northern Ireland throughout 2016/17. The main changes include the replacement of Disability Living Allowance with Personal Independence Payment, Universal Credit to replace most means-tested benefits and the introduction of the benefit cap and 'bedroom tax' (though this is not due to take effect for at least four years).

While Carer's Allowance is not changing with the introduction of welfare reform, carers' entitlement to Carer's Allowance may be affected if the person they look after loses their disability benefit when they are reassessed for Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

However, there will be a system of 'welfare supplementary payments' to help cover financial loss of those affected by the changes to the benefits system. Carers affected in this way will receive a supplementary payment to cover their financial loss for a period of one year.



For more information about the timescale for welfare reform visit the Law centre website:

www.lawcentreni.org/component/content/article/46-policy/1301-welfare-reform-timeline.html

You can also get a copy of the Carers NI briefing on Welfare Reform or find out what financial help may be available to you, by calling the **Carers NI confidential advice line** on (028) 90439843 or by emailing advice@carersni.org

The **Social Security Agency** has a free benefits check helpline and you can make the call on 0800 232 1271.

Your local **Independent Advice Centre** or **Citizens Advice Bureau** can also help with benefits advice and form filling.

Housing, benefits and legal matters

Carers and the people they look after are often entitled to support from the benefits system. Even if you think you are not entitled or have been turned down in the past, it's important to check in case your eligibility has changed.

You will need to inform the benefits office if your circumstances change in circumstance. Contact the **Jobs and Benefits Office** on **0300 200 7822**

If you receive Housing Benefit or Rate Relief, contact the **Housing Benefit Phone Line** on **03448 920 902**

Carers Allowance / Carers Credit call **028 9090 6186** or **0300 123 3356**

Independent advice and information is also available from:

This support can include:

- Carers Northern Ireland Adviceline **028 9043 9843**
- Citizens Advice Bureau: (Derry) **028 7134 2536** (Fermanagh) **028 6632 4334** (Derry) **028 7136 2444** (Strabane) **028 7138 2665**
- Dove House Resource Centre, Derry **028 7126 9327**
- Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI) **028 7776 5438**
- Omagh Independent Advice Service **028 8224 3252**
- Rosemount Community Resource Centre, Derry **028 7128 2829**
- The Resource Centre, Derry **028 7135 2832**

For advice on housing issues contact or the **Housing Rights Service** on **028 9024 564026**

Legal matters

For advice on legal matters such as Wills and Probate, you can contact your own family solicitor or if you don't have a solicitor a list may be obtained from the **Law Society for Northern Ireland**. Alternatively contact the **Citizens Advice Bureau** on **028 6632 4334** or **028 7136 2444**.

Juggling work and care

Welfare reform and financial support

If you juggle work and care, it's important to know what your rights are and to make sure you're accessing any support, advice and information for carers within your workplace.

Flexible working

All employees have a right to request flexible working after they have worked for the same employer for 26 weeks. This could help you balance your work and caring responsibilities. Employers can only refuse requests for certain specified reasons and should deal with requests in a 'reasonable manner'.

Time off for emergencies

You have the right to take a 'reasonable' amount of time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant. This right also includes some protection from victimisation and dismissal. It is at the employer's discretion whether the leave is paid or unpaid.

Parental leave

If you have worked for your employer for at least a year and are responsible for a child, you are entitled to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave (per parent per child) before your child's fifth birthday (18th if they are disabled and receiving Disability Living Allowance).

Protection from discrimination

Carers are protected under the Human Rights Act and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, which requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for carers. In some cases carers may have rights under disability and sex discrimination legislation.

Further education

Some carers decide to take on some part-time study.

There are a number of options from recreational to accredited course available through your local colleges, community development association or training agency.

For advice and information, contact:

- South West College: 0845 6031 881
- North West Regional College: 028 7127 6000



Useful contacts

Western Health and Social Care Trust contacts

Community Services Department

2 Coleshill Road
Enniskillen BT74 7HG
028 66344217
carers.support1@westerntrust.hscni.net
www.westerntrust.hscni.net

Primary Care and Older People

Enniskillen ISD	028 6632 7790
Lisnaskea ISD	028 6634 4050
Irvinestown ISD	028 6638 2702
Castleberg ISD	028 8167 2840
Omagh ISD	028 8283 5937
Strabane ISD	028 7138 4109
OPCMH Team	028 6634 4048
OPCMH Team	028 8283 5933
Limavady ISD	028 7776 1100
Waterside Urban ISD	028 7132 1729
Waterside Rural ISD	028 71865264
Shantallow ISD	028 7135 1350
Riverview ISD	028 7126 6111
Dementia Team	028 7186 4384

Adult Learning Disability

Southern Sector	028 8283 5050
Northern sector	028 7186 4362

Adult PD & Sensory

Southern Sector	028 66344241
	028 8283 5050
	Ext 5116
Northern Sector	028 7135 4031
Sensory Team (Southern)	028 6632 4400
Sensory Team (Northern)	028 7132 0167

Adult ASD Service

Northern Sector ASD Team 028 7130 8313

Adult Mental Health – Recovery Teams

Southern Sector/Omagh	028 8225 2202
Southern Sector	
/Fermanagh	028 6638 2112
Northern - Cityside	028 7135 0063
Northern - Limavady	028 7772 2123
Northern - Strabane	028 7138 2963
Northern - Waterside	028 7131 4200

Women's and Children's Gateway Service

Omagh	028 8283 5156
Fermanagh	028 6638 2000
Northern	028 7161 1214

Family Intervention Service

Omagh	028 8225 4500
Fermanagh	028 66344027
Northern - Shantallow	028 7135 1350
Northern -	
East Bank Limavady	028 7776 1100
Northern -	
East Bank Strabane	028 7138 1600
Northern -	
East Bank Rosstown	028 7131 4200

Children's Disability

Omagh	028 8283 5050
Enniskillen	028 6638 2000
Northern	028 7186 0616
Service Manager	
for 3 teams	028 6638 2000

Children's Autism Service

Trustwide	028 8283 5983
Northern Sector	
ASD Team	028 7130 8313

Local Carer Support Groups

Autism/ASD

Autism NI

Derry/NW Branch meets third Tuesday each month at 7.30pm in Little Orchids Centre, Gransha Park.

Derry/Fermanagh Branch meets 4th Tuesday every month from 8.00pm – 10.00pm at Fermanagh House, Broadmeadow Place (beside KFC), Enniskillen

Cedar Foundation

Right4You Service
Call: 028 7136 0136
Email:
right4uwestern@cedarfoundation.org

National Autistic Society (NAS)

Fermanagh NAS Parent Support Caroline Bogue on:
0791 726 6487 or 028 8954 141
Tyrone NAS Parent Support Group
- 2nd Wednesday of each month in Rivendale, T&F Site, Omagh

Other activities near you

Strabane
Contact Brigid McElwee on 0770 726 0202 or email: bme@talktalk.net
Omagh
Contact Karen Connolly on 0777 767 0037 or email: karen.connolly20@btinternet.com
Newtownstewart
Contact Arlene Sproule at arlenesproule@hotmail.co.uk

Brain injury

HEADWAY (Brain injury) Carers Support Groups

Foyle Branch – 07557732726
Enniskillen Headway (Fermanagh/Tyrone)
Local Carers Support Groups meetings bi-monthly. For further information contact Drumcoo Centre, Enniskillen, on 028 6632 4400

Learning Disability

Down's Syndrome Group Enniskillen

Contact Susan on 078 1382 8455

Foyle Downs Syndrome Trust

Parent/Carers support group meets each Friday at 11am in meets in the Shared Future centre, Irish Street, Waterside, Derry
Phone: 02871 343 991

Foyle Parents and Friends (learning/sensory disability)

Call 028 7127 1017 for details of meetings

Mencap

Contact the Western Area Office on 028 7126 2227

Positive Futures

Fermanagh Group contact Elisha O'Callaghan on 028 6772 4700

Mental health

CAUSE

Carers Support Group Last Tuesday of every month in Melrose Day Centre, Glendermott Road, Derry at 7pm Contact Annette O'Doherty on 0751 506 5296

Western Trust Mental Health Carer Support Groups

Fermanagh – 1st Monday of each month in Ernevale Beacon Centre, Mill Street Enniskillen at 7.30pm
Tyrone – 2nd Tuesday of each month in Erne House, Omagh at 8pm.
For more information contact Patricia McGurk, Respite Co-ordinator, on 028 8283 5070

Other disability / health condition

Alzheimer's Society

Lisnaskea and Enniskillen Carer Support Groups. Call 028 6634 4073 for details
Omagh Carer Support Group meets on the 4th Monday of every month at 8pm in Meadowbank Residential Home, Omagh

For more information contact 028 8224 0826

Foyle Area Meetings
Call 028 7134 8887 for details

Arthritis Care

Meets regularly meets regularly in Strabane
Call 028 9078 2940 for details

Arthritis Care

Outlook Service (short breaks from caring and activities for children and young people) outlook@cedar-foundation.org
Transitions Service (school leavers) transitions@cedar-foundation.org
Youth Matters (personal development for teens) youthmatters@cedar-foundation.org
Contact Children's and Young People's services at: Unit D3, Ballinska Business Park, Springtown Drive, Derry BT48 0NA, Tel: 028 7136 0136 or Unit 2, Bridge House, Omagh Road, Dromore BT78 3AH, Tel: 028 8289 7772

NI Chest, Heart and Stroke

For more information call 02871 377 222

Parkinson's UK

Foyle Branch	0771 265 1045
Fermanagh Branch	028 6862 2009
Omagh Branch	028 8289 8339

Other carer support groups

British Red Cross

Neighbourhood Links is a partnership between the British Red Cross and South West Age Partnership (SWAP) aiming to reach older people aged 60+ in the Omagh and Fermanagh areas. Contact Nicola Reid (Neighbourhood Links Service Manager) on 028 82 25 1116 or email nlni@redcross.org.uk

Erne Carers

Meet on the 4th Wednesday of every month at 12.30 pm in the Railway Hotel, Enniskillen

ME UNLTD

meunltd.org

Time-4-Me

Meet fortnightly at Omagh Enterprise Company, Omagh. Contact Dianne Crozier on 028 8289 7911 or 07769 773489

The Break-Aways

Meet Fortnightly at the Fir Trees Strabane. Contact Anne McNamee on 028 8166 2342 or 07719 936762

The Social Butterflies

Meet fortnightly at Foyle Academy of Performing Arts, Derry / L'Derry. Contact Claire Gillespie on 028 7135 0464 or 07849 109302.

The Escapists

Meet weekly at the Aisling Centre, Enniskillen. Contact Clare McGovern on 028 66325918 or at 07830 117766

The Flyaways

Cross Border Group
Cavan/Fermanagh/Monaghan. Meet monthly at a range of cross border venues including the Slieve Russell Hotel, and Cavan Crystal Hotel.
Contact Clare McGovern on 028 6632 5918 or 07830117766

Riverside Male Carers

Derry/L'Derry. Meet monthly usually at the Millennium Forum.
Contact Paul McConnell on 07746906104

Male Carers West (Fermanagh)

Meet monthly at a range of venues throughout Fermanagh. Group focus is hiking / walking and social outings.
Contact Peter McMahon on 028 6865 8863 or 07779 269710

NI-wide voluntary organisations

Action Mental Health

028 9182 8494
www.amh.org.uk

Age NI

028 9024 5729
0808 808 7575 (helpline)
info@ageni.org
www.ageni.org

Alzheimer's Society

028 90664100
nir@alzheimers.org.uk
www.alzheimers.org.uk

Aware Defeat Depression

Derry/L'Derry
028 7126 0602
www.aware-ni.org

BME contacts

Chinese Welfare Association Sai Pak (Derry) 028 7134 3594
Stronger Together 028 8775 0211
Strabane Ethnic Community Association 028 7188 6419
NW Migrants Forum 028 7136 2184
Active Citizens Engaged 028 7126 1941
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities 028 7137 2235
Omagh Ethnic Community Support 02882 249 750

Carers Northern Ireland

028 9043 9843
info@carersni.org
www.carersni.org

Carers Trust

Rosaleen Quigley, Carers Support
Outreach Worker
07827 014 687
rquigley@carers.org

CAUSE

028 9065 0650 or 07515065296
0845 6030291 (helpline)
info@cause.org.uk

Centre for Independent Living

028 8224 8926 or 028 90618546
western@cilbelfast.org or info@cilni.org

Contact a Family

028 9262 7552
nireland.office@cafamilly.org.uk
www.cafamily.org.uk

Disability Action

028 7136 0811
derry@disabilityaction.org
www.disabilityaction.org/

LGBT – Rainbow Project

Derry 028 7128 3030
Belfast 028 9031 9030

Macmillan Cancer Support: Western Health and Social Care Trust Macmillan Information and Support Service

02871 611139 / 07342075636
martha.magee@westerntrust.hscni.net
www.macmillan.org.uk

Mencap

028 9069 1351
0808 808 1111 (helpline)
helpline.ni@mencap.org.uk

Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA)

0345 375 1852
creea.convery@mndassociation.org
www.mndassociation.org/

MS Society

028 9080 2802
nireception@mssociety.org.uk
www.mssociety.org.uk

Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke

028 9032 0184
mail@nichsa.org.uk
www.nichsa.org.uk

Northern Ireland Hospice

028 9078 1836
information@nihospice.org

Parkinsons UK

028 9092 3370
northernireland@parkinsons.org.uk
www.parkinsons.org.uk

Stroke Association

028 9050 8020
northernireland@stroke.org.uk
www.stroke.org.uk

Carers Support Plan

Carer Referral Form

Carers of any age are entitled to a support plan of their own needs as a carer provided the person they care for is eligible for personal social services. However if the cared for person refuses services, this does not exclude the carer from a separate plan.

A Carers Support Plan is an opportunity for you as a carer to talk about the care you provide; how it affects your life; and identifies the support needed to help you to look after your own health and wellbeing. Even if you don't wish to have a plan, you can still register to receive information from the Trust about its carers support services including: Pamper Days, Health Events, Training and Support Groups.

Carer details:

Name (print) _____ D.O.B. _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Tel No: Home _____ Work _____

Email _____

Ethnicity:

White Black African Bangladeshi

Pakistani Black Caribbean Irish Traveller

Chinese Indian Filipino

Mixed Ethnic Group Black Other

Other Ethnic Group Please specify _____

Is English your first language? Yes No

The person cared for is aged: 17yrs or under 18-64yrs 65yrs or over

Their main illness or difficulty is: Physical Learning Old & Frail

Mental Illness ASD

They live in/near: Lisnaskea Irvinestown Enniskillen Omagh

Castledearg Strabane L'derry Limavady

Other _____

Have you had a Carer Support Plan previously? Yes No

If YES, when and by whom approximately _____

Carer consent (please tick and sign below)

I provide substantial and regular care and support to a family member/friend

I would like to have my support needs as a carer assessed

I would like to register as a Carer with the Western Trust to receive information and Carers Newsletter

I would like to register as a Carer with my GP Practice

Carer Signature _____ Date _____

As a carer it is essential that you look after your health and wellbeing, therefore we would encourage you to identify yourself as a carer with your GP practice. By completing the information below we will register you with your GP practice on your behalf.

GP practice details _____

GP Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Please return completed form to:

Carers Support Office

WHSCT,
2 Coleshill Road,
Enniskillen BT74 7HG