

# COVID-19: ADVICE FOR INFORMAL (UNPAID) CARERS AND YOUNG CARERS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Updated 03 August 2020 @ 10:00

## Key Messages

- **Follow** public health **advice**.
- Carers, people with care and support needs and people coming into the home of a person with care needs should follow **hygiene and infection control** guidelines.
- **Plan for contingencies** and check with your Trust what the emergency plan is.
- **Make the most of networks** now to plan for “what if?”: speak to family, friends and neighbours, and your local community organisations.
- Make sure you have **key information** to hand about the person you care for.
- **Make the most of technology** that can keep you in touch with the person for whom you care, or keep them in touch with others.
- This new situation for carers can be confusing and demanding, even tough. **Support is available** to help you to get through this.
- **Remember** to use the **Coronavirus Take 5 message** each day:

[Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing](#)

## Easing out of Lockdown

As we ease out of lockdown and various restrictions are lifted after many weeks of isolating ourselves and family members, it is important to continue to follow the guidance in order to remain safe.

Continue to take the advice of local government and the Public Health Agency to help all of us stay safe.

The initial message of keeping yourself and family members safe still applies. It is important to remember to stick to the advice for those that are shielding or vulnerable and to continue to remember the advice regarding social distancing.

To limit the spread of COVID-19 the World Health Organisation has recently recommended that everyone should avoid the Three C's:

- **Closed spaces with poor ventilation**
- **Crowded places with many people nearby**

- **Close-contact settings such as close-range conversations.**

Please remember this as you continue to care for your family members, friends or neighbours. In this edition we have provided further advice that we hope you will find helpful. If you are concerned about anything, please contact the Carers NI advice line which has extended opening hours during COVID-19. If you have services provided by the HSC Trust, contact your **named worker**.

Health and social care services that were stopped as a result of COVID-19 are beginning to resume in a limited way in keeping with government advice. HSC Trusts are contacting families who used particular services before lockdown to discuss how your family members can start using the service again. To find out about the resumption of services and how this will affect you, please speak to your named worker.

## What's New in this Update?

Page Number	Sections updated	What's New
1	Easing out of Lockdown	New section added
6	Health Advice	Information has been streamlined to reduce the number of links
7	Physical and Emotional Well-being	New link added for Age NI's "Move with Mary" Programme for older people
8	Support for you in your caring role	New link added for SCIE's videos on looking after someone at home
9	If the person you care for needs to go to hospital	New guidance available for accompanying someone to hospital
11	COVID-19 Testing	Updated to reflect current policy
11	Short breaks	Section updated
18	Help with Technology	New section added with link to Libraries NI

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## Introduction

This information provides advice and support for **informal (unpaid) carers, young carers and family members**. It pulls together already existing sources of information into one place and signposts carers to others who may be able to help. All links provided throughout this document are from reliable sources.

As the crisis with COVID-19 (Coronavirus) continues, this document will be regularly reviewed to update the information and advice.

**Always ensure you are reading current COVID-19 information from reliable sources as guidance may change frequently.**

This advice contains links to the **.gov.uk** website. The information contained in these links is very useful but you should be aware that, on occasions, it includes further web links to information specific to England.

[A number of resources on COVID-19 in British and Irish Sign Language are available via this link:](#)

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus)

## Planning ahead for an emergency

It is vitally important that you have an emergency plan in place in the event that you become ill and are unable to provide care.

- If you don't have one, speak to your **named worker** about getting one in place.
- If you already have a plan, check with the Trust that it is still workable due to COVID-19 (and review periodically).
- Be prepared for the person being cared for needing to be admitted to hospital (have a bag packed, include a list of medication, contact details for their carer and family members).
- Know who your **named worker** is and what arrangements are in place for cover if they are off work.
- This plan may help you to record vital information in the event of an emergency. Keep it up to date and share with your **named worker** and other family members. This will help significantly if your family member needs to be hospitalised or if you become unwell.
- It might be worth giving neighbours and friends of the individual 'In case of Emergency' numbers and also placing these in personal items (e.g. handbag, purse, wallet) of the individual. This is particularly useful for people with dementia who may try to go out for exercise but become displaced or confused.

### [Carers UK - Planning for emergencies](#)

You might find this tool useful to help you plan during the COVID-19 period. It was developed specifically for this situation:

### [Planning for emergencies tool](#)

## Health advice

**The Public Health Agency website has all the relevant information relating to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in Northern Ireland. This includes advice on social distancing, self-isolation, looking after someone who is vulnerable, shielding, what to do if you think you have symptoms of COVID-19 and more. It can be accessed here:**

[www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net)

## Interpreting services

Since the outbreak and spread of COVID-19, many Health and Social Care services and essential information sources have switched to telephone contact only, creating significant challenges for deaf people and others who use sign language. A free, temporary service has been established to enable the Deaf community to communicate effectively via telephone and secure video link.

A free interpreting service provides the Deaf community in NI with access to:

- NHS111 services during the COVID-19 pandemic via a video relay system.
- All other Health and Social Care services including GPs via either a video relay system or video remote interpreting.

Further information can be found at the following link:

[www.hscboard.hscni.net/interpreting-service-bsl-isl/](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/interpreting-service-bsl-isl/)

## Physical and emotional wellbeing

COVID-19 has impacted on us all, leading to unprecedented changes in our everyday lives. The restricted living conditions and daily challenges we face can lead to feelings of stress and other difficult emotions.

Health and Social Care (HSC) in partnership with ORCHA (Organisation for Review of Care and Health Apps) has developed a library of high quality, convenient Apps to support health and social wellbeing during these difficult times.

The Apps included in the library provide useful support and information on how to manage stress and improve wellbeing, sleep management, staying fit and nutrition.

You can access the Apps Library via your smart phone or PC at:

[apps4healthcareni.hscni.net](http://apps4healthcareni.hscni.net)

These links have some useful tips and advice on looking after your wellbeing:

[Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing](#)

[www.mindingyourhead.info](http://www.mindingyourhead.info)

Age NI has teamed up with Lady Mary Peters to develop an exercise programme aim specifically at keeping older people moving during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland/information-advice/coronavirus-covid-19/movewithmary/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland/information-advice/coronavirus-covid-19/movewithmary/)

An excellent resource for people who are isolated or vulnerable can be found on the SCIE website:

[www.scie.org.uk/support-for-people-who-are-isolated](http://www.scie.org.uk/support-for-people-who-are-isolated)

A new free online stress control class is available through YouTube. To access these classes go to:

[www.stresscontrol.org](http://www.stresscontrol.org)

There are a range of crisis response helplines in Northern Ireland for adults or children who are experiencing distress or despair.

Helpline services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to listen and help, **in confidence**.

People living in Northern Ireland can call Lifeline on **0808 808 8000**. Deaf and hard of hearing Text phone users can call Lifeline on 18001 0808 808 8000. Calls to Lifeline are free to people living in Northern Ireland who are calling from UK landlines and mobiles.

[www.lifelinehelpline.info/](http://www.lifelinehelpline.info/)

Samaritans: **phone 116 123**

Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

ChildLine: **phone 0800 1111**

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## Support for you in your caring role

If you are new to a caring role during COVID-19 it is very important that you contact your local Trust (see contact details at end of this Advice) and identify yourself as a carer. This will allow the Trust to be aware of you and your situation and give you access to various support and help provided by the Trust.

If the person you care for is already in receipt of services and you have any concerns about them, contact the **named worker** who will be best placed to give advice and support.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has developed a series of videos about looking after someone at home. They cover subjects such as nutrition, preventing ulcers, mouth care, preventing falls, behaviours etc. These videos can be accessed here:

[www.scie.org.uk/carers/informal-carers](http://www.scie.org.uk/carers/informal-carers)



## Can care workers continue to deliver care?

Government advice is that people who need care and help should continue to receive it. Domiciliary care workers and community-based health and social care staff have access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and will follow strict guidelines about hygiene in order to keep you safe.

## If the person you care for needs to go to hospital

If the person you care for needs to go into hospital, the information contained in the link below will give you guidance about supporting the person whilst they are in hospital:

[COVID-19: Regional Principles for Visiting in Care Settings in Northern Ireland](#)  
(revised on 30 June 2020).

## Carer's Assessment

As a carer you are entitled to a Carer's Assessment so that the Trust can identify your needs. During COVID-19 (Coronavirus) the Trust may need to contact you by phone or using video (e.g. Skype, Facetime etc.) to discuss your situation. Talk to your local Trust and/or Care Co-ordinator about this.

For children's services, this will be via the Gateway Teams (list attached) but please note that each case will be on the basis of an individual assessment of need and may reflect the capacity of the service to respond during the current situation. Priority will be given to cases where children are at risk or family breakdown is likely.

For more information on Carer's Assessments visit:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk - assessments for carers](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk - assessments for carers)

[www.carersuk.org/Factsheets/Assssments.pdf](http://www.carersuk.org/Factsheets/Assssments.pdf)

## Self-Directed Support – Option1: Direct Payments

If you, as a carer, are in receipt of services, Direct Payments can be used to 'buy-in' care and support rather than using Trust arranged services. If you choose to have your assessed need in regards to care and support provided via Direct Payments you can discuss this with your **named worker** or your local Trust's **Carer Co-ordinator**. Contact details are included at the end of this document.

[Direct Payments User Guide - April 2020](#)

The Department of Health is currently working to provide more comprehensive guidance on the use of Direct Payments during the COVID-19 period. A link to the new guidance will be added to this advice as soon as it is available.

Please access the links below for further information and help:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk - Direct Payments](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk - Direct Payments)

[Centre for Independent Living NI](#)

Please note that Direct Payments is just one option in how you can choose to have your care and support needs met. The individual in receipt of services and/or their legally authorised person can choose how your assessed need is met. This can be through Direct Payments, Managed Budgets, Trust Arranged Services or a mixed option. Your care and support will be reviewed and any change in your circumstances will be discussed and the existing provision revised.

During the assessment process, Trusts will seek to engage with families regarding their specific circumstances and will try to be as flexible as possible in responding to your needs, looking at how support and care provided by family, community and the Trust can support you in achieving your outcomes.

### **Carer's Allowance**

If you are new to caring or are looking after someone and do not receive an allowance, you may be entitled to some financial support, called Carer's Allowance. It is paid by the Department for Communities. Information on the allowance can be accessed here:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk - carers allowance](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk - carers allowance)

Existing carers will continue to be paid Carer's Allowance when they have temporarily ceased to care for a severely disabled person due to either of them self-isolating or being infected with coronavirus.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, emotional support can also count towards the 35 hours a week you spend caring for someone who is ill or has a disability.

### **Additional financial support during COVID-19**

You may also be entitled to a Discretionary Support Grant if you have been affected by COVID-19. Details on the grant and how to apply can be access via this link:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/extra-financial-support](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/extra-financial-support)

### **Carer's Cash Grant**

Each Trust will have funding dedicated for carer's cash grants. The grants are there to support carers known to the HSC Trust who are receiving a service and who may need one-off financial support. Please contact your **named worker** if you need to be assessed for a carer's cash grant.

## COVID-19 Testing

Everyone in Northern Ireland with symptoms of coronavirus is now eligible for testing. For further information on testing see the PHA website:

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19)

## Voluntary/community support

The **Freephone COVID-19 Community Helpline** number is **0808 802 0020** or e-mail: [covid19@adviceni.net](mailto:covid19@adviceni.net) or text: ACTION to **81025**.

There is a **Family Support Hub** in your area and their work is continuing. They can provide access to a wide range of services including foodbanks, advice on parenting and children`s issues, and money matters. Details of services are available on:

- The Family Support NI website [www.familysupportni.gov.uk](http://www.familysupportni.gov.uk)
- Children & Young Peoples Strategic Partnership website [www.cypsp.hscni.net](http://www.cypsp.hscni.net) or
- NI Direct website. [www.nidirect.gov.uk - support hubs](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk - support hubs)

## Short breaks

Residential Short Breaks services for children with disability which had been providing a limited service during the initial phase are beginning to expand those services but the capacity will remain restricted by the public health guidelines and social distancing requirements. Families who had been utilising those services previously should continue to link with their **named worker** in regard to any change in either their circumstances or needs of the young person.

It is important that you also look after your own health and well-being for your own sake and to enable you to continue caring. If you are concerned about your situation you should speak to your **named worker**.

Do look at the section above called [Physical and emotional wellbeing](#) about coping during this difficult period.

## Short breaks including residential short breaks for children with disability including those with complex health needs

Short break services are recognised as an important aspect of support, especially to families caring for disabled children. Services will strive to seek a balance between maintaining this support and ensuring the health of the person being cared for is not further compromised.

Details of support and the role of Family Support Hubs is noted above.

## What if I need medical supplies?

If you or the person you care for normally receives medical supplies from the Trust or through your GP prescription to your community pharmacy, or from your district Nurse, this will continue. **This process has not changed.** Those who are on regular prescriptions are being advised to order in good time and if there are difficulties to contact your **named worker**.

## Local pharmacy/prescriptions

If you are unable to collect a prescription from the community pharmacy you should:

- ask someone to do this on your behalf, such as a friend, neighbour, family member or local support network (this is the best option, if possible);
- If this cannot be arranged some community pharmacies may be able to arrange to deliver your prescription to your home.

To check if your pharmacy offers a prescription delivery service you can contact the COVID-19 Community Helpline on 0808 802 0020 or Carers NI on 028 9043 9843.

## Grocery shopping

People who have received letters from their GPs with advice to stay home and 'shield' can now access priority delivery slots for online shopping from a number of supermarkets. To register for this facility use the following link:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/register-priority-online-food-delivery](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/register-priority-online-food-delivery)

Volunteer Shopping Cards are available from various supermarkets, including Sainsbury's, Lidl, Asda and Marks and Spencer. Cards are pre-set with a specific amount of money and can be purchased by the cared for person via telephone or online. Cards can be posted out or emailed and printed off and given to the carer to carry out shopping duties. This can be a safer way to shop as it eliminates the need for cash or the exchange of bank details or bank cards.

## Carer's ID Card

A Carer's ID Card is available from Health and Social Care Trusts to all *informal (unpaid) carers* in Northern Ireland who are known to the Trust and in receipt of services. The Carer's ID Card provides proof of carer status and can be shown to Police Officers when carrying out essential travel or additional exercise during lockdown. The Carer's ID Card will also allow carers access to priority in-store shopping hours similar to key workers and essential workers. Carers can avail of priority shopping hours at any of the following stores throughout Northern Ireland: ASDA, Co-op, Lidl, Ireland, Marks and Spencer and Sainsbury's. Check with your local store to find out how the retailer can help you with access to priority in-store shopping.

Speak to your Trust's Carer Co-ordinator (contact detail at the end of this advice document) if you have not received a card but think you are eligible.

## Access to PPE (masks, aprons etc.)

In most instances where you provide informal care you will not require PPE, for example if you provide shopping, deliver medications or help with meals. However if you provide direct hands on care, for example personal care and toileting, you should be provided with disposable gloves and disposable plastic aprons. Fluid-resistant surgical masks (face mask) and eye/face protection can be provided following a risk assessment which determines that there is a risk of contamination with splashes, droplets of blood or body fluids. Where informal carers consider there is a risk to themselves or the individuals they are caring for, they should wear a fluid repellent surgical mask with or without eye protection. Please note that the face mask should be replaced if it becomes damaged, soiled or uncomfortable. After you have provided care directly to the individual, you should remove the face mask (and any other PPE) and maintain a distance of 2 meters or more.

**PPE will be provided by your local Trust and you will not be charged.** As an informal carer you should contact your **named worker** to secure access to PPE or contact the relevant Carer Support Service referenced on page 21 of this document. Likewise if your needs change or you are new to the caring role, again please contact your **named worker** or the relevant Carer Support Service.

The guidance has been based on the advice of Public Health England, and endorsed by the PHA. See link below.

[assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/879111/T4\\_poster\\_Recommended\\_PPE\\_additional\\_considerations\\_of\\_COVID-19.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/879111/T4_poster_Recommended_PPE_additional_considerations_of_COVID-19.pdf)

Trusts must ensure that all **Direct Payment recipients** have a **named worker** in their Trust to contact about the need for PPE provision. In this situation the Direct Payment recipient should not be charged for the provision of PPE from Trust stocks.

## Working carers

You may be a carer who also has a full time or part-time job. Juggling your caring and working role can be difficult in normal times. Trying to do this during COVID-19

may place additional stress upon you. It is vital you seek support of other family members where possible, and even more important to take time for yourself.

Keep in touch with the **named worker** who will be best placed to give advice and support.

Remember the [Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing](#) messages each day to help you and your family get through this.

## Employment rights

All employers have been asked to be flexible with their staff during COVID-19 (Coronavirus). If you need to take extra time off work because you have caring responsibilities, you should check your employer's policy on Carers/Caring for Others and discuss your situation with them.

The Law Centre has produced useful information about your employment rights:

[Law Centre NI - employee rights - Covid-19](#)

Guidance on Statutory Sick Pay:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk - Statutory Sick Pay](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk - Statutory Sick Pay)

[www.gov.uk - Statutory Sick Pay](http://www.gov.uk - Statutory Sick Pay)

The Equality Commission for NI also have help advice on employment issues if you are a carer and are being asked to return to work:

[www.equalityni.org//Caring-responsibilities-and-returning-to-work](http://www.equalityni.org//Caring-responsibilities-and-returning-to-work)

## Benefits

For advice and assistance on other benefits such as housing, Universal Credit etc., please access the NI Direct website:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk - information on benefits and financial support](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk - information on benefits and financial support)

[www.communities-ni.gov.uk - benefits and pensions/make the call](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk - benefits and pensions/make the call)

You may also be entitled to a Discretionary Support Grant if you have been affected by COVID-19

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/extra-financial-support](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/extra-financial-support)

## Are you a young carer?

A young carer is someone aged between 8 and 18 who cares for a parent, sibling or relative. This may be due to disability, a mental health condition, long-term illness, or drug or alcohol addiction.

A Young Carers Service will continue to be provided:

- in the Southern, South Eastern and Belfast Trust areas by Action for Children  
Contact Jennifer Hamilton, email: [niyoungcarers@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:niyoungcarers@actionforchildren.org.uk)
- in Northern and Western Trust areas by Barnardo's  
Contact Dougie Tyler, email: [dougie.tyler@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:dougie.tyler@barnardos.org.uk)

Referrals to the Young Carers service will continue in the usual way and in line with the regional guidance to HSC Trusts which identifies processes for:

- The assessment and identification of Young Carers
- The provision of services to Young Carers
- Young Carers entitlement to a Carer's Assessment

Both Barnardo's NI and Action for Children Young Carers services will continue to process referrals to their service in the usual way and will offer 1-2-1 support, assessment and reviews.

Most contact is currently remote/virtual however there has been and will continue to be doorstep visits and socially distanced walks. Small group walks will start soon. During the current crisis, the Young Carers Services will continue to maximise the use of phone, text, Skype, and any other means which are safe and acceptable to young carers and their families.

### **Useful information for young carers**

We have gathered together some information below to help support young carers to understand the current situation surrounding COVID-19 that we hope you will find useful.

For the latest news about Coronavirus for young people, CBBC Newsround - [www.bbc.co.uk/newsround#more-stories-2](http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround#more-stories-2)

The charity Young Minds have written a blog about what young people can do if they are feel anxious about Coronavirus - [www.youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/)

There is lots of support surrounding young people's mental health on the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust website. They have free resources which you can download to support your wellbeing - [www.cwmt.org.uk/](http://www.cwmt.org.uk/)

There is also a PDF workbook from Mindheart to download and print out, which you can use to colour or write down your thoughts about how you are feeling - [www.mindheart.co/descargables](http://www.mindheart.co/descargables)

## Caring for those with learning disabilities and Autism

Lifestyle changes such as social distancing, shielding and self-isolation can be particularly difficult for those with learning disabilities and Autism. Support for families/carers of people with learning disabilities through the Coronavirus restrictions can be found here:

[bild.org.uk/Coronavirus-resources-for-use-by-families](http://bild.org.uk/Coronavirus-resources-for-use-by-families)

[scie.org.uk/learning-disabilities-autism](http://scie.org.uk/learning-disabilities-autism)

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/guidance-hsc-staff-healthcare-workers-and-care-providers/staff-health-and-0#supporting-people-with-learning-difficulties-and-or-autism](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/guidance-hsc-staff-healthcare-workers-and-care-providers/staff-health-and-0#supporting-people-with-learning-difficulties-and-or-autism)

Carers who have a family member with a learning disability or autism may need to leave their homes several times a day for exercise or medical need, this may include travel beyond their local area. To support these circumstances the Health and Social Care Board has shared a template letter with the Health and Social Care Trusts which is available, upon request, from the relevant Trust area. Families who would like a copy should contact their key worker in their local Trust.

Surestart have developed some resources that carers may find very useful – the resources reach out to children with a disability and young people as well.

[SureStart-Newsletter-2nd-Issue-May-2020.pdf](#)

Guidance on providing unpaid care to adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults can be found at the following link. While some of the guidance contained duplicates what is already in this document, these are useful:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-providing-unpaid-care-to-adults-with-learning-disabilities-and-autistic-adults](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-providing-unpaid-care-to-adults-with-learning-disabilities-and-autistic-adults)

A great resource for children and young people or those caring for children and young people can be found here:

[www.cypsp.hscni.net/resource-pack-for-children-young-people/](http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/resource-pack-for-children-young-people/)

## Caring for someone with a Dementia

Caring for someone with a dementia is particularly stressful both emotionally and physically as the person with the dementia may require continuous support and supervision. If the person you care for is involved with Trust services, keep in touch with the **named worker** who will be best placed to give advice and support. For information about Dementia (including information booklets):



[www.NIDirect.gov.uk/dementia](http://www.NIDirect.gov.uk/dementia)  
[www.hscboard.hscni.net/dementia/](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/dementia/)  
[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications?keys=dementia](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications?keys=dementia)  
[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications?keys=delirium](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications?keys=delirium)

It is important for everyone including people with a dementia to keep active during this pandemic. The following links provide useful suggestions:

[www.playlistforlife.org.uk](http://www.playlistforlife.org.uk)  
[musicmemories.bbcrewind.co.uk](http://musicmemories.bbcrewind.co.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/events/224767148793291/](https://www.facebook.com/events/224767148793291/)  
[www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/coronavirus-activity-ideas-people-living-dementia#content-start](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/coronavirus-activity-ideas-people-living-dementia#content-start)

A number of Apps have been developed which provide support through self-monitoring and self-management of care for people living with a dementia. These are available at:

[apps4dementia.orcha.co.uk](http://apps4dementia.orcha.co.uk)

The Royal College of Psychiatrists have created a useful webinar entitled, '**Supporting carers and care staff to understand and respond to changes in behaviour in people with dementia during the COVID-19 pandemic**'. This can be downloaded from the following link:

[www.northerntrust.hscni.net/services/dementia-services/clear/](http://www.northerntrust.hscni.net/services/dementia-services/clear/)

This link also includes the guide used by all Trusts on "How to support people with Dementia during COVID-19":

There are several charities offering support and help for dementia carers:

- Age NI
- Alzheimer's Society
- Carers NI
- Dementia NI
- Together in Dementia Everyday (Tide)

Further details can be found in the Contacts section on page 21.

## Distance caring

Know the contact number of your relative's GP and **named worker** within the Trust and ensure they have your contact details as next of kin. Check that the current domiciliary care package is being maintained.

Consider setting up a rota/schedule for regular phone calls to keep in touch or using technology such as WhatsApp or Facetime to keep your family and friends connected over long distances.

## Bereavement and End of Life Care

Where the person you are caring for has palliative or end of life care needs, services and care will be planned and delivered to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to meet these needs and continue to support you in your caring role.

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus#bereavement](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus#bereavement)

[www.macmillan.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/coronavirus)

[www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/coronavirus](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/coronavirus)

## Help with Technology

Are you struggling a bit with technology? If you're having problems with your tablet, laptop or phone, or would simply like more information?

Libraries NI has developed a series of fact sheets and Zoom-based sessions to help you. You can also phone on 028 9039 5989 (Mon - Fri 9:15am - 4:45pm) with a brief description of how you need IT help and library staff will phone you within 48 hours with free, helpful advice.

[www.librariesni.org.uk/Digital-Support](http://www.librariesni.org.uk/Digital-Support)

## Contacts

### Online information and contact numbers for carers support in each Trust

Each Trust has organised a programme of supports and activities for carers in your area. Details can be obtained from:

#### Northern Trust

Telephone Carer Hub: [028 2766 1210](tel:02827661210) (available Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)

E-mail: [carers.coordinator@northerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:carers.coordinator@northerntrust.hscni.net)

Carer Hub can be accessed at the following link:

[northerntrust.hscni.net/services/carers-service/](http://northerntrust.hscni.net/services/carers-service/)

[www.carersdigital.org](http://www.carersdigital.org) resources for the Northern Trust only can be downloaded and easily accessed and connection to other carers through the carers chat forum. Carers create their own personal account and download the Jointly app for free using the code DGTL2770.

### Belfast Trust

The Belfast Trust Carers Support page:

[belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/carers-services](http://belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/carers-services)

Telephone Carer Service: [028 9504 6702](tel:02895046702) and leave a message or

Email: [CarerSuppSvcs@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:CarerSuppSvcs@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

### Southern Trust

The Southern Trust Carers Support page:

[southerntrust.hscni.net/health-wellbeing/community-development-and-user-involvement/carers-information/](http://southerntrust.hscni.net/health-wellbeing/community-development-and-user-involvement/carers-information/)

Telephone: [028 3756 6284](tel:02837566284)

Email: [carers.coordinator@southerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:carers.coordinator@southerntrust.hscni.net)

### Western Trust

The Western Trust Carers Support page:

[westerntrust.hscni.net/service/carers-support-service/](http://westerntrust.hscni.net/service/carers-support-service/)

Southern Sector (Fermanagh/Omagh/Castledearg)

Telephone: [028 6634 4163](tel:02866344163) or Mobile: [075 2589 8985](tel:07525898985)

Email: [Cathy.Magowan@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:Cathy.Magowan@westerntrust.hscni.net)

Northern Sector (Strabane/L'Derry/Limavady)

Telephone: [028 7135 5023](tel:02871355023) or Mobile: [078 1015 6551](tel:07810156551)

Email: [GeraldineAnn.McLaughlin@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:GeraldineAnn.McLaughlin@westerntrust.hscni.net)

## South Eastern Trust

The South Eastern Trust Carers Support page:

<https://setrust.hscni.net/service/carers-support-service/>

Pamela Smyth SET Carers Development Officer

Telephone: 028 4372 1807

E-mail: [carer.support@setrust.hscni.net](mailto:carer.support@setrust.hscni.net)

## **Community COVID Helpline Freephone**

Telephone: [0808 802 0020](tel:08088020020) (Every day 9am-5pm)

Email: [covid19@adviceni.net](mailto:covid19@adviceni.net)

Text: ACTION to 81025

## **Carers NI**

Telephone: [028 9043 9843](tel:02890439843) (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)

Email: [advice@carersni.org](mailto:advice@carersni.org)

Website: [www.carersuk.org/northernireland](http://www.carersuk.org/northernireland)

## **Action for Children**

Contact via Facebook [www.facebook.com/YoungCarersNI/](https://www.facebook.com/YoungCarersNI/)

## **Age NI**

Telephone: [08088 087 575](tel:08088087575)

Email: [www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland)

Website: [www.ageni.org](http://www.ageni.org)

## **Alzheimer's Society**

Telephone: [028 9066 4100](tel:02890664100)

Helpline: [0300 222 1122](tel:03002221122)

Email: [nir@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:nir@alzheimers.org.uk)

Website: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

## **Dementia NI**

Telephone: [028 9693 1555](tel:02896931555)

Email: [info@dementiani.org](mailto:info@dementiani.org)

Website: [www.dementia.org](http://www.dementia.org)

## **CAUSE**

Telephone 082 9065 0650

Website [www.cause.org.uk](http://www.cause.org.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CAUSEcarers](http://www.facebook.com/CAUSEcarers)

## **Together in Dementia Everyday (Tide)**

Telephone: [07841 457596](tel:07841457596)

Email: [Fiona@tide.uk.net](mailto:Fiona@tide.uk.net)

Website: [www.tide.uk.net/](http://www.tide.uk.net/)

## **Other useful links**

If you need to talk to someone about coping with the pressures, you may wish to call

Lifeline on [0808 808 8000](tel:08088088000)

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.education-ni.gov.uk/](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/)

[www.communities-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/covid-19-service-updates](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/covid-19-service-updates)

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19)

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus)

The Centre for Independent Living has a useful set of FAQs:

[www.cilni.org/bwl-knowledge-base-category/coronavirus-faqs/](http://www.cilni.org/bwl-knowledge-base-category/coronavirus-faqs/)

A useful point of contact for a wide range of helplines available in Northern Ireland

<https://helplinesni.com/>

The A-Z Guide for Carers has been revised and is available at:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/a-to-z-guide-carers](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/a-to-z-guide-carers)