

COVID-19 UPDATE

Dear Carers,

The past few months have been an incredibly difficult time for everyone especially Carers. Research carried out by Carers UK during lockdown demonstrated an increase of 98,000 people in Northern Ireland taking up a caring role. Carers highlighted concerns around the financial impact of the increased cost of food and household bills. The full report can be found on Carers UK website.

https://www.carersuk.org/images/News_and_campaigns/Behind_Closed_Doors_2020/Caring_behind_closed_doors_April20_pages_web_final.pdf

As you will know from the last carers newsletter (Spring edition) sent out in April, the Carers Support Team have taken on a piece of work to update the Carers Newsletter Mailing List. This was a massive undertaking. Pre-March we had just over 5,600 carers all receiving the newsletter by post. To date 1800 carers have re-registered for the mailing list and a high proportion of this number have agreed to receive the newsletter by email.

The Department of Health and the Health and Social Care Board have updated the advice/information page for unpaid carers. This can be found at the following link.

www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/advice-informal-unpaid-carers-and-young-carers-during-covid-19-pandemic There is also information for those who use Direct

Payments <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-direct-payments>

Please note if you do not have access to a computer we are happy to send out hard copies. Contact Cathy or Geraldine (contact numbers on page 8).

COVID-19

The fight
is not over



Keep washing
your hands

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

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Carers Northern Ireland Helpline

The Carers NI helpline is now open Monday-Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Alternatively you can email your query anytime to advice@carersni.org



The Complete A-Z for Carers August 2020



The Complete A-Z for Carers has now been updated and can be found on NI Direct's website at the following link:

www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/a-to-z-guide-carers

If you don't have access to a computer please contact the Carers Support Team for a copy of the Complete A-Z

Carers ID Card

Covid-19 Carer Identification cards were launched by the Health Minister in Carers Week 2020.

The Card is available to those currently in receipt of Trust services. To request a card contact the keyworker (Social Worker/Nurse/CPN) involved with the person you care for.



Managing the Challenge

Managing the Challenge is a programme of self management courses accredited by Stanford which are delivered across the Western Trust area by Action Mental Health volunteer tutors.

There are two programmes.

1. Managing long term conditions
2. Managing Pain

These courses normally run in community venues over 6 weeks but given the current situation with Covid-19 this can't happen.

Currently courses are being delivered via ZOOM over 7 weeks.

We are planning to commence a virtual **Pain Management course at the end of September (dates to be confirmed)**. This will be delivered via **ZOOM**, so anyone wishing to participate will need to have access to a **computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone and have internet/4G access**.

If you are interested in the Pain Management programme please contact **Cathy Magowan on (028) 6634 4163 or E: Cathy.Magowan@westerntrust.hscni.net** or download the referral from at <https://www.amh.org.uk/services/managing-the-challenge/>

BENEFITS

Benefit Rates

(April 2020)

CARER'S ALLOWANCE £ 67.25

Carer premium - £ 37.50

Earnings limit - £ 128

ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE

Higher rate - £ 89.15

Lower rate - £ 59.70

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

Care Component

Highest - £ 89.15

Middle - £ 59.70

Lowest - £ 23.60

Mobility Component

Higher - £ 62.25

Lower - £ 23.20

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Daily living component: enhanced—£89.15

Daily living component: standard: £59.70

Mobility component: enhanced £62.25

Mobility component: standard £23.60

COVID-19

Simple steps save lives

HSC Public Health Agency



Wash your hands regularly.
Keep your distance.
Wear a face covering where needed.

Benefits Information

Social Security Agency
Improving Uptake of Benefits Community Outreach Officers

Name	Office Base	Telephone	e-mail
Derek Moran	Enniskillen	Ring <i>'Make the Call'</i> 0800 232 1271 to make an appointment with a Community Outreach Officer	derek.moran@nissa.gsi.gov.uk
Sharon Scott	Strabane		sharon.scott1@nissa.gsi.gov.uk
Ryan Tierney	Foyle Lisnagelvin Limavady		ryan.tierney1@nissa.gsi.gov.uk
Thomas Corey	Omagh		thomas.corey@nissa.gsi.gov.uk

Not sure what benefits you are entitled to or need a benefits check?

For independent advice and support contact: -

Carers NI

Tel: (028) 9043 9843

Omagh Independent Advice Service

Tel: (028) 8224 3252

Dove House Resource Centre, L/Derry

Tel: (028) 7126 9327

The Resource Centre, L/Derry

Tel: (028) 7135 2832

Rosemount Community Resource Centre, L/Derry

Tel: (028) 7128 2829

Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI)

Tel: (028) 7776 5438

Citizens Advice Bureau:

(Fermanagh) Tel: (028) 6632 4334 **(L/Derry)** Tel: (028) 7136 2444

Spencer Rd, L/Derry Tel: (028) 7134 2536 **(Strabane)** Tel: (028) 7138 2665

Disability and Carers Service, Castle Court, Belfast (Administrate Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Carer's Allowance, **Tel: 0800 587 0912 Text: 028 9031 1092 (for hearing impaired)**)

Western Trust Carers' Activities Autumn/Winter

Carers rights and entitlements with Carers Northern Ireland

- ◆ Who we are and what we do
- ◆ Who are carers/facts and figures/ impact of unsupported caring
- ◆ Carers Allowance
- ◆ Carers Credit
- ◆ Rights in work
- ◆ Supports available to carers
- ◆ Jointly
- ◆ Carers assessments

Dates

15th October 2020 ~ 10.30—12.30

11th November 2020 ~ 10.30—12.30

24th February 2021 ~ 10.30—12.30

To link into one of the three sessions listed above please see how to register at the bottom of this page.

Registration is essential.

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come first serviced basis.

How do I register?

Email Geraldine Green
geraldine.green@carersni.org Or
Contact Carers NI (028) 9043 9843

All sessions are **delivered via ZOOM** so you will need access to a computer, tablet or smartphone and internet/4G.

Carers Self Advocacy Training (3 weeks) delivered by Carers NI

Consecutive Wednesdays 10.30-12.30

Day 1: The System

- ◆ Carers in NI
- ◆ Introduction to advocacy
- ◆ Carers and the System
- ◆ Carers Rights
- ◆ Carers perspective

Day 2: Communicating effectively

- ◆ Recap
- ◆ Assertiveness
- ◆ Influencing and negotiating
- ◆ Making a complaint

Day 3: Language and Thinking

- ◆ Recap
- ◆ Words, voice and language
- ◆ Thinking about your thinking
- ◆ Empathy
- ◆ Next steps – Carer involvement in local Forums

Dates

25th November 2020

02nd December 2020

09th December 2020



Do you care for someone with a serious mental illness or personality disorder? Meet Annette and Orla.



A diagnosis of a serious mental illness is often a devastating experience for friends, family and partners as well as for patients or service users. “What does this mean for my loved one?” “Will he or she get better?” “What does this mean for his or her employment?” “How will we manage?” “What will people say?” “How long will they have to stay in hospital?” So many questions, so much confusion.

This scenario is played out for families on a daily basis. For others, the illness may have been ongoing for years – friends and extended family may have fallen away; the service user may have good days and bad days, but whatever day it is, the need for practical and material help, support and encouragement in accessing treatment, monitoring and assisting with early intervention when signs of relapse are evident and advocating for the loved one when they are too ill to represent themselves, is ongoing.

Cause is a unique charity, 25 years in existence this year, with a strong presence here in the West. Its uniqueness comes from being peer-led and staffed by carers, past and present, to support those caring for a loved one with a severe and enduring mental illness in their caring role. Two peer advocate workers cover the Western Trust area, providing invaluable information, education, advocacy, respite or short break opportunities and an empathetic listening ear to Western Trust carers. The carer advocates also provide a useful two-way bridge between families and the various community-based or hospital-based mental health teams.

This communication pathway ensures that the valuable information which comes from families and carers is understood and helps carers to raise issues regarding their loved ones that they may find difficult or sensitive.

Annette O’Doherty joined Cause over 12 years ago having previously worked with a mental health charity. Annette is based at Grangewood hospital and supports carers from Strabane to Limavady and all points in between.

Orla Conway is a more recent addition to the Cause team in the west. Orla, based at the new Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex, covers Omagh district and Fermanagh.

Monthly support groups run in Limavady, Derry and Lisnaskea. Cause acknowledges that support groups are not for everyone and so carers are also supported through one-to-one meetings. A telephone Helpline operates daily to provide support and information to carers or health professionals.

The voices and experiences of carers supported over the last 25 years have been used by Cause to lobby and advocate for the needs and wishes of carers at a strategic and policy-setting level both within the Western Trust and regionally.

If you would like to know more about what Cause can do to support you in your caring role, please contact Annette on 07515 065 296 annette@cause.org.uk or Orla on 07711 590 095 orla@cause.org.uk If you prefer, you can ring the Cause Helpline free of charge from most landlines and mobile networks on **0800 103 2833**.

Money Advice Service

<https://www.moneyadvice.org.uk/en> offers free and impartial advice, set up by the Government

They can offer you

- Advice and guides to help improve your finances
- Tools and calculators to help keep track and plan ahead

Support over the phone, whatsapp and online

8 core topics widen out into a library of information that will broaden your knowledge and understanding of money matters touching all our everyday lives. Additionally, it offers calculators and tools to help plan your finances and prompts you with detail that you may not consider at first.

- Debt and Borrowing
- Homes and Mortgages
- Budgeting and Saving
- Work and Benefits
- Pension and Retirement
- Family and Care
- Cars and Travel
- Insurance



Money & Pensions Service

If you need to ask a quick question or need help on where to look for reading material, you can do this through 3 options.

Benefits and tax credits you can claim as a carer

Find out about support available to carers and how to manage the money of someone you are caring for.

[Money problems and poor mental wellbeing](#)

[Help manage the money of someone you're caring for](#)

[Support services available to carers](#)

[Financial support for young carers](#)

[Benefits and tax credits you can claim as a carer](#)

[When someone needs formal help managing their money](#)

[Help someone informally with day-to-day money](#)

[If the person you want to help can still manage their money](#)

[If the person you want to help has lost mental capacity](#)



Web chat

Got a question? Our advisers will point you in the right direction.

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm
Saturday, 8am to 3pm
Sunday and Bank Holidays, closed



WhatsApp

Need help sorting out your debts, have credit questions or want pensions guidance?
Add +44 7701 342744 to your Whatsapp and send us a message.

For everything else please contact us via Webchat or Telephone.



Contact Us

Give us a call for free and impartial money advice.

0800 138 7777

Typetalk: 18001 0800 915 4622
Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm
Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays, closed

CARER SUPPORT TEAM CONTACTS



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Carer Support Coordinator
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Carers Newsletter

To receive the Carers Newsletter directly to your home please contact the Carers Support Team (details above). If you are registered on our mailing list and your details are **not correct**, please let us know so they can be updated/amended. *Where possible we would prefer to send the newsletter by **email**.*

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please ring (028) 6634 4163 or (028) 7135 5023 or email Carers.Support1@westerntrust.hscni.net

Second review of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Call for Evidence:

- The Call for Evidence was launched on Wednesday 4th March and was due to close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 29th April;
- As a result of restrictions imposed due to Covid-19 the call for evidence consultation period has been extended to 5.00pm on Friday 16th October 2020;
- The call for evidence is aimed at organisations and individuals who have information that is relevant to how the PIP assessment is operating for new claims, award reviews and change of circumstances;
- Evidence submitted will be used to inform a final independent report which will be laid in the Assembly in December 2020;
- The call for evidence can be found at the following link:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/second-independent-review-personal-independence-payment-pip-assessment-process-northern-ireland>