



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





This handbook has been produced in association with Carers NI.

Carers NI is the lead charity providing expert advice, information and support for carers and professionals supporting carers in Northern Ireland. We connect carers so no one has to care alone, campaign together for lasting change for carers and innovate to find new ways to reach and support carers.

You can find out more about Carers NI and join us as a member at [www.carersni.org](http://www.carersni.org) or contact us for information and advice on 028 9043 9843.

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“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.”

**DR ANNE KILGALLEN**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

WESTERN HEALTH AND  
SOCIAL CARE TRUST.

# Welcome

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, son, partner or neighbour, doing what they can to support a friend or loved one.

Through the implementation of the Northern Ireland regional carers strategy 'Caring for Carers 2006' the Western Trust has made a firm commitment to improve key areas of support for carers. To date there has been tremendous achievements and developments within Carers Support. However there is still work to be done.

One of the key areas of the regional strategy is access to information. We hope that the valuable information contained in the Carers Handbook will help you source the support you need. The Handbook has been revised and updated in partnership with Carers Northern Ireland and carer representatives.

As the Chief Executive for the Western Trust I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you do in providing help and support to your loved ones.

# Look after yourself

When you're caring for someone, it's important to look after yourself and stay as healthy as possible. 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.

## *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.



*Find out more:*  
[www.carersuk.org/health](http://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, and sweets



*Find out more:*

[www.westerntrust.hscni.net/livewell/EatWell.htm](http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net/livewell/EatWell.htm)

[www.carersuk.org/nutrition](http://www.carersuk.org/nutrition)

# Sleeping well

Carers can often find it difficult to have a good night's sleep. There are ways you can help yourself relax and switch off, and a visit to your GP may help.

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. However, if sleeplessness becomes intolerable do visit your GP for advice.

Here are some tips that carers shared with each other on the Carers UK Forum – an online support community for anyone who is caring:



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.carersuk.org/sleep](http://www.carersuk.org/sleep)

To sign up for the  
Carers UK Forum visit

# Moving and handling

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. There are different ways you may be able to get support with moving and handling.

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.

**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

Your local social work 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.



*Carers UK has produced a mobile and online app called Jointly, which could help you coordinate care. Find out more at [www.carersuk.org/jointly](http://www.carersuk.org/jointly)*

## Telecare services

Telecare services can help the person you care for stay in their own home independently, and give you peace of mind.

The Western Trust work with an organisation called TF3 to provide telecare services to people who meet set criteria. Telecare services can include equipment to help monitor the safety of the person you care for, along with a 24 hour link to a response centre.

Talk to your health and social care team to see if you and the person you care for are eligible for telecare services.



*Find out more:*  
[www.carersuk.org/backcare](http://www.carersuk.org/backcare)  
[www.carersuk.org/equipment](http://www.carersuk.org/equipment)

# 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 three Carers Walking Groups:



## Fermanagh

Call  
028 6634 4163  
to find out more.



## Derry & Omagh

Call  
028 7135 5023  
to find out more.



# Dealing with difficult emotions

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

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.

It is inevitable that your caring role will change over time – whether you're looking after someone who is recovering and growing in independence, or someone whose condition is deteriorating.

We all cope with life changes in different ways. It's important to get advice and support to help you if you need it. On the next page find out about the range of ways you can get support.



*Find out more:*  
[www.carersuk.org/emotions](http://www.carersuk.org/emotions)

# Where to go for support

There a range of ways you can get support with caring – including from your GP, from online communities or support groups and voluntary organisations.



## ***Speak to your GP or keyworker***

If you are feeling stressed or depressed, or are struggling to cope with your situation, it is important that you talk to your GP or keyworker about how you are feeling. They can give you the treatment, advice or information you need.



## ***Counselling and talking therapies***

It can be helpful to talk things over with someone outside your family and friends. Counselling and other talking therapies can give you 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.

Carers NI is part of Carers UK, which offers a UK-wide listening support service where you can talk through how you are feeling with a trained volunteer who understands caring. The service is available on Mondays and Tuesdays from 9am to 7pm – call 0808 808 7777.



## ***Support groups***

You might find it helpful to meet with other carers and to share experiences and understanding. 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. See the useful contacts pages for details.

Support groups can also offer social and leisure activities, training, assistance in applying for benefits.



## **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 with other carers.

Carers NI is part of Carers UK, which offers a UK-wide online forum where carers can connect with one another for support, advice and understanding. Visit [www.carersuk.org/forum](http://www.carersuk.org/forum) to sign up.



## **Voluntary organisations**

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 31 of this handbook.

Carers NI is the lead organisation supporting carers across Northern Ireland and can provide information on all issues relating to caring, and can help you find out if you're claiming everything you're entitled to. You can contact them on 02890 439843 or [advice@carersni.org](mailto:advice@carersni.org) or visit [www.carersni.org](http://www.carersni.org)

Independent advice centres may also be able to help you sort out financial matters and ensure that you are claiming all the financial help you are entitled to.



## **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.

# 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.

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.



### *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
- 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
- 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
- palliative and terminal illness
- patients undergoing cancer treatment requiring care of specialist devices/ subcutaneous fluids
- continence management/Catheter care
- medication management
- support to carers and completion of the Carers Support Plan



## 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

A number of Community Pharmacies across the West are working in partnership with the Western Trust and Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) to identify hidden carers. The pharmacies involved are listed on the HSCB website. The pharmacy staff can refer you to the Western Trust Carers Service.

# Community Care Support

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
- main meal provision
- providing adaptations and equipment in your home
- providing short breaks from caring

Provision of services is based on an assessment of need.

## 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 Support Plan.



## 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



*Find out more:*

[www.westerntrusthscni.net/services/CarersInformation.htm](http://www.westerntrusthscni.net/services/CarersInformation.htm)

Tel: 028 6634 4163 (Omagh & Fermanagh)

028 7135 5023 (Strabane/L'Derry/Limavady)



# 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 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 20), 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:*

[www.westerntrust.hscni.net/services/CarersInformation.htm](http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net/services/CarersInformation.htm)

[www.carersuk.org/ni/assessments](http://www.carersuk.org/ni/assessments)

# Thinking about what you need

Before you have an assessment, 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.
- 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?



## *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

- 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 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.

# Self Directed Support

Self Directed Support is a new way social care services are provided which could offer you more choice, control and flexibility to meet your care needs.

It lets you put together a package of support that best suits your lifestyle and allows you and your family to receive care in a way that works best for you.

Self Directed Support provides you with a choice about how support is delivered. It gives you as much control as you want over a personal budget to use towards care services.

Your personal budget can be:

- a direct payment
- a managed budget (with support from the Trust)
- a service arranged by the Trust or
- a mixture of all three

Self Directed Support is available to anyone who has been assessed as being in need of social care support. If you don't already have social care support you can ask for an assessment from your social worker or keyworker to ensure you are eligible.

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**

# 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: [www.carersuk.org/ni/break](http://www.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.
- Short breaks can be facilitated through Self Directed Support/Direct Payments. Please contact your key worker for more information.

# 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 the duty social worker 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 Regional emergency social work service

Social Services operate an emergency response service after normal working hours, which means after 5pm on weekdays and all day at weekends. If you find yourself in a crisis you can contact the service to discuss your 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 you are able to contact your keyworker or social worker the next working day.



*Carers can contact the out-of-hours Social Work service on 028 9504 9999 or the Western Urgent Care Out of Hours GP on 028 7186 5195.*

# 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 7161 1226** or email [complaints.department@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto: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 and Client Council can also provide free advice and help to anyone making a complaint. Call free on 0800 917 0222 or visit their website on [www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net](http://www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net)



*Carers NI has a self-advocacy toolkit that can help you speak up for yourself and for the person you care for.*

*Download your free copy at [www.carersni.org/being-heard](http://www.carersni.org/being-heard)*

# Help for young carers

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

- 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?

The Western Trust and Barnardo's work together to provide a regional young carers service as 1 in 10 young people said they 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.org.uk](mailto:dougie.tyler@barnardos.org.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 4163** or Derry on **028 7135 5023**.



*If you are a young carer, you can also get support and information through Babble – an online community for young carers, created by Carers Trust. Visit [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)*

# Carer Involvement/ Volunteering

There are opportunities to participate in carer involvement/engagement forums and events.

These are an opportunity to contribute towards co-production projects and have your say in how services are delivered. It is important that carers are able to have their voices heard.

If you can commit an hour or two to volunteer once or twice a year the Carers Support Team are interested in hearing from you. We plan to establishing a panel of carer volunteers to assist with delivering training, manning information stalls, delivering posters and handbooks to community settings.

Contact **Carer's Support Team** on **028 6634 4163** or **028 7135 5023**.



# Other Information

## Benefits and welfare reform

You and the person you care for may be 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.

Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers. You may be eligible if you are looking after someone for 35 hours a week or more.

There are benefits to help pay for the extra costs of long-term illness or disability which the person you care for may be able to claim, such as Disability Living Allowance (if they are aged under 16), Personal Independence Payment (if they are aged 16 to 64) or Attendance Allowance (if they are aged 65+).

There are also other benefits which you and the person you care for may be able to claim, which depend on your income/capital or your national insurance contribution record.

The benefit system is complicated so it is a good idea to get a benefit check to make sure you and the person you care for are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to.

Welfare reform is being implemented across Northern Ireland. The main changes include the replacement of Disability Living Allowance with Personal Independence Payment for those aged 16+ and the introduction of Universal Credit to replace most means-tested benefits. While Carer's Allowance itself is not changing, entitlement may be affected if the person you care for loses their disability benefit when they are reassessed for Personal Independence Payment.

However, a mitigation scheme has been put in place. This includes a range of measures to support people who may be financially worse off due to the changes to the benefit system. If you are eligible the payments should be made automatically – you don't have to apply.

If you need more information, visit [www.carersni.org](http://www.carersni.org) or contact the Carers NI Adviceline on **028 9043 9843** or at [advice@carersni.org](mailto:advice@carersni.org)

Your local Independent Advice Centre or Citizens Advice Bureau can also help with benefits advice and form filling. Here are some useful contact details:

- Carers NI 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
- Housing Rights Service 028 9024 564026
- 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
- The Social Security Agency free benefits check helpline 0800 232 1271

## 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

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.

# Useful contacts

## Western Health and Social Care Trust contacts

### Carers Support Team

2 Coleshill Road  
Enniskillen  
BT74 7HG  
028 6634 4163

Rossabbey Office  
Abbey Street  
L'Derry BT48 9DN  
028 7135 5023

carers.support1@westerntrust.hscni.net  
www.westerntrust.hscni.net

### Primary Care and Older People

Enniskillen ISD	028 6632 7792
Lisnaskea ISD	028 6634 4050
Irvinestown ISD	028 6638 2702
Castledearg ISD	028 8167 2840
Omagh ISD	028 8283 5935
Strabane ISD	028 7138 4109
OPCMH Team (Enniskillen)	028 6634 4048
OPCMH Team (Omagh)	028 8283 5933
Limavady ISD	028 7776 1100
Waterside Urban ISD	028 7132 1729
Waterside Rural ISD	028 7186 5264
Shantallow ISD	028 7135 1350
Riverview ISD	028 7127 2109
OPCMHT Northern Sector	028 7186 4384

### Adult Learning Disability

Southern Sector (Fermanagh)	028 6634 4000
Southern Sector (Omagh)	028 8283 5050
Northern sector	028 7186 4362

### Adult PD & Sensory

Southern Sector (Fermanagh)	028 6638 2112
Northern Sector	028 7130 8313
Southern Sector (Omagh)	028 8283 5050
Northern Sector (Strabane)	028 7135 4031
Sensory Team (Southern)	028 6632 4400
Sensory Team (Northern)	028 7132 0167

### Adult ASD Service

Adult ASD Team	028 7132 0167
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### Adult Mental Health – Recovery Teams

Omagh	028 8225 2202
Fermanagh	028 6638 2112
Northern (Slievemore)	028 7135 0063
Limavady	028 7772 2123
Strabane	028 7138 2963
Waterside	028 7131 4200

### Adult Mental Health – Primary Teams

Southern Sector (SWAH)	028 6638 2112
Southern Sector (OHPCC)	028 8225 3087
Northern Sector (Strabane)	028 7138 2963
Northern Sector (L'Derry)	028 7132 0102
Northern Sector (Limavady)	028 7772 2123

### Women's and Children's Gateway Service

Omagh	028 8283 5156
Fermanagh	028 6638 2000
Northern	028 7131 4090

### Family Intervention Service

Omagh	028 8225 4500
Fermanagh	028 6634 4027
Shantallow	028 7135 1350
Northern Limavady	028 7776 1100
Northern Strabane	028 7138 1600
Northern Rosstown	028 7131 4200

### Children's Disability

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

### Children's Autism Service

Trustwide	028 8283 5983
Northern Sector	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.  
 Omagh/Fermanagh Branch meets 4th Tuesday every month from 8.00pm - 10.00pm at Fermanagh House, Broadmeadow Place (beside KFC), Enniskillen For information on both groups, please call 028 90 401 729 [www.autismni.org](http://www.autismni.org)

### Cedar Foundation

Right4You Service Call: 028 7136 0136  
 Email:[right4uwestern@cedarfoundation.org](mailto:right4uwestern@cedarfoundation.org)

### National Autistic Society (NAS)

Fermanagh & Tyrone NAS Parent Support Group -  
 Contact group for dates of meetings - Omagh Hospital.  
 Contact Olive 075 0003 7784 Email [Nasomaghwest@gmail.com](mailto:Nasomaghwest@gmail.com)

**Strabane:** Contact Brigid McElwee on 0770 726 0202 or email: [bme@talktalk.net](mailto:bme@talktalk.net) Newtownstewart  
 Contact Arlene Sproule at [arlenesroule@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:arlenesroule@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 [www.headway.org.uk](http://www.headway.org.uk)

## Learning Disability

### 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

### Mencap

Contact the Western Area Office on 028 7126 2227  
[www.mencap.org](http://www.mencap.org)

### Positive Futures

Fermanagh Group - contact 028 6772 4700  
[www.positive-futures.net](http://www.positive-futures.net)

### Friends of Moving On Up

Open to parents/carers of young people and adults with a learning disability - 028 7727 8020 [friendsofmou@hotmail.com](mailto:friendsofmou@hotmail.com)

### Destined Feeny Parent/Carer Group

Meet quarterly. Group is open to Parents/Carers of anyone who has a learning disability  
 028 7778 1141 [charlene@destined.ie](mailto:charlene@destined.ie)

### Fermanagh Affiliated Downs Syndrome Association

Monthly meeting Open to parent carers of children and young adults with Downs Syndrome  
 Contact Susan on 078 1382 8455  
 Email: [susandoyle207@gmail.com](mailto:susandoyle207@gmail.com)

## Mental health

### Western Trust Mental Health Carer Support Groups

Support groups in Fermanagh and Omagh are currently under review. Please contact The Respite Team on 028 8283 5070 for more information.

### Cause Foyle & Limavady Support Group

Monthly meeting. The group is open to Carers receiving support from CAUSE.  
 Contact Annette 075 1506 5296  
 Email: [annette@cause.org.uk](mailto:annette@cause.org.uk)

## 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

028 9066 4100 [nir@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:nir@alzheimers.org.uk) [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

### Arthritis Care

Meet regularly in Strabane, Omagh, Enniskillen & Lisnaskea.  
 Call 028 9078 2940 for details

### Cedar Foundation

Outlook Service (short breaks from caring and activities for children and young people)

Transitions Service (school leavers)  
 Youth Matters (personal development for teens)  
 Contact Children's and Young People's services:  
 Unit D3, Ballinska Business Park, Springtown Drive, Derry BT48 ONA Tel: 028 7136 0136 or  
 Unit 2, Bridge House, Omagh Road, Dromore BT78 3AH Tel: 028 8289 7772

Enniskillen Office (Adult Services)  
 Fermanagh House, Broadmeadow Place  
 Enniskillen BT74 7HR Tel : 028 6632 7361

### NI Chest, Heart and Stroke

For more information call 02871 377 222

## 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 Neighbourhood Links Service Manager on 028 82 25 1116 or email [nlni@redcross.org.uk](mailto:nlni@redcross.org.uk)

### Erne Carers Association

Meet third Wednesday of every month in the Westville Hotel. Open to all unpaid carers in Fermanagh  
 Contact Freda (028) 6632 2654

### Personal Development - Me Time

Personal Development - Me Time deliver personal development programmes and support groups for carers.

## The Carers Handbook

### Time For Me

Meet fortnightly at Omagh Enterprise Centre, Omagh Open to unpaid female carers from the Omagh area. The Time for me Group are committed to personal development activity [annekelly934@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:annekelly934@yahoo.co.uk)

### The Break-Aways

Meet fortnightly at the Fir Trees Hotel Open to unpaid female carers from the Strabane area. The Breakaways are committed to personal development activity. [lisamaurice@gmail.com](mailto:lisamaurice@gmail.com)

### The Escapists

Meet weekly at the Aisling Centre, Enniskillen. Open to unpaid female carers from Fermanagh. The Escapists are committed to me-time and personal development activity Clare McGovern (028) 6632 5918 or 078 3011 7766 [clare.mcgovern@btinternet.com](mailto:clare.mcgovern@btinternet.com)

### Male Carers West (Fermanagh)

Meet monthly at a range of venues throughout Fermanagh. Group focus is hiking/ walking and social outings. Contact Simon 077 7158 0387

### Belleek Community Carers Group

Every Friday 10.30 - Wark Hall, Belleek Open to unpaid Carers from Belleek and surrounding villages including cross border. 075 6576 8711 [belleekccg@gmail.com](mailto:belleekccg@gmail.com)

### Foyle Parents & Friends Association

Contact Seanna for details. Support network for parents/ carers of children and adults at the local special schools and ATCs. 02871 271017 [foylefpa@gmail.com](mailto:foylefpa@gmail.com)

### Sion Mills and District carers group

Open to all unpaid carers in Sion Mills and surrounding district. Contact Lynda on 077 5246 2365 [lyndabill56@hotmail.com](mailto:lyndabill56@hotmail.com)

### Sperrin Carers Support Group

Open to unpaid carers in the Newtown Stewart/Castlederg areas [sperrincarers@hotmail.com](mailto:sperrincarers@hotmail.com)

### The Ely Centre Carers Project

Forthill Street Enniskillen BT74 6AJ Poppies and Pins meet on a Wednesday morning to make lots of different craft items. Open to carers looking after someone that has been physically or psychologically injured as a result of the Northern Ireland Troubles. Tel: 028 6632 0977 [shirley@elycentre.co.uk](mailto:shirley@elycentre.co.uk)

## NI-wide voluntary organisations

Action Mental Health 028 9182 8494 [www.amh.org.uk](http://www.amh.org.uk)

### Age NI

028 9024 5729 / 0808 808 7575 (helpline) [info@ageni.org](mailto:info@ageni.org) [www.ageni.org](http://www.ageni.org)

### Aware Defeat Depression

Derry/L'Derry 028 7126 0602 [www.aware-ni.org](http://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 NI

028 9043 9843 [advice@carersni.org](mailto:advice@carersni.org) [www.carersuk.org/northernireland](http://www.carersuk.org/northernireland)

### Centre for Independent Living

028 8224 8926 or 028 90618546 [western@cilbelfast.org](mailto:western@cilbelfast.org) or [info@cilni.org](mailto:info@cilni.org) Contact 028 9262 7552 [nireland.office@contact.org.uk](mailto:nireland.office@contact.org.uk) [www.contact.org.uk](http://www.contact.org.uk)

### Disability Action

028 7136 0811 [derry@disabilityaction.org](mailto:derry@disabilityaction.org) [www.disabilityaction.org](http://www.disabilityaction.org)

### Fermanagh MS Society

Social events are held approximately four times a year. Attendance by invitation to members and carers. All those affected with Multiple Sclerosis and their carers Siobhan Allister 078 0975 9597 or Philomena Mulligan 077 4296 5124 [fermanagh@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:fermanagh@mssociety.org.uk)

### Huntingtons Society

Monthly meeting. All those affected by Huntington's disease and their carers. Angie 07921 513 561 or Zelie 077 3393 5863 [angie@hdani.org](mailto:angie@hdani.org) or [Zelie@hdani.org](mailto:Zelie@hdani.org)

### LGBT - Rainbow Project

Derry 028 7128 3030 Belfast 028 90319030

### Macmillan Cancer Support: Western Health and Social Care

**Trust Macmillan Information and Support Service** 02871611139 /07342075636 [Martha.magee@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:Martha.magee@westerntrust.hscni.net) [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

### Mencap

028 9069 1351 0808 808 1111 (helpline) [helpline.ni@mencop.org.uk](mailto:helpline.ni@mencop.org.uk)

### Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA)

0345 375 1852 [creea.convery@mndassociation.org](mailto:creea.convery@mndassociation.org) [www.mndassociation.org/](http://www.mndassociation.org/)

### Parkinson's Support Fermanagh

Meet 3rd Wednesday monthly in Tempo Road Day Centre [www.parkinsonssupport.org/fermanagh](http://www.parkinsonssupport.org/fermanagh) Contact Myrtle (028) 6862 2009

### Parkinson's UK Foyle Branch

Meet monthly. Contact Les Hill for details. Open to those with Parkinson's and their family/unpaid carers. Les Hill 0788 55 20894

### Parkinson's UK Omagh Branch

Meet third Wednesday of every month in Omagh Library, Spillars Place, Omagh at 2.30pm. Open to those with Parkinson's and their family/unpaid carers. Mary McAloon (028) 8289 8339 [mwmcalcon15@hotmail.com](mailto:mwmcalcon15@hotmail.com)

### Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke

028 9032 0184 [mail@nichsa.org.uk](mailto:mail@nichsa.org.uk) [www.nichsa.org.uk](http://www.nichsa.org.uk)

### Northern Ireland Hospice

028 9078 1836 [information@nihospice.org](mailto:information@nihospice.org)

### South East Fermanagh Foundation

Meet quarterly. Open to all carers who support victims/survivors of the troubles Kenny Donaldson/Joy Aiken 028 6772 3884 [joy.aiken@seff.org.uk](mailto:joy.aiken@seff.org.uk)

### Stroke Association

028 9050 8020 [northernireland@stroke.org.uk](mailto:northernireland@stroke.org.uk) [www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

# Consent for Carers Register (WHSCT)

## Carer Details

The Western Trust Carers Support Team maintains a Carers Register (mailing list). The purpose of this is to keep carers up-to-date with information. This is normally through the Carers Newsletter which is issued in September and April. The newsletter contains a range of information and invitations to events.

Your personal information is confidential and is held in line with data protection regulations. Your information is not shared with any other departments or agencies. The profile information gathered regarding carers who have registered helps to evidence future funding proposals and developments. You may ask to have your details removed at any time.

Title:\* Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms (\*please delete)

First Name: ..... Surname: .....

Address:.....

..... Town:.....

County: ..... Postcode:.....

Telephone : ..... Mobile: .....

D.O.B. .... Email: .....

### Race/Ethnic Origin:

- |                    |                          |                 |                          |                 |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| White              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black African   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bangladeshi     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pakistani          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> | Irish Traveller | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Chinese            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Indian          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Filipino        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed Ethnic Group | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black Other     | <input type="checkbox"/> |                 |                          |

Any other Ethnic Group (please specify) .....

Is English your first language? Yes  / No

So that we can make sure information being sent to you is relevant, we need some **information about the person you care for.**

**Please tick below**

Age 0–18	<input type="checkbox"/>	19–64	<input type="checkbox"/>	65 and over	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	ASD	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dementia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arthritis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alzheimer's	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart condition	<input type="checkbox"/>	CVA/Stroke	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kidney disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	MS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parkinson's disease	<input type="checkbox"/>
Old and frail	<input type="checkbox"/>	Downs Syndrome	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brain Injury	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) .....				Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Carers consent** (please tick and sign below)

- I would like to register with the Western Trust Carers mailing list to receive information.
- I would like a member of the carers support team to contact me

Please complete *all* information as far as possible and return to

**Carers Support Team**

**2 Coleshill Road,**

**Enniskillen**

**BT74 7HG**

or scan to

**Carers.support1@westerntrust.hscni.net**



The Western Health & Social Care Trust  
Community Services Dept  
2 Coleshill Road, Enniskillen BT74 7HG  
Tel: 028 6634 4163 / 028 7135 5023  
Email: [carers.support1@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:carers.support1@westerntrust.hscni.net)  
Web: [www.westerntrust.hscni.net](http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net)

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Web: [www.carersni.org](http://www.carersni.org)

For copies in large print, braille or languages other than English, contact us on the telephone number or email address above.

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