

Looking after someone

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This factsheet is for anyone who wants to know more about caring for another person. Many people do not consider themselves Carers. It may seem the most natural thing to look after a friend or relative. However, in concentrating your time on the person you care for, you can forget your own needs.

Caring for someone else can be both challenging and rewarding. You have the right to decide whether you take on or continue the role of a Carer. This factsheet focuses on you as the Carer. You are not alone, there are thousands of carers in Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion and there are various organisations that may be able to help. We hope this information will give you practical and emotional support, as well as links to other sources of help and information.

Caring for yourself

It can be difficult to recognise yourself as a Carer and to accept that you have needs of your own. Do not feel guilty about needing and asking for help. If you can take care of yourself, you are more likely to stay healthy and able to continue helping the person you are providing care for. Becoming a Carer may have happened suddenly, leaving little time to think about the implications for you. Or it may have been a gradual process, with you taking on more responsibility for the person you care for. It may have been a role you accepted willingly out of love, or out of duty, or a bit of both.

Looking after someone else is nearly always hard work. You may find it a financial drain, physically or mentally exhausting, or all three. Coming to terms with a new role may take time and constant readjustment.

Coping with your feelings

How do you feel at times? Tired? Isolated? Guilty? Upset? Angry? Embarrassed? These are common feelings experienced by many Carers but may also be mixed with positive feelings.

Dealing with stress

No matter how well you deal with your caring role, there will inevitably be times when you experience high levels of stress. To ensure your own health does not suffer, it is important to try and deal with stress. Possible ways of doing this are to ask friends and family for support; talk through situations with appropriate professionals, face to face or by telephone, or seek help from GP's, pharmacists, or other health professionals you may know.

Counselling

If you are experiencing depression or anxiety or feel you need additional support in helping you to deal with your circumstances, you can discuss with your GP whether it would be appropriate for you to be referred for counselling. Or you could try voluntary or charitable agencies that offer counselling. There are charges for private counselling services, but sometimes these can be negotiated.

Support Groups and carers' organisations can be a source of help. You may want to contact a Support Group to get information and find out how others have met and dealt with problems similar to those you encounter. There are a number of groups representing various conditions, for example, diabetes, arthritis or mental health problems, learning disability and so on. These groups can provide you with information about the particular illness or disability experienced by the person you care for.

Taking the Strain

Lifting and moving the person cared for can cause injury to Carers who are particularly vulnerable to back and other injuries.

If the person you care for is in hospital, or undergoing physiotherapy, ask the physiotherapist for advice. Occupational Therapists (OT's), whether from the NHS or Social Care, can give advice on lifting and moving as well as disability equipment. You can ask your doctor to refer you. If a disabled person asks for an assessment by Social Care, it is often done by an Occupational Therapist.

For further information:

Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales

Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales offers a range of carer support services that are available for unpaid carers of all ages. Contact us for further information on the support services we have available in your area.

Tel: 0300 0200 002

Email - Llanelli Office: info@ctcww.org.uk

Email - Pembrokeshire Office: carerssupportpems@ctcww.org.uk

Website: www.ctcww.org.uk

Local Authority Social Care Services

Local authority's social care services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. Emergency service after 5pm and up to 9am weekdays, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Carmarthenshire - Delta Wellbeing (previously called Careline)

Tel: 0300 333 2222

Website: <http://www.deltawellbeing.org.uk/>

Pembrokeshire - Pembrokeshire County Council

Office Hours Tel: 01437 764551 / Out of Hours Tel: 0300 333 2222

Email: enquiries@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Ceredigion – Porth Gofal Ceredigion County Council

Tel: 01554 574000

Email: contactsocservs@ceredigion.gov.uk**Dewis Cymru**

A directory of services where you can find out about services and opportunities available both locally and nationally.

Website: <https://www.dewis.wales/>**Carers Trust**

Carers Trust works to improve support, services and recognition for Carers.

Website: www.carers.orgWebsite: www.youngcarersnet.co.uk**Carers UK**

For information and advice about caring.

Tel: 0808 808 777

Email: advice@carersuk.orgWebsite: www.carersuk.org**Courses for Carers****Looking after Me – EPP Cymru**

Education Programmes offering a range of self-management health and wellbeing courses and workshops for people living with, or caring for, someone with a health condition.

Tel (general enquiries): 02920 227744

Email: epp@gavo.org.ukWebsite: www.eppwales.org**Counselling****Carmarthenshire Counselling Service**

A voluntary organisation with trained counsellors offering individual counselling for adults over 18 years.

Tel: 01554 772385

Email: carmarthenshirecounselling@gmail.com**Pembrokeshire Counselling Service**

A charity offering free confidential and secure counselling to the Pembrokeshire community for people experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues.

Tel: 01437 768708

Email: contact@pembrokeshirecounsellingservice.org**British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)**

For information on private counsellors in your area.

Tel: 01455 883300

Email: www.bacp.org.uk

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