

New to Caring?

Information and advice
for people new to caring



This booklet is entirely based on the experiences of carers and was written by Anne Chilton, Manager of VOCAL's Carers Advocacy and Counselling Service.



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Confused? bewildered? Don't be.
This short guide provides some of the answers.
The Princess Royal Trust VOCAL Carers Centre
can help with the rest.

Things worth knowing if you are new to caring

What is a community care assessment?
Do I need one?

Are there other people like me?
How do I meet them?

What if it all gets too much?
Who will support me?

Who are Occupational Therapists?
What do they do?

How am I going to manage financially?
Can I claim any benefits?



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What is a carer?

At the moment you may be wondering if you are a carer or not. You may see yourself as a wife, husband, partner, son, daughter, parent, friend or relative.

You may feel what you do for the person you care for is not anything other than what you would expect to do for them.

When someone we love or are close to becomes ill and needs extra help someone has to lend a hand. For some of us this can be something as simple as getting the shopping once a week. For others it can mean spending 24 hours a day with someone, being responsible for all their everyday needs as well as their personal care.

In many day-to-day situations the other person gets better and we can go back to how we were. But if the person does not get better, or is unable to do things for themselves, we may find ourselves being seen as their carer. So, what makes being a carer different from looking after someone? Well, it can be difficult to decide. 'Carer' is a word used to describe what lots of us have always done. Look after someone we care about when they cannot do it for themselves.

When you become a carer you may find that your life changes in all sorts of ways. You may have to spend more and more of your time looking after the needs of the person you care for. You may have to give up work. It might mean that you have to change how you view your life. You might need to learn new things, like cooking or dealing with the finances. Maybe you have always been independent and looked after your own affairs, now you might have to start asking for things for the person you care for or yourself. You may need to find out about the person's illness or disability. You might have to start claiming benefits.



In fact your whole life might change overnight, or, it might gradually change as the person you care for becomes less able to manage on their own. You might suddenly realise one day that you have changed from looking after someone to becoming their carer. Other people, such as professionals might start referring to you as a carer.

What might I need to know about?

How do you begin to manage these changes? It's difficult to predict what you might need to know about when you first become a carer. And so you don't know what questions to ask.

Many carers have told us, at the VOCAL Carers Centre, that accurate, relevant information at the beginning would have made a big difference to them. The main questions carers wanted information on were:

- the person's illness or disability
- community care assessments
- what happens when someone comes out of hospital
- what practical help they can get at home
- what their rights are as a carer
- what the different professionals do
- what support is available for you, the carer
- what benefits you or the person you care for might be entitled to
- what carers can do if it all gets too much

There may be other questions but these are the ones that are most frequently asked. In most cases they come down to being able to get the right information, at the right time, from the right person. We will look at how you can go about that in the rest of this booklet.



Getting information about the illness or disability

If you are caring for someone it is important that you know about their illness or disability. This might seem obvious but sometimes we can feel intimidated in, say, a hospital setting, not wanting to take up the doctors time. You might think that everyone else seems to know and feel a bit embarrassed about asking, what you think, are basic questions.

The first thing you have to remember is that professionals who work with people who are ill or disabled do so all the time. They know a lot about that illness or disability. You on the other hand may be facing it for the first time. How are you to know all about it? You need to know what the illness is, how it might affect the person you care for and how you can best help them.

You might need to find out how to deal with the illness in practical terms. For example, about:

- diet
- medication
- lifting and moving
- exercises

Ask, ask and ask again!

In order to do any of this you have to ask! And keep on asking until you feel satisfied with the information given.

This is easier said than done. It can be difficult to ask for information if you don't know what you need to know! It can, however, be helpful to think about what information you might need to know in terms of categories:



What do you need to know about ...

- what is wrong with the person you care for (the illness or disability)
- how it will affect the person you care for
- medication
- what might happen in the future

Write down what you want to know

As you are reading questions may be occurring to you. With the best will in the world we all forget things. It can be helpful to write down all the things you want to know about. So, here is a page for you to jot

things down as they occur to you and to act as a reminder for the future.

What do I need to know about the person I care for?

Remember this can include things like:

- information about the illness / disability
- how this will affect the person I care for
- information about medication
- what might happen in the future
- how often we will have to visit a doctor
- what services can be provided - if any
- is there an organisation who supports people like me?

Jot down anything that occurs to you. It doesn't matter how small a thing it is... if it's something that is troubling you, then you need an answer. So ask.



I need information about ...

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Confidentiality If the person you care for is an adult, you may need to get their permission, if they can give it, before a doctor or other professional will discuss their situation with you. This is because professionals work under strict rules regarding confidentiality. If you have difficulty getting information contact VOCAL for advice.

If the person you care for has a specific illness or disability, for example, if they have had a stroke, have Alzheimer's, Cerebral Palsy or are elderly there might be an organisation specifically for their illness or disability. Contact them, they will have up-to-date information about how an illness or disability can affect someone.



Who should I ask?

Ask if you can see either a doctor or someone who is treating the person

you care for. Tell them that you have some questions about the person's condition and you would like to discuss it with them. Take someone with you. A bit of moral support can make all the difference.

Alternatively, here are a few organisations that can help. These are just some examples, there are hundreds more.

NHS Helpline

For information about illnesses, treatment and anything about the health service.

Tel: 0800 22 44 88

Age Concern Scotland

Age Concern produce information on all issues facing people who are elderly. This includes information on finances, benefits, legal matters, community care and housing.

113 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 3DT

Advice line: 0800 009966

Chest, Heart and Stroke Association

Offering help and advice for those suffering from strokes, chest and heart difficulties.

65 North Castle Street, Edinburgh EH2 3LT

Tel: 0131 225 6963

Website: www.chss.org.uk

Email: adviceline@chss.org.uk

Advice line: 0845 077 6000

Other disabilities and illnesses with their own support organisations:

Alzheimer's
Arthritis
Asthma
Autism
Brittle Bones
Cancer
Diabetes
Drug misuse
Dyspraxia
Epilepsy
Genetic disorders
Head injuries
Hearing problems
HIV +
Kidney problems
Learning difficulties
Leukemia
Manic Depression
ME
Mental health difficulties
Multiple sclerosis
Parkinson's
Physical disabilities
Schizophrenia
Visual problems

As well as providing information, many organisations also offer support to carers



And there's always your Carers Centre ...

The Princess Royal Trust
VOCAL Carers Centre has
experienced staff to answer
your questions, or to direct you
to the best place for support.
We have information about

local and national organisations offering carers information and advice, a directory of support groups, and we can offer carers advocacy and counselling. If you can't find out who to call, then contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666, or by e-mail at vocal@carers.net. All services are free and confidential.

Advice Lines

Some organisations run advice lines staffed by professionals, others are run by volunteers, who are carers themselves. They will understand if you are not quite sure what

information you need. You never know, they might just answer the questions you didn't know you wanted to ask!

Remember that one person is unlikely to be able to give you all the information you need. You may need to speak to several people to get all your questions answered. But also remember, if you are not satisfied don't give up... keep asking until you get the information you need.

Help for the person you care for

Carers are often confused about what help is available for the person they care for and how to get that help. The first thing you need to know is that in order to get services from social work the person you care for



has to have been 'assessed' as requiring those services. The assessment is carried out either by social work (a community care assessment) or when someone is discharged from hospital.

Community Care Assessments

A community care assessment is what social work carry out to find out what support you need. It will show what services are required by someone who is ill, disabled or affected by old age, to allow them to continue to live in their own home.

If a person requires help then they need to contact their local social work office. As a carer you can do this on behalf of the person you care for. You can ask for a community care assessment on behalf of the person you care for...

- if the condition of the person you care for changes
- if they require more help to live day to day
- if the person you care for becomes more dependent on you
- if being a carer is getting too much

Some carers prefer to manage on their own, not wanting any extra help. However, it is important that you know how to get help if caring becomes too much for you.

Once the person you care for, or you on their behalf, have requested a community care assessment, social work will visit you to 'assess' the needs of the person you care for. The assessment looks at what services might be required to meet the person's assessed needs. This is called the community care assessment. It is important to note that,



what the social worker might assess as the person's needs, are not necessarily the same as what you or the person you care for feel is needed.

If the community care assessment results in services being provided then a financial assessment will be carried out to determine what, if anything, the person cared for will pay towards the cost of those services.

To request a community care assessment contact your local social work office. If you are not sure how to go about it then contact your local carers centre. They can help you apply for the assessment. If the person you care for has already had a community care assessment and their condition has changed, or you feel less able to manage you can request a re-assessment.

Coming out of hospital

Sometimes our caring role begins when someone is discharged from hospital. This might be following an accident, operation or illness.

Whilst you may be pleased that they are being discharged, you also need to think of some of the practical things that will need to happen before they come home. You need to think carefully about how you will cope, not just for the first week or two but for all the weeks and months following. The practicalities of caring for someone, maybe 24 hours a day, can be vast. It is important that you think about this and of the things that you might need to make your life a little easier.



Planning what a person needs

If the person you care for has been in hospital for a long time, or, is less able than when they went into hospital, then there is a procedure that the hospital should go through before the person is discharged. The hospital should carry out a 'discharge plan'. This outlines what care might be provided once the person is discharged. As carer you should be involved in deciding what services might be needed. The hospital social worker or OT (Occupational Therapist) is responsible for drawing up this plan. They should meet with you and the person you care for to discuss how you will manage once they are discharged. They will discuss with you what services might be available. The person you care for should be given a copy of the discharge plan.

If the person you care for has only been in hospital for a short time or they had services at home before they were admitted, then a discharge plan may not be required. It is only if a person is going to require a lot of care that a discharge plan is carried out.

What happens after leaving hospital?

When the person is to be discharged, the hospital social worker will liaise with the person's local social work office over how the assessed services will be provided once the person is discharged. The hospital social worker will monitor the services provided for the first six weeks after the person has been discharged from hospital. After this, responsibility is handed on to the



local social work office. At this point social work may carry out a community care re-assessment to ensure that the services provided are still required. This re-assessment might result in services being continued at the same level and frequency, being withdrawn or additional services being provided.

Who will pay?

The other thing that will need to be worked out is who is going to pay for the services. In order to do this a financial assessment will be carried out. This means that the finances of the person you care for will be recorded. This includes any income, for example, their pension, or any benefits they get. Amounts are taken off to cover their living expenses and then it is decided how much they will have to contribute towards the costs of the services provided. You can choose not to have a financial assessment. If so you will be expected to pay the full cost of any services provided.

Working out how much someone will pay towards services is a complicated process. If you need advice or need someone to explain the process to you then contact your local carers centre or local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

The sort of services you might be entitled to will depend on the illness or disability affecting the person you care for. How you are, what sort of accommodation you live in and what services are available may also affect the decision.

**Not sure what to do?
contact VOCAL 0131 622 6666**



What support can I get at home?

Services for the person you care for can be divided into three main areas: help in the home; aids and adaptations and day care and respite.

Help in the home

You may already know about some of the services such as Meals on Wheels. These services can be arranged through a social worker or your GP. In order to have any help in the home provided by social work the person you care for needs to have had a community care assessment, or have been assessed as needing services when discharged from hospital. Both of these assessments will identify what services are assessed as being required. Some services are provided by social work, others are provided by organisations who social work pay to provide those services.

Care at Home

This is when someone comes into your home to help with some of the tasks involved in looking after someone. It could include help with getting up in the morning, help with personal care, such as washing or dressing. It can also include preparing a meal or making sure the person is warm and safe. It could also provide a 'put to bed' service at night. The service is only provided if it has been assessed as being required in the community care assessment.

Aids and adaptations

Other services might also be needed such as changes to your home. For example, the person you care for might need a handrail in the bathroom to help them get in and out of the



bath. These are referred to as 'aids and adaptations'. Basically that means things which can, practically, make life easier for the person you care for. Usually the occupational therapist, district nurse or health visitor can help you get these. The range of things that can be provided is huge so if you think something might make a difference ask if it is available. Or contact the Disabled Living Centre (0131 537 9190) and ask if there is anything that could help. The Disabled Living Centre has information on all sorts of aids and things such as wheelchairs which could make your life easier. There may be a charge for some aids and adaptations.

Short breaks and breaks from caring

Breaks from caring may not seem a priority in the early days. You may be too concerned initially with adapting to all the practical and emotional changes that caring brings. However, in time you will

reach a point when you feel you need a break. It is important to recognise that we all need time out to recharge our batteries. If we don't, the strain of caring can cause our own health and well-being to suffer.

Breaks from caring are often referred to as respite. They may last a few hours, a few days, or even a few weeks. However long, the main concern carers have before they can enjoy a break is the quality of the 'replacement' care for the person they look after. Just like parents don't like to leave their children without making sure they are "in good hands", carers won't get any peace of mind to relax unless they can be sure the person they care for receives the same quality care they usually provide.



Home-based services ('sitter services')

This form of respite is traditionally known as a 'sitter service' - someone comes to your home to look after the person you care for while you are out. Nowadays, most agencies who provide these services realise that this should be an enjoyable and stimulating experience for the person cared for, and it can be, particularly once you get to know the people who come to your home.

Your social worker, local carer project or the VOCAL Carers Centre can put you in contact with agencies that provide sitter services. Such services usually cover a few hours, but are now also available overnight and may cover several days.

Day Care

It might be possible for the person you care for to attend a day centre. This will again depend on how well they are, what their illness or disability is and if there is a day centre suitable for them. Often transport is available to take the person and trained staff are on hand all day to care for them. Some people are reluctant to consider day care. Sometimes the person you care for makes it clear that they do not want to go. However, you need to consider your needs as well. If the person you care for does go to a day centre then this can give you valuable time to yourself. Time to catch up with the chores, or to meet friends or just to relax and recharge yourself. Day care can be arranged through your social worker. Some organisations provide services for specific illnesses or disabilities and run specialised day care services, such as The Chest, Heart and Stroke Association.



Longer breaks - residential care

Sometimes we need a longer break to enable us to carry on caring. This is when we need to consider arranging for the person we care for to “go in for respite”. This means the person we care for will go into a hospital, residential home or a nursing home while we have a break. If you feel you need a break speak to your social worker about respite. They will advise you as to whether social work will fund the respite costs or if you will have to pay for them yourself. As mentioned before, what you have to pay for services is dependent on the income and savings of the person you care for.

Who does what - the role of professional staff

There are a whole range of professionals who might become involved in the life of the person you care for. Who they are and how they are linked together can

seem confusing. The main people who may be involved with you are:

○ **Social Worker**

Social workers are either based at a hospital or in the community at social work offices. They can carry out community care assessments or discharge plans and can arrange services for the person you care for. They are also able to help you claim benefits.

○ **Occupational Therapist (OT)**

OTs are based both in hospitals and the community. They carry out assessments of peoples homes to see what aids



or adaptations may be required to enable the person to live in their home. For example they may require handrails or bathing aids. They can also run groups and activities for people with specific disabilities or illnesses, for example people with Alzheimer's, mental health difficulties or learning disabilities.

○ **Health visitor**

Health visitors are based in the community at health centres and GP surgeries. They can provide advice and information on a whole range of health related issues. They will visit you at home. They are able to refer people to occupational therapists and to social workers.

○ **District Nurses**

People can often get confused between health visitors and district nurses. The district nurse is the one who provides the practical nursing services. Things like, injections, changing dressings, giving enemas, bathing and such like. They are based in GP surgeries and health centres. Their services are usually arranged through the hospital, at discharge, or through the GP.

○ **CPN**

This stands for Community Psychiatric Nurse. These are nurses who are specifically trained to work with people who have mental health difficulties. They can offer support to the person with the illness and their families and carers. CPNs are usually based in the community and are often attached to a GP surgery or health centre.

○ **Pharmacist**

People don't often think of a pharmacist as someone



offering a service. However, if the person you care for is on any medication you are likely to be a frequent visitor to your local pharmacy. The pharmacist will know all about the medication prescribed. They can give you all sorts of information, like what to do if you miss a dose, what side-effects there are with different drugs and how to help someone take medication if they have a swallowing difficulty. If you have any queries about medication then ask your pharmacist. They will be happy to help.

Don't forget professionals are there to help you.

Carers Centres and carer organisations in the Lothians

Carers Centres are often the best place for first contact. Thanks to the support of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers and health and local authorities

carers centres and local carer organisations exist to offer carers advice and information, and direct them to the most appropriate service available.

Many centres and projects offer much more than advice, so it's worth contacting them and getting on their mailing lists. Towards the end of this booklet we have listed some of the many groups and organisations you could approach for information and support.



Your rights as a carer

The most important right you have as a carer is the right to be listened to and to have your views taken into account. You should be consulted about the services that might be provided for the person you care for. You should be asked if you are able to provide care for that person. Professionals should not force you or persuade you to take on caring for someone if you feel you cannot or do not wish to do so.

If you are providing a lot of care for the person you care for then you are entitled to a carers assessment. This means that you can ask social work to look at what you do as a carer and how this affects your life. Social work cannot provide you with services, but, they can provide extra services for the person you care for which may give you extra support or time off.

You can ask for a carers assessment at any time. As a carer you can ask for a carers assessment to be carried out at the same time as the person you care for has a community care assessment, when you feel you need help, or when the person is being discharged from hospital if a discharge plan is being carried out.

The carers assessment will look at how caring affects your life. It will look at the things you liked doing but maybe have had to give up now you are a carer. It will look at what your needs are and see if they can be better met by providing extra services for the person you care for. For example, if you feel you would like more time for yourself, maybe just to do the shopping, social work may be able to arrange an extra session in day care or for a sitter to come in for a couple of hours.



Summing Up

- If the person you care for is living at home and requires services then you can contact the social work office direct and ask for a community care assessment on their behalf. You will be asked if the person knows you are contacting social work. A social worker will arrange to visit and assess what services are required.
- If the person you care for is in hospital, then the hospital social worker will assess what services are required for when they get home (the discharge plan). If services are required, the hospital social worker will pass these details on to your local social work office. The social work office will arrange for the services to start. The hospital social worker will monitor the services for the first six weeks after the person is discharged from hospital. Responsibility is then handed on to the local social work office.
- In both cases, hospital discharge and community care assessment, the person you care for will be offered a financial assessment. If they agree they will have to declare their income and any savings they have. The financial assessment will determine how much the person has to pay for the services that are provided. This can be the whole cost, part of the cost or, if you are on a very low income, no cost at all. If they decline a financial assessment they will be expected to pay the full cost of any services provided.
- As a carer you should be asked for your views on; the services being provided for the person you care for; your ability and willingness to care for them.
- If you are not sure about what is happening then



ask. Ask what they are doing, ask what services are being provided, when, how, who is providing them. Don't rely on being told.

- Ask for a copy of the discharge plan or community care assessment.

Is there help and support for me?

Being a carer can be the best thing that you ever do in your life and it can also be the most difficult. But the good news is that help and support are at hand. There are carers in all walks of life, living on every street, shopping at the shops you use. You may never have considered those people before. You may know someone who cares for someone. Maybe you have walked past a carers centre and wondered what goes on in there? Well, lots goes on. We specialise in providing advice, information and emotional support to carers.

Carers Centres

Most carers centres offer advice and information on a range of issues relevant to carers. This can cover practical things like helping carers to identify what benefits they can claim through to providing emotional support through counselling. Centres often also run courses and workshops on issues about caring. They may also have an advocacy service, which has people who are trained to support you and help you get your views across to professionals.



Carer Support Groups

At VOCAL we have information on over 100 support groups for carers. You may well already be thinking that this wouldn't appeal

to you. Hold on a moment. Lots of carers feel that way to begin with. They feel they can manage on their own. Until, that is, they wake up one morning and don't want to get out of bed. They feel tired, worn down, maybe wanting to cry all the time but not knowing why. What's up with them? Carer fatigue? You can only go on giving to others for so long. If you don't get back something for yourself then you start running on empty.

Carer support groups are seen by many carers as their 'pit stop', their refuelling place. Somewhere that they can go and talk about how they feel to others who understand; or not talk; just stop being a carer for a few hours; or have a laugh; or listen to someone else's difficulties; have a cup of tea; go off on an outing; anything that helps.

It can be helpful to meet other people who understand how demanding it can be to be a carer. Where you don't have to explain why you are so tired / frustrated / fed up / worried. These things can help when the going gets a bit tough. Most carers support groups are places of fun and laughter. Many carers say it is going to these groups that help get them through. Knowing that there is a time, maybe once a month when they can let go for a short time.

Education and Training

Many carer organisations offer courses specifically for carers. Some focus on providing support linked to the caring role, others



offer courses which can add another interest to carers' lives. For example, courses in art and crafts, creative writing or understanding local history. Your local carers centre will know and can put you in touch with whoever runs the course.

Who Cares? Courses

These courses are specifically for carers and are run by carers centres. They are designed to fill in some of the gaps in information which carers feel they have. For example the course might have sessions on what benefits carers can claim or how to move someone without hurting them or you! They might have someone come in to show you how to de-stress yourself. Contact your local carers centre and ask if they run these courses and when will the next one start. The courses are free for carers.

Helplines

Many organisations now run helplines for those affected by an illness or disability. They are usually open to carers as well. They vary in the times they are available and who runs them. Most though will have up-to-date, relevant information. They may be able to tell you about carer support services in your area. This means groups or workers who have specific responsibility for supporting carers.

Carers National Association

There is one helpline run specifically for carers. It is called Carersline and is run by Carers Scotland. This is a national helpline. Tel: 0808 808 7777. They will have lots of general advice for carers but not information relevant to your particular neighbourhood or area. Carers Scotland also produce a range of free leaflets about issues relevant to carers. Call Carers Scotland on 0141 221 9141.



Benefits and financial support

How and when we become a carer affects what sort of benefits we can claim. It also depends on the nature of the illness or disability the person we care for has and such things as our age.

There may be benefits that you or the person you care for can claim. However, the benefits system is complex and it can seem overwhelming trying to work out if you are entitled to claim a particular benefit. Should you manage to work that out and get the form you are then confronted with what can seem to be an immense list of questions that are not always relevant to your situation. Many carers give up through frustration at this point. Don't.

Yes, the forms are complicated but there is help at hand. You can contact your local CAB. They have people who are trained to fill in these forms. You can also contact your local carers centre. Staff there can help with finding the right person to help you fill in the forms. Or you can contact the Benefits Enquiry Line on 0800 88 22 00. This is a free enquiry line for people with disabilities and their carers. They can help fill in the form for you over the telephone.

The rules about who can claim any benefit and under what circumstances change regularly. So, rather than go into all the rules and criteria for all of the benefits please contact your local CAB, carers centre or one of the organisations dealing with the illness or disability of the person you care for.



Counselling for carers

If things seem too difficult and you feel that talking to someone away from your immediate family might help then counselling might be worth considering. Many carers

feel that when they become carers their whole life changes. Not just in the practical things they have to do but in other ways as well. It may be you are now having to care for the person who always supported you. The demands on your time and energies might be greater now, whilst the support you receive is less. You may feel that there is no one for you to lean on. Family and friends can provide a lot of support but sometimes we need a space of our own to explore how our lives have changed and how we can manage those changes. If you feel talking to a counsellor might help then contact your carers centre or VOCAL to find out about services in your area.

With the best will in the world there will be times when it all gets on top of you. You may wonder if you can manage for another hour, let alone the rest of the week.

It's at times like these that you need to know what support you can draw on. Friends and family are often willing to help ... if we let them. Often we want to protect those closest to us from how we feel. Especially if it isn't positive. This is natural enough. But, sometimes in doing this we can deny ourselves the very support we need.

So, talk to friends and family members. Those who want to help will and those that don't will make their views known. It's a true fact that we find out who our real friends are in a crisis.

There are other things that we can do to support ourselves.



We can:

- join a carers support group
- contact a helpline
- make contact with our local carers centre

In fact, make contact with or talk to someone, anyone who understands. Whatever you do, don't keep it to yourself. Talking about things won't change things but it can change how we feel about things.

Carer organisations and Centres in Edinburgh and the Lothians

Princess Royal Trust VOCAL Carers Centre

8 Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2PW

Tel: 0131 622 6666

Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre

Carers of West Lothian

Strathbrock Partnership, 189a West Main Street, Broxburn,
West Lothian, EH52 5LH

Tel: 01506 771 750

Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre

Carers of East Lothian

149 North High Street, Musselburgh EH21 6AN

Tel: 0131 665 0135

Carers Action Midlothian

14/15 Bogwood Court, Mayfield, Dalkeith, EH22 5DG

Tel: 0131 663 6869



Greater Pilton Carers Resource

36 Muirhouse Crescent, Edinburgh EH4 4QL

Tel: 0131 315 3130

For carers living in the Greater Pilton area.

MECOPP - Minority Ethnic Carers of Older People Project

23 Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH6 8LN

Tel: 0131 467 2994

Edinburgh Young Carers Project

Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh EH7 5QY

Tel: 0131 475 2322

A specific service for children and young people who care.

VOCAL - Carers Advocacy Service and Carers Counselling Services

8 Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2PW

Tel: 0131 622 7625

Advocacy and counselling specifically for carers in
Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Other Useful Contacts

Lothian Health Council

21 Torphichen Street, Edinburgh EH3 8HX

Tel: 0131 229 6605

For information on all aspects of the NHS Trusts, including
support in making complaints against the NHS.

Disabled Living Centre

Astley Ainslie Hospital, Grange Loan, Edinburgh EH9 2HL

Tel: 0131 537 9190

For information and advice on aids and adaptations for
people with disabilities, including wheelchairs.



Ca(i)re Project

The Eric Liddell Centre, 15 Morningside Road,
Edinburgh EH10 4DP

Tel: 0131 446 3317

Ca(i)re provide free adult education courses and support for carers in Edinburgh.

NHS Helpline

Tel: 0800 22 44 88

For information and advice about illnesses, patients' rights, self-help groups, waiting times and NHS dental care.

Benefits Enquiry Line

Tel: 0800 88 22 00

For general information on social security benefits.

Tel: 0800 44 11 44

For help with completing claim forms.

Carersline (Carers Scotland)

Tel: 0808 808 7777

General information and support for carers.

CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau)

To find out where your nearest CAB office is, look in the phone book or Tel: 0131 550 1000 for details.



If you're not sure where to turn contact the VOCAL Carers Centre

What can the VOCAL Carers Centre help me with?

- community care & carers assessments
- financial support and benefits
- carer support groups
- information on help from other organisations
- information on breaks from caring
- training and education courses for carers
- advocacy
- counselling

But what can they actually do?

Well, amongst other things we can:

- put you in contact with other carers
- help you to find out about things, like respite
- check you are claiming the benefits you are entitled to
- put you in contact with other local projects which can offer you support
- tell you about courses for carers at other organisations
- tell you about our publications and courses on
 - How Relationships Change
 - Dealing with Guilt
 - Self Advocacy
- send you a free copy of 'Carers News'
- support you to get your views across to professionals
- help you to get services that will help you as a carer
- listen to you
- be there for you while you are a carer and after



We can send you further information on any of the services offered to carers - just tick the ones you want more information on, cut out this page and send to:

VOCAL Carers Centre, Freepost 3172, Edinburgh EH1 0XG
or phone us on 0131 622 6666

Please send me more information on:

- VOCAL Information Pack
- Carers News
- Carers Advocacy Service
- Carers Counselling Services
- Training courses
- Workshops and support groups
- Vocalise - A guide to self advocacy
- Changing Relationships - a self help guide
- “Home From hospital” - information pack

I would like to go on the VOCAL mailing list yes / no
I would like someone from VOCAL to contact me yes / no

Name

Address.

.....

Postcode

Telephone

Contact the VOCAL Carers Centre
0131 622 6666 or vocal@carers.net
or click: www.vocal.org.uk





