

Welcome

to the Carer Information Pack



VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● July 2018

About this pack

This Carer Information Pack has been produced by VOCAL (Voice of Carers Across Lothian) for carers living in Edinburgh. Each of the factsheets falls into one of four themed areas (listed on the right) or a specialist topic.

Many carers are unaware of the support available to them or what they are entitled to. This pack is simply a starting point, not a comprehensive guide. After reading the pack, you may find that you have more questions or would like more information related to your own caring situation.

How VOCAL can help

VOCAL is an organisation run by carers for carers, offering a range of free support services and opportunities:

- **Carer Support Teams (Edinburgh and Midlothian)**
- **Specialist benefit and legal surgeries**
- **Grant funds for short breaks and power of attorney**
- **Training and groupwork programme**
- **Counselling service**
- **Family Support Addictions team**
- **Gateway to other services**

Useful resources

Websites

- VOCAL website: www.vocal.org.uk
- Carer Events website: www.carerevents.co.uk

● Support and information for carers

Accessing short breaks; carers assessments; direct payments for carers; emergencies and emotional support.

● Services for person you support

Assessments; care at home; services and support; equipment; alarms; who's who in health and social care.

● Money and Transport

Welfare, disability benefits; council tax discounts; travel concessions; funding sources; hospital parking; mobility cars.

● Legal matters

Power of attorney; guardianship; mental health legislation; wills and trusts and your rights as a carer.

● Specialist topics

Parent carers - children and families; worried about someone's addiction; carers in employment; thinking about long term care.

Practical help with caring

for family members, partners and friends

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Carers can access practical support through their local carer centres and carer support groups and through the City of Edinburgh Council's Health and Social Care department.

Carer Support Plans

Under the Carers' (Scotland) Act, all carers have a right to request an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) or Young Carer Statement (YCS). At time of writing this is only available to carers in a small area of Edinburgh but should be rolled out later in 2018/early 2019. The ACSP should set out your identified needs and the support to be provided to meet these needs which may include maintaining your own health and well-being and balancing caring with other areas of your life such as employment or social activities.

Short breaks for carers

Short breaks offer carers a break from daily routine, time to pursue personal interests and improve confidence, health and well-being.

Breaks can vary from a few hours to a few weeks and may be arranged on a regular planned basis, as a holiday, or to deal with an unexpected emergency. Breaks can also take many forms - you can go away or stay at home; try something new or make time for your old interests; spend time on your own or with others.

Planning and arranging a break

Short break (respite) services can be arranged through City of Edinburgh Council's Health and Social Care department. The first step is to get an Adult Carer Support Plan (see above), and the person you care for will require an assessment of their needs.

VolunteerNet

City of Edinburgh Council has a support scheme for carers called VolunteerNet.

The service has volunteers who can sit with someone while a carer goes out or carry out odd jobs such as shopping or gardening on the carers behalf. Contact Social Care Direct on **0131 200 2324**.

Stepping Out[®] weekends

Free short residential breaks which take place from a Friday afternoon to the Sunday afternoon at Low Port Education Centre in Linlithgow. Contact Care for Carers on **0131 661 2077** or visit: **www.care4carers.org.uk**

Take a Break

Take a Break is administered by the Family Fund, to fund single or ongoing breaks for families caring for a disabled or seriously ill child or young person. Email **info@takeabreakscotland.org.uk** or visit the website: **www.takeabreakscotland.org.uk**

BreakAway helps people with a learning or physical disability aged 16 to 65 who live with their family or carer to find and create the right break for them. The Council must have assessed the needs of the person you care for and agreed to an individual budget for respite care before the Break Away can help - call **0131 200 2324**.

If you are arranging a short break yourself, then there are a number of factors to consider, including cost. Shared Care Scotland provide a range of tools and resources for carers who are planning short breaks - visit their website: www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk or call **01383 622462**.

There are a number of organisations that offer support to carers to finance short breaks, including VOCAL. With funding from Shared Care Scotland's Creative Breaks Fund, **VOCAL's Short Breaks Fund** has funding available to help you take a break from your caring role. Contact VOCAL on **0131 622 6666** or visit: www.vocal.org.uk/short-breaks-fund

Direct payments for carers

The Self-directed Support Act provides local authorities with a power to support carers in their caring role. Where such support is provided, local authorities have a duty to offer the carer the same options for their support as are provided to service users. The SDS statutory guidance reinforces this message and sets out how support to carers can prevent crisis.

For more information about direct payments for carers visit: www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk or contact VOCAL on **0131 622 6666**.

Learning opportunities for carers

VOCAL runs a number of free courses for carers in partnership with NHS, social care and other voluntary organisations. As well as courses about particular conditions (eg. dementia, stroke, MS, child with additional needs), there are many other free seminars, learning and leisure opportunities designed to maintain carers' health and well-being, improve confidence and skills required in their caring role and provide the opportunity to meet other carers. Visit: www.carerevents.co.uk for more details.

Support for carers in Edinburgh

VOCAL Carers Centre

- 0131 622 6666

Edinburgh Carer Support

- 0131 536 3371

MECOPP

- 0131 467 2994

Ca(i)re Befriending Project

- 0131 446 3317

Care for Carers

- 0131 661 2077

Edinburgh Carers Council

- 0131 322 8480

Support in Mind Scotland

- 0131 662 4359

North West Carers

- 0131 315 3130

Oxgangs Carers

- 0131 445 3332

Broomhouse Carers

- 0131 455 7731

Queensferry Carer Support

- 0131 622 6666

Pasda

- 0131 475 2416

Edinburgh Headway Group

- 0131 537 9116

Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living

- 0131 475 2350

Emotional support for carers

emotional support and counselling

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Looking after yourself

Becoming a carer affects all of us in different ways. Whether we felt we had a choice about it or were thrown into it because of circumstances, there is no doubt that caring can be difficult at times. There is not usually any prior training so most people muddle through as best they can, learning as they go along.

The daily responsibility of attending to someone else's needs may mean that your own needs are often neglected.

Taking time out for yourself

Leisure time is often the first thing that disappears for carers, and yet it is one of the best stress relievers. If possible try to take some 'time out' each day. Carers can apply to **VOCAL's Short Breaks Fund** for grants to cover short breaks including leisure activities or a series of short weekly breaks.

VOCAL runs a free **Complementary Therapy service** for carers - call **0131 622 6666** or email **centre@vocal.org.uk** to book an appointment.

Taking part in groups

Joining a carer support group can be a way of getting both practical and emotional support. No matter what you are struggling with there will usually be someone who has been through the same thing and can understand how you feel.

For more information about looking after yourself - from getting enough sleep, healthy eating and relaxation techniques - visit the VOCAL website:

www.vocal.org.uk/carer-support/care-for-yourself

Managing stress

VOCAL runs regular **stress management courses** designed to help carers to understand stress and its impact, develop techniques to plan for and manage stressful situations. For more information visit **www.carerevents.co.uk**, email **centre@vocal.org.uk** or call **0131 622 6666**.

VOCAL Carer Counselling Service

VOCAL's COSCA recognised counselling service is open to carers who require emotional support. The first step is to call **0131 466 8082** or email **counselling@vocal.org.uk** to arrange an intake session. For carers living in Edinburgh or Midlothian, financial contributions are agreed at a level to suit your individual circumstances. Carers who live in other local authority areas can access counselling at a cost of £20 per session.

Emergencies

making a plan and sources of support

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Planning for an emergency

For many carers life cannot simply be put on hold when emergencies happen as the person they are looking after relies on them for vital support. All carers should create an emergency plan - for you and the person you look after. Having a plan in place can help ease your worries and provide reassurance.

An emergency plan might include:

- The name, address and contact details of the person you look after.
- Who should be contacted in an emergency – this might include friends, family or professionals.
- Details of any medication the person you look after is taking.
- Details of any ongoing treatment they receive.

Although you may be able to arrange an emergency plan with friends and family it can be reassuring to have the involvement of your local council in case informal arrangements fall through. One way to do this is through requesting an **Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP)** (or **Young Carer Support Plan**) which should include an emergency plan.

Safety in the home

Make your home safer and have a fire action plan - Scottish Fire and Rescue Service offer a free home safety check and fit free smoke detectors if required. To arrange a visit call **0800 0731 999** (freephone).

There are also devices and technology which may help - alarms, monitors and sensors for unlit gas, heat, smoke or floods, fall detectors and wander alarms. See the factsheet '*Organising the home for care*' for more details.

In an emergency

Social Work Emergency Service (out of hours):

0800 731 6969 or
01506 281028/9 (W Lothian)

Ambulance: If someone is feeling unwell contact their **GP** or alternatively call **NHS 24** on **111**.

In an emergency dial **999**.

If you would like to book an ambulance call **0300 123 1236**.

Police: call **999** for emergencies and **101** for non-emergencies.

Fire emergencies: leave the home immediately and then dial **999**.

Accident & Emergency Departments (A&Es):

Aged 13 & over

Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh
0131 536 1000

Under 13 years

Royal Hospital for Sick Children

0131 536 0000

All ages

A&E Department, St John's Hospital, Livingston
01506 523 000

Services and care

for the person you support

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This factsheet introduces some of the health and social care services and support available for **adults with support needs living in Edinburgh**. Please note that some services may have waiting lists in operation. For information about **carers' assessments** and **support services for carers** see the yellow factsheet '*Practical help for carers*'.

Arranging care and support services

There are a number of ways in which care and support services for the person you care for can be organised:

- **Privately** - if you know what support the person you care for requires and they are able to pay for it you can arrange this privately. VOCAL can help you find relevant information.
- **Local authority** - if the person you care for is eligible for support from the local authority then follow the steps on page 3.
- **Following discharge from hospital** - intensive support, called 'reablement', is available for six weeks after coming out of hospital. After this period ongoing support is offered if help is still required.

Waiving of charges for carers

The Social Care (Self-Directed Support) Scotland Act 2013 introduced the right for carers not to be charged for any support they receive as a carer. This does not apply to services that are provided to the person who is being cared for. In this case, the normal charging for non-residential care services will still apply.

Support is defined as "*any form of services of assistance which will help the adult to provide, or continue to provide, care for the person cared for.*"

● **Free personal care**

The person you care for needs an assessment to see if they qualify for free personal care. They will qualify if they are 65 years old or over and assessed as needing support. They may have to pay for things like cleaning, laundry or washing up after meals.

● **Day care services**

A needs assessment is required if the person you care for wants to go to a day centre. Transport and meals are provided at a low cost. Some centres are specially designed for people with dementia, sensory impairment, physical or learning disabilities. A full list of day care services is available from -

www.edinburgh.gov.uk

● **Terminal illness**

People who are terminally ill are entitled to free care.

Services for the person you care for

Services provided by the local authority require the person you care for to have an **eligibility assessment (see page 3)**. Most are chargeable and paid for by the person you care for (on a sliding scale depending on income) but some may be free if they are eligible. You may also choose to arrange and pay for care services privately.

	Free if assessed as eligible by health & social care and over 65 yrs of age	Usually charged for (some may be free depending on financial assessment)	May be available free through other agencies eg voluntary sector
PERSONAL HYGIENE <i>Includes washing, dressing, shaving, oral hygiene, nail care</i>	■		
TOILETING/CATHETER CARE <i>Help with going to the toilet or managing a catheter</i>	■		
GETTING UP/ GOING TO BED <i>Help in the mornings and evenings to prepare and get in/out of bed</i>	■		
MEAL PREPARATION & EATING <i>Help with preparation of up to 3 meals and snacks a day</i>	■	■	
TAKING MEDICATION <i>Help with remembering or taking medication</i>	■	■	
HOUSEHOLD CHORES <i>Help with household cleaning, shopping, laundry</i>		■	■
OVERNIGHT SUPPORT <i>Includes toileting, turning in bed and monitoring safety</i>	■	■	
DAYCARE <i>Includes social and group activities, lunch clubs and day centres</i>	■	■	■
HELP AFTER COMING OUT OF HOSPITAL <i>Short term care at home following discharge from hospital</i>	■		
GETTING A PERSONAL ASSISTANT <i>Support to find and employ a personal assistant</i>		■	
EQUIPMENT & ADAPTATIONS FOR THE HOME <i>Includes equipment and support to make adaptations to the home</i>		■	■
MONITORS & ALARMS FOR THE HOME <i>Includes personal alarms, movement sensors and smoke alarms</i>	■	■	■
REPLACEMENT CARE <i>Replaces care that you would normally give so that you can take a break</i>	■	■	■
BEFRIENDING/SITTER SERVICES <i>Trained staff spend time regularly with the person you care for</i>	■	■	■
GARDENING <i>Help maintaining your garden and outside areas</i>		■	■
HOME REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE <i>Help with DIY jobs and small repairs</i>		■	■

Arranging services and support through your local authority

The time it takes to arrange support services for the person you care for will vary depending on the complexity of their situation.

Eligibility Criteria

Priority is given to people who are at the greatest risk.

Four types of social care need are assessed: personal safety, personal care / domestic tasks, family and social responsibilities and carers' needs.

These are graded as *critical or substantial*, or *moderate or low* based on risk to personal safety and maintaining independence.

Most people are only eligible for social care services where they are assessed as having *critical or substantial* risk.

 **Call Social Care Direct**
0131 200 2324



 **Discuss and agree the needs of the person you care for**
Usually through a **community care assessment** carried out by a social worker, occupational therapist or community care assistant



Eligible for council services?
Usually eligible if assessed as having **critical/substantial** levels of risk

NO

↓ YES



 **Self-Directed Support - decide how to manage care services**

- Direct payment (person you care for arranges support)
- Person you care for arranges support through council or other agency
- Council arranges support or
- Combination of the above

Arrange care yourself
See page 4 for useful contacts

 **Eligible for financial support?**
Financial assessment to determine whether person you care for is eligible for financial support from local authority (and how much they may have to contribute).

NO

↓ YES



Services and support for the person you care for

Coming home from hospital

The process of planning what services and support someone may need when they leave hospital should begin as soon as they are admitted. For some people the process is simple, for others it can be more complicated. By the time someone leaves hospital they should know:

- How to contact relevant services.
- What treatment will be provided.
- How to use any equipment needed.
- What, and how, medication will be given.

A team of professionals in the hospital will work together to discuss discharge arrangements and a named person will be in charge of this plan. You should be given this person's name. For more details see NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council's '*Leaving Hospital: a guide to discharge planning for relatives and carers*'. Contact VOCAL on **0131 622 6666** to request a copy.

Free nursing care

Free nursing care is available for people of any age who have been medically assessed as requiring nursing care services including podiatry, catheter care and wound management/dressings. This may not always cover equipment needed at home - this would be assessed by the local authority using social work criteria and processes.

Useful contacts

The Care Inspectorate - List of registered home care providers and inspection reports. This list is useful if arranging care privately.

www.careinspectorate.com

Care Information Scotland - Telephone service and website with information about care services for older people living in Scotland.

www.careinfoscotland.co.uk

A-Z of NHS Lothian health services:

www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/Services/A-Z/Pages/default.aspx

Over the Fence - Practical Self-Directed Support information and advice about arranging care for yourself or someone else.

www.overthefence.org.uk

Self-Directed Support Scotland - Information about Self-directed Support with a specific section for carers.

www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk

VOCAL website - For the most up-to-date information about the practical and financial aspects of arranging care for someone else.

www.vocal.org.uk

Carer events website - Free courses, events and workshops for carers on welfare rights, Self-Directed Support and many other issues affecting carers.

www.carerevents.co.uk

Lothian Council for Inclusive Living - Support for disabled people, people with long-term conditions and older people, to live independently in their communities.

www.lothiancil.org.uk

Edinburgh Choices

The City of Edinburgh Council's online directory of care and support services for people living in Edinburgh.

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/edinburghchoices

Organising home for caring

Equipment, adaptations, alarms, telecare, housing repairs, housing with support

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Alarms and monitors (Telecare)

Telecare allows you or the person you support to contact the community alarm service to get help if the person you care for needs it e.g. if they become ill or something is wrong. In addition to the community alarm service there is a range of equipment to monitor movement, heat, fire risks and if the person you support might wander.

A professional can arrange for a Telecare package to be installed or you can call **Social Care Direct on 0131 200 2324** and they will make arrangements for someone to visit and find out what kind of Telecare is needed. There is usually no charge for the installation, maintenance, repair or removal of any equipment but you may have to pay for the monitoring service.

Equipment to help in the home

Equipment for the home is available to help older people or those with disabilities manage bathing, dressing, toileting and moving around the home day to day. If you are leaving hospital, an occupational therapist or physiotherapist will assess your needs and arrange for the equipment you need. If the person is at home you can contact Social Care Direct on the number below.

Most equipment is ordered through the Community Equipment Service - some simple items can be ordered directly by you while others require a professional assessment before they can be ordered.

Contact Social Care Direct on 0131 200 2324 for advice or to arrange an assessment.

Ordering simple equipment items

Simple items such as pickup reachers, dressing sticks and grab rails can be ordered from the Council's directory of equipment (available online at: **www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory/15/** or by calling the Community Equipment Store on **0131 529 6300**). These items are free of charge and can be installed if required. If equipment is required for a child or young person under 16, please contact Social Care Direct on **0131 200 2324**.

Red Cross short term loan service

The British Red Cross provide short-term loans (free of charge) of mobility aids to people in need, including wheelchairs, commodes, walking sticks and frames. Call the local branch in Dalkeith on **0131 660 9372**.

Adaptations to the home

You may be eligible for support to make adaptations to your home such as changing the layout of your kitchen or bathroom or putting ramps inside or outside your property. The Council use a set of criteria to assess eligibility for a major adaptation - this is the same criteria used to assess eligibility for care at home services. An Occupational Therapist (OT) will visit and assess the needs of the person you care for.

To arrange for an assessment for an adaptation to your home contact Social Care Direct on 0131 200 2324.

Care and repair

Care and Repair provide a wide range of practical services and advice to assist elderly and disabled people in Edinburgh to live in their own homes in more comfort, security and with greater independence, including handy person, small repairs, home improvement and trade referral services.

Call **0131 337 1111**, email **reception@careandrepaiiredinburgh.org.uk** or visit: **www.careandrepaiiredinburgh.org.uk**

Housing with support

Support for people with learning disabilities

Housing support providers can help the person you care for to move into their own home and to live independently if this is suitable for them. City of Edinburgh Council has a list of housing support providers for people with learning disabilities - visit **www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20097/learning_disabilities**

Sheltered housing

City of Edinburgh Council has sheltered housing across Edinburgh. It is allocated based on individual needs; there is no age barrier but there must be a need for support or the alarm system. To apply for sheltered housing with the council and housing associations call **0131 529 5080**, email **edindex@edinburgh.gov.uk** or visit the website: **keytochoice.scotsman.com**

Managing home energy use and bills

VOCAL provide free energy use seminars, energy surgeries and 'switching labs' for carers to support them to get the best deal from energy suppliers and manage home energy use and bills. Contact VOCAL on **0131 622 6666** or visit **www.carerevents.co.uk** for more information.

Disabled Living Foundation

The Disabled Living Foundation offers advice and information for older and disabled people, as well as carers. You can get independent advice and guidance on equipment and adaptations. Contact **0300 999 0004** or visit: **www.dlf.org.uk**

Useful resources

Disabled Living Foundation

The Disabled Living Foundation's 'Living made easy' website - **www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk**

- can help you choose what daily living equipment will suit you best. They offer clear, practical advice.

You can also check 'Ask SARA', the Disabled Living Foundation's guided advice tool - **asksara.dlf.org.uk**

The Dementia Centre

Virtual Care Home is an online resource that demonstrates dementia-friendly design in people's own homes. For more details visit:

www.dementia.stir.ac.uk/design/virtual-care-home/virtual-care-home

Help getting around

transport, discounts, mobility cars, accessible travel

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For many carers supporting the person they care for to get around can be expensive and difficult. This factsheet introduces some of the concessions and options available.

- **National Entitlement Card (over 60s):** Bus pass for people over 60, apply at your local City of Edinburgh Council library.
- **National Entitlement Card (disabilities):** Bus pass for people with disabilities. Apply at your local City of Edinburgh Council library. If you have any questions about either card, please phone One Edinburgh on 0131 200 2351.
- **Disabled persons railcard:** Save up to one third of the cost of train fares with this card - call **0345 605 0525** for details.
- **Senior railcard:** Allows anyone over 60 years of age to save one third on Standard and First Class rail fares. Call **0345 3000 250** for details.
- **Taxicard:** If you are an Edinburgh resident with a disability you can apply for a Taxicard to make your journeys cheaper and get free rail travel in the Lothian area. Call **0131 469 3891** for details.
- **HcL (formerly Handicabs):** Provides accessible transport for people with mobility challenges including Dial-a-Ride (door-through-door service) and Dial-a-Bus (transport from your home to local shopping centres). Call **0131 447 1718**.
- **Blue Badge:** Allows eligible badge holders to park in disabled and public parking places for free. There is an admin charge for new badges and renewals. For more information call **0131 469 3891**.
- **Lothian Shopmobility:** Lends wheelchairs and powered scooters from a Mobile Unit in the city centre or at the Gyle, Cameron Toll and Fort Kinnaird Shopping Centres. Call **0131 557 4123** for more information.

● Driving and DVLA

If you have a driving licence you must tell DVLA if you have a 'notifiable' medical condition - epilepsy, strokes and neurological conditions, mental health problems, physical disabilities and visual impairments. Call **0300 790 6806** for more details.

● Hospital travel

You may be entitled to help with necessary travel costs to and from hospital if you have a low income or receive certain benefits or credits. Call **0300 330 1343**.

Any NHS Lothian patient can claim back travel costs if they have to travel to a hospital outside Lothian. Call **0131 242 2861** for more details.

● Volunteer Car Services

WRVS: edinburghcityhub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk

Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)

Tel: 0131 652 3140

Money matters

benefits, funding, special deals and discounts

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Benefits and allowances

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

DLA is a tax-free, non means-tested benefit for children and young people under 16 who need help with mobility or care costs. There are two components: care which is paid at lower, middle or higher rates, and the mobility component which is paid at the lower or higher rate and can be paid if eligible from 3 years old. To make a claim for DLA you will need to submit an application form and any supporting evidence. The amount awarded will be dependent on the level of support, care and supervision required.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

PIP is a tax free, non means tested benefit for people of working age (16-64) for people who have difficulties with daily living or getting around. PIP has two components: daily living and mobility both of which can be paid at standard or enhanced rates.

Following the submission of a questionnaire and a face to face assessment, points are awarded. The more support you need the more points you get, and the number of points you receive will dictate the rate you are awarded.

Attendance Allowance (AA)

Attendance Allowance (AA) is a benefit for people aged 65 and over who need help with personal care or supervision to remain safe. AA is not means tested and there are two rates. The lower rate is awarded if you need frequent help or supervision during the day **or** at night. The higher rate is for people who need help or supervision both day **and** night, or those who are terminally ill.

● Making a claim for PIP

- Contact DWP on **0800 917 2222** (8am - 6pm, Mon - Fri)
- Carers can make this call but they need to be with the person making the claim.

Ensure you have the following:

- Contact details, date of birth
- National Insurance number
- Bank account details
- GP or health workers name
- Time spent in hospital or care home, or time abroad

The date of the claim is set at the point of the phone call. You will receive a specially bar coded form which you need to complete with details about how your condition affects the person making the claim.

How to claim DLA

Order a form by calling:
0800 121 4600

How to claim Attendance Allowance

Order a form by calling the Attendance Allowance helpline:
0800 731 0122

Carers Allowance (CA)

Carers Allowance is (at time of writing) £73.10 per week for carers in Scotland. From summer 2018 carers in Scotland who receive Carers' Allowance will receive a top-up benefit (backdated from April 2018) twice a year from the Scottish Government while continuing to receive their regular payment of £64.60 per week from the DWP. This is an interim measure prior to the Scottish Government taking complete control of Carer's Allowance itself at a later date.

You may get Carers Allowance if you:

- are 16 or over
- spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone
- have been in Great Britain for at least 2 of last 3 years

AND the person you care must get one of the qualifying disability benefits which include: Attendance Allowance; Disability Living Allowance (middle or highest care rate); Personal Independence Payment (daily living component).

You may not get CA if you're in full-time education, studying for 21 hours or more a week or if you earn more than £120 a week (after tax). If you can't be paid Carer's Allowance due to the 'overlapping benefit rule', you may get: the carer premiums for Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support; extra Pension Credit; contributory ESA or the carer element in Universal Credit.

Universal Credit (UC)

Universal Credit (UC) is a new benefit that is gradually replacing six existing benefits with a simpler, single monthly payment. Your eligibility to claim UC currently depends on where you live and your personal circumstances - at time of writing, only single people with no family commitments could claim UC in Edinburgh.

There are no limits to the number of hours you can work a week - your UC payment will reduce gradually as you earn more so you won't lose all your benefits if you are on a low income.

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) offers support if you're unable to work due to an illness or disability. You can

Scottish Welfare Fund

The Scottish Welfare Fund pays out two types of grant - a crisis grant and a community care grant - to people in crisis and to people who need help to live independently in the community. To apply contact City of Edinburgh Council on **0131 529 5299**.

Benefits replaced by UC

The following will be merged into Universal Credit:

- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax credit
- Child Tax credit

Carers Credit

This is a National Insurance credit that helps build your entitlement to basic State Pension and additional State Pension, ensuring there are no gaps in your National Insurance record. You must be: aged 16 or over; under State Pension age; and looking after one or more people for at least 20 hours a week. If the person you care for doesn't get a qualifying disability benefit (eg. AA, DLA or PIP) complete the 'Care Certificate' part of the application form and get a health or social care worker to sign it.

get financial support and work-related support through ESA.

The financial support you get depends on your circumstances (eg.income) and type of ESA you qualify for: contribution-based ESA if you have enough National Insurance contributions (NICs) or income-related ESA if you have a low income or not enough NICs.

You need to fill out the 'limited capability for work questionnaire' during your application for ESA and you may have to go to a work capability assessment. This is to see if your illness or disability affects your ability to work, and can include a medical assessment.

After 13 weeks of ESA you'll be put into a group - either a Work-Related Activity Group (where you will have to attend regular interviews with an adviser) or a Support Group (where you don't have to go to interviews - you're usually in this group if your illness or disability severely limits what you can do).

Council Tax Discounts

Carers Discount

If you are a carer living with the person you care for, you can claim a carers discount for council tax. It is only available to carers who care for an adult child, elderly parent or a friend (so not your spouse, partner or child under 18 years old). The carer is disregarded for council tax leaving one person (the cared for) to whom the single person discount is applied. You must be providing 35 hours or more care per week and the person you care for must be in receipt of: Disability Living Allowance (higher rate care), Attendance Allowance (higher rate) or Personal Independence Payment (enhanced rate of daily living component).

Severe Mental Impairment

If two adults are living at home (regardless of their relationship), and one has a severe mental impairment, that person will be disregarded for council tax and the single person discount will be applied. The person with the mental impairment must complete a form, get it signed by their GP and return it to the council tax department to confirm their illness.

'Bedroom Tax'

Working age tenants who receive housing benefit, and have more bedrooms than required, will face a reduction in their Housing Benefit of 14% for one spare bedroom and 25% for two or more spare bedrooms. Carers of qualifying age for state pension credit will not be affected.

Carers may be affected if:

- you and your partner sleep apart due to medical condition.
- you use a spare bedroom to store disability equipment.

Parent carers

Children who are unable to share a room due to a disability can have an extra room.

For more information visit www.carersuk.org or contact your local council.

Short Breaks Fund

Carers living or caring for someone in Edinburgh can apply to VOCAL's Short Breaks Fund for funding and assistance to take a break from caring.

Contact the VOCAL carer support team on **0131 622 6666** for more information or visit www.vocal.org.uk/short-breaks-fund

Disabled Person's Reduction

This is not a discount. You can get a reduction of one band on your council tax (eg. if you are on Band B you will get a reduction to Band A). It is available if:

- a disabled person needs to use a wheelchair indoors
- there is a second bathroom/kitchen needed by the disabled person
- there is a room (other than a bathroom, toilet or kitchen needed and predominantly used by the disabled person.

Concessions and discounts

Many visitor attractions and venues allow carers a reduction or to go free, if they are accompanying the person they care for (eg. Edinburgh Zoo and Historic Scotland).

National Trust's admission policy admits the necessary companion or carer of a disabled visitor free of charge using the 'Access for All Admit One Card'. Call **0344 800 1895** or email enquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk for details.

A number of hotels, holiday and travel companies offer discounts to carers (eg. Haven holidays). For details of the latest discounts contact the VOCAL Carer Support Team on **0131 622 6666**.

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card (CEA Card) entitles the holder to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. See www.ceacard.co.uk for more information. For travel and transport concessions see the '*Help with getting around*' factsheet.

Where appropriate VOCAL can refer carers to **Edinburgh Leisure** for a Community Access Programme card which provides reduced costs to access leisure facilities for 3 months. Carers also gain free access to Edinburgh Leisure facilities free when they are supporting the person they care for to attend at the same time.

Support and advice for carers

VOCAL Benefits Surgeries

VOCAL's free Money Matters surgeries cover areas such as Power of Attorney, Guardianship, financial planning for long term care, debt management, mental health and accessing benefits.

To book an appointment for one of the surgeries, or to contact VOCAL's Carer Support Team please email centre@vocal.org.uk or call VOCAL on **0131 622 6666**.

Useful Contact details

- **Gov.uk website**
www.gov.uk - has information on benefits, transport, employment and taxes.
- **Benefit numbers**
PIP: 800 917 2222
AA: 0800 931 0122
DLA: 0800 121 4600
CA: 0800 731 0297
Pension: 0800 011 3797
ESA: 0800 328 9344
- **Carers Scotland**
Keep up to date with Welfare Reform and it's impact on carers - visit www.carersuk.org
- **Council numbers**
Council Tax information:
0131 608 1111

Scottish Welfare Fund
0131 529 5299
- **Lone Parent families**
Free lone parent helpline, call **0808 801 0323** or visit www.loneparenthelpline.org.uk
- **Citizens Advice**
www.citizensadviceedinburgh.co.uk has useful factsheets and an advice guide covering money, rights, family and daily life.
- **The Action Group**
Provides a welfare rights service to maximize income and employment advice to access Real Jobs - a supported employment service. Call **0131 475 2315** or email: advice@actiongroup.org.uk
- **Turn2Us website**
Turn2Us is a website, designed to help people find out about the money available to them through grants, welfare benefits or other support. Visit www.turn2us.org.uk

Long term care

choosing a care home, charges, support

VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● August 2018

Choosing a care home

There are a number of directories that you can access online to search for care homes in Edinburgh and other areas. City of Edinburgh Council has a directory of care homes in Edinburgh - visit: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory/34/care_homes_short_breaks_and_day_services or contact Social Care Direct on **0131 200 2324**.

The Care Inspectorate's website explains how they regulate and inspect all care homes. Their reports tell you about the quality of each care home and they can also provide a comprehensive list of all care homes in your area.

Visit www.careinspectorate.com or call **0345 600 9527**.

You can arrange a visit to a care home or ask for someone from the home to visit you. Write down the things you and the person you care for want to ask and bring the list with you on visits.

A care home should be homely, safe and secure to enable people to carry on leading as full a life as possible. Don't be embarrassed to ask lots of questions, and have a good look around. Here is a list of some things you may wish to think about:

- **Location:** Is it close to local amenities and you home?
- **Ambience:** What is your first impression?
- **Staff:** Are there enough staff? How do they behave? What professional qualifications do they have?
- **Accommodation:** Do you get your own room? Toilet facilities?
- **Facilities:** Are there visiting hairdressers, chiropodists etc?
- **Freedom:** Are safeguards in place for vulnerable adults?

● Emotional support

Thinking about long term care in a care home can be an emotional time for people. As a carer you may experience emotions including guilt, loss, grief and isolation. VOCAL can offer group and individual support to help with these feelings, and has produced a self help booklet for carers - call **0131 622 6666** for a copy.

● Long term care planning surgeries

Many carers are concerned about paying for care home fees, how much they will have to pay and what happens to property. VOCAL runs free monthly surgeries with a Chartered Financial Advisor who can explore options with carers. This surgery would be of most benefit to carers where the move to long term care will take place in within 6 months. To book an appointment call VOCAL on **0131 622 6666**.

- **Condition-specific information:** Do they have other people of a similar age? Are staff trained to deal with specific conditions eg dementia?
- **Meals:** Is there a choice of good quality, nutritious meals?
- **Pets:** Are pets allowed in the care home?
- **Activities:** What activities are provided by the care home?
- **Keeping in contact:** access to telephone or internet?
- **Having a say:** How does the home handle problems?

Paying for care

If someone is assessed as needing to live in a care home, then their finances have to be assessed - taking into account the capital and income of the person moving into the care home.

Capital includes property, investments and savings in that person's name. Half of any capital in joint names will be taken into account. Pensions and state benefits are assumed capital from income. Care home residents can get 50% of their private pension paid to a spouse who continues to live at home.

The value of property is not treated as capital if the person's spouse or partner, relative over 60 or a relative under 60 with incapacity continues to live there. If a carer (who is not a spouse or partner) has been living in the house this can be disregarded at the discretion of the local authority.

There are upper and lower limits which define how much someone needs to pay. These figures change in line with inflation and are included in the revised versions of Charging for Residential Accommodation Guidance (see 'useful resources' on the right). If someone has over the upper limit they will be asked to pay the full cost of care.

Some types of income are disregarded or partially disregarded including the surrender value of life insurance policies, money held in trust and personal possessions.

If the person you care for is assessed as needing personal and/or nursing care, then they will get the costs for both deducted from the care home fees. The amount is less for people under 65. Charging procedures can be complicated so it is worth seeking advice - see page 1 for details about the support that VOCAL can offer.

Care Inspectorate

Care services in Scotland must be registered with the Care Inspectorate, who also inspect and grade them, to ensure they follow the National Care Standards. They also deal with complaints and can take action to force services to improve. Call **0345 600 9527** or visit: **www.careinspectorate.com**

Useful resources

Charging for Residential Accommodation

Guidance - visit: **www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Financial-Help/Charging-Residential-Care**

Local authority charging procedures for care homes

For information about paying for care, what happens to property, what to do and think about before a move to care home and a checklist for visiting care homes:

www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/information-advice/care-and-support/care-homes/

Legal matters

power of attorney, guardianship, mental health

VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● August 2018

Planning for the future and assisting the person they care for to make decisions is an important consideration for many carers. This factsheet introduces some of the legal issues around capacity - see also '*Wills and Trusts: a guide for carers*'.

Adults with Incapacity

In common law all adults (anyone aged 16 and over) have a right to make their own decisions and we must assume that someone has capacity to act and make decisions unless there is evidence otherwise. No one is regarded as lacking capacity just because they make unwise, unusual decisions, or because they have a particular diagnosis, illness or condition.

An inability to make decisions in our lives can occur for a range of reasons including conditions such as a learning disability, dementia, brain injury or severe mental illness. People who have had a stroke or severe hearing impairment may lack the capacity to communicate their decisions and need someone else to act for them. The **Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000** provides a legal framework for family members and friends to assist the person they care for with decision making regarding welfare, health care and financial decisions.

What does incapacity mean?

In an everyday context, mental capacity means the ability to make decisions or take actions affecting daily life. In a legal context, it refers to a person's ability to do something, including making a decision, which may have legal consequences for the person themselves or for other people such as making a contract with someone, buying and selling things, deciding about medical treatment or managing money.

VOCAL runs free specialist and legal surgeries. To book email centre@vocal.org.uk or call **0131 622 6666**. Appointments are 30 minutes and available for the following:

● Power of Attorney

Support to write and register a Power of Attorney, for carers and the person they care for - replacing the need to see a solicitor.

● Guardianship

Solicitor consultation on Guardianship, Wills & Trusts.

● Mental health

Consultation with a solicitor on the Mental Health Act (please indicate which area at time of booking).

Power of Attorney

A Power of Attorney is a legal document in which an individual gives authority to another person to make decisions on their behalf. This could relate to financial or property matters and/ or personal welfare.

For example, John chooses to give Janet the power to make decisions for him if he becomes unable to make his own decisions. At the point of arranging the Power of Attorney, John must understand what he is doing and be able to make a decision about it.

Powers relating to John's financial or property affairs are known as *continuing powers* and may be given with the intention of taking effect immediately and continuing upon John's incapacity, **or** beginning when John lacks capacity. Welfare powers cannot be exercised until such time as John has lost the capacity to make these decisions.

Guardianship and intervention orders

A Guardianship Order can be sought when someone is unable to make any decisions due to a mental disorder. It allows the appointed guardian to make decisions for the person with incapacity even if that person does not understand or is unable to make the decision to allow a guardian to be appointed. This has to be applied for in the Sheriff Court.

Working in partnership with a solicitor, VOCAL offers carers free 30 minute consultations about key issues such as Wills, Trusts and Guardianship. Contact VOCAL on **0131 622 6666** or email centre@vocal.org.uk for more details.

Mental Health (Care and Treatment) Act 2003

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) Act 2003 is the legislation that supports and safeguards people with a mental health disorder. The Act covers detention in hospital and some treatment in the community.

Advanced statements

This is a statement made when a person is well, about how they wish to be treated if they become unwell. It could be regarding diet, medication or what happens to pets etc. The tribunal and others giving treatment have to take this into account when making decisions.

Office of the Public Guardian

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) in Scotland has a function to supervise people who have been appointed to manage the financial or property affairs of adults who lack the capacity to do so for themselves.

As well as providing information and advice, the OPG investigates concerns where the property or financial affairs of an adult seem to be at risk.

The OPG website has a range of resources and information, including a list of FAQs around Power of Attorney and Guardianship. For details visit: **www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk** or call **01324 678398**.

Wills and Trusts

a guide for carers

VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● August 2018

Planning for the future is particularly important if a member of your family has a disability, physical or mental health problem, addiction or long term condition. You may want to make provision for them in your will, and they may **need support** to manage any money that you leave them.

You also need to consider the impact of making a will or trust. Any money that you leave to the person you care for may affect their **welfare benefit entitlement** and any financial contributions that they make to **pay for their care**.

This guide outlines some of the general issues that you should consider when making a will or trust however everyone's situation is different. It is important to get expert legal advice, and to have a discussion with other family members who may be affected.

Trusts

A trust is a way of looking after assets (money, investments, land or buildings) for people. It is a legal arrangement where one or more 'trustees' are made legally responsible for holding these assets, managing the trust and carrying out the wishes of the person who has put the assets into trust. A trust can be set up in your lifetime or in your will and is one of the best ways to make financial provision for a person whose main income is state benefits.

There are several types of UK family trusts, and the one generally recommended is called a '**discretionary trust**'. The money is handed over to trustees who have 'discretion' about how to use the income of the trust, and sometimes the capital.

As the trustees are legal owners of any assets held in the trust and the beneficiary has no absolute right to call on the money

● Free legal surgeries

VOCAL runs free 30 minute surgery consultations where carers can discuss these issues in more detail with a solicitor. To book an appointment contact VOCAL on **0131 622 6666** or email **centre@vocal.org.uk**

● Trusts: laws and tax

Trustees have to pay tax on trust income, and any income the beneficiary receives from the trust will also be liable to tax depending on their circumstances.

● Appointing Trustees

Trustees should be people you trust who are happy to undertake the role.

Trustees can be:

- Professionals eg. solicitors, banks, trustee services (they will charge a fee).
- Family members or friends (you may want them to have access to professional advice).
- A combination of family members and a professional.

it is not regarded as their capital for welfare benefit purposes. The terms of the trust also outline how it will be wound up. For example the trust can provide that the money will go to other members of the family or to the children of the beneficiary.

How are welfare benefits affected?

Payments of income or capital from a discretionary trust may have an effect on means-tested benefits. If someone on means tested benefits receives a regular income of more than £20 a week from a trust, any amounts over £20 will be taken off the benefits.

If a large amount is needed (e.g. to buy a flat) the trustees should buy the item themselves. They can then make it over to the trust beneficiary. With the many changes taking place in the benefits system it is important that trustees regularly check that these rules have remained unchanged.

Wills

It is important to write a will if you have a family member with reduced capacity or some other type of disability. You will need to consider what provision you want to make for the person you care for, in addition to other people you may wish to provide for.

If you do not make a will the law requires that your estate is dealt with in a particular way - which may be contrary to your wishes.

You may decide not to include the person you care for in your will and rely on other beneficiaries to support them but this can also be problematic. You can avoid these pitfalls by setting up a Discretionary Trust in your will.

Options for dealing with property

There are a number of options available if you wish to leave your home to the person you care for. A person's home is not taken into account when calculating their capital for welfare benefits.

You may wish to leave the home to the person directly or ask trustees to sell it and buy somewhere smaller or more suitable. If you have concerns about their ability to manage the burdens of owning a property, the house can be put in the names of the

Trust payments which may be **disregarded**:

- Irregular lump sum payments (unless they bring the person's total capital above the threshold for the particular benefit).
- Payments of income intended to pay for items not normally covered by welfare benefits (eg. phone bills, TV rental, CDs).
- This does not include rent, rates, fuel, clothing or food as welfare benefits are intended to cover these items.

trustees who can allow the person you care for to live there. Alternatively you may specify in your will that the person you care for can live in the property for life, after which it is given to someone else.

Does the person you care for have capacity to make decisions?

An inability to make decisions in our lives can occur for a range of reasons. Disabilities such as dementia, brain injury or severe mental illness may limit our capacity to understand what is involved in decision-making.

People with a physical condition, such as stroke or severe hearing impairment, may lack the capacity to communicate their decisions and need someone else to act for them. Being born with a learning disability may limit a person's ability to act or make some or all decisions for themselves, depending on the severity of the condition.

The **Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000** provides a legal framework for family members and friends to assist the person they care for with decision making - it enables carers or others to have legal powers to make welfare, health care and financial decisions.

For more details see the '*Legal Matters*' factsheet.

Before writing your will:

- List what you own including assets and liabilities and their value in money.
- Think about who you would like to benefit from your will and what you would like to give them.
- Who would you like to be the executors of your will? An executor is the person you officially appoint to make sure that the wishes in your will are carried out.
- If your child or children are under 18, think about whether you would like to appoint a guardian for them.
- Think about whether you need to set up a trust for the person you care for.

Sources of support:

Free legal surgeries

VOCAL runs free legal surgeries and Power of Attorney surgeries for carers. To book call **0131 622 6666** or email **centre@vocal.org.uk**

Solicitors

The Law Society of Scotland can help in finding a solicitor. They can also advise on how fees are set, solicitors' standards and how to make a complaint. Call **0131 226 7411** or visit: **www.lawscot.org.uk**

Trustee service

Contact Enable Scotland by email: **enabledirect@enable.org.uk** or on **0300 0200 101**.

Your rights as a carer

legislation and national guidance

VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● August 2018

Carers' rights in Scotland

The Carers' (Scotland) Act 2016 extends the rights of adult and young carers in Scotland, placing a duty on local authorities to provide every carer with a carer support plan and to provide support to all carers who are eligible.

The Act provides for:

- A new right for carers to receive an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) or Young Carer Statement (YCS), setting out their personal outcomes, identified needs and the support to be provided to meet these needs.
- A duty for local councils to provide support to carers, based on their needs which meet local eligibility criteria.
- A requirement for local councils to establish and maintain an information and advice service for carers.
- They must also publish and review a short breaks services statement.
- A duty for local councils and health boards involve carers and carer representatives in the planning and evaluation of services that support carers.
- A requirement for the responsible local authority to consider support in the form of a break from caring.
- A duty on health boards to inform the carer and to invite their views before a cared-for person is discharged from hospital.

The Act is now in effect, however at the time of writing local authorities are still consulting some aspects including hospital discharge and local eligibility criteria.

● Employment rights

Carers in employment now have more statutory rights to help them manage their work and caring responsibilities, through **the Work and Families Act 2006**. See '*Carers and Employment*' factsheet for more details.

● Adult carer support plan (ACSP)

An adult carer support plan (ACSP) starts with a conversation where you discuss your caring role and what is important to you in your life. It helps plan what could help you work towards your goals. The key points of the conversation are written down with agreed actions and this becomes the adult carer support plan.

If you live in Edinburgh you can request an Adult Carer Support Plan by contacting Social Care Direct on **0131 200 2324**.

Equalities Act 2010

This act began on 1 October 2010 and brought new legislation to protect carers from direct discrimination or harassment because of their caring responsibilities.

The Government Equalities Office (GEO) has produced a series of guides including '*Equality Act 2010: What do I need to know as a carer?*'. For more information call the Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) on **0808 800 0082** or visit **www.equalityadvisoryservice.com**

Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

This Act came into effect in October 2005. It sets out how a service user with a mental health difficulty can be treated and says what their rights are. It states that the rights and views of carers must be taken into consideration as much as possible when any decisions about the service user's care and treatment are made.

Anyone involved in the care and treatment of the person using mental health services must provide carers with the information they need to provide effective care. A carer will not receive information that the service user does not want to share.

For more details of carers rights and the role of a named person under the Mental Health Act 2003 call the Mental Welfare Commission on **0800 389 6809**, email **enquiries@bmcscot.org.uk** or visit: **www.mwcscot.org.uk**

Self-Directed Support Bill

The Self-Directed Support (Scotland) Act became law in 2014. It introduced a new power for local authorities to support carers through direct payments. It also aims to make it easier for people to use direct payments to employ relatives. For more details see: **www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk**

Patient Rights Bill

The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011 aims to improve patients' experiences of using health services and to support people to become more involved in their health and health care. Included in the Act was the establishment of a Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS). This service provides free, accessible and confidential information, advice and support to patients, their carers and families about NHS healthcare. For more information visit:

www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights

Carers in employment

rights and sources of support

VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● August 2018

Introduction

Over 250,000 carers combine their caring role with paid employment. One in five will give up work to care and for those caring for 50 or more hours a week, more than half have stopped working. Carers now have more statutory rights to help them manage their paid work and caring responsibilities and this factsheet introduces these rights and sources of support.

Work and Families Act 2006

The Work and Families Act 2006 gives carers of adults the right to request flexible working, building on the existing rights which were introduced in April 2003 for parents of a disabled child under 18.

You have the right to request flexible working if you are an employee with 26 weeks continuous employment with that employer at the date you make the application and you are:

- A parent with a child under 6 or a disabled child under 18 or
- A carer - to qualify as a carer under the legislation, you must be, or expect to be, caring for a spouse, partner (who you live with), civil partner or relative, or live at the same address as the adult in need of care.

You have the right to make one application per year and you are not required to prove the caring relationship but it may help your application to provide as much information as possible. 'Caring' in this context can include, for example, help with personal care, emotional support,

● Getting support

VOCAL's Carer Support Team offers specialist support to carers who are juggling work and caring responsibilities. Contact the team on **0131 622 6666** or email: **centre@vocal.org.uk**.

● Flexible working

Flexible working patterns could include:

- Flexible starting and finishing hours
- Compressed working hours
- Annualised working hours (eg. hours are calculated over a year and you work some fixed shifts but have flexibility over some of your hours)
- Term-time working
- Job sharing and part-time working
- Homeworking and teleworking.

helping with financial matters or paperwork and support to attend medical appointments.

The request for flexible working should be made in writing (your employer may have a standard form) and include the date of application, confirmation that you are eligible, an outline of the working pattern you would like, the date you would like to start the proposed change and details of any previous requests. You should also outline any effects the change would have on your job.

The right to time off in emergencies

Also known as time off for dependants, this gives all employees the right to take a 'reasonable' amount of time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant. Whether the time off is paid or not is at the discretion of the employer.

A dependant could be mother, father, son, daughter, parent or anyone who lives with you who is solely dependent on you.

An emergency could be:

- A disruption or breakdown in care arrangements
- The death of a dependant
- If a dependant falls ill or has been assaulted
- To make longer term arrangements for a dependant who is ill or injured (but not to provide long term care yourself).

To use this right to time off, employees must inform their employer as soon as possible after the emergency has happened.

Parental leave

If you have one year of service you are entitled to 13 weeks parental leave to care for a child and 18 weeks for a disabled child who receives Disability Living Allowance and is under 18. Leave can be taken in blocks of one week up to a maximum of 4 weeks leave in a year (for each child). It can be taken in single or multiple days if the leave is to care for a disabled child.

Equalities Act

This legislation protects carers from direct discrimination or harassment because of their caring responsibilities. See '*Your rights as a carer*' factsheet for more details.

Seeking support in the workplace

Employers value skilled, experienced members of staff and are keen to keep them. Your employer may be able to help in ways you have not considered. Talk to your manager about your situation, directly or through your HR/ personnel officer or union or staff association representative.

Many Edinburgh employers have a carer policy or carers' network as well as links to VOCAL and support services. If you decide to leave work, make sure you check all your options before you resign. For example can you take a career break, voluntary redundancy or early retirement?

Children and Families

Information for parents and kinship carers

VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● August 2018

Introduction

Families who have children with additional support needs often have to navigate education, health and social care and medical systems to get support. This factsheet introduces some of the support and resources available to families and parent carers.

Arranging for care and support services

The first step to getting support from health and social care is to contact Social Care Direct on **0131 200 2324**. Your details are then passed to one of the following assessment teams:

- **Children's Practice Team (Disability)** provides information and assessments, as well as statutory support (child protection and crisis care).
- **Children and Families Occupational Therapy Team** supports children's practical and social skills within Child and Family Centres, as well as assessing for equipment and adaptations in the home.
- **Transition Team** supports the move from school and children's services to adult services.

The assessment team will discuss:

- Services which you may access directly.
- Visiting you to obtain more information.
- Referring you to our partner providers for support with behavioural or sleep issues.
- Placing your name on a waiting list for further assessment.

Following a Section 23 assessment, a referral is made to an

Section 23 assessment

Local Authorities have a duty to assess the needs of children with or affected by disability. This is called a section 23 assessment and is needed to access services. Traditionally these assessments have been carried out by social workers, but recently this has changed to extend to keyworkers and other professionals working with the family.

Education

Find out more about additional support for learning and the resources available to parents. See page 2 for details.

Transition

When a child turns 16 they begin the transition from child to adult services. Education choices, benefit changes and the move to adult support services can make this a difficult time for many carers. See page 3.

allocation panel who use a scoring system to ensure that those with the greatest needs are prioritised for services including:

- Clubs, befriending and sitter service
- Day and overnight short breaks services
- Equipment and adaptations

Additional support for learning (ASL)

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 became active in 2005 introducing significant changes to current arrangements for school age children and young people who experience difficulties in learning. The Act was introduced to ensure disabled children could be educated, wherever possible, in mainstream schools with additional support.

Key requirements of the Act:

- The term ‘additional support needs’ refers to the needs of all children who, for whatever reason, require additional support, short or long term, to help them make the most of their education.
- A Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) is opened for children who have complex needs requiring multi agency intervention.
- The local authority must provide a system for resolving disputes in relation to provision for additional support needs which parents and young people can access.
- There is a nationally organised Tribunal to hear appeals relating to Co-ordinated Support Plans.

The act also gives rights to parents to:

- Request an assessment to determine if their child has additional support needs.
- Request an assessment to determine if their child requires a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP).
- Request a specific type of assessment (eg. medical).
- Be informed of the outcome of any requests they make.
- Receive advice and information about their child’s support needs and a copy of any CSP.
- Have their views sought and taken into account and noted in a CSP where there is one.
- Request a specific school placement.

Support and activities

Sleep Scotland - one to one sleep support for families and workshops
Tel: 0131 651 1392

TailorEd Foundation - home based support and courses.
Tel: 0131 624 8970

Positive Paths - support with behaviour and activities and socialising for children with additional needs.
Tel: 0131 332 3848 or 07903962450

The Richmond Fellowship - support with behaviour issues and other supports.
www.trfs.org.uk/contact

Lothian Autistic Society - Activities and groups for children with additional support needs.
Tel: 0131 661 3834

ASL support

ASL helpline: run by Kindred on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council
0800 031 5793 (option 1)

ASL Parent & Pupil Support Manager
Adam O’Brien - **0131 469 3444** or email: **Adam.O'Brien@edinburgh.gov.uk**

In On The Act leaflet
A guide to ASL and City of Edinburgh Council’s policy: visit **www.edinburgh.gov.uk/inontheact**

- Access independent mediation services or dispute resolution.
- Appeal to an independent Tribunal in matters related to CSP.

Transition from child to adult services

City of Edinburgh Council's Transition Team support the move from school and children's services to adult services. They work with young people aged 14 to early 20s who have a disability. If transitional planning is required, the young person is referred to the Transition Team from school at S2 stage.

The Transition Team work jointly with schools, Health & Social Care and Children & Families Practice Teams, the Local Area Co-ordinator and the Direct Payments Team.

The Transition Team:

- Offer information and support to young people and their families to explore options - college, day services, work, care providers, community resources and leisure.
- Assess need, working with the young person, their family and those who know them best.
- Check the young person is receiving the benefits they are entitled to and develop funded packages.
- Support the move to further education or services when the young person leaves school.
- Provide support to individuals leaving college and requiring day services.

Parents can also access training courses about preparing for the transition from child to adult services - contact VOCAL on **0131 622 6666** and/or Kindred on **0800 031 5793** for more details.

You might also be interested in the '*Legal matters*' factsheet which provides details on setting up Power of Attorney, Guardianship and Interventions.

Visiting Teaching & Support Service

The service works with children and young people from birth and throughout their school years who have or are awaiting a diagnosis of a disability.

This includes pre-school children, and the service works with families, early years settings and schools to develop programmes to progress the children's learning and offer advice and support regarding aspects of disability.

The referral system is open and just requires a parent's informed consent - forms can be obtained by calling **0131 469 2850**.

Enquire leaflets

Enquire produce a range of useful leaflets including 'Progressing beyond school after 16' - visit: **www.enquire.org.uk**, call **0845 123 2303** or email **info@enquire.org.uk**

Children and adolescent mental health teams (CAMHS)

The CAMHS provides a service for children and young people (0-18 years) and their families in Edinburgh who are experiencing difficulties ranging from significant emotional or behavioural problems to persistent mental health problems. The team provides assessment and a range of interventions and you can be referred by GPs, community child health, general medicine, social work, health visitors, schools, educational psychology and other professional agencies. The team can provide support to children, young people and their families around many issues including mood, anxiety, self harm and behavioural issues.

For further information visit the NHS Lothian website:

www.nhslotian.scot.nhs.uk/Services/A-Z/CAMHS

Young carers

If other children in the family spend a lot of time helping you care for their chronically sick or disabled sibling then they may benefit from contact with a young carers project. For more details contact the Edinburgh Young Carers Project on **0131 475 2322** or visit: www.youngcarers.org.uk

Medical Conditions

Many families find that they are not given enough information when their child is first diagnosed with a particular illness or condition. They can feel isolated and are often frightened about what the future holds. Here are organisations who can help or offer training courses on specific conditions:

Contact a Family:

0131 659 2930

FAIR: 0131 662 1962

Kindred: 0800 031 5793

VOCAL: 0131 622 6666

The Family Fund

Helps families of disabled or seriously ill children under 16. They give grants and information related to the care of the child including holidays, leisure, laundry equipment and lots more. Call **01904 550 055** or visit:

www.familyfund.org.uk

Other options for financial support are available – please call the VOCAL carer support team for information and support:

Tel: 0131 622 6666

Email: centre@vocal.org.uk

Addictions

are you worried about someone's addiction?

VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● August 2018

This factsheet is for family members, partners and friends – carers – who are affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use.

You matter too!

Family members and carers of people affected by addiction say that, at times, they feel overwhelmed by all that is happening around them. The chaos of substance misuse and addiction does not just affect the individual but also those close to them. It can feel like being on a rollercoaster; there can be worry, stress and difficult decisions. You can lose sight of who you are as a person and what you need, and you may not realise that there is support available.

VOCAL's Family Support Addictions service provides this support – over the phone and face to face. It is your chance to talk through things from your point of view - offload concerns in a neutral space, discuss how the situation is affecting you and anything you want to change.

Getting support for yourself, in your own right, is a step along the way to feeling less isolated, getting more balance in your life and thinking about the role you want to play in supporting your friend or family member.

More about Family Support Addictions

Family Support Addictions is a small team within VOCAL's carer support team. They provide one to one support, and also run monthly support groups, SMART Family & Friends meetings, courses, occasional workshops and de-stressing activities. To contact the Family Support Addictions team, email fsa@vocal.org.uk or call **0131 622 6666**.

Information:

Information about addiction or other specialist services that can help you and/or your family and friends.

Support groups:

Monthly groups for people who are interested in meeting with others.

SMART Recovery Family & Friends:

Weekly structured meetings explore topics such as change, self-care, communication and healthy boundaries.

Training courses:

Free sessions over three weeks, exploring topics such as addictions, the impact on the family and coping strategies

Links to other VOCAL services:

For benefits advice, advocacy, counselling and short breaks.

Respite activities:

Occasional outings and de-stressing activities.

Some useful information

Do you know about the Alcohol Charter?

It has been developed by relatives, partners and friends to outline what people should expect when they are supporting someone with an alcohol addiction and working with services such as health and social care.

You can download a copy of the alcohol charter from the VOCAL website: vocal.org.uk/addictions

What are your rights as a family member, partner or friend?

It is important the views of family and friends are considered and valued. Family members often have a detailed, day to day knowledge of the person with the addiction, and they can be affected by decisions about treatment for that person.

As a result NHS Lothian Carer Information Strategy states that carers should be recognised as a key partner in the provision of care and are also entitled to general information about the condition and medication, even if the person who is being cared for does not consent to specific personal information being shared.

Further information on carers' rights can be found in the factsheet *'Your rights as a carer'*.

Have you been offered support?

You have the right to be offered support for yourself in your own right and as a carer, in addition to receiving relevant information about addiction and possible treatments for the person you are supporting.

'It's hard for me too' booklet

Family Support Addictions has produced a booklet called *'It's hard for me too'* which is a self-help guide for family, partners and friends living with the effects of drug or alcohol use.

The booklet explores what is happening to them and the impact and influence they can have.

The booklet is available from VOCAL's website (www.vocal.org.uk/addictions) or by calling **0131 622 6666**.