



CARERS FACT SHEET 11

Useful Contacts and Information

Remember you are unlikely to be the first person in a particular situation and finding someone who has been through a similar situation before may be the best help you will ever receive. The growing network of carers across the county may also be of help to you. You may wish to join a group or organisation or you may prefer to just make contact to find what you need. There are more than 100 local groups of carers across the county and cities, which meet together for mutual support and help. Many also develop a social programme and stay in touch with members through a local newsletter. You may benefit from access to up-to-date information and communication with others. Contact Carers Together for details.

You may come in contact with one or more of the following:

- Carers Together is a countywide organisation run by carers for carers. It offers a confidential listening ear to carers, a support network of people in similar situations to yours as well as information, signposting and help. It produces a regular newsletter, provides training for carers, and, with local centres, supports local carers forums, where you can have your say on what should be done. It also works directly with other organisations both statutory and voluntary to develop better services for carers.
- Your local Carers Workers may provide information and advice, individual support and contact, people to speak on your behalf and support for local groups of carers. There are Carers Workers based all over Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight.
- Adult Services Department, who can carry out your assessment for you, and may decide that they can offer you services. Among the support that your local Social Service office may be able to offer or signpost you to are day care services, residential care, home care, specialist help for the deaf or hard of hearing, specialist help for those with sight problems, skills training and equipment that may make life easier at home. The local contact list (Fact Sheet 11a) may help or you can find the telephone number in your local telephone directory under local authority and then community information, or speak to your own GP.
- Your own doctor, who can help you to access services such as district nursing, speech therapy, health visiting, chiropody, mobile assessment, incontinence support and counselling, as well as offering referral to specialists. Since 1 April 2004 your GP has a duty to record the number of carers in his/her surgery and to ensure the right services are offered. Make sure you tell your GP that you are a carer. You can do this by telling the receptionist or by using a form available from Carers Together. Since 2004 most out of hours cover is provided by your local Primary Care Trust.



Carers Together

A consortium of carers in Hampshire
Charity Number 1051879

- The Children's Services Department, who can offer help and advice on educational and social care issues for children and provide you with special leaflets as needed. You may also wish to contact the Parent Partnership Officer.
- The Employment Service, www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk for advice and information relating to work and training.
- NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 - a lo-call telephone helpline staffed by specially trained nurses, who can offer information or advice, or arrange emergency support if necessary.
- The hospital social work team, who can arrange for services if the person you care for is about to leave hospital. Hospital staff should refer you to them, but you are free to make contact with them yourself, and it is important to remember that any arrangements for support should be made before the person you care for leaves hospital.

When you talk to any of these services, make sure you understand what they are saying to you. It is easy for people to use jargon you can't follow, so the trick is to be persistent and ask anyone you come into contact with to explain things clearly in a way that you can understand.

Whoever you talk to, it can take some time to sort out the help you need, and you need to hang on in there and not give up.

Useful Publications from Social Services

- Guide to Care at Home a guide to community services in Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton.
- Guide to Residential Care a list of registered residential care/nursing homes in the area.
- Pinpoint a directory of services for children with disabilities and their families.

You can obtain a free copy of the above publications (which are updated annually) by calling 0800 028 0888 or by contacting your local Social Services office. They are updated annually.

Some useful Publications from Carers Together

- Carers Pack – a folder of information/fact sheets about aspects of being a carer
- A list of local and national contacts and organisations
- Carers Guide to Assessments
- Useful Benefit Numbers
- Regular Newsletter
- Enduring Powers of Attorney forms
- Leaflets about Direct Payments, CLICK, Carers emergency arrangements etc

You can obtain a free copy of the above publications by calling 01794 519495 or by contacting your local Carers Together office.