

# Welcome

*This booklet provides you with information about the services that can be offered by Carers of West Dunbartonshire and information about your rights as a carer.*

The Carers' Service operates from 72 and 84 Dumbarton Road, Clydebank. 84 Dumbarton Road is the base from which the service is managed and 72 Dumbarton Road is a resource base which is used for groups, training, meetings etc. The service provides a range of support for carers who are 18 and over and who are caring for someone living in West Dunbartonshire. We would encourage you to make as much use of it as you can to assist you with your caring role. We are open from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday and carers who reside in any part of West Dunbartonshire are welcome to access our services any time during those hours.

The Carers' Centre is the office base of the staff. They are there to help you with enquiries, provide a listening ear and offer support, both practical and emotional. We also operate an outreach service at venues throughout West Dunbartonshire which provides carers with the opportunity to access carer support easily. Complementary therapies, carers' training and group work are also available to carers within these outreach bases. Our Carer Support staff will also visit you at home, if required.

If you wish to register with the Carers' Centre, your name will be added to our database of carers which means that you will receive regular mailings about events and activities.

# Commitment to equality

Carers of West Dunbartonshire is committed to ensuring that it treats its staff, job applicants, volunteers, users of the service and others equally and without prejudice.

We recognise that there is a variation in people's need for support, information and services, and how these needs should be met. We acknowledge that groups and individuals face discrimination, both directly and in-directly.

As an organisation we are committed to taking positive action to counter discrimination in all areas of our work and to promote policies and initiatives aimed at the active participation of all groups and individuals in the management, staffing, volunteering, administration, membership and services of Carers of West Dunbartonshire.

**A copy of our Equality and Diversity Statement can be provided upon request.**

# Emergency Planning

**An emergency is a situation which unexpectedly results in you being separated from the person that you care for long enough to pose a risk to them and which requires an urgent intervention by another person. There could be several reasons why this may happen e.g. you have become unwell, been involved in an incident or accident or need to deal with a personal crisis.**

Have you thought about what you would do if a situation like this arose .....who would step in? It's something that most carers worry about but often put to the back of their mind or have thought about it but never actually shared their plan with anyone.

An emergency plan sets out the practical arrangements for these unexpected situations. By writing it down and involving others, creating an emergency plan can give you, and the person that you care for, peace of mind and help avoid a crisis. It can also help you have a conversation with family and friend about your caring role and help them to understand what type of difficulties you face. It doesn't need to be complicated, it is **your** plan and should include the information and practical arrangements that **you** feel are relevant.

Emergency Planning is now part of a Carers Support Plan and it is important that you discuss it with the person that is completing the Support Plan with you. Even if you already have a support plan in place, you should still think about what you would do if an emergency situation arose.

Carers of West Dunbartonshire has developed an emergency planning toolkit which includes an Emergency Plan, a Carer's Emergency Card and a Keyring.

If you would like more information about emergency planning or would like help with completing an emergency plan, please contact the Carers' Centre.

# Power of Attorney & Guardianship

## Guardianship

If someone has never had capacity or they've lost the capacity to make decisions for themselves and they haven't previously granted a POA, they might need what is called a Guardian to make decisions on their behalf.

Guardianship Orders can be granted to authorise someone to be responsible for property, finances and/or matters relating to an adult's personal welfare. Sometimes an application will be triggered by a certain event e.g. authority is needed to sign a tenancy agreement on the adult's behalf and sometimes it's simply because the adult's carers or relatives want to have a central role in the decisions being made about them.

Before applying for a guardianship order you should seek legal advice to make sure the appointment will benefit the adult and is appropriate under the circumstances.

## Intervention Order

An Intervention Order is similar to Guardianship except it is used for one-off events or a short series of, decisions or actions.

## Further Help and Information

In the first instance you should seek your own legal advice or more information is available at;

## Office of the Public Guardian (Scotland)

Hadrian House  
Callendar Business Park  
Callendar Road  
Falkirk FK1 1XR  
Tel: 01324 678300

[www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk)

# Adult Carers' Support Plan

A brief guide for carers -

***Carers have a legal right to an assessment of their needs! It***

***is an opportunity to discuss what help you may need to cope with a caring role. In West Dunbartonshire a very high value is placed on the services that are delivered to carers and this assessment process is known as a n Adult Carer's Support Plan.***

## Who qualifies for an Adult Carers' Support Plan?

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 states you have a right to an assessment if you are looking after a friend or relative. You are entitled to an assessment even if the person you care for does not wish to receive help from support services. You also have a right to an assessment if you intend to look after someone, for example a relative or friend due to be discharged from hospital, or a disabled child. You do not have to be the parent of the child, but you must have parental responsibility for them.

## What is the purpose of a Adult Carers' Support Plan?

The purpose of the assessment is to allow you the opportunity to think about and discuss what help you may need with caring, including maintaining your own health and balancing work and family commitments. Support services will use this information to decide what help they may be able to offer.

However, the person carrying out the assessment shouldn't assume you want to provide care for someone. They should ask if you are happy and willing to carry out the tasks involved. It may be that due to increasing physical or emotional demands, you feel unable to provide care.

## How do I get a support plan completed?

You can request a Support Plan from your local Social Work Department, a Health Care Professional such as a District Nurse and the Carers' Centre. You can also complete one by yourself. If the person you currently look after or intend to look after is in hospital, ask the nursing staff to put you in touch with the Social Worker or the Hospital Discharge Project at the Carers' Centre.

# Carers Allowance & Related Benefits

To qualify you must meet the criteria, on the checklist below:

- You MUST be 16 years of age or over. ✓
- You MUST look after someone for at least 35 hours per week.
- The cared for person MUST be in receipt of a qualifying disability benefit i.e. the middle or high rate of Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, daily living component of Personal Independence Payment or Armed Forces Independent payment
- If you are employed you MUST NOT earn over a certain amount. Money from a private or occupational pension is not considered earned income.
- You MUST NOT be a full time student (21 hours per week or more)
- You MUST be present and resident in the UK and NOT subject to immigration control

If you receive another benefit, such as State Pension, you may not get paid Carers Allowance. ✗

## Carers' Credit

If you do not qualify for Carer's Allowance but provide at least 20 hours care for one or more people, you may qualify for **Carer's Credit**. This means you are credited with National Insurance Contributions (NIC) as a Carer under state pension age. It contributes to your future state pension and bereavement benefits entitlement.

## Carers' Allowance Supplement

The new Scotland Social Security agency will pay an extra payment for Carers in Scotland who are receiving full or partial CA. The Carer's Supplement will be paid twice a per year.

## Universal Credit

If you are claiming Universal Credit, you can get a '*carer amount*' included in this if you have "*regular and substantial caring responsibilities*" for a severely disabled person. In this situation, the work-related requirements, known as the '*claimant commitment*', will not apply to you.

For more advice speak to a member of staff at the Carers' Centre, or you can contact:

- WDC Working 4U Team on 0800 980 90 70
- Citizen's Advice Bureau on 0141 435 7590 or 01389 752727/744690
- Independent Resource Centre on 0141 951 4040

# Power of Attorney & Guardianship Guardianship

## What is 'incapacity'?

The law assumes that anyone over the age of 16 is capable of making decisions and managing their own affairs. For people with certain disabilities, injuries or illnesses, that may not be possible. Where someone is unable to act, communicate, understand or remember decisions then they are considered to lack capacity.

When a child turns 16 or an adult loses capacity, families often feel there should be an 'easy' way for them to take over decision making for that person. The thought of having to make a formal application can be daunting. However, the procedures are there to protect everyone's rights and with good support the process is normally straightforward. The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 offers a range of options to give others authority to act or make decisions for another adult.

## Powers of Attorney

In general, a Power of Attorney (POA) is used to provide for the situation where someone might become unable to make decisions in the future due to illness or injury.

People often assume that important decisions about money, care or medical treatment could be taken by their partner or 'next of kin' or their primary carer. However, no-one has an automatic right to make decisions on someone else's behalf unless they've been legally appointed.

The key thing to remember about a POA is that you can't 'take out' a POA in relation to someone else. It's something that must be granted to you by the individual at a time when they have capacity to understand the document they are signing.

# Useful Telephone Numbers

## Social Work Departments Telephone Number

Aurora House, Clydebank	0141 562 8800
Kilbowie Road, Clydebank	0141 951 6202
Church Street, Dumbarton	01389 737000
SOCIAL WORK, OUT OF HOURS	0800 811 505

## Health Service Telephone Number

Clydebank Health Centre	0141 531 6400
Dumbarton Health Centre	01389 763111
Vale of Leven Health Centre	01389 828251
NHS 24	111

## Welfare Rights Telephone Number

Welfare Rights Helpline (All Areas)	0800 980 9070
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# Complementary Therapies



**Caring for someone can be stressful. We offer a range of activities and therapies which help manage stress.**



**Our complementary therapy programme includes:**

- **Mindfulness**
- **Time 4 Me (Stress Management)**
- **Yoga**
- **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**
- **Breathing Exercises**



**Ask a member of staff for more details.**



## When your caring role comes to an end.

Your caring role can come to an end for a number of reasons. The person that you were caring for: **May have passed away, may have gone into a long term care establishment, may have got better and no longer require the same support or some-one else may have taken over their care.**

Those who are no longer providing an active caring role are often referred to as *Former Carers*. However, that does not mean that they do not still need some level of support.

When your caring role comes to an end, for whatever reason, it can leave a huge gap in your life, particularly if you have been caring for many years.

As your circumstances change so too will the support that the Carers Centre offers you.

We will continue to support you for a further 6 months following the end of your caring role. You can continue access all appropriate services available from the Centre including: –

- **Information and advice**
- **Welfare Benefits Advice**
- **Emotional Support**
- **Ongoing attendance at our Friday CRAFT Group**
- **Access to our Life After Caring Course**

During this 6 month period we will offer you support to access other things in the community e.g. volunteering opportunities, other types of community activities or advice about getting back to work.

If you feel that you do not require any further contact from us, we will ensure that your details are removed from our database and all mailing lists.

However, you can continue to receive our *Carers' News* by becoming a member of Carers of West Dunbartonshire.

Remember, everyone is different and we will be lead by you in terms of how much support you still require.

**Further information about becoming a member of Carers of West Dunbartonshire, becoming a volunteer or our Former Carers policy are all available on request.**

## Complaints Policy

### What you can do if you are concerned or unhappy -

You can talk to the Service Manager about your concern or complaint. If you prefer to speak to someone else then you can speak to a member of the Board of Trustees. If you wish to make a formal complaint, this should be put in writing to the

### If you have a complaint we will -

- Listen and try our best to respond to your problem to stop it becoming a bigger problem
- Write it down so that it does not get forgotten
- Deal with your complaint confidentially
- Try to be sensitive to your needs and wishes
- Try to solve the difficulty quickly
- Keep you up-to-date on the action being taken

### When your complaint is received -

- We will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days
- Where possible a response will be made within 14 working days following investigation.
- We will also offer you the opportunity to discuss your complaint

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you must tell us within 14 working days of receiving our written response. It will then be referred to a Hearings Panel where you will be invited to present your complaint personally. If you wish you can be accompanied by a Representative/ Advocate. In respect of these proceedings the decision of the Hearings Panel is final.



# Protecting your information

It is necessary for the Carers' Centre to hold confidential information about the people that we support. The information that we have includes your name, address, date of birth and also some details about the person that you are caring for. It also includes details about the support that you are receiving from us

We will only use your information to support you and to provide you with information that you have requested from us. From time to time we would like to contact you about services or support that we think will be of benefit to you or the person that you are caring for. If you are happy for us to contact you for this purpose, we will generally do this in writing. If we are referring you to another organisation, we will not share your details without first getting your permission to do so.

## How is it kept confidential?

All information is stored securely and is only available to Centre Staff who are required to adhere to the organisation's Data Protection Policy.

## Your Rights

- You have a right to know how your information is used.
- You have a right to see the information that we have about you.
- You have a right to complain if you are unhappy about how your information is protected.

***A copy of our Privacy Statement which outlines our practice in more detail, can be provided upon request and is also available on our website.***

# Social Events

Participation in social activities is an important element of everyone's well-being. Being socially connected with other people helps increase our sense of belonging, our confidence and provides balance in our lives.

However, as a result of your caring role you may find it difficult to attend social events and feel that you have lost touch with friends. This can leave you feeling very isolated. We believe that carers also have a right to a life of their own and it's important for you to maintain a balance between your caring responsibilities and social activities.

Being able to engage in social activities can:

- ◆ **Increase your confidence and self esteem.**
- ◆ **Provide an opportunity to meet new people and make new friends.**
- ◆ **Give you a break from your caring role.**
- ◆ **Help you have fun.**

The Carers' Centre offers a variety of social activities and we can provide you with replacement care services which will allow you to attend. All of our carer support groups will provide an opportunity to socialise with other carers and in addition to this we arrange a variety of social events.

These include:

- Annual Carers' Break
- Christmas Social Event.
- Other annual events such as Carers' Week & Carers' Rights Day.