

Health, Housing and Adult Social Care

Keeping Safe – a Carers Guide



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Section 1 Introduction

This guide has been developed to help support adult carers (who care for an adult) look after themselves – from health and wellbeing to protecting the person they care for, and themselves, from abuse.

Some of the information can be accessed through the internet – if you do not have access to the internet at home, there are computers at local libraries and at Enfield Carers Centre where you can print information out. You can drop in (please see page 15 for address) or phone them on **020 8366 3677** or email them at info@enfieldcarers.org. If you do have the internet, they also have a website with lots of information at www.enfieldcarers.org

A very useful booklet for you as a carer is '*Carers Rights Guide – Looking After Someone*' published by Carers UK. It can be downloaded from their website at www.carersuk.org or calling them on **020 7378 4999**.

Section 2 Looking After Yourself

Being a carer can be hard work! It is known that caring may leave you feeling stressed, tired and frustrated. Some carers also find it hard to have their own life and this can also cause the carer to feel angry. Please do not worry – this is a normal reaction to the situation.

What is important is that you deal with these feelings and don't bottle things up. This is for two reasons – firstly you have to be fit and healthy to be able to care properly and secondly, the more angry and frustrated you feel the more likely you are to take it out on the person closest to you – the person you care for.

Carers UK offers the following advice:

Don't do it alone

There are almost 30,000 carers in Enfield. Often friends and family don't realise how difficult caring can be or realise that you need help. Talk to them and ask if you need help.

“ I go into the other bedroom and talk to my friends on Facebook. It might sound trivial but it is my 'exit door' from everything!”¹

You can get support and information from Enfield Council – if you still wish to care but need some extra help then please have a Carers Assessment. The Council is committed to supporting carers and understand it can be difficult. If you wish to continue caring, we want you too as well.

You can meet other carers through Enfield Carers Centre who has support groups and activities. Often it helps to meet others in the same situation, knowing they understand.

You can call Carers Direct on **0808 802 0202** which provides free, confidential advice to carers (9am to 8pm Monday to Friday (except bank holidays), 11am to 4pm at weekends) or access the Carers Trust online forum at www.carers.org/carers-chat

¹ Care quote taken from Carers UK website www.carersuk.org/support/carer-qaq/item/2656-sheena-ann-brown

Carers who use the Carers UK discussion boards have devised a list of tips to help look after yourself:²

- 1.** Don't be too hard on yourself. Everyone has bad days.
- 2.** If possible, get out of the house for a while. Go for an outing.
- 3.** Speak to people who make you feel positive. This could be family, friends or our forum members.
- 4.** Make a list of the things you're grateful for.
- 5.** Take one thing at a time and just breathe.
- 6.** Get enough sleep at night. Sleep deprivation is a well known cause of depression and being tired does nothing for your mood.
- 7.** A pamper session in the bath can help: bubbles, oils, music and a good book.
- 8.** Singing along loudly to a CD in the car.
- 9.** Remember that you are not only a carer; there is more to you than that.
- 10.** Don't forget to keep busy. It tends to be harder to fight the urges to cope in negative ways when you are alone and doing nothing.
- 11.** Rather than fighting and trying to make it a good day, it helps to write it off as a bad day and look to tomorrow to have a better day.

² www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/quick-guide-to-caring/tips-for-low-mood

12. Organise your problems, if its tomorrow's problem then worry about it tomorrow.
13. Some say a change is as good as a break. Bringing some flowers into the house or even wearing a nice jumper or hat can put us in a different mindset.
14. Compile a 'Happy Box'. Treat yourself with a collection of items that you love and put them all in a box. When you need it, open it up and take something/everything out.
15. If possible, some form of exercise really helps to lift your mood. Walking, swimming, yoga or gardening, whatever works for you.
16. Certain foods like chocolate and curry have ingredients in them that can help with low moods.
17. If your list of 'to-do's' is overwhelming, get a timer and give yourself a set time in which to do whatever you feel. 15 minutes to read or 30 minutes to do nothing. Make it your time.
18. Engross yourself in creative time. Get the paints out, write a story or poem, play an instrument or anything that takes your mind off of things.
19. Try to have a rough plan. Not more than you can handle, but enough to give you a basic routine to the day.
20. Remember, you are not alone.

Get some practical help

You can contact Adult Social Care on **020 8379 1001** or **adultsocialcare@enfield.gov.uk** to get assessed. The person you care for will have an assessment called a Needs Assessment and you are entitled to a Carers Assessment. These assessments can be done at the same time although you are able to have your assessment away from the person you care for if you wish.

The assessments will tell you about the help and support that can be provided and how much you will have to pay, if any.

“ The call button means that I feel I can pop up to the local shops for a short period of time as my mother could call for assistance if there was a problem.”³

You could also find out about Safe and Connected Service which provides alarms, sensors and equipment, as well as an emergency response system to give you peace of mind when you are not with the person you care for. You can contact the Safe and Connected Service on **020 8803 1524** or via email: **safeandconnected@enfield.gov.uk**

Look after your own health

You should tell your GP you are a carer. They keep a register and may be able to offer additional support or be more flexible with appointments when they know you are a carer.

“ The doctor has been fantastic and he takes care of me and daughter.”⁴

Make time to look after your own health – make sure you go to the GP and dentist when you need to. If you have your own health conditions you should get additional support to attend your appointments. If you find it hard to leave the person you care for you should tell your Social Worker who will provide alternative care.

“ Counselling is essential to stop us carers becoming depressed.”⁵

It is also important you recognise when you feel stressed and/or depressed. Carers do have an increased risk of depression and anxiety and it is important that you get support if you feel like this. Make sure you take time for yourself to relax and unwind. Your Carers Assessment should address your need to take a break.

4 Carer quote taken from Carers UK publication 'Sick, Tired and Caring' 2011

5 Enfield carer quoted at Carers Strategy consultation event, 2012

There is lots of equipment that can help you with physical caring tasks. Again if you feel there is equipment you need or you need adaptations made to your home please contact your Social Worker who can refer you to Occupational Therapy for an assessment.

If you have to lift the person you care for you may benefit from Manual Handling training which is provided by Enfield Council. You can request this by phoning the Council on **020 8379 1001**.

Care for your career

Balancing the demands of caring and working can be very difficult.

As a carer you have rights in the workplace such as the ability to request flexible working, time off in emergencies and parental leave. Carers UK has more information on flexible working and your employment rights on their website – www.carersuk.org

Make the most of your money

Make sure you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to by having a benefits check which is available through Enfield Carers Centre or through the Carers UK Advice Line on **0808 808 7777** (Monday-Friday 10am-4pm). You can also contact the Revenue and Benefits Team at Enfield Council on **020 8379 1000**. It is important to remember some benefits are not means tested and you may be eligible for benefits you are not aware of.

Check about council tax reduction – in some cases people with disabilities and/or carers can receive a discount. Please speak to the Enfield Council Council Tax Advisory Line on **020 8379 1000**.

Section 3 Employing Care Staff

If you are a self funder or receive a direct payment you could employ your own care worker or Personal Assistant. When you do this, you become their employer and this comes with responsibilities.

It is also important to do Disclosure and Barring Service checks on the person you wish to employ to make sure they are safe and do not have a criminal record.

If you are employing a Personal Assistant we recommend that you:

- Check references thoroughly
- Undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- Follow the guidance in the Skills for Care toolkit

A DBS check is available through Crossroads Care Lea Valley and will cost £60. You can contact Crossroads on **020 8373 6210** or email at leavalley@crossroads.org.uk

The Brokerage Team at Enfield Council can also support you to employ staff and signpost you to relevant organisations. You can contact the Brokerage Team on **020 8379 1001**.

Section 4 Recognising Abuse

Abuse is when someone does or says something to make you feel upset, scared or frightened. You may be too scared to tell them to stop or even for help from someone else. This abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, financial, institutional, discriminatory or neglectful.

Abuse is always wrong. Abuse is not your fault.

Anyone can abuse, such as a family member, care worker or someone you should be able to trust.

The Enfield Adult Abuse line is a single point of contact to report abuse. You will be listened to and your concerns taken seriously – please call **020 8379 5212**.

Section 5 What Do I Do If...

I don't have a Social Worker, who do I contact?

If you care for an adult you should contact the Access Team on **020 8379 1001** or via email: adultsocialcare@enfield.gov.uk

If you care for a child, you can contact the Joint Service for Disabled Children by email at cheviots@enfield.gov.uk or by phone on **020 8363 4047**.

I am finding it hard to cope with my caring responsibility

A Carers Assessment would look at your needs as a carer and what support you need. When having a Carers Assessment please be honest about your feelings and ability to continue caring. Support can be provided to help you improve the situation and give you choices. You can contact the Access Team to request an assessment.

You may also wish to contact Enfield Carers Centre where you can receive one-to-one support and information, relaxation therapies, counselling, support group and the chance to meet other carers.

I don't want to care anymore

If you care for an adult you should contact the Access Team on **020 8379 1001** or via email: adultsocialcare@enfield.gov.uk

If you care for a child, you can contact the Joint Service for Disabled Children by email at cheviots@enfield.gov.uk or by phone on **020 8363 4047**.

How do I get training to help me with my caring role

Training is provided through Enfield Carers Centre and the Centre can also refer you onto training at Enfield Council.

I need equipment to help me – who do I ask?

Again you should contact Adult Social Care. If you are assessed as needing equipment, you will be able to look and try equipment at the Independent Living Resource Centre in Edmonton. Their telephone number is **020 8379 6937**.

If you need to adapt your home you may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant to help fund the costs. Again you can request this through your Social Worker.

I don't get time to go to the doctor for myself, what do I do?

Tell your GP who may be able to offer you appointments at the beginning or end of surgery times to avoid you waiting around. Some doctors may also be able to offer home visits.

Alternative care can also be provided through your Social Worker to allow you to attend health appointments.

I think the person I care for is at risk of harm

If you see or know of a worrying situation, please do not ignore it. Get in touch with Enfield Council and we will do something about it. This may mean acting directly on your information and/or contacting other services to help stop an abusive or neglectful situation.

We will also provide information and offer practical advice to the person suffering abuse, so that they can make an informed choice about any help they might need, or any action they may wish to take. If they are unable to make an informed choice, care will be taken to support and protect them.

Enfield Adult Abuse Line on **020 8379 5212**.

The person I care for puts me at risk

Sometimes the person you care for may harm you. Sometimes this may be because they are angry and frustrated and sometimes this may be because of the condition they have.

Although it may be a daunting step, you do need to tell someone about this. Extra support, information and services can be provided to help the person you care for and to keep you safe.

You can speak to the Enfield Adult Abuse Line on **020 8379 5212**. Enfield Carers Centre will be able to provide you with support through this time.

I feel like I could harm the person I care for

We all know how stressful caring can be and that may lead to a carer harming the person they care for. If you feel like you could harm the person you care for, or you have done, we can provide support and information to you to help deal with your feelings and situation.

We urge you to contact Adult Social Care or Enfield Carers Centre if you feel like you could harm the person you care for.

Who do I contact in an emergency?

Emergency out-of-hours contact

If you need to contact Health and Adult Social Care outside of normal working hours, over the weekend or on a bank holiday, please phone the Customer Service Centre:

Phone: **020 8379 1000**

Textphone: **020 8379 4419**

Out-of-hours GP and nurse cover

Barndoc provides out-of-hours GP and nurse cover between 6.30pm at night and 8am the following morning during weekdays, and for 24 hours a day at weekends and Bank Holidays.

Phone: **03000 333 777**

Website: **www.barndoc.co.uk**

Section 6 Sources of Support

Enfield Adult Abuse Line

Phone: 020 8379 5212

Website: www.enfield.gov.uk/keep-safe

Enfield Carers Centre

Britannia House
137-143 Baker Street
Enfield
EN1 3JL

Phone: 020 8366 3677

Email: info@enfieldcarers.org

Website: www.enfieldcarers.org

Access Team (Adult Social Care)

Phone: 020 8379 1001

Email: adultsocialcare@enfield.gov.uk

Website: www.enfield.gov.uk/adultsocialcare

Joint Service for Disabled Children

Phone: 020 8363 4047

Email: cheviots@enfield.gov.uk

Independent Living Resource Centre

The Assessment Suite
14 Centre Way
Claverings Industrial Estate
Edmonton
N9 0AH

Phone: 020 8379 6937

Carers Direct

Phone: 0808 802 0202
Website: www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

Open: 9am to 8pm Monday-Friday (except bank holidays),
11am to 4pm at weekends.

Carers UK Advice Line

Phone: 0808 808 7777
Website: www.carersuk.org

Carers in Enfield

HHASC494

Produced by the Adult Social Care Commissioning Team
Health, Housing and Adult Social Care

April 2015

