

Carers Careline

providing support for unpaid carers

Newsletter



November 2024

Last month we highlighted the importance of arranging a carers assessment. But what is a carer's assessment and who can you call to arrange one? Worcestershire Association of Carers (WAC) manage the Carers Hub and conduct carers' assessments on behalf of Worcestershire County Council.

- A carer's assessment is a conversation over the phone (sometimes in person) of approximately one hour, about your role as a carer.
- At the assessment you will be asked to give an overview of your role, what is going well and what is not.
- Your wellbeing will be discussed including how you are managing.
- You will be given advice and support regarding your caring journey and signposted to organisations who are able to assist you further.
- If your situation changes you can ask for another carer's assessment.
- In some cases, an annual review can be scheduled to reassess your situation.

If you would like a carer's assessment we can refer you to Worcestershire Association of Carers. Alternatively you can call them on 0300 012 4272.

How to prepare for a Carer's Assessment

Collect all the relevant information you'll need:

- your NHS number
- your GP's name, address and phone number
- your email address (if you have one)
- contact details of anyone coming to the assessment with you if your appointment is in person
- details of the person you care for including their full name, address, date of birth and NHS number

Things to think about beforehand

Make a list of the different ways you are providing support, such as:

- emotional support
- managing finances
- helping someone with practical activities
- ensuring someone is safe from harm
- helping with personal care

If the person you care for will be present at the assessment, think about if you will be able to speak freely about any difficulties you have?

Consider how caring affects your life

- Does it leave enough time for you?
- Does it affect your emotional wellbeing – for example, do you often feel drained or lonely?
- Does it affect you physically – for example, do you lose sleep or suffer with back ache from lifting someone regularly?
- Has it affected your work, social life or education?

In the event you, the carer, should require hospitalisation or care of your own you can request a carer's assessment and a needs assessment for the person you care for.

So what is a needs assessment? A needs assessment is for the person you are caring for to provide them with additional support at home. You can call Adult Social Care (who are part of Worcestershire County Council) on 01905 768053 for a needs assessment if you are finding it difficult to manage or the person you are caring for needs further assistance. From the needs assessment, a social worker from the Adult Social Care team will decide whether the person you care for qualifies for support. Following this, they will carry out a financial assessment to determine whether the council will cover some or all of the costs for care within the home. For care at home the value of your house is **not** included in the financial assessment however you may be asked to top up the cost of care if:

- you have savings above the lower capital limit of £14,250
- you decide you would prefer care from agencies that are not on the council framework

If you have savings over £23,250 which is considered the upper capital limit you will be asked to cover all care at home costs until your savings reduce below this limit at which point this would be reviewed.

There are a number of comprehensive home care services to support daily living. Choosing to put care and support in place early isn't just about planning for the future it's about enhancing your quality of life too. And don't forget if you or the person you care for are a state pensioner with health problems and/or disabilities, you may be entitled to Attendance Allowance. This benefit is not means tested however you do have to fit the eligibility criteria. Call the Carers Careline team in the office for more detail.



We have some really good news! The WAN Household Support Fund voucher scheme has been extended!

For anyone who has not yet applied, the team will continue to contact as many carers as we can or alternatively you can call us. If you have already been successful through this scheme, the good news is that you can apply again after six months from receiving your first vouchers - while funds last. We have had such great success with the scheme and brought a little extra light into the lives of some of our carers and we intend to continue to do so as long as the scheme is running. One of our carers who has now been awarded a second lot of vouchers said, "I just want to say a huge thank you - we both really appreciate your support with the voucher scheme!" Another carer called to say, "Thank you so much for continuing to encourage me to apply for the WAN vouchers. I am thrilled to bits." Please call the Carers Careline team in the office if you would like to be referred. It's likely, that in most cases, you will fit the eligibility criteria - nothing ventured, nothing gained!



Drop-In: Monday-Wednesday 10.30am-12.30pm
Room 1, Ecumenical Centre



Evesham Walk
Redditch, B97 4EX



Call: 01527 66177 Mon-Thurs 10-1.30pm

Email: info@carerscareline.co.uk
Web: www.carerscareline.co.uk

Facebook: carers careline

Instagram: carerscareline

Twitter: @carers careline



Carers Careline is a registered charity number 1106747



The caring journey

The caring role is an enormous puzzle. Can we fix it?

We carers, above all, know the fragility of life. It doesn't matter who we're looking after. It might be a parent, a child, a spouse, a lover, a friend, a neighbour, a mixture of any of those – whoever it is, the main question of caring always comes down to the same thing. Is this person – whether I love them or not – ever going to get better? How long will it go on for? How is this story going to end? Can I make it all right? Basically, we can never answer any of

those questions until, one way or another, the journey is over.

It is probably true that although we can care for someone to the very best of our ability – their quality of life or lifespan is not really in our hands. But there's an issue in the caring situation which rears its ugly head over and over again. The issue of co-dependence. Our caree depends upon us to keep them clean, fed, safe – as much as we possibly can. And the longer the caring goes on, the more the carer depends upon having that role to fulfil their own identity.

It does happen slowly and we carers mostly don't even notice it happening. But answer these questions: Do you still see all the family that you saw before you took on the role? Do you hear from your friends? Have you had to leave your job to continue caring? Do you ever feel lonely or isolated because of the caring? What – at this moment in time – is the reason you have for living?

If we struggle to find any time to be just ourselves – doing some of the things we did before, carrying on family life in the same way, enjoying the same social life that we had before, engaging in the things that keep us activated, engaged, with a sense of purpose – then maybe it's time to wonder whether we have become co-dependent. When everything outside of the caring is just too much effort to deal with – then we are reaching a time when the meaning of our life has basically become caring for our caree. And then, what we do not realise is that we have forfeited our own identity to the caring role.

Many carers refute the idea of co-dependency – 'I'm just doing what I have to do!' and that's absolutely true – but we need to look at the bigger picture as well. One day, the caring will end. When the caring is finished, however that happens – what's going to happen to us? Are we just going to carry on, sitting in the four walls, ruminating on the past, feeling lost and alone? Are we, having become so used to looking after someone else's needs for such a long time, suddenly going to be able to work out what our own needs are and look after them?

It's while we are caring that we need to be thinking about getting out – joining in – making friends with others who have shared experiences – hooking into a group or two – laying some foundations for the future so we're not suddenly faced with total oblivion but have at least a couple of phone numbers that we can call and say, 'This has happened, I don't know what to do now...'

Please, as much as you can, take part in all Carers Careline social and respite activities, for your own sake.

The caring role is a puzzle. Can we fix it? We don't know – but we can jolly well try!

Irene

The Adventures of the Ladies of Table No. 1 (the Naughty Table)



Greetings! Trundling along in our Bobcat, we came upon a group of men looking quite bewildered. Not sure how many men it would take to change a light bulb in the 'Welcome to Fabulous LAS VEGAS, Nevada' sign, they asked if we knew. We said at least four but only one

woman. They didn't have a ladder so, choosing Irene to change the bulb, we instructed the men to form a pyramid standing on each other's shoulders. Then we hoisted Irene up to the top. She soon changed the bulb and the sign shines out today!

Noting our CanCan costumes the men assumed we were the new dancers they'd heard were booked for Caesar's Palace. Thanking us for our help and hinting they could make use of our Bobcat, they told us to park it up by the roadworks and they would give us a lift in their van. It seemed a good trade as a way of reaching downtown Vegas. Hearing of the fair on the roof, we booked into the Stratosphere. Before going in search of the well-known waving cowboy we took the lift to the fair. The rides were frightening – the mother of all white knuckle rides – shooting out into thin air above the Strip and stopping with a terrifying jolt. Petrified, we watched. No way would we partake!

We set off and found the cowboy high above streets full of people, penny arcades and shops. We drifted into a nightclub and met up with the Rat Pack. I could have stayed their longer listening to Dean, but time is precious. Hitting the Strip, we explored the Mandalay Bay, New York New York, Planet Hollywood, the Mirage, the Egyptian themed Luxor, and so many more casino/hotels – every one of them themed and something to wonder at!

The Venetian is a miniature Venice. We paid our money and drifted along the Grand Canal to the merry song of a Gondolier. At the end of our ride Hazel stood up to give him a hug which threw him off balance, tipping him into the water. He had no trouble recognising us afterwards as we stood on the Rialto Bridge and waved to him. He muttered something in Latin as he gestured his farewell and passed under the bridge.

We watched the flamboyance of pink flamingos in the garden of The Flamingo, also the white tigers at The Mirage. We were disappointed that the Pirates' Ship anchored outside Treasure Island sunk in 2013 and the show no longer takes place. Seeing the Paris Casino's replica Eiffel Tower, we went inside and were asked to perform our CanCan during the matinee show. We don't improve! Then we were off to Caesar's Palace.


As we approached, a doorman grabbed us. Hurrying into a backstage dressing room, he instructed we were given new, very scanty costumes, long gloves, fishnet tights, tall feather headdresses with matching fans. Swept along with ten other ladies, we found ourselves on stage. We poised and waved our feather fans about. The audience were enthralled, especially a group of men playing Roulette, located in front of the stage. Very rowdy and shout out, they asked us to join them. As we did so, one of them won big time. He said we must stay as their good luck charms. They were a stag party. The bridegroom, being about thirty, had saved up to bring his male relatives to Vegas. This included Dad, brothers, cousins, uncles, grandads and a great grandad. We felt we would be okay with the older men. We played Black Jack and the slots with them. We hit more than one jackpot – oh, the sweet sound of coins cascading down the chute!

Excitedly, Hazel hugged the men each time they won but they were more interested in playing their lucky streak. When we had a disgusting amount of cash the older men suggested we went to see the Bellagio's Dancing Waters. After watching this wonderful musical display and feeling very tired we asked to return to our hotel. Would you believe it – the stag party were booked into the Stratosphere too!

Before reaching the hotel we saw and stopped at one of the many wedding Chapels. Great Grandad, in very high spirits, insisted he get married. Which one of us married him, we leave to your imagination! A few goodnight hugs later, we agreed to meet next morning. First we had to buy some diamonds and new clothes and arrange a quickie annulment. Great Grandad was pleased about this as he had a wife at home. Imagine our surprise when all the men were waiting in two white limousines. Pleased to see us they apologised for anything which may have embarrassed us the previous evening. We journeyed with the older relatives and were treated to chocolates, strawberries and champagne.

This IS the life! Our companions were great company and had planned a wonderful day. Helicopters had been booked to fly us over the Hoover Dam to the Grand Canyon. We stopped off for lunch at the Canyon Hotel. Then we were taking white water rafting on the Colorado River before returning to our hotel. The staffs were leaving next day but before they left they told us they would love to meet up back home. They also arranged and paid for a limo to take us back to our travels, Route 66.

Diary Dates - November 2024

When	Organised by	Activity	Detail	Where
Friday 1st November 1pm	Millcroft Care Home 01527 433411	Fish and Chip Fryday Call the Millcroft team to book—no charge	Join the Millcroft team on the first Friday of the month for free fish and chips.	Millcroft Care Home Alfrick Close Redditch B97 6RU
Monday 4th November 10 -11am	Carers Careline	Care for Coffee? Book with one of the team	Join Nat at Aroma for a catch up and a coffee or cuppa.	Aroma Church Green East B98 8BP
Tuesday 5th November	Carers Careline	Carers Connect 	Remember, remember, the 5th of November! We're going live with Carers Connect! Look out for our first communication on our new WhatsApp group.	WhatsApp Group
Monday 25th November 2-3:30pm	Carers Careline	Bereavement Group No need to book	If you have been, or know someone else who has been bereaved recently, this group is for you and them. You do not have to be registered with Carers Careline to attend.	RYCE (REDI Centre) South Street B98 7DQ
Tuesday 26th November 10:30-12:30pm	Carers Careline	Creative Writing Group Book with one of the team	If you've never thought of joining the writing group – come and give it a whirl – you might find you love it!	RYCE (REDI Centre) South Street B98 7DQ
Wednesday 27th November 12pm onwards	Carers Careline	AGM Carer Consultation 12pm Lunch 1pm Book with one of the team	From 12pm onwards we invite active carers and those they care for to join the staff team & trustees for consultation and feedback on our programme of services, followed by an update at 1pm on the charity's activities throughout the year and beyond.	Ecumenical Centre Evesham Walk Redditch B97 4EX
Saturday 30th November 10 -1pm	Repair Cafe	Repair Café No need to book	The Repair Café experts will try to fix your items in need of repair. It's a free repair service, spare parts need to be paid for or supplied.	Community House 103 Easemore Road B98 8EY

Regular weekly classes and events

Mondays November 9:30-11:30am	Worcestershire County Council 01905 728537	Microsoft Office Skills Book With WCC	Would you benefit from refreshing your knowledge of using Microsoft Word and Excel? This course will improve your confidence in using more of their functions at work and at home.	Redditch Library 15 Market Place B98 8AR 11th/18th/25th
Tuesdays November 1.30pm-3:30pm	Adult Learning Worcestershire 01905 728537	5 Ways to craft Book With Adult Learning Worcestershire	A new craft to learn each week over this 5 week course	YMCA Redditch Church Hill B98 9JS 5th/12th/19th/26th
Wednesdays November 10-11am	Carers Careline	Gentle Keep Fit £3 per session No need to book	Join Sue's keep fit class, gentle exercise that will improve your fitness and enhance your wellbeing.	Ecumenical Centre 6th/13th/20th/27th
Wednesdays November 10 - 12pm	Healthy Worcestershire 01905 928185 or 0800 772 0307	Free activities and topics Call to book	A new service to help improve your strength and balance, support your mental health, and provide social activities.	Abbeyle Community Club B98 8JE 6th/13th/20th/27th
Wednesdays November 10 -12pm	Frhens woodlandelectrical @btinternet.com	Frhens No need to book— donations welcome	A group at the Ecumenical Centre for women who are looking for friendship, a support network and fun activities, especially crafting of all kinds.	Ecumenical Centre 6th/13th/20th/27th
Wednesdays November 11am	Millcroft Care Home 01527 433411	Chatty Café Call the Millcroft team to book—no charge	Pop to the Chatty Café at Millcroft for some company over a cuppa.	Millcroft Care Home Alfrick Close, Redditch B97 6RU 6th/13th/20th/27th
Fridays November 10 - 4pm	Emmanuel Church & Community Centre	Friday Warm Welcome No need to book	Enjoy a cooked breakfast from just £3.75. A partnership between Emmanuel Church and charity Disability Support Project (DSP).	6 Evesham Walk, Redditch, B97 4EX 1st/8th/15th/22nd/29th

Don't forget our Telephone Support and Counselling services - if you would like additional contact or support, call one of the team on 01527 66177. We can schedule a regular support call, email or text. We can also arrange counselling support with one of our qualified counsellors.

