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# Carers Monthly

Issue 2. July 2020.

## Our full offer of services for Derby City's carers:

An information & advice help-line, operational Mon-Fri, 09:00-17:00, excluding public holidays. There will be an answerphone for out-of-hours and when the line is busy.

Bookable in-depth Carers Conversations, should an enquiry require more hands-on support.

A full calendar of free well-being activities to help carers stay mentally and physically well.

A wide-array of free training opportunities to enable carers to deliver the best and safest care they possibly can, for example, first aid and manual handling.

Support and advice for setting up and maintaining peer support groups.

An engaging monthly newsletter, filled with important information, dates for your diary, local services and useful contacts. You can sign up to our newsletter by our website or help-line.

GP clinics and Talking Points drop-in sessions across Derby City to provide face-to-face support.

## How our offer has changed owing to COVID-19 restrictions:

**Advice help-line:** We have been able to continue to offer this service as normal during COVID-19 and help carers with their questions and needs. We happy to hear from you and continue to help you during this challenging time.

**Carers Conversations:** A Carers Conversation is designed to offer carers a more person-centred approach to support. Our advisors will have 'conversations' with you to best understand what is happening in your caring role and how it is impacting on your health and well-being. A Carers Conversation is designed to understand what really matters to you and to connect you to the resources and support that can help you continue with your caring role independently. This service is also still available during the lock-down and our team are booking these appointments for you now. Please call or email us to book an appointment.

**Well-Being:** Last week we started to offer a well-being call service for our carers after feedback that carers are suffering with increased levels of stress, anxiety and loneliness caused by COVID-19. These calls are 20 minute informal and friendly chats, in a non-judgemental and a safe space for you discuss YOUR well-being. You can book by telephone or email to have a call at a time convenient to you.

**Training Opportunities:** We are currently unable to deliver our training as planned. However, our Training Coordinator is working tirelessly to produce a training package to be delivered to you in your own home. This will feature first aid and manual handling. Jump to our training section to find out more about our FREE DIGITAL TRAINING offer!

**Peer Support:** We are currently pairing carers with other carers in their area to have friendly chats over the phone. You can be paired with someone who has similar interests or similar caring responsibilities. You will be able to support one another through this tough time. Please give our advice help-line a call if this is something you'd like to sign up to.

**Newsletter:** You can sign up to receive a monthly newsletter, packed with useful information about our service. Please let us know what you think and if you would you like anything additional putting in. We love feedback!

**Drop -in Sessions:** These aren't happening at the moment owing to COVID-19 restrictions. However, rest assured, as soon as we can be out safely in the community, we will be!



## Community Information – stay safe:

### **How to book an appointment with your GP surgery as lock-down restrictions lift:**

We realise things are starting to change as lock-down restrictions are eased and that it can be quite stressful not knowing how the world will now operate. To help you, we have gathered some useful advice to help you access your local GP surgery:

Most GPs have started a triage system whereby reception staff will be asking patients the reason they need the appointment. This helps their staff to signpost you to the most convenient service to help you with your health problem or query.

Almost all GPs are NOT allowing access to their building without a booked appointment. Once you have booked an appointment, you will need to arrive at the building and make your presence known. The receptionist will then allow you into the building.

When it comes to prescriptions, requests are to be made online or via telephone ONLY. There is no collection of prescriptions from the surgery.

All patients will be required to wear their own face-covering when attending an appointment at their surgery.

To book an appointment at your GP surgery you can book online by visiting 'GP Surgery Consulting Room' or by telephoning your GP surgery directly.



## Well-Being – remember to take time for yourself:

### **How to help alleviate stress and anxiety and boost your well-being:**

**Move your body:** Exercise is an important part of physical and mental health. Aim for 15-30 minutes of exercise a day. **Some simple exercises that you can do at home are in the useful to know section of this newsletter.**

**Ease up on caffeine and alcohol:** Both of these can kick anxiety into overdrive. Cut back or avoid if you can.

**Schedule your worry time:** It may sound silly to plan to worry, but doctors actually recommend that you pick a time to think about your fears on purpose. Take 30 minutes to identify what's bothering you and what you can do about it. Don't dwell on 'what ifs.' Focus on what's actually making you anxious.

**Be the boss of your thoughts:** Try to turn any negative thoughts into positive ones. Picture yourself facing your fears head-on. The more you do this in your mind, the easier it will be to deal with it when it happens.

In the next newsletter we will be discussing more tips to help with reducing loneliness. Please feel free to contact us and let us know if any of these tips helped – **we'd love to hear from you!**

**Carers' Art Exhibition:** For Carers Week, local artist, Natalie Sweeney, produced a stunning piece of artwork to raise awareness about carers and to celebrate all the amazing work you do. We are having an exhibition of all **YOUR** artwork, photographs, poetry, songs and videos celebrating carers once lock-down restrictions are lifted. We have included at the back of this newsletter a line drawing of Natalie's artwork for you to fill in with your experience of caring. This is a wonderful way to wind down and relax. **Mindfulness colouring** has many health benefits; it reduces stress and improves focus and sleep. Please email your contributions to us or you can post them to Citizens Advice Mid Mercia, Stuart House, Green Lane, Derby, DE11RS. We can't wait to see them !



## Skills and Training – become the best carer you can be:



Unpaid carers need to invest in the importance of their own **self-development**. This could be in terms of developing a better understanding of your role as a carer and what rights you have, learning more about the condition of the person you care for or it could be about gaining and enhancing your skills in relation to your caring role.

This month we are focusing on the importance's of **digital awareness** and how to access our free digital training offered to all carers. Whether you're a complete novice or want extra tips on accessing digital technology, you may benefit from our 1-to-1 help with computes, tablets or phones. We can support you with the following:

- Setting up social media
- Using Skype or Facetime
- Online shopping
- Online banking
- Internet safety
- Accessing your GP surgery online
- And much more!



If you would like access our digital training, simply call our advice help-line to book an appointment.

Finally, if you would like to learn more about your caring role and how to deliver safer care in the home, please type this link into your Internet browser for a video based resource: <https://www.scie.org.uk/carers/informal-carers>



## Useful to know:

Here are a few websites offering useful information on how to reduce stress and anxiety as lock-down restrictions start to lift:

[www.countryliving.com/uk/wellbeing/a32455608/anxious-life-after-lockdown/](http://www.countryliving.com/uk/wellbeing/a32455608/anxious-life-after-lockdown/)

<https://allevents.in/events/stress-and-mental-health-preparing-to-come-out-of-lockdown/200019790256345>

<https://www.netdoctor.co.uk/healthy-living/a32741261/post-lockdown-anxiety/>

NHS: Tips with how to cope with stress - [www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/understanding-stress/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/understanding-stress/)  
UK Gov: [www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-plan-to-tackle-loneliness-during-coronavirus-lockdown](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-plan-to-tackle-loneliness-during-coronavirus-lockdown)

- Government advice on how to stay safe during the lockdown and information regarding how the government plan to tackle loneliness.

If you need support with general tasks, or can offer help to vulnerable people, get in touch with the Derby COVID Community Response: [Hub.www.covidsupport@communityactionderby.org.uk](mailto:Hub.www.covidsupport@communityactionderby.org.uk) or telephone 01332640000

Exercise Tips at Home : [www.express.co.uk/life-style/diets/1258922/lockdown-exercise-coronavirus-the-eight-exercises-you-can-do-while-stuck-at-home](http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/diets/1258922/lockdown-exercise-coronavirus-the-eight-exercises-you-can-do-while-stuck-at-home) - some simple exercise you can try whilst at home.

**\*Thoughts on our newsletter? We'd love to hear your suggestions!\***

# Mindfulness Colouring / Carers Week Art Exhibition

