

## Carers Conversation Guide for Adult Carers during COVID-19 Response Period

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### *For staff having conversations with Carers*

The Carers Centre has all staff redeployed to provide support to Carers and Young Carers at this time and are using a similar guide to ensure Carers are receiving support and up to date information

Carers Centre support will be provided through telephone calls and Attend Anywhere video calls

The following has been compiled to provide a guide to conversations that staff across the Health and Social Care Partnership have with Carers. This is to try to ensure a consistent approach to the support offered to Carers at this time.

***It is imperative to remember that there are more people caring full time for relatives or friends than staff working either in the NHS or in social care.***

***Many Carers may also be juggling working and caring and may need extra support at this time as a result.***

***Young Carers may be experiencing higher levels of worry, stress and anxiety due to the impact on studies, family members and as a result of the stress displayed by parents / siblings etc. Some Young Carers will be the primary Carer and have the additional worry of being able to access food, medications etc.***

This guide provides brief details around the following key subject areas:

- **Keeping Up to date about COVID-19**
- **Emergency planning**
- **Key Information of the person requiring care**
- **Supplies and Shopping**
- **Technology and Keeping in Touch**
- **Young Carers**
- **Local supports**
- **Ongoing provision of services to Cared for and respite services**
- **Employment Issues**
- **Ongoing Support and Recording of Information**
- **Adult Carers Support Plan**

### **Keeping Up to date about COVID-19:**

Like everyone Carers and people being cared for should familiarise themselves with the public health advice on how to protect themselves from infection. Carers can be directed to NHS inform websites for the most up to date information around the management of COVID-19. It is good to encourage people to check regularly for updates.

### **Emergency planning**

This should be promoted and it is important to ensure that Carers have considered the need for an emergency plan to be prepared

Carers who do not already have an emergency plan in place should be encouraged to talk with family and friends about who could take over their caring role if they become ill or need to self-isolate – particularly while social services and the NHS are under so much pressure.

A plan should be made available to family / friend networks and a copy should be left with them or they should be made aware of where the Carers copy is kept.

An Emergency Plan template is available through the Carers Centre and can be emailed or posted.

If in discussion with the Carer it becomes apparent that this topic is resulting in distress or severe anxiety it may be necessary to contact Social Services to discuss further. Alternatively the Carer can be directed to the Carers Centre where further support can be given to discuss options available

### **Key Information of the person requiring care**

Carers should be advised to prepare and keep to hand **Key information** about the person cared for in the event this has to be provided to extended family, friends, care support services or emergency services.

If the Carer has health needs of their own this information should also be recorded in this key information.

### **Supplies and Shopping**

Discuss with Carers their plans to try and ensure they have access to food and other supplies at this time. Is this an area that is causing them distress or severe anxiety? If so, further assistance may be required through local support networks.

### **Technology and Keeping in Touch**

Carers should be encouraged to use technology to keep up to date with information, to keep up networks of support and to shop on line if needed.

The Carers Centre facebook page will have the most up to date information available and any Carer can be directed to this.

### **Young Carers**

Are there any Young Carers affected by the situation in the household? Are they in touch with the Young Carers Project at Dumfries and Galloway Carers Centre? If so they could be directed to the service and a Young Carers Support Worker will be in touch. If they are not registered with the service the staff could provide advice to you which you could pass on to the family. If

there are Adult Carers in the household please refer in to the service as normal. There is clear information on the Young Scot website aimed at young people around COVID-19 <https://young.scot/campaigns/national/coronavirus>

### **Local supports**

Are Carers aware of what is going on in their local communities – supports offered etc – ensure they are cautious of accepting only genuine offers of help.

If recommending or highlighting a local network of support please advise them to look on facebook for these rather than giving them contact details direct. This will ensure the Carer makes their own decision about what they choose to access.

### **Ongoing provision of services to Cared for and respite services**

Is the Carer concerned about any respite they receive or the ongoing services through care agencies, day centre services etc?

Explore if there has already been a reduction to these. What support can be or has been offered as an alternative if any?

Again if the Carer displays signs of distress or severe anxiety around this the Carer could be directed to the Carers Centre to discuss this further and receive support to look at their options. Alternatively you could phone and speak to staff at the Centre for any advice to pass on. In some circumstances a referral or conversation may need to be had with Social Services especially if there are Adult Support and Protection concerns or Child Protection concerns raised as a result.

### **Employment Issues**

Are there worries here around being able to continue to work, financial impacts etc and are employers aware of the additional responsibilities facing the Carer. How are these things being addressed?

Does the Carer have employment responsibilities through an SDS package of support etc? Are they worried about any aspects of this?

Support to explore these issues can be provided through staff at the Carers Centre.

### **Support Planning**

The Dumfries and Galloway Carers Centre will still provide access to Adult Carers Support Plans and Young Carers Statements.

These will need to be done using a good conversation on the telephone or through Attend Anywhere.

***Ultimately the Carers Centre will endeavour to provide support in whatever shape or form it can to Carers in the region who will undoubtedly experience higher levels of stress, anxiety and additional caring responsibilities as a result of the COVID-19 situation.***



#### **How to Get in Touch**

You can contact us in various ways:



You can call us on: **01387 248600**

Email us at: **info@dgalcarers.org**

Visit our website at: **www.dgalcarers.co.uk**

Our postal address is: **Dumfries & Galloway Carers Centre, 2-6 Nith Street, Dumfries DG1 2PW**