



Caring News



CARERS ACTION WORCESTERSHIRE



is a consortium comprising:

Worcestershire Association of Carers

Polysec House
Blackpole Trading Est. West,
Hindlip Lane, Worcester,
WR3 8TJ

e: mail@carersworcs.org.uk
w: www.carersworcs.org.uk
t: 01905 751340
Reg Charity no: 1071850

Crossroads Caring for Carers Worcestershire

Weir Lane, Lower Wick
Worcester, WR2 4AY

e: care@crossroads-worcestershire.org.uk
w: www.crossroadsworcs.org.uk
t: 01905 729293
Reg Charity no: 1110582

Worcestershire Parent and Carers Community

C/O Crossroads, Weir Lane,
Worcester, WR2 4AY

e: wpccsue@gmail.com
w: www.parentcarers.org.uk
t: 07955 760488
Reg Charity no: 1122583

YSS Worcestershire Young Carers

Polysec House
Blackpole Trading Est. West,
Hindlip Lane, Worcester,
WR3 8TJ:

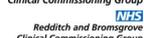
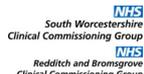
youngcarers@yss.org.uk
w: www.yss.org.uk
t: 01905 619886
Reg Charity no: 1081992

Carers Careline

Room 1, Ecumenical Centre,
6 Evesham Walk, Redditch,
B97 4EX

info@carerscareline.co.uk
w: www.carerscareline.co.uk/
t: 01527 66177
Reg Charity no: 1106747

Worcestershire Integrated Carers Hub Supported by:



Message from Carole Cumino, WAC Chief Executive

Dear Carer

At this very difficult time, I wanted to take this opportunity to give a personal message to all carers in Worcestershire.

Whilst COVID -19 is affecting everyone, we know that carers have many more concerns than people who do not have a caring role. Like everyone else, carers should follow core public health advice such as frequent and thorough washing of hands, coughing or sneezing into a tissue then binning it and washing hands. We must also avoid close contact with anyone who has a fever and cough – people with any signs of a cough or a high temperature are advised to self-isolate. The guidance from the government also tells people over 70 to self-isolate for 12 weeks and others to limit themselves to only essential social contact.

This is all well and good but it's causing anxiety amongst carers who won't be able to isolate themselves from the person they care for. The carers we are talking to are frightened they'll get ill. None of this is easy but we as an organisation will work together with social care, health, voluntary and community organisations and charities to try our absolute best to support these families.

All of this is putting many carers in a difficult position – should they continue to visit their family member in a care home, should they call round on their elderly parents who are only just managing at home, what will happen to the home care workers, who will do the shopping? There are so many questions. Each case needs to be looked at individually and the issues and problems identified.

In this edition of Caring News, we'll do our best to give you up to date and accurate information and to answer some of the questions we've been hearing from carers, but if you're worried about anything, please do get in touch (details below). We'll do our utmost to support you, and on behalf of everyone at WAC – staff, trustees and volunteers – we sincerely hope you and your loved ones stay safe and well over the coming weeks.

Kind regards

Carole



Extended Helpline Hours

Our experienced Carer Pathway Advisors can assist by providing accurate, local information and advice on all aspects of caring.

Carers Hub Helpline Extended Hours:

8am-8pm

Monday—Sunday



What does coronavirus mean for you as a carer?

What do the Government's movement restrictions mean to me?

The Government has placed strict rules on people's personal movement to limit the spread of coronavirus. Rules for those showing symptoms were already in place, as well as measures to protect the most vulnerable.

Under the restrictions, everybody must **stay at home** and only leave for these reasons:

- to exercise once a day - either alone, or with members of your household
- shopping for basic necessities, although this should be done as little as possible
- medical need, or to provide care for a vulnerable person
- travel to or from work, but only where this is absolutely necessary



If you have to go outside you must stay more than 2m (6ft) apart from others. This is what's known as social distancing.

The restrictions were introduced on 23 March, initially for three weeks. But England's Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr Jenny Harries, says it could take six months to see "whether we can get back to normal" and "it is plausible that it could go further than that".

Can I leave my house to care for someone that I normally care for? What do I do if I am stopped by the police?

If you normally care for a friend or relative, then this is one of the four reasons that you are allowed to leave your house.

Chief Superintendent Tom Harding from West Mercia Police has said:

"Individuals must remain inside of their homes but one of the exceptions is to provide care. If you're travelling to provide care, then all you need to do if you're stopped is explain to an officer and they will completely understand and thank you for what you're doing and let you get on your way. It's really clear and all officers understand that if you have caring responsibilities then you are absolutely OK to travel to do that".

However, if you would like additional peace of mind we recommend one of two things.

1. Apply for a Carers Emergency Card.

You can do this online at <https://www.carersworcs.org.uk/emergency-planning> or by calling **0300 012 4272** (8am-8pm 7 days a week) and asking for a form to be posted out to you. You can show the card to the police as proof that you are a registered carer and a vulnerable person relies on you.

2. Print and cut out the information in the box below.

When am I allowed to leave the house?

You should only leave the house for very limited purposes:

- Shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible
- One form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household
- [Any medical need, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person](#)
- Travelling for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home

What does coronavirus mean for you as a carer?

What do I do if I care for someone and I need to self-isolate?

If you have to self-isolate and are using a care service, let your care service provider know and they will discuss how best they can support you through this period.

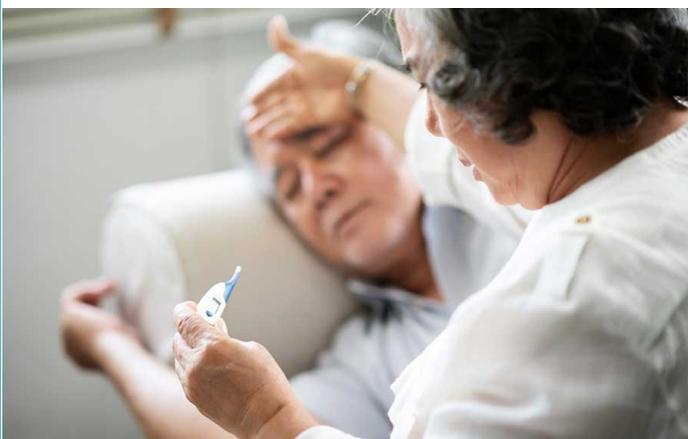
If you are self isolating and would usually provide care, or if you support someone you don't live with and feel that alternative provision is required (and the person you care for lives in Worcestershire), please contact the Adult Social Care Access Centre on **01905 768053**.

Please be clear what support is needed.

If you are worried that you or someone you look after may be at risk, NHS 111 can offer direct guidance through their online coronavirus helpline. Call 111 if your (or their) symptoms become severe, and let them know you are a carer.



Do I need to stay away from the person I care for?



The NHS has written to everyone considered to be at risk of severe illness if they catch coronavirus. You may have received the letter yourself, either as someone in this 'high risk' group or as the named carer of someone else who is.

If a person you care for has received this letter, the instructions are very clear. They must stay at home at all times and avoid all face-to-face contact for at least 12 weeks, **except from you as their carer and healthcare workers continuing to provide essential medical care.**

However, if you start to display any of the symptoms of coronavirus you must suspend your face-to-face visits. If this means that the person you care for will be even more vulnerable, for example because they will no longer receive the essential supplies that you bring them, call the Adult Social Care Access Centre on **01905 768053** if they live in Worcestershire. If the person you care for lives elsewhere and you have received an NHS letter or are caring for someone who has, you can register for further support at www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable or call the Government's new dedicated helpline on **0800 028 8327**.

Symptoms to look out for:



Cough



Runny nose



Sore throat



Fever



Difficulty breathing

Emergency Planning

Have you thought about what you might do if you become ill? All you need to do is carry a small yellow card with you, and should you be taken ill, it will immediately let people know that someone is depending on you.

For more information go to:

www.carersworcs.org.uk/emergency-planning or call our helpline on **0300 012 4272**



Parent Carers

Families in Partnership (FiP) is Worcestershire's Parent Carer Forum. We are a group of parents and carers of disabled children who work with the Local Authority, Education, Health and other providers to make sure the services they plan and deliver meet the needs of children with additional needs and their families. We are independent from the Local Authority and are experts by experience.



A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR - Sally Anne Keane

During these challenging and unprecedented times, I want to extend my wishes that you and your families are well and keeping safe. To ensure you have current and up to date information I have been working with Worcestershire's Children's First to ensure the SEND Local Offer has information that is relevant to you.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20780/coronavirus_covid-19_send_local_offer

This is being revised and updated continually. If there is something that is not here, and you would like information about it, please let us know at enquiriesfip@carersworcs.org.uk

If you would like to talk to someone for support or information, please contact the carers helpline on **0300 012 4272** (Monday-Sunday: 8am to 8pm).

Please take the advice of the Government and stay at home and be safe.

NEW MEMBERS - WELCOME

We are pleased to see an increase in our membership in recent months, as well as having new Parent Carer Reps who are attending meetings on our behalf. A huge welcome to our Reps who add a much needed voice where it matters; and do so as volunteers! If you would like to join us, you can find out more at www.carersworcs.org.uk/parent-carer-forum. If you are a professional, or represent a group or organisation, you can also join us as part of the Stakeholder Reference Group.

MEETINGS

FiP are, of course, observing social distancing and started to do so before it became mandatory as we recognise the impact on Parent Carers health and the importance of us all staying well. As we are no longer holding meetings for FiP in our usual way, we are using Zoom (video) for the Steering Group and Rep meetings as well as keeping in contact with WCC, WCF and the Health and Care Trust.

AGM

To learn more about the work that FiP participated in during the last year, presentations from our Chair and the Director of Education and Early Help, Worcestershire Children First, Sarah Wilkins, can be found on the Parent Carer Forum tab on the WAC website.

SEND PARENT CARER CONFERENCE

Prior to the challenges we face right now and before lockdown was ever on the cards, we were hoping to hold a SEND Conference specifically designed for Worcestershire's Parent Carers. We planned for a full day of training, talks and opportunities to meet the Professionals. As planning ahead is impossible at the moment, we cannot offer any more information on this, however, we would still love to hear what kind of event you would like to see in the future. Please email your thoughts to us at enquiriesfip@worcs-carers.org.uk and join our mailing list for regular updates and details.

PARENT CARERS SESSIONS WITH WAC

FiP secured extra funding to run support sessions aimed at Parent Carers and WAC organised these lovely events for us. They were a huge success and a sell out, and we hope to do more of these in the future.



Parent Carer Emotional Resilience session at Jinny Ring

Your Well-being

With indefinite isolation, contagion, financial uncertainty, and with no return to normality in sight, coronavirus is taking its toll on our collective mental health. Here are a few things you can do to maintain your mental and physical well-being.

Stay informed

It's good to get a balance - keeping up to date with health information and advice is beneficial for your mental state and resilience, however, watching or reading too many reports on coronavirus can be overwhelming, so limit yourself to the amount of updates you receive and also be careful with the sources you access.



Keep to a schedule

Try to keep to a regular schedule everyday to maintain 'normality'. Make a plan of things you will do during the day - don't let yourself slip into boredom.



Stay active

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness. Evidence also shows it can improve your mental wellbeing by:

- raising your self-esteem
- helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them
- causing chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood

Connect with others

Social distancing should not mean social isolation. While you may not be able to visit family and friends in person, that does not mean that you cannot stay connected.

- Call someone on the telephone (particularly on days you are feeling lonely)
- Send a letter
- Place calls using video chat services like Skype or Zoom
- Post on social media or respond to other's posts on social media



Be kind to yourself

Remember it's okay to treat and pamper yourself as these can help relieve stress. This can include making some comfort food, having a long soak in the bath, or watching your favourite film.

Protect your sleep

Quality, sufficient sleep not only helps support your immune system but also helps you better manage stress and regulate your emotions.



Accept a lack of control

Control what you can - accept and cope with those things outside of your control. Remember you may not always be able to control what happens, but you can always control how you react.



Eat well

Having a healthy diet is important in supporting our immune function and many nutrients influence the body's ability to fight infection. Try to plan healthy meals which give you more energy, making you feel better both physically and mentally.

Programmes and Information Sessions for Carers

All of our sessions are currently online. If you would like to attend any please call Worcestershire Association of Carers helpline on **0300 012 4272** or book online at **www.carersworcs.org.uk** and go to 'events'

Our programmes will be responsive to the ever changing guidance produced by the Government and the NHS, and by what carers tell us, so please do check the website or contact us via the helpline for updated sessions and topics.

Well-being Wednesday Webinar

It is important to look after your own health and well-being even if you are busy looking after someone else's health which is why we have created a programme of online webinars to help you consider your own well-being. We are calling these sessions 'Well-being Wednesdays'.



- **29th April, 10:00am - 11:30am:**
How to use Food to Support Your Mood
- **6th May, 10:30am - 12:00pm:**
Getting a Good Nights Sleep
- **13th May, 1:00pm - 2:30pm:**
How to use Food to Support Your Mood
- **20th May, 10:30am - 12:00pm:**
Emotional Resilience
- **27th May, 1:00pm - 2:30pm:**
Building Emotional Well-being

Our online webinars for training and well-being will be conducted via Zoom, a trusted and easy to use programme. All you need to join is a computer, laptop, tablet or phone, and an internet connection.

To join a webinar:

1. Click on the link you are sent or see on the website.

It may look something like this:

<https://zoom.us/j/429831133>

2. If prompted click 'run' or you can download the zoom app beforehand from your app store or at www.zoom.us

3. Agree to use video and make sure you have audio so you can hear and be heard.

4. Join in the webinar, through the video or chat function. Your host will be able to talk you through any issues.



Programmes and Information Sessions for Carers

Carers Chorus



Our choir is temporarily moving online, so no need to miss out on the uplifting fun!

If you would like to join in with any of the online sessions then go to:

www.carersworcs.org.uk/carers-chorus and click on the link next to the relevant date.

Upcoming dates:

- **Monday 4th May**
- **Monday 18th May**
- **Monday 1st June**
- **Monday 18th June**

All sessions are 2:00pm—3:00pm



Information Webinars

Tuesday 28th April (10:00am – 12:00pm): Coping with Caring & Coronavirus

Supporting your loved one full time can present challenges at any time. With the current lock-down, pressures can appear to grow. Join us for a session designed to address how to cope emotionally with your caring role right now. Expert and sensitive tips and tools to bring order and calm into your life.

Tuesday 5th May (10:00am – 12:00pm): Moving with Confidence

Helping to physically move the people we care for causes back strain in 50% of carers. Our expert will show you how to help someone in and out of a chair, assist them to walk, use a wheelchair and get in and out of a car, all without strain to you or stress to the person you are helping.

Friday 8th May (10:00am—11:30am): Benefits Advice

Covering all aspects for carers claiming benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Carers Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- Employment Support Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- Council Tax benefits and grants

Tuesday 12th May (10:00am – 12:00pm): Dementia Awareness

Caring for someone living with dementia is emotionally draining. Trying to explain why no one can visit during social distancing can be very taxing. Join our sensitive online session that will give you the understanding of what is going on in the mind of the person you care for. Expert tips and strategies for de-escalating situations and helping your loved one to live well with dementia.

Tuesday 19th May (10:00am – 12:00pm): Coping with Caring & Coronavirus

Supporting your loved one full time can present challenges at any time. With the current lock-down, pressures can appear to grow. Join us for a session designed to address how to cope emotionally with your caring role right now. Expert and sensitive tips and tools to bring order and calm into your life.

Here2Help Worcestershire

The #Here2Help campaign from Worcestershire County Council encourages the community to come together to tackle coronavirus.

Self-isolating and in need of support?

If you need help during this difficult time and would like to be contacted by a helper or volunteer, please go to www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help to complete the form. A phone number has been set up to help those who can't access the internet, to help them fill out the form. The dedicated number is: **01905 768053**. This can be used Monday to Sunday between 8am and 8pm. Alternatively you can call our helpline **0300 012 4272** and we can also help you with the form.

Wanting to help?

If you are able to offer goods, services or support to those that need it during the coronavirus pandemic, there is a form you can fill out on the website.

HERE 2 HELP WORCESTERSHIRE



Can you help?

To support the most vulnerable people in our community who are no longer able to access our services/centres we will be preparing care packages. but we need your help. We are in need of:



non-perishable items such as: Toilet roll, soap, toothpaste, cereals, baked beans, soup, pasta and rice



Books & Magazines



Puzzles, games, crosswords, word searches



colouring books and pencils



Outdoor toys such as bats, balls, frisbees, skipping ropes

If you can help, in any way, please place items in a bag and drop outside Ronkwood Community Centre, Canterbury Road, Worcester, WR5 1PJ

Thank you

Instagram

On Instagram? Why not catch up with our WAC bear Lloyd as he keeps you updated on caring news and events!



carersworcs



Providing support for Carers

Like many other organisations, Carers Careline has reluctantly had to close our drop-in and stop all other face-to-face activities for the foreseeable future. However, our staff and volunteers are continuing to provide support for Carers in Redditch. If you need support or information about your caring role, please contact us on 01527 66177 or email us at info@carerscareline.co.uk. If there is no answer, please leave a message, we will get back to you.

We are looking forward to catching up with you all, hopefully not before too long.

AGE UK Post Diagnostic Dementia

Living well with dementia... accessing support after a dementia diagnosis.

The Dementia Wellbeing Service is delivered by Age UK Herefordshire & Worcestershire and Onside Advocacy and provides person-centred information, advice and practical support for people living with dementia or memory loss, their families and carers.



We also provide a specialist support and mentoring service for those living with Young Onset Dementia. This service is provided by Dementia Wellbeing Officers skilled and experienced in understanding the particular challenges facing people diagnosed at a younger age and those of their families and carers. In addition to the service provision detailed below this service can also provide time limited one to one mentoring support aimed at enabling people to stay connected to activities and opportunities within their communities.



How do I access the service?

Referrals can be made by a healthcare professional or via self-referral, following a diagnosis from a Worcestershire GP. During your initial conversation with the service, we will organise a home visit appointment from one of our Dementia Wellbeing Officers - they will then be your central point of support.

Please note that due to the coronavirus pandemic, some services may have changed or been temporarily cancelled.

What can the service do for me?

Your Dementia Wellbeing Officer will provide:

- Information and advice following a diagnosis
- Information and support for carers
- Well check calls for continued support
- Drop-in sessions at local GP surgeries
- Practical tips on living well with memory loss, including ways to maintain well-being and what to do about driving
- Legal and financial help including Lasting Power of Attorneys (LPAs), Attendance Allowance, Personal Independent Payment (PIPs) and Council Tax reduction
- Accessing activities and services in your community, including dementia cafes and other peer support sessions



What support does the service provide for carers?

It's important to look after yourself as a carer. The Dementia Wellbeing Service ensures that the carers and family members of those living with dementia are well supported through home visits and well check calls.

Your Dementia Wellbeing Officer will be your point of contact for any concerns, worries or questions you may have. As well as providing useful information on things like finances and continuing care, they will also put you in touch with further support and activities.

Anyone who has concerns about memory loss, or is living with dementia, can contact the Dementia Wellbeing Service: **0800 008 6077** or **01905 740956**

Current information on coronavirus and ways you can support someone with dementia can be found at www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus/

Carer Reps

We are proud to partner with the Learning Disability Partnership Board to raise awareness around Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire, working closely with expert members, providers and other professionals.

Together we run the Learning Disability Strategy, which aims to better the outcomes for individuals with Learning Disabilities and their families. This is underpinned by seven aims:

- Staying Healthy
- Living Well
- Having a Place to Live
- Having a Job
- Staying Safe
- The Right Support for Carers
- Preparing for Adulthood



Are you a carer interested in sharing your knowledge and experience? Our aim is to have carer representative on all seven groups in order to promote the carer's voice and ensure we continue to make a difference.

If you are interested in becoming a carer rep and would like more information, please contact our Carer Engagement & involvement Lead Jenny Hewitt: JHewitt@carersworcs.org.uk

Safeguarding adults for people self-isolating



We want to make sure that the most vulnerable are safe when they are self-isolating. Here are some things to think about if you are offered, or need, support during this time.

Try to use existing and trusted community groups. If not, could a family member, friend or neighbour you know and trust help?



Not sure? Don't answer the door.

If you're not sure about an offer of help, ask the person to leave details and talk to someone you trust about it.

To report a crime or potential crime to the Police you can call the non-emergency number 101.

For safeguarding advice please phone the Adult Safeguarding Team on 01905 843189 (this number does not accept referrals).



To report a safeguarding concern please call 01905 768053.

If someone is in immediate danger Call 999

End of Life Information

Sadly we know that carers and families will lose loved ones, so should the worst happen we've pulled together some information we hope you will find useful during this difficult time.

Registering a death

Anyone needing to register a death will have to book a telephone registration and a registrar will then call on the chosen date/time to register the death.

The form for the funeral will then be sent directly to the funeral director, instead of the usual practice of collecting it from the registrar.

Arranging a funeral

Funerals should be arranged over the phone or via other electronic means, wherever possible. If a funeral must be arranged in person, please respect the social distancing guidance – keep two metres apart, wash hands frequently, and cough or sneeze into a tissue/crook of your elbow and limit the number of people attending in person to arrange the funeral.

Do not arrange a funeral in person if anyone involved has symptoms or should be self-isolating, in accordance with government advice. It is vital that we do all we can to reduce the spread of the virus and that funeral service employees (who are key workers) can remain healthy and able to continue supporting bereaved families.



Who can attend a funeral?

In line with Government guidance, funeral services should only be attended by members of the immediate family who are not in any of the high-risk categories and are not self-isolating. No specific number has been set by the Government. Only the following people should attend:

- members of the person's household
- close family members

(If the deceased has neither household or family members in attendance, then it is possible for a modest number of friends to attend).

There are a number of options that could be considered for people who want to pay their respects or feel involved in the funeral. This might include having an online gathering at the time of the funeral through Google Hangout, House Party, Zoom, WhatsApp or other facility, for all those unable to attend, where you share stories, light candles or play music. Also, ask your funeral director about the possibility of live-streaming or recording the service.

Changes to the services

During the service, all mourners should remain two metres apart from anyone not living in their household. Refrain from making physical contact with anyone outside of your household. There may be other changes too. For example, the gardens may be closed, it may not be possible to touch the coffin or for families to be bearers, the curtains may not be able to remain open during the service and all charitable collections should be done online.

Coping with the loss of someone you love is one of life's biggest challenges and at the moment it may seem much harder as we feel more detached from our usual support networks. For support and advice, please contact us on **0300 012 4272.**

Stay Safe; Stay in Touch

Please be aware that in line with Government recommendations we have taken the difficult decision to postpone all of our face to face activities.

This doesn't mean that we will stop supporting carers, for example you can contact us:



Our telephone helpline will still be available. Contact us on **0300 012 4272**



For regular updates, news and events please visit www.carersworcs.org.uk



We have a group on Facebook called '**Caring Friends Worcestershire**'. Please find us and request to join



We will be hosting regular online webinars for training and well-being via **Zoom**. Please see the centre pages of this newsletter for more information



Visit www.carersworcs.org.uk and click the 'lets chat' button on the bottom right

**Stay updated:
Visit the coronavirus pages at www.gov.uk or www.nhs.uk**

COVID-19: Five steps to look after yourself and others



We appreciate that not everyone wants to use emails, or is able to receive them, but if it would be possible for us to email you Caring News rather than post it we would be grateful. This helps us to keep our postage costs down. If you would like to receive an emailed newsletter let us know by giving us a call on 0300 012 4272 or email: mail@carersworcs.org.uk

Caring News can be made available in other languages and alternative formats (large print, audio, CD-ROM, PDF, and Braille). Please contact us for more information or email mail@carersworcs.org.uk

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