

Coronavirus and mental wellbeing for Carers and Young Carers

The term 'carer' is used here to describe someone who provides, or intends to provide, practical and emotional support to someone with a physical or mental health problem.

You may or may not live with the person you care for. They may be your spouse, partner, a relative, friend or neighbour, but you are in a position of providing support to someone.

This guide has been produced to help support you during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

In addition to our guidance on mental wellbeing, there are a range of organisations you can contact for additional help and support if you care for someone else. This includes some of the Public Health England's guidance for if you are a [child or young person](#) who cares for someone else or are an adult [carer](#). Or someone who supports an [adult with a learning disability and/or autism](#).

Planning with your child or young person what will happen if you or another member of the family they care for becomes unwell, including contact details for others who can step in and support them, will help to reduce anxiety.

Children and young people who care for others

Some children and young people may have existing caring responsibilities for adults or siblings that they live with. They may be anxious about what will happen if the person they care for becomes unwell, or what will happen if they themselves become unwell and unable to support the person they care for. Even if they don't currently act as a carer, it is possible that they may become one if they are in a household with one adult.



Kernow Young Carers/Action for Children

Support children and young people who have caring responsibilities for a family member who may be affected by ill health, disability, mental ill health or substance misuse. During the coronavirus outbreak families will still receive 1:1 support via phone, and have access to virtual groups and funding.

Their [Facebook page](#) has lots of information, virtual activities (which has been extended to books, school supplies, DVDs and games) and information on how to apply for a young carers break.

The team are using social media and Microsoft Teams to remain contactable and provide advice and support. They are also providing their usual youth group activities through Microsoft Teams.

All parents of children aged 0 - 19 years can speak either online or via phone about anything from finances to worry and anxiety:

www.actionforchildren.org.uk
www.actionforchildren.org.uk/in-your-area/services/young-carers/kernow-young-carers-service/

Call: **01872 321486**

Plan how you will access medication

If you are caring for someone who needs medication, you might be able to order repeat prescriptions by phone, or you may be able to do this online using an app or website, if your doctor's surgery offers this.

Ask your pharmacy about getting medication delivered or think about who you could ask to collect it for you. The NHS website has more information about [getting prescriptions for someone else](#) and [checking if you have to pay for prescriptions](#).

Continue to order repeat prescriptions in your usual timeframe. There is no need to order for a longer duration or larger quantities.

You might also want to make arrangements for anyone you care for if you become unwell, for example making sure a partner, friend, family member or neighbour is aware of important information including their care plan, medications and emergency numbers.

Caring for people with physical health issues

People with long term physical health issues, such as those who need continuous use of a breathing machine or are confined to a wheelchair or bed, might have more intense distress, worry or anger than those without these issues because they have less control over day-to-day wellbeing than other people. Support them by listening to their concerns, providing open and honest explanations about the situation, and giving them information about what is being done to protect them.

You may also be concerned about how you will continue their care if you have to stay at home, or you may be worried about infecting them. If you usually have support in your home, see the links below for **Kernow Carers Service** to discuss what alternative arrangements may be in place.

Supporting adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults

Someone with a learning disability and/or autism will have unique needs and preferences, which includes the need for additional support to understand the latest Government advice through to any changes to their care. All care and support should continue to be given in the least restrictive way possible and continue to maximise independence wherever possible. Public Health England have provided specific [guidance](#) to help you to protect yourself and the person you care for, make plans in case you are unable to continue with your caring role, make information accessible, maintain active lifestyles, care for someone who is extremely vulnerable or has symptoms of Covid-19 and to cope with bereavement.

Local support for adult carers

The following links provide some organisations that you can contact for support when caring for someone else and where to find specific guidance concerning Covid-19.

Sources of support

Kernow Carers Service

For specialist carers advice go to Care and Support in Cornwall website www.supportincornwall.org.uk/kb5/cornwall/directory/carers.page or contact the carers helpline **0800 587 8191 / 01872 323535**, open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, email: fis@cornwall.gov.uk

Kernow Carers Service support during the covid19 crisis includes:

- [Face Book Live Chat](#) each working day- between 12 and 1pm:
- Carers wellbeing support over the phone: to answer questions and provide support information, advice and guidance and signpost to local resources; to provide carers with access to short breaks from the caring role within the remit of social distancing.
- Telephone support to the Adult Social Care Access Team (carers in crisis to be supported by the Access Team): to identify callers who might be unpaid, informal carers who require reassurance, information, advice and guidance.
- Targeted Information to the most vulnerable carers via letter and email about support available (including developing digital skills).
- Carers Hospital Discharge Support available via phone/email.
- Carers needs assessment over the phone: to identify most vulnerable carers and those at risk of carer breakdown.

Cornwall Link

To find out about peer support for adult carers available in your local area go to the Cornwall Link portal www.cornwall-link.co.uk or contact **Cornwall Link helpline 01872 266383** open Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm. Email: Helpline@ageukcornwall.org.uk

For specialist carers advice go to Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group

www.kernowccg.nhs.uk/your-health/carers website or Care and Support in Cornwall website www.supportincornwall.org.uk/kb5/cornwall/directory/carers.page or contact the

carers helpline **0800 587 8191 / 01872 323535** open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays) Email: fis@cornwall.gov.uk

Digital Support

One-to-one phone/digital support to help to get online and to develop digital skills - and online streaming, you can either contact Cornwall Link helpline or Digital Inclusion team at CRCC via phone **01872 243557** or **01872 243534** or email Digital Inclusion: digitalinclusion@cornwall.gov.uk

Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group

www.kernowccg.nhs.uk/your-health/carers

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Latest information about all services delivered by the Trust - www.cornwallft.nhs.uk/adult-community-services

Changes during Covid 19

www.cornwallft.nhs.uk/coronavirus

Information and resources for carers of adults with mental health problems in Cornwall.

www.cornwallft.nhs.uk/carers-corner

NHS 24/7 help line

To talk to someone about your mental wellbeing you can call the 24/7 NHS mental health telephone support, advice and triage help line - **0800 053 3800**. Support is available to anyone, regardless of age, all day every day. If you or someone you know feels they need to access urgent mental health support, they will listen to you and assess how best to help.

Disability Cornwall

Values based, user-led charitable company with a mission to represent, include, support and empower people living with a long term health condition or disability, their families and carers in Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly. Call: **01736 759500** www.disabilitycornwall.org.uk

We Are With You Cornwall

Provide free, confidential support to people experiencing issues with drugs, alcohol or mental health - www.wearewithyou.org.uk/help-and-advice/coronavirus-covid-19

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides adult community health, mental health and learning disability services to people of all ages.

If you are unhappy about your care, the care of a relative or about any aspect of our services, you should initially try to speak to a member of staff who is with you at the time or a member of the care team. They may be able to resolve your concerns straight away. However, if you are unable to resolve your concerns by talking to a member of staff, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), which provides support and advice to patients, their families, carers and friends. Independent advice and support. Call: **01208 834620**

Email: cpn-tr.Palscft@nhs.net

www.cornwallft.nhs.uk/patient-advice-and-liaison-service

Start Now provides information on how to look after your emotional wellbeing - www.startnowcornwall.org.uk/coronavirus

Headstart Kernow provide a range of sources of information and advice about supporting the emotional wellbeing of children and young people: www.headstartkernow.org.uk/sec-sch-support/covid-19

Your Way have extended opening hours and offer support via The Your Way Live chat (everyday 9am-9pm); Skype – request through live chat; Telephone – 01872 222447; Text – request through live chat through www.your-way.org.uk/coronavirus

The Family Information Service provide information, advice and support that is available to families and professionals working alongside them. You can contact them on 0800 587 8191 or 01872 323 535; fis@cornwall.gov.uk www.supportincornwall.org.uk/kb5/cornwall/directory/home.page

Together for Families provide information on emotional resilience for parents and carers, as well as for young people www.cornwall.gov.uk/education-and-learning/coronavirus-advice-for-children-and-families/emotional-resilience-and-mental-health/emotional-resilience-for-parents-and-carers/

Wild Young Parents help support the most vulnerable young families through this crisis. Offices are currently closed but you can contact them on hello@wildproject.org.uk or Instagram/Facebook: @wildyoungparentsproject www.wildproject.org.uk

Supporting someone with Dementia

Admiral Nurses

Admiral Nurses provide the specialist dementia support that families need.

When things get challenging or difficult, Admiral Nurses work alongside people with dementia, and their families: giving them one-to-one support, expert guidance and practical solutions.

Caroline Ellis (Admiral Nurse)

Call: **01872 254551**

Email: Rcht.Admiralnurse@nhs.net

Complex Care Community Team

The Complex Care and Dementia Community Team supports the family and carers of people referred to the service and signposts services that might offer help within the community.

To find out which CMHT covers the area in which you live, please contact Bodmin Hospital switchboard on **01208 251300**

National Services

Carers UK

Provide information and guidance to unpaid carers, including benefits and financial support, your rights as a carer in the workplace, carers' assessments and how to get support in your caring role, services available to carers and the people you care for, how to complain effectively and challenge decisions.

www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19

Advice Line Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm
0808 808 7777

The Carers Trust

Work to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. www.carers.org/guidance-coronavirus

Carers Direct

Helpline for carers on **0300 123 1053**
(Mon-Fri 9am-8pm; Sat and Sun 11am-4pm)

Age UK

For older people, their families, friends and carers. Call **0800 055 6112** Helpline open: every day of the year, 8am to 7pm
www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus

The Silver Line

For older people. Call **0800 4 70 80 90**
Helpline open: every day of the year, 24 hours a day
www.thesilverline.org.uk/latest-news-2/coronavirus

Local Services

Citizens Advice (CA) Cornwall offer free, independent, confidential and impartial advice. Text **ADVICE** to 78866 or for debt issues text **DEBT** to 78866 and CA will call you back within 48 hours (excluding weekends). Or call **03444-111444** Mondays to Fridays from 10am to 4pm.
www.citizensadvicecornwall.org.uk

Community Energy Plus is a Cornish charity which provides energy advice and practical help for vulnerable householders in Cornwall to achieve warmer, healthier homes. Call on Freephone **0800 954 1956** or **01872 245566** or email: advice@cep.org.uk

Parent Carer Council for Cornwall
Call: **07973 763332**

Mental Health Safety Plans

A safety plan is for someone to use when they are feeling that their mental health and wellbeing is low, and/or that they are at risk of self-harm or acting on suicidal thoughts – a plan to remind themselves of reasons to live, family and friends they can talk with and things that can make them feel strong and in control of their feelings.

By having a safety plan, you're making sure that there are strategies you can use to keep yourself safe, which can help you feel more in control when everything feels out of control. Think of your safety plan as your 'mental health first-aid kit'; it includes different things that will help you through a crisis.

Everyone's plan is personal and different, but it can help by walking someone through their steps to keep them safe. For people who self-harm or feel suicidal it's not designed to be their only support, but can help as part of a wider approach to supporting their wellbeing.

More information about how you can support someone to create a safety plan, alongside signposting to further sources of support, access to free online suicide prevention and general wellbeing training for adults, and Papyrus' children's safety plan can be found on the [Cornwall Council website](#).