A key objective of Government policy for older people, children and adults with an illness or a disability is to support them to live in dignity and independence in their own homes and communities for as long as possible, and home-based care by family members is the preference of the vast majority. Family carers are the backbone of care provision in this country.

As Minister of State in the Department of Health, I want to ensure that carers receive the acknowledgement and respect that they deserve in an often difficult and challenging role that requires determination, patience, resolve and a fundamental selflessness. In addition, the financial and emotional impact can be significant.

The publication of the National Carer’s Strategy in July 2012 sends a strong message to carers that Government recognises and values their selfless hard work and compassion, which enhances the health and quality of life of thousands on a daily basis. It sends a message that we want to support carers to continue caring by ensuring that their own needs are considered alongside those for whom they care and that they have the supports that they need to make caring manageable. The Strategy aims to support carers whilst also acknowledging the significant contribution that their hard work and commitment makes to our society.

In any situation, but particularly one which can often be stressful and exhausting, being able to access relevant information easily and quickly, is vitally important. Indeed, this publication supports one of the objectives of the Carer’s Strategy - the promotion of user friendly and
10 DAYS OF HEADACHES FEVER AND MUSCLE PAIN.

or a
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Vaccination is the only protection.

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timely information. I am delighted, therefore, that the Carers Association, in collaboration with Guerin Media, have published this accessible Guide for carers.

The Guide covers topics such as what being a carer means, care skills, benefits of homecare, adapting the home, personal care, nutrition and diet, mobility, hygiene and infection prevention. The Guide also provides relevant and helpful information on respite care, rights and entitlements. It has a national directory of contacts and information, which is broken down on a county by county basis, so that users can access a full list of available local services and supports.

I believe that this free Guide which will be distributed to all Carers Association Centres around the country will prove a very practical and helpful resource, not only for carer’s but also for service providers, medical practitioners and other family members.

I wish both the Carer’s Association and Guerin Media every success with this worthwhile venture.

Minister of State, Department of Health and Department of Justice, Equality and Defence with responsibility for Disability, Older People, Equality and Mental Health.

Minister Kathleen Lynch, May 2013

Minister of State,
Department of Health and Department of Justice,
Equality and Defence with responsibility for Disability,
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Welcome to the *Carers Companion* - The Carers Association’s dedicated handbook for Ireland’s 187,000+ family carers across the country. Family carers provide high levels of care in the home to loved ones who are highly dependent including frail older people, people with severe disabilities/chronic illness, the terminally ill and children with special needs.

We hope that this handbook will provide carers with a comprehensive and accessible A to Z of services and supports available to them and will guide them in the right direction, particularly when they first become a family carer, which for many is the most stressful and isolating time.

The last number of years have been difficult for everyone in our society and, in particular, family carers. They have been hit by numerous cuts to their income and services and yet they continue to provide over 3.5 million hours of care per week in their homes saving the state an estimated € 4 billion each year. Family carers are the backbone of our health services and must be recognised for their tremendous contribution and roles within our society.

On a more positive note 2012 saw the publication of The National Carers Strategy which promises to value, recognise and empower family carers and we look forward to working with Government on its full implementation.

*Continued on Page 7*
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www.hiddenhearing.ie
FOREWORD

Continued from Page 5

I would like to thank all our sponsors who contributed to this booklet through advertising and in particular Guerin Media who have kindly sponsored the design and printing of Carers Companion for distribution.

I would also like to thank our staff who worked on the publication and in particular Lee Anne Fox for all her hard work on same.

We hope that family carers find Carers Companion useful and would encourage them to contact our Freephone National Careline 1800 240724 for information, advice or just a friendly ear.

Catherine Cox
Head of Communications
The Carers Association
Looking for wheelchair friendly transport?

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www.sightsavers.ie/legacies
This companion booklet is intended to act as a guide for Family Carers in Ireland.

The definition of being a “Carer” can be very broad and for the purpose of this directory we define Family Carers as those who provide high levels of care to incapacitated persons in their home.

Who are Family Carers?
Family Carers are usually immediate relatives who provide very high levels of care at home for children and adults with severe disabilities, frail older people and people who are terminally ill.

Carers need to be constantly available due to the high levels of social and health care needed at home, and in case of emergency. The Carer’s life centres on the needs of the person requiring care. Many carers are in poor health arising from the physical, social and emotional affects of providing long-term high-level care, without basic supports.

According to Census 2011 there are 187,112 carers in Ireland providing in excess of 900,000 hours of care every day in the home.

Find out more at www.carersassociation.ie
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---

**Who would benefit from this service?**

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*This system is not a replacement for the emergency services.*

---

Call us on 0949 067 077

Dial4Help is a service provided by Terraco Nut Limited, Innovation in Business Centre, Wellport Road, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

---

www.Dial4Help.ie
Established in 1987, The Carers Association represents the interests of family carers as well as providing a range of supports and services.

The Carers Association was founded in Dublin in 1987 following a meeting organised by the late Ms. Iris Charles of the Dublin Council for the Aged, and Mr. Frank Goodwin of Dublin Corporation.

At that time the word ‘carer’ was unknown in the context of family members caring at home; and the primary objective of the Association was to place the contribution of family carers on the political agenda. Since then The Carers Association has expanded from its initial advocacy and lobbying role to include service provision.

Today, The Carers Association’s mission statement reads: “The Carers Association aim to provide family carers with emotional and practical supports; to promote the interests of family carers and those receiving care in the home through effective partnership, lobbying and advocacy and to gain recognition and social justice for Carers invaluable contribution to Irish society.”

The Carers Association has recently received the ISO 9001:2008 accreditation for its documented Quality Management System. This Quality Management System is proof that as an Association we are committed to continually improving the standard of our Respite Service, in accordance with the international recognised requirements contained within the ISO 9001:2008 standard.

The Carers Association is dedicated to achieving Total Customer Satisfaction by providing a high quality Respite Service which is consistent to each Family Carer and Cared for person.

To ensure we are doing so, a comprehensive In Home Respite Manual has been developed and accredited. This document contains working documents e.g. Policies, Processes, Procedures and Records within the required elements of the Quality Management System relating to the day to day activities involved in providing Respite.

All of these documents are designed in a user friendly way to provide all necessary information to allow personnel to continually provide a high quality service and to reassure Family Carers and their loved ones that the appropriate measures and standards are in place.

All staff are fully committed to the development, implementation and continual improvement of ISO 9001:2008.

Find out more at carersassociation.ie/aboutus.php
SERVICES & SUPPORTS

• About The Carers Association
• Advocacy & Lobbying
• The National Careline
• Home Respite Service
• The Carers Association Online Resources
• Membership
• Carers Resource Centres
• Support Groups
• Training & Education
• Volunteering
• Private Care Service
• Location of Resource Centres & Service Projects
The Carers Association is the national voluntary body of family Carers in the home.

The Carers Association is totally dedicated to the needs of Ireland’s 187,000 family Carers in the home.

The aims and objectives of the Association are to improve the quality of life of Ireland’s family Carers, through the roles of advocacy, lobbying and service provision.

The Carers Association has a national network of Carers Resource Centres and service bases across the country.

The Carers Association provides the following services:
- Advocacy & Lobbying
- Freefone Careline 1800 240724
- In-Home Respite Service
- Information and Advice
- Membership
- Resource Centres
- Support Groups
- Training
- Volunteer and Mentor Programme for Carers
- Commercial Respite Service

**ADVOCACY & LOBBYING**
The Association advocates on behalf of Carers by:

- Empowering Carers by giving independent information on their rights and entitlements;
- Supporting Carers who are experiencing difficulties by helping them find the best possible solution to their situation.
- Advocating on their behalf;
- Accompanying them to meetings or speaking on their behalf;
- Giving Carers a collective voice through local Carer Support Groups;
- Research and Social Development

The Carers Association lobbies politically both at a local and national level. We are also represented on a number of consultative committees, state agencies and boards and are members of the Community and Voluntary Pillar of the Social Partnership.

The Carers Association play a central role in highlighting the issues affecting Family Carers in their day-to-day lives and advocate on their behalf to ensure they have a voice and can participate fully and equally in society.
The National Careline
FREEFONE: 1800 24 07 24

Lines are open 9.00 am to 5.30 pm
Monday - Thursday
and 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Friday

THE NATIONAL CARELINE
FREEFONE: 1800 24 07 24

The National CareLine is the freefone number for Carers in the Home. This confidential, friendly and supportive service is a vital link for the isolated Carer.

The people who take your calls on the National CareLine fully understand how you feel. You can phone for advice or information or just a chat with someone who understands what you are going through.

The CareLine operates from 9am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday, due to the contribution of volunteers.

HOME RESPITE SERVICE

There is a chronic lack of respite care facilities in Ireland. The pace of change is slow with Carers still under great stress. Many families want greater support at home and home-based respite care services, which suit their family circumstances. The Carers Association has been providing its Home Respite Service since 1994. The home-based service is tailored to the needs of the Carer and the person cared for at home. The service is based on:

- Putting the Carer first
- Allowing time for the Carer, Cared for Person and Home Respite Worker to get to know each other
- The Carer being able to plan his/her short breaks away from home secure in the knowledge that a trained and trusted person will be there to care in his/her place
- Confidentiality, respect and dignity for all.

Carers are facilitated to make the best use of the service. For example, the Carer may need the service at an agreed time to assist her/him in carrying out a particularly complex or difficult activity with the cared-for person. Or the Carer may use the period to go out of the family home to do other business while the cared for person and home respite worker remain at home.

The Home Respite Worker may take over some of the domestic duties while the Carer tends to the cared for person, for example. Each caring situation is different and the home respite worker must be flexible.

Continued Overleaf
All Home Respite Workers employed by The Carers Association are trained in personal care tasks including palliative care, are Garda vetted, and supported and trained to the highest standards one being, our ISO accredited Respite Manual. We are also an approved HSE Home Care Package provider and also offer private commercial care.

Carers can contact the Association to refer themselves for the service. Referrals are also taken from family members, GPs, Public Health Nurse, Social Workers, and other professionals in the voluntary and statutory service. The Carers Association requests that anyone making a self referral is known to the local PHN or Social Work Dept as well. This service is subject to limited funding and therefore waiting lists may apply.

INFORMATION
The Carers Association:

- Publishes Take Care Newsletter and Ezine
- Operates the National Careline, the freephone helpline for Carers 1800 24 07 24
- Produces the Carers Companion Handbook and information booklets such as The Carers Association Handbook proudly produced by DocMorris
- Provides the Carers Web Site carersireland.com

Young Carers website: www.youngCarers.ie
- Provides the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/Carersassociation and Twitter page: www.twitter.com/CarersIreland
- Through the resource centres and outreach services advises Carers on their rights and entitlements.

MEMBERSHIP
The Carers Association is delighted to offer membership to any person interested in the work of The Carers Association and recognition for family Carers. Our members include family Carers, family members, health professionals, donors, corporate members and advocates for family Carers.

We are the largest representative body in Ireland to advance the cause of voluntary family Carers in the home. We play a lead role in informing social policy and public debate surrounding home-based family care. Our strength comes from unity in numbers as we give members a strong voice on issues directly related to the care they provide. Members receive key information pertaining to rights and entitlements, guidance and support, and a representative voice that informs Government policy and
During these tough and challenging times, the Carers Association is a united voice advocating on behalf of Ireland’s 187,000 voluntary family Carers. Already represented in hundreds of communities across Ireland, the Carers Association’s membership continues working to grow stronger in empowering family Carers.

Become a member today and we will keep you up to date on our services, community activities and outreach. Visit our website carersireland.com or contact Lee Anne on 057 9322920 or at lfox@Carersireland.com

Our members’ privilege programme, valid for one year (renewable), offers discounts on goods and services across Ireland. Our bi-monthly newsletter will keep you informed on what’s happening in your area and upcoming events of interest.

**CARERS RESOURCE CENTRES**
The Carers Resource Centre is an important service provided by The Carers Association. Carers Resource Centres are located in key towns and cities throughout Ireland. You can ‘drop in’ for a cup of tea or a chat, find out about your rights and entitlements or arrange to do the Care in the Home course.

Each Centre also deals with telephone enquiries and personal callers on a variety of welfare, social care, health care, personal awareness and advocacy issues.

**SUPPORT GROUPS**
The Carers Association currently run Carers Support Group Meetings from our Resource Centres and Outreach Services around the country.

Support Groups allow Carers:

- to share their experiences, feelings, ideas, concerns, information and problems
- feel a reduced sense of isolation
- have a sense of connection with other Carers in similar circumstances
- have a break from the caring situation
- have hope for the future
- let off steam
- relax
- socialise
- learn from other Carers
- Cope from day to day
Carers can share coping strategies and local information as well as offer emotional support and develop enduring friendships through support groups. Mutual support groups provide a valuable opportunity to meet Carers in the same position to share mutual experiences. For example support groups for parents of children with special needs can discuss issues specifically related to their caring situations such as dealing with difficult and challenging behaviour, high dependency issues etc.

Support groups also allow Carers to access information on their rights and entitlements. Guest speakers are invited to meetings to address Carers on issues of interest to them such as public health nurses, H.S.E. representatives, Social Welfare representative on Carers entitlements etc.

**TRAINING & EDUCATION**

It is well recognised that caring often places social, emotional, physical, psychological and financial pressures on the carer. For many family Carers, life can be even more stressful than for other people, as daily life is full of worries about finances, their own health, the health of the person they are caring for and whether or not they can keep on caring into the future. One of the most common requests received by The Carers Association and by other Care professionals from Carers is to have some training on how to cope with the practical and emotional demands of providing care.

The Carers Association provides a range of FETAC Level 5 accredited training and non-accredited topic specific workshops. The aim of these courses is to provide the learner with all the practical skills and knowledge required to deliver high quality care both in the home and in other care related environments such as Nursing Homes, Hospitals and Day Care Centres.

The Carers Association is a recognised FETAC quality assured training provider. We aim to provide every learner not only with the care skills necessary to perform their role efficiently and effectively but in doing so to raise awareness of caring within a home environment and within the community where 90% of all care is provided. All courses are subject to demand and the availability of funding.

For information on our courses see [www.Carersireland.com/trainingunit.php](http://www.Carersireland.com/trainingunit.php) or call 057 9322920

For further details on upcoming courses, contact your nearest resource centre.
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- Ballyhaunis Showroom: Knock Rd., Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo
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VOLUNTEERING WITH THE CARERS ASSOCIATION

The Carers Association recognises that volunteers make a valuable contribution to its work and that the role of volunteers is important and unique. In order to achieve our goals we need to engage with the wider community and strive to involve volunteers.

By sharing your skills and knowledge, you can make a positive impact on the lives of some of Ireland’s most vulnerable Family Carer’s.

Not everyone has a family or friend support network that they can rely on for guidance and advice to help them through difficult times. Volunteers can help to fill this gap by offering their free time and providing support.

Volunteer Programmes Offered:

Befriending Programme!

Befriending is a one-to-one, non-judgmental relationship where you can volunteer your time to support and encourage someone. Many people benefit from the support of a befriender at a time of change in their life or when they are socially isolated due to illness or old age.

Visits usually involve a simple cup of tea and a chat. This simple gift of time makes a huge difference to people experiencing loneliness and isolation.
Mentoring Programme!
A new pilot mentoring programme for Family Carers. This new service will begin in the Cork and Tipperary area. This new mentoring programme will provide support for Family Carers through a team of trained volunteers which have been through a similar experience.

This support can be provided on a one to one basis in a safe, neutral and confidential environment, or will be available over the phone or online.

If you are new or a long term Family Carer and would like to be matched to an existing or former Family Carer who can provide a listening ear, companionship, support, advice and guidance then this programme is for you!

The National Careline
FREEFONE: 1800 24 07 24

Lines are open 9.00 am to 5.30 pm
Monday - Thursday
and 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Friday

National Freephone Careline!
The Carers Association offers a confidential, friendly and supportive Care Line, which is been operated by staff and a group of volunteers. Due to the contribution of volunteers we are able to extend the opening hours of our National Careline.

Our new opening hours are Monday – Thursday 9.00 – 5.30 pm and Friday until 5.00pm.

They will listen to your concerns and offer practical advice on a range of topics.
An Opportunity to Suit You!
We have a variety of volunteering opportunities to offer. Whether you have a general desire to volunteer with us or have a specific set of skills which you feel could benefit our organisation, our aim is to provide you with an opportunity to be a part of what we do.

Additional information, induction, training, resources and ongoing support will be available to ensure your time with The Carers Association is as productive and enjoyable as possible.

The Carers Association is often in need of volunteers who can respond to a specific need such as Fundraising, Once-Off Events, Media Interviews or Short-Term Project Assistance all volunteer activities are based on the organisations volunteer needs.

If you would like more information, please email Arlene Carroll on acarroll@carersireland.com or call us on 057 9370218.
PRIVATE CARE SERVICE

The Carers Association understands how difficult it can be to care for all your or your loved ones needs and the stress and worry it can cause. We can help relive that stress through the provisional of offers a commercial respite service to family Carers.

This service is tailored to the needs of the cared-for and is available in three levels and pricing structures.

These are:
Level 1 – Sitting Service
Level 2 – Personal Care/Home Support
Level 3 – High Dependency Care

You may only need us for a few hours a day, whatever is required The Carers Association is there to care and provide you with the support required to keep you or your loved one at home.

Please contact your local Resource Centre or Outreach Service where they will be happy to discuss a quotation based on your needs.
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BreastCheck is a Government-funded programme and part of the National Cancer Screening Service.

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www.bowelscreen.ie

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www.disabledfriendlybuilder.ie
The Carers Association’s **National Office** is based in **Tullamore, Co. Offaly**.

The Association also has a **Regional Office** based in the **Kilkenny Resource Centre**.

All of the Association’s **12 Resource Centres** (Red Markers on Map) and **2 Service Projects** (Blue Markers on Map) provide a range of information and support for family carers.

Currently, The Carers Association supports a staff of approximately **340 employees**.

Visit for Interactive Map: [www.carersireland.com/centres.php](http://www.carersireland.com/centres.php)

Find contact details for all centres in the **Directory** towards the back of this handbook.
SUPPORTS FROM THE HEALTH SERVICE

- Community Health Services
- Public Health Nurses
- Other H.S.E. Supports
  - Chiropody Services
  - Speech & Language Therapy
  - Psychological Services
  - Technical Aids
  - Respite Care, Day Centres & Hospital Care
  - Drug Payment Scheme
  - School Transport Grant
  - Back to School Clothing Allowance
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

These services can include the public health nursing service, home help service, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, chiropody service, day care and respite care service.

The rules about which community care services must be provided, differ in accordance with the different services. In some cases, the Health Service Executive (HSE) is obliged to provide services while, in others, the HSE has discretion about whether to make the service available or not.

One of the reasons for this, is the health services provided by the HSE reflects the population in the area in which you live (that is, older people, children, etc.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES

The Health Service Executive (HSE) is obliged to provide a free nursing service to medical card holders. The service is not necessarily confined to medical card holders, although they get priority as they have a legal entitlement.

The services provided by Public Health Nurses include night nursing, day nursing, weekend nursing and twilight nursing. The services provided by the public health nurses vary from area to area and they frequently act as a point of access for other community care services.

Services can include:

- Home Help for practical assistance with homemaking duties
- Home Care including help with dressing, feeding and other personal care duties. Some H.S.E.offer a flexible Home Support Service combining elements of home help and home care
- Liaison service between hospital care and home for further care which may be needed on discharge from hospital.
- Visits to homes, including practical advice on care techniques
- Referral for training in care skills, such as lifting and handling and strategies for coping
- Any person who is sufficiently dependent to need
- Advice and assistance on continence management
- Referral to day care, respite care, meals on wheels and other local services
- Advice on women's health issues such as breast care and cervical smear testing
- Referral to The Carers Association and to local Support Groups
- Respite care (usually for a week or two) at local residential centre
- Transport services provided on a varying basis may include access to day hospitals and day centres and access to outpatients departments and other hospital services.
Some Local Health Offices employ care assistants as a back-up to the public health nursing service. The role of the care assistant is to provide personal care rather than domestic services, but there is some overlap between what they do and what home helps do.

**OTHER H.S.E SUPPORTS INCLUDE:**

Physiotherapy services are generally provided in the community and are generally free to medical card holders. Waiting lists operate in many areas. Home services are only available in a small number of cases.

Occupational therapists are employed by most Local Health Offices. Their services are generally available free to medical card holders. Waiting lists operate in most community care areas for these services.

**Chiropody Services**
Chiropody services are available free to medical card holders in most community care areas.

**Speech and Language Therapy**
Speech and Language Therapy is available to assist, diagnose and treat disorders affecting the person’s communication capacity. Many illnesses and disabilities severely disrupt communication, including hearing disabilities, strokes, head injury and tongue cancer.

**Psychological Services**
These are available to provide assessment, family counselling and management of stress, health promotion, advice on healthy living, and nutrition.

**Technical Aids**
The Health Service Executive (HSE) is obliged to provide medical and surgical aids and appliances such as wheelchairs and walking aids free of charge to medical card holders. If you do not have a medical card, you may get such aids and appliances free if they are part of hospital treatment. In practice, the HSE may provide some help with the costs. If you have private health insurance, you may be covered for some or all of the costs.

**Respite Care**
Respite care or temporary care may be based in the community or in an institution. In practice, respite care is provided to a varying degree at a number of locations around the country – in some cases by HSE and in others by voluntary organisations.
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- Ridgewood, Swords
- Rathfarnale, Swords
- Malahide S.C.
- Clarehall Shopping Centre
- The Diamond, Malahide Village
- Yellow Walls, Malahide
- Dundrum Town Centre
- Citywest Shopping Centre
- Griffeen, Lucan
- Kimmage
- Sandyford, Tallaght
- Adelphi Court, Dundalk
- Lis Na Daoine, Carick Road, Dundalk
- The Crescent Shopping Centre, Lucan
- Paddy McCauley's Pharmacy, Gorey
- Sherwood's Pharmacy, Wexford Town

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Delivery
A free prescription delivery service right to your door.

EasyMed Table: Organiser
A free personalised tablet tray that organises your daily medications, minimises confusion and helps keep you on track to take your medication at the right time.

Emergency Dispensing Assistance
When you cannot get to your usual McCabes Pharmacy simply pop into another branch where the pharmacist can view your medication history through our networked computer server and assist with any queries you may have.

Medication Usage Review
This service helps you or a carer understand your medicines, what each medicine is for and how and when to take it to get the best results.

Out of Hours Telephone Service
This free service entitles you to receive a dedicated patient care telephone number so you can avail of the pharmacist's help. This service is available for those on complex medication regimes and those with serious illness.

Palliative Care Programme
This programme is for those with palliative care needs and allows easier access to pharmaceutical care and specialised medicines. The programme has been put together in conjunction with local hospices.

Smartphone App
This lets you order your prescription by mobile phone and shop 24 hours online. Also has a handy medicine reminder alarm.

Contact details:
Email: easyscript@mccabespharmacy.com
Phone: 01-295 63 68
Fax: 01-293 63 68
www.mccabespharmacy/Easyscript

www.mccabespharmacy.com
Day Centres
Day centres include centres that provide day activities such as recreational, sport and leisure facilities and specialised clinic facilities that provide a combination of medical and vocational rehabilitation services. Day centres are provided on a variable basis throughout the country, some being funded by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and others funded by voluntary organisations. Day centres providing medical care are less widely available and are funded by the HSE. Access to day centres is by referral and the eligibility conditions vary from area to area with means tests applying in some cases.

Meals on Wheels Services
Meals services are generally provided by a mixture of voluntary and statutory bodies. The ways in which these are provided vary from area to area. Access to meals services is generally by referral. You may be asked to contribute towards the cost of meals services. Eligibility conditions vary from area to area.

Medical Cards
If you have a medical card you are entitled to a range of free health board services, including hospital care, medicines, treatment by your GP, and technical aids and appliances.

To qualify for a medical card your weekly income must be below a certain figure for your family size. Cash income, savings, investments and property (except for your own home) are taken into account in the means test.
Medical card holders pay the Universal Social Charge on their income (except for social welfare and HSE payments), but at a maximum rate of 4%. The only exemption is for people earning less than €10,036 per annum. They may also be exempt from paying school transport charges, State exam fees in publicly-funded second-level schools.

Drug Payment Scheme
Under the Drug Payment Scheme an individual or family pays the first €144 per month of the cost of prescribed medicines approved for this purpose by the Minister for Health and Children.

GMS eligible persons are unaffected by the Scheme. People or families must register with their local health board to avail of the Scheme. Registration forms are available from the health board.

School Transport Grant
If you have to bring your child to school because s/he has a disability, you may qualify for a grant towards these travel costs. Whether you qualify depends on the circumstances, such as whether your child is unable to avail of the school bus service and distance from the school.

Hospital Care
All citizens are entitled to in-patient and out-patient services in public hospitals regardless of their means. You have to pay the full cost of services if you opt for private or semi-private treatment in a public hospital. Generally speaking, unless you have a medical card, you have to pay a daily charge for in-patient service. A charge is made for attendance at Accident & Emergency departments of public hospitals unless you are referred by your doctor.
NCBI
Working for People with Sight Loss

Leaving a lasting legacy of help

NCBI is a not for profit charitable organisation established in 1931. Today, NCBI offers support and services nationwide to people who are experiencing difficulties with their eyesight. There are currently over 15,500 people using NCBI services. Of these, 5% are totally without sight, while 95% have varying degrees of usable vision.

We provide valuable support, training and counselling to people with sight loss and we need to raise substantial funds on an on-going basis to maintain these services. Requests, through legacies, assist us tremendously in providing these much needed and availed of services.

We rely on legacy gifts to continue our work. We hope you will consider contributing to NCBI's work of enabling people who are blind or vision impaired to overcome the barriers that impede their independence and participation in society. Your support will improve the lives of people with sight loss throughout Ireland. If you would like more information on leaving a legacy to NCBI to help us continue our work, please call us on Lo call: 1850 33 43 53 or contact us at this address:

NCBI Head Office
Whitworth Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9
Email: info@ncbi.ie

Web: www.ncbi.ie
Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance

You may be able to avail of this scheme to help towards the cost of school uniforms and footwear for your children. The scheme is means-tested, but many Carers in receipt of Carers Allowance could qualify.

To be eligible for the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance, the applicant (parent or guardian) must meet a number of conditions.

You must be receiving certain social welfare payments or payments for training, employment schemes or adult education.

Your total household income must be below a certain amount.

The child/student must be between 4 and 22 years before 30th September of the year you apply and must be in full-time education at a recognised school or college.
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Hotel Westport is secluded in 7 acres of beautiful woodland in the heart of Westport. You’ll discover a uniquely friendly, comfortable and stylish hotel, abounding in warmth and relaxation.

Not only was Westport flying high with accolades in 2012 – Hotel Westport has recently been awarded an AA Rosette for Culinary Excellence, Hotel Bar of the Year 2012, Georgina Campbell Family Friendly Hotel of the Year 2013 and the Primary Times Star Award - Top 10 Hotel, and CIE Tours International Best Hotel Dinner in Ireland.

Hotel Westport offers a variety of holidays and are renowned for their theme breaks – Over 50s (where you get an extra night’s Dinner, Bed and Breakfast for FREE!), Golf, Walking, Bridge, Indoor Bowling, Horse Riding and Wellness.

As part of their Over 50s Programme they take care of your every need! The holiday includes a full Irish Breakfast each morning (served until a leisurely 11am!), and a four course Table d'Hote dinner each evening in the AA Rosette Islands Restaurant. Groups and Individuals are welcome to join Hotel Westport’s Over 50s Programme. Group Discounts apply. Hotel Westport organise Day tours too - Knock Shrine, Kylemore &/or Ballintubber Abbey, Foxford Woollen Mills, Achill Island, The Céidé Fields (at your own expense) and more tours are being added all the time like the Titanic Village and Hennigans Heritage Farm. Alternatively, for those of you wanting something a little more relaxing, book a treatment in their luxurious Ocean Spirit Spa. Choose from an array of treatments – specialised massages, reflexology, soothing facials, exotic hand and foot spa treatments, luxurious body peels and wraps. Games and entertainment are organised for the evenings too. You won’t want to go home!

The Hotel has 129 bedrooms with all the comforts of home. The newly refurbished Award-Winning AA Rosette ‘Islands Restaurant’ overlooks the Carrowbeg River, while the ‘Maple Bar’ provides the perfect ambiance for music and chat over drinks amongst friends. Avail of the extensive leisure facilities on hand, relax with a good book in the patio gardens or take a stroll along the Carrowbeg River into multi-award winning town where there is an excellent mix of shops, cafes and restaurants.

Hotel Westport is located in the perfect place to take in one or more of the many outdoor activities in the local area: Croagh Patrick, Ireland’s Holy Mountain, Clew Bay, with 365 islands, blue flag beaches, horse riding, golf, surfing, fishing, walking and shopping - just to mention a few and has direct pedestrian access through the grounds of Westport House and located on the Great Western Greenway - 42km of uninterrupted walking and cycling taking in breathtaking scenery on the way, from Westport through Newport and Mulranny and onto Achill Island!

A warm, friendly welcome awaits you at Hotel Westport, “One of Ireland’s best loved Hotels”. Call Hotel Westport NOW to book your Holiday 098 25122.
FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CARERS

• Carer’s Benefit
• PRSI Contributions for Carer’s Benefit
• PRSI Classes
• Claiming an Increase for a Child Dependant
• Department of Social Protection
• Carer’s Allowance
• Means Test for Carer’s Allowance
• Secondary Benefit
• Respite Care Grant
• Domiciliary Care Allowance
• Medical Criteria
• Half Rate Carers Allowance
• Homemakers Scheme
• Housing Adaptation Grants - The Figures
• Carers Allowance - the Figures
As a Carer you may be entitled to a number of supports from the Department of Social Protection.

**Carer’s Benefit**

Carer's Benefit is a payment paid for up to 24 months and made to insured persons who leave the workforce to care for a person(s) in need of full-time care and attention.

If you are caring for more than one person, you may receive payment for each care recipient for 104 weeks. This may result in the care periods overlapping or running concurrently.

If you claim Carer's Benefit for less than six consecutive weeks in any given period you must wait for a further six weeks before you can claim Carer's Benefit to care for the same person again.

You should apply for Carer’s Benefit 8 weeks before you intend to leave employment in order that your eligibility can be assessed prior to leaving your employment.

You will qualify for Carer’s Benefit if you the Carer are:

- Age 16 or over
- Have been employed for 8 weeks during the last 26 week period. Satisfy the PRSI contribution conditions
- Give up employment to care for a person(s) on a full-time basis (this employment must have been for a minimum of 16 hours per week or 32 hours per fortnight)
- Are not in employment, self-employment, training or education courses outside the home for more than 15 hours a week. The maximum amount you can earn is €332.50 per week. (€332.50 is your net income after you have deducted income tax and Universal Social Charge, PRSI, superannuation (pension payments), pension levy, union dues and subscriptions to Friendly Societies from your total wage.)
- Are living in the state
- Are not living in a hospital, convalescent home or other similar institution
**PRSI Contributions for Carer's Benefit**

For a first claim you must have 156 contributions paid since entry into insurable employment and:

A) 39 contributions paid in the Relevant Tax Year
or

B) 39 contributions paid in the 12 month period before the commencement of the Carer's Benefit

or

C) 26 contributions paid in the Relevant Tax Year and 26 contributions paid in the Relevant Tax Year prior to that.

Your payment is made up of a weekly personal rate for yourself and extra amounts for your child dependent(s). If you are providing care to two or more persons you may be entitled to an extra 50% of the personal rate.

For example if you are caring for one person and have no child dependants and meet the above criteria the maximum payment you will receive is €205 per week or €307.50 if caring for two or more people.

**Claiming an increase for a child dependant**

You can claim an increase for a child if they are under age 18, normally live with you and are maintained by you. If a child is in full-time education by day at a recognised

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**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For claims made in:</th>
<th>The Relevant Tax Year is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRSI contributions Classes**

* A, B, C, D, H and E count.

For second and subsequent claims you:

- You do not need to satisfy the PRSI contributions conditions again.
- You do not need to satisfy the employment conditions in the three month period prior to commencement of your claim if you were in receipt of Carer's Benefit within this three month period.
school or college this increase is payable until the end of the academic year in which the child reaches age 22. (This child does not have to live at home).

A full-rate Qualified Child Increase (IQC) is payable if you are single, widowed, separated or a civil partner who is not living with the other civil partner.

You may get a half-rate Increase for Qualified Child (IQC) if you are living with your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant.

If your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant is getting a payment from the Department of Social Protection, you will each get a half-rate increase.

From 5 July 2012, you can no longer claim a half-rate IQC with your Carer’s Benefit if your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant has an income of over €400 a week.

For more information on Carer's Benefit, contact your local Social Welfare Office or:  
Department of Social Protection  
Carer's Benefit Section  
Social Welfare Services Office  
Government Buildings  
Ballinalee Road  
Longford, Ireland  
Tel: (043) 334 0000  
Local: 1890 92 77 70  
www.welfare.ie

After Death
As per Carers Allowance, Carers Benefit is paid for 6 weeks should the person you are caring for pass away.

Bereavement Grant:
A Bereavement Grant may also be payable.

More Information:  
Bereavement Grant Section  
Social Welfare Services Office  
Government Buildings  
Ballinalee Road, Longford  
Tel: (043) 452111  
Dublin: (01) 704 300
Carer's Leave:
The Carer's Leave Act 2001 allows employees to leave their employment temporarily to provide full-time care for someone in need of full-time care and attention. The minimum period of leave is 13 weeks and the maximum period is 104 weeks.

Carer's leave from employment is unpaid but the Carer’s Leave Act ensures that those who propose to avail of Carer's leave will have their jobs kept open for them for the duration of the leave.

To enquire about your possible entitlement to Carer's Leave contact:
Workplace Relations Customer Services
(formerly Information Services of the National Employment Rights Authority)
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation,
O'Brien Road, Carlow
Ireland
Opening Hours:
Mon. to Fri. 9.30am to 5pm
Tel: (059) 917 8990
Locall: 1890 80 80 90
www.workplacerelations.ie/en/

Carer’s Allowance
What is Carers Allowance?
The Carers Allowance is a payment for Carers who look after people in need of full-time care and attention.

Carer’s Allowance
To qualify for the Carers Allowance the Carer must:
• Be aged 18 or over
• Satisfy a means test
• Care for the person on a full-time basis
• Not be engaged in employment, self-employment, training or education courses outside the home for more than 15 hours a week. Not live in hospital, convalescent home or other similar situation
• Satisfy the Habitual Residence Condition

The Cared-for Person(s) must:
• Be 16 or over
• Or
• Be under age 16 if Domiciliary Care Allowance is being paid from the Health Service Executive. You need to provide documentary evidence of this payment. The Carer of a child on Domiciliary Care Allowance need not be the person who receives that Allowance on the child’s behalf.
• He or she is so incapacitated as to require continuous supervision in order to avoid danger to him or herself or continual supervision and /or frequent assistance throughout the day in connection with normal bodily functions, and
• He or she is so incapacitated as to be likely to require full-time care and attention for a period of at least twelve months.
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Member of Solicitors for the Elderly Ireland

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Crosscare Carer Support Programme was established in 1993 and provides a variety of services to family carers in Dublin. We are based in Drumcondra and have outreach to many centres in Dublin.

Working with male carers, young carers, parents of children/adults with special needs and carers for the over 60’s.

Services
- Support groups
- One-to-one support
- Quarterly newsletter
- Training courses
- Respite breaks for the carer
- Counselling
- Care home
- Information on relevant services and entitlements

Location:
Crosscare Carer Support Programme, The Red House, Drumcondra, Dublin 3

Contact details:
Tel: 01 8356001  Web: www.crosscare.ie

you are not alone
www.crosscare.ie
The person being cared for may attend a non-residential course of rehabilitation training or a non-residential day care centre approved by the Minister for Health and Children.

You the Carer may:

- Attend an educational or training course or take up voluntary or community work for up to max. of 15 hours per week.
- Engage in limited self-employment in your own home any income earnings will be assessed as means. 15 hour rule applies along with means test.
- Engage in employment outside your own home for up to 15 hours per week.

During your absence adequate care for the person requiring full time care and attention must be provided for. The requirement to provide full time care and attention will be assessed on an individual basis. It is not intended nor is it desirable that a Carer would be expected to provide care on a 24-hour basis.

In this regard the above arrangements will be applied in a flexible manner, having due regard for the needs of the Carer and the person requiring care.

Means test for Carer’s Allowance

Your means are any income you or your spouse or partner have, property (except one's home) or any asset that could bring in money or provide you with an income. The first €7.60 of means assessed will not affect your payment, but for every extra €2.50 means you have, your weekly payment will be reduced by €2.50.

The income disregard for a couple is €665 per week and for a single person is €332.50 per week therefore this money will not be counted as means for the purpose of Carers Allowance.

If you are getting a social welfare payment from another state an amount up to the maximum rate of the Irish State Pension (Contributory) is exempt from the means test. Any foreign social welfare payment above the maximum Irish State Pension (Contributory) rate is treated as income for the means test.
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WWW.1-800Maintenance.ie
Free Call: 1-800 989889

Office: 01 - 4650175
What does not count as mean?
The following items do not count as means:

- Your own home
- Child benefit
- Your spouse's or partner's payment from Dept of Social and Family Affairs or the H.S.E.
- €133 a year (€2.56 a week) of your spouse's or partner's earnings for each child dependent
- Income earned as a part-time Home Help with the H.S.E.
- Your spouse or partner's social security payment from another country equal to the maximum personal rate of the Irish Old Age Contributory Pension. Any amount greater than this is counted as means.

How much is Carer’s Allowance?
Your payment is made up of a personal rate for yourself and extra amounts for your child dependant(s) if any. The amount you may get depends on your means.

For example, if you are caring for 1 person and you satisfy the means test and have no child dependants the maximum rate of Carers Allowance is €204 per week if you are a Carer under 66 and €239 per week if you are Carer over 66.

You may claim a full-rate increase in your payment for a child dependant if you are a Carer and are single, widowed, separated or a civil partner who is not living with the other civil partner. You may claim a half-rate increase in your payment for a child dependant if you are a Carer and are living with your spouse, civil partner or cohabitant.
Revolutionising Homecare in Ireland
An Expert Team Delivering Exceptional Service

Call our expert team on 0818 227 052

Quality Certified Services
- Care of Older Persons
- Care of Adults & Children with Physical Disabilities
- Care of Adults & Children with Intellectual Disabilities
- Care of Adults & Children with Sensory Impairments
- Child Care / Nanny Services
- Dementia Care
- Palliative Care
- Acquired Brain & Spinal Injury Care
- Pre & Post Operative Care
- Live-In Care
- Specialist Personal Assistants

www.bluebirdcare.ie
LEADING THE CARE REVOLUTION IN IRELAND

Bluebird Care has revolutionised the way care is delivered in Ireland by concentrating on high quality customer service, whilst at the same time upholding the very best in professional care service both in the home and in the community. With 18 offices nationwide we offer a unique service of tailored care visits from 15-minutes to more long-term support. High quality, advanced enablement packages are provided in the community for people of all ages and with very diverse needs.

Total Flexibility:
“Everybody has different needs and abilities, and that is something we are very conscious of,” says Lorna Liney, National General Manager of Bluebird Care. “We pride ourselves on offering an individual, personalised service which also offers value for money. Re-enablement plans are person-centred. There is total involvement from the individual and/or family members. Many of our social care staff have third level degrees with all staff undertaking ongoing FETAC accredited training. Our ethos is simple – we help you or a loved one remain at home and we have the expertise to facilitate this.”

Quality and Accreditation
“We are delighted with our recent EIQA mark of quality from Ireland’s leading certification body,” says Eddie O’Toole, Operations Director. Bluebird Care will be the first homecare company in Ireland to have achieved the Q Mark in all its office. Focusing on quality standards coupled with continuing professional development Bluebird Care social care workers lead out in terms of their expertise and abilities.

All social care workers at Bluebird Care are FETAC qualified and this year Bluebird Care developed a partnership with Irish Times Training and Frontline Training to deliver accredited training on an ongoing basis. Bluebird Care also works with etraining ensuring continuous professional development for all staff.

Staying at Home:
Remaining in your own home as you get older or as you cope with disability, or simply returning to your community after illness, is what most people prefer to do. With the right help and qualified support this is possible for the majority of people. Bluebird Care delivers services that allow people to do just that, for customers of all ages and abilities and on a nationwide basis. “For those who require live-in care or those with greater needs we work with individuals and families to design an enablement package to suit,” says Lorna Liney.

With a nationwide network and a fully qualified team Bluebird Care will visit you in your own home to assess your individual needs.

To find your local Bluebird Care office, log onto www.bluebirdcare.ie or call us on 0818 227 052 or email info@bluebirdcare.ie. You can also connect with us on facebook and twitter.
Secondary Benefit
All people getting a Carer's Allowance qualify for:
• A free travel pass for the Carer in his/her own right
• The Household Benefits Package
• Free Television Licence

For more information on Carer's Allowance, contact your local Social Welfare Office or:

Department of Social Protection
Carer's Allowance Section
Social Welfare Services Office
Government Buildings
Ballinalee Road
Longford
Ireland
Tel: (043) 334 0000
Locall: 1890 92 77 70

Continuing Payment after Death
The Carer's Allowance will continue to be paid to you for 6 weeks should the person you are caring for pass away.
Hickey's Pharmacists...HERE TO HELP

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Do you:
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• Care for someone who takes several medicines?

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a simple solution to storing and taking medication.

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ASK IN-STORE FOR MORE DETAILS

For your nearest store visit www.hickeyspharmacies.ie
Respite Care Grant
Who is entitled to a Respite Care Grant?
The Respite Care Grant is an annual payment for Carers who look after person/persons who require full-time care and attention. It is available to Carers who provide full-time care and attention regardless of means and who satisfy the following conditions:

Carer must:
• be aged 16 or over,
• be ordinarily resident in the State,
• care for the person on a full-time basis,
• care for the person for at least six months. This period of care must include the first Thursday in June
• live with the person they are looking after or can be contacted quickly by a direct system of communication(for example, a telephone or alarm) between their home and the home of the person they are caring for.
• not be employed or self employed outside the home for more than 15 hours per week;
• not be in receipt of Unemployment Benefit or Assistance or be signing for credits
• not be living in a hospital, convalescent home or
• other similar institution;
• be fit to care.

Definition of person being cared for:
• Must be ordinarily resident in the State and is so incapacitated that he or she requires full-time care and attention.

A relevant person shall be regarded as requiring full time care and attention where:
the person is so incapacitated that he or she requires from another person-
(i) continual supervision and frequent assistance throughout the day in connection with normal bodily functions, or
(ii) continual supervision in order to avoid danger to himself or herself, and the nature and extent of the person's incapacity has been certified in the prescribed manner by a medical practitioner.

You do not need to apply for a Respite Care grant if you are already receiving Carers allowance as it is automatically paid in June every year. However if you are not in receipt of Carers Allowance then you can apply by getting a form from your local Carer's Association Office or Dept. of Social Protection.

The current rate of this grant is €1,375 (as and from June 2013). It is paid for each person you are caring for if you satisfy other qualifying conditions. The Respite Care Grant is paid for every person you care for provided you satisfy other conditions.
Half Rate Carers Allowance
If you are getting certain social welfare payments and you are providing full-time care and attention to another person, you can keep your main social welfare payment and get a half-rate Carer’s Allowance as well.

If you are in one of the following situations you may qualify for half-rate Carer’s Allowance:

- Already getting Carer’s Allowance but also meet the qualifying criteria for another social welfare payment
- Changed from another social welfare payment to get Carer’s Allowance
- Caring for someone and being claimed for by a spouse, civil partner or cohabitant
- Getting a social welfare payment other than Carer’s Allowance and caring for someone

The following social welfare payments are not considered:

- Supplementary Welfare Allowance
- Supplementary Welfare Allowance - Increase for a Qualified Adult
- Jobseeker’s Benefit
- Jobseeker’s Allowance
- Family Income Supplement
- Back to Work Allowance
- Back to Education
- Carer’s Benefit

If you satisfy the conditions for Carer’s Allowance it will be awarded at 50% of the rate that would apply if you were not getting any other payment.

You will also be eligible for the Respite Care Grant, Household Benefits Package (if you are living with the person for whom you are providing care) and a Free Travel Pass.

The maximum half-rate Carer's Allowance in 2013 is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under 66</th>
<th>Age 66 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caring for one person</td>
<td>€102</td>
<td>€119.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for two or more</td>
<td>€153</td>
<td>€179.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To apply contact:
Department of Social Protection
Carer’s Allowance Section
Social Welfare Services Office
Government Buildings
Ballinalee Road
Longford
Ireland
Tel: (043) 334 0000
Local: 1890 92 77 70
Domiciliary Care Allowance

Domiciliary Care Allowance is a monthly payment to the carer of a child with a disability so severe that the child requires care and attention and/or supervision substantially in excess of another child of the same age.

This care and attention must be provided to allow the child to deal with the activities of daily living. The child must be likely to require this level of care and attention for at least 12 months.

The Domiciliary Care Allowance rate is €309.50 per month. There is no restriction on the number of children for whom you may claim Domiciliary Care Allowance. (In other words, if you are caring for more than 1 child who qualifies for Domiciliary Care Allowance, you may claim the monthly allowance for each).

Payment may continue for up to 13 weeks if the child is getting medical or other treatment in hospital.

Payment is made on the third Tuesday of every month for the current month.

To qualify, the child must have a severe disability that is likely to last for at least one year and:

- Be aged under 16
- Live at home with the person claiming the allowance for 5 or more days a week - see 'Half-rate payment' overleaf
- Meet the medical criteria - overleaf
- Be ordinarilry resident in the State

In addition, the person claiming the allowance for the child must:

- Provide for the care of the child
- Be habitually resident in the State.
Medical criteria
To qualify for Domiciliary Care Allowance a child must have a disability so severe that it requires the child needing care and attention and/or supervision substantially in excess of another child of the same age.

Eligibility for Domiciliary Care Allowance is not based on the type of impairment or disease, but on the resulting lack of function of body or mind which means the child needs extra care and attention. The Department's Medical Assessor will take the following into account before giving his/her opinion on whether the child meets the medical criteria:

- Review the history of the case
- Consider all medical reports received
- Have regard to the description of the care and attention required by the child given by the parent or guardian.
- Children who are being cared for on a full time basis in residential homes or other institutions are not eligible for the allowance.
- However, children in residential care who go home may receive a half-rate payment if they are at home for 2 days or more a week, for example, a child who attends residential services from Monday to Friday and goes home at weekends.

Reviews and appeals
If your application is refused on medical grounds, you may submit additional information and ask for the case to be reviewed by a different Medical Assessor. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of this review, or wish to appeal on other grounds, you can appeal the decision to the Social Welfare Appeals Office.

Where to apply:
Send your filled-out Domiciliary Allowance application form and supporting documents to:

Domiciliary Care Allowance
Social Welfare Services Office
Department of Social Protection
College Road, Sligo, Ireland
Tel: (071) 915 7100
Locall: 1890 500 000
www.welfare.ie
First Ireland Insurance Brokers are proud to be associated with the Carers Association.

Please contact us on 01.8820800 for any home, motor or business insurance needs or see our website www.firstireland.ie

First Ireland Risk Management are regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland
**MOBILITY ALLOWANCE**

On 26 February 2013, the Department of Health announced that the Mobility Allowance scheme was closed to new applicants. An alternative scheme is being devised to replace it in June 2013. Those who are currently in receipt of the allowance will continue to do so until June. Applications already received by the HSE before the announcement will be processed. If found to be qualified after their assessment, the applicants will be paid the allowance from the date of the application, until payments cease in June 2013.

**HOMEMAKERS SCHEME**

A Homemaker for the purposes of the Homemaker's Scheme is a man or woman who gives up work to take care of a child under age 12 or an incapacitated child or adult aged 2 or over on or after 6 April 1994.

The Homemaker's Scheme makes it easier for you as a Homemaker to qualify for an Old Age Contributory Pension when you reach age 66.

**These arrangements apply to Old Age Contributory Pension only and do not involve payments while Homemaking.**

A person must have a minimum yearly average number of PRSI contributions paid or credited from the time he or she enters social insurance to pension age.

Before 6 April 1994, if you left the workforce to provide full-time care and attention for a child(ren) and or adult(s) as mentioned above, you could have gaps in your social insurance record which could affect your entitlement to an Old Age Contributory Pension.

**Contact:**

**Homemaker's Scheme Section**
Department of Social Protection
McCarter's Road
Ardaravan, Buncrana
Co.Donegal
**Tel:** (01) 471 5898
**Local:** 1890 690 690
**www.welfare.ie**
After budget cuts who will take our place and at what cost?

The Carers Association
### HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANT FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY*  
(HOUSES OVER 12 MONTHS OLD):  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Max. Yearly Household Income</th>
<th>Percentage of Costs</th>
<th>Maximum Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to €30,000</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>€30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€30,000 - €34,000</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>€27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€34,001 - €38,000</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>€24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€38,001 - €42,000</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>€21,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€42,001 - €46,000</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>€18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€46,001 - €50,000</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>€15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€50,001 - €54,000</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>€12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€54,001 - €65,000</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>€9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over €65,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No Grant Payable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANT FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY*  
(HOUSES LESS THAN 12 MONTHS OLD):  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Max. Yearly Household Income</th>
<th>Percentage of Costs</th>
<th>Maximum Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to €30,000</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>€14,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€30,000 - €34,000</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>€13,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€34,001 - €38,000</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>€11,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€38,001 - €42,000</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>€10,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€42,001 - €46,000</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>€8,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>€46,001 - €50,000</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>€7,250</td>
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<td>€50,001 - €54,000</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>€5,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€54,001 - €65,000</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>€4,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over €65,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No Grant Payable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Carer’s Allowance:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carer</th>
<th>Maximum weekly rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aged under 66, caring for 1 person</td>
<td>€204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged under 66, caring for 2 or more</td>
<td>€306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 66 or over and caring for 1 person</td>
<td>€239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 66+, caring for 2 person</td>
<td>€358.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase for a Qualified Child</td>
<td>€29.80 (full-rate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>€14.90 (half-rate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sightsavers’ vision is of a world where no one is blind from avoidable causes and where visually impaired people participate equally in society. We hope that you will help us achieve this vision by leaving a gift in your Will.

Sightsavers has been working for over 60 years to combat blindness in developing countries, restoring sight through specialist treatment and eye care. We support people who are irreversibly blind by providing education, counseling and training. As well as helping people who need it most – those living in poverty in some of the world’s poorest countries.

Legacies are vital for Sightsavers to achieve our vision. By leaving a gift in your Will to Sightsavers, you are enabling us to plan ahead. Legacies give the greatest income and allow the implementation of the largest initiatives with peace of mind that the funds are there to reach the goals. The many thousands of adults and children whose sight has been restored are testimony to the major effect that legacies can have on Sightsavers’ vital work.

Our ambitious plans for 2013 are well underway, and we would love to tell you about them. So please feel free to get in contact to have a chat or if you would like to receive a copy of any of our latest materials, where you can read the amazing stories of the difference that kind supporters’ gifts have made on these people’s lives. It is truly amazing, and the smiles say it all.

For someone who is blind, the gift of sight is the greatest gift of all. If you would like more information on leaving a gift in your Will to Sightsavers please contact John Fleming on 01 663 7666 or log onto our website www.sightsavers.ie/legacies.

70 Upper George’s Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Registered Charity No. CHY 15437

www.sightsavers.ie/legacies
Flu is a highly infectious acute respiratory illness caused by the flu (influenza) virus and is spread by coughing and sneezing. When someone gets flu, they suddenly develop a high temperature with chills, muscle pains and a headache usually 2-7 days. This is different from a cold which starts gradually with a sore throat and a blocked or runny nose.

While most people recover from Flu within a week, serious complications such as pneumonia and bronchitis can develop, especially in older people. These illnesses may need hospital treatment and a number of mainly older people die from flu each winter.

The best way to prevent flu is by getting the flu vaccine. Annual flu vaccine is recommended for certain “at risk groups” which include:

- All those aged 65 and older;
- Those with long term medical conditions eg heart or lung disease.
- Carers including healthcare workers.

Flu vaccine is very safe and contains inactivated (killed) viruses so the vaccine cannot give the flu. You should get vaccinated to protect yourself and those in your care.

People aged 18 years or older may attend either their GP or Pharmacist to get the flu vaccine.

- If you have a ‘Medical Card’ or ‘GP Visit Card’ the vaccine and consultation are free.
- If you do not have a ‘Medical Card’ or ‘GP Visit Card’ you will be charged a consultation fee for seasonal flu vaccine.

More information is available from www.immunisation.ie
EMERGENCY RESPONSE OFFERS SOLUTIONS TO HELP RESTORE INDEPENDENCE TO YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES.

With our technology you can remove the fear of living alone enabling you to live independently secure in the knowledge that help is always available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Help can be summoned by simply pressing your personal trigger which can be worn around the neck or around the wrist. Our centre operators will take the appropriate action, whether it be contacting a family member, neighbour, doctor or the emergency services.

New GSM alarm available no landline Required.

LISTED ARE SOME OF THE ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS ALSO AVAILABLE:
Our range of sensors can be tailored to suit your needs.

- Medication Dispenser
- Care Assistant Pager
- Fall Detector
- Vega GPS Bracelet
- Bogus Caller Button
- Temperature Extremes Detector
- Epilepsy Sensor
- Bed Occupancy Sensor

Each sensor is programmed into your unit and if activated alerts our monitoring centre or family member.

HELP AT THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON
Contact our Telecare Support Team on 1850 247 999
Looking for wheelchair friendly transport?

Simply log on to:

**Wheelchairtaxi.ie**

Driving Social Change

We provide a comprehensive wheelchair travel directory for disabled transport providers in Ireland. Our listings will instantly help you match a driver in your area with your specific wheelchair transport needs, wherever you are in Ireland.

or email directly at:

info@wheelchairtaxi.ie
Home
CARING SAFELY IN THE HOME

• Hazards & Risks
• Fire Safety in the Home
• Managing Health & Medications
• Your Own Health is Important!
• The MyMed App
• Drugs Payment Scheme
• Personal Care Skills & Tasks
• How to Assist with Feeding
• Assisting with Showing and Bathing
• Oral Hygiene & Dental Care
• Managing Urinary Incontinence
• Hygiene & Infection Control
• Food Safety
• Nutrition & Diet
• Moving & Handling Your Relative
• Technical Aids, Housing & Transport
• Refund of VRT & Vat - Disabled Persons Vehicle
CARING SAFELY IN THE HOME
Carers face many safety issues depending on the needs of the persons they care for and their level of dependency.

If the person you care for has a mobility problem:
• Equipment such as rails and ramps may make the home safer for you both.
• Arrange furniture simply and consistently and keep all areas uncluttered
• Remove loose rugs and seal carpet edges that may prove to be safety hazard.

If a person needs to be lifted:
• Ask the health care workers you normally deal with to arrange an assessment of your situation.
• An Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist or Public Health Nurse will be able to work out a safe way of lifting or transferring the person you care for.
• The Carers Association Care in the Home course provides certified training on lifting and handling for Family Carers and other health workers.

If the person you care for is confused:
• Try not to make any changes to the familiar environment
• Consider checking medication as this can be a common cause of confusion
• Easy to read clocks and large calendars can be helpful reminders of time and date

If the person you care for has memory loss:
• It is important at all times that they carry identification with their name and address and emergency contact details.
• Display emergency and commonly used telephone numbers near the phone
If the person you care for is aggressive:
- Make sure that all professionals involved with person know of any aggressive behaviour.
- Always protect yourself in advance if possible from aggressive outbursts. Plan safe places in the house to protect yourself.
- Remove or hide any items in the house that could be used to hurt you.
- Seek support from someone you trust after an outburst such as a family member, friend or a health professional familiar in dealing with cared for person's condition.

If the person you care for has a problem with their sight:
- Leave all items as they were left. If something has to be moved, tell the person where it has been placed.
- Shut doors completely or leave them fully open, a half opened door is a hazard.
- Furniture should be kept in the same position to avoid confusion.

HAZARDS AND RISKS
A Hazard has the potential to cause harm. Risk on the other hand is the likelihood of harm and usually qualified by some statement of severity of the harm. The Risk can be high or low.

The first step in safeguarding your home is to identify examples of hazards when caring in the home:
- Physical Hazards
- Manual Handling
- Falling Objects
- Electricity
- Fire
- Poor Housekeeping
- Slips/Trips
- Health Hazards
- Noise
- Dust
- Unsuitable lighting
If you care for someone with limited mobility it is vital you have early warning if fires do occur. The following are ways to protect your home from a fire:

**FIT SMOKE ALARMS ON EACH LEVEL IN YOUR HOME...**

- Keep them free from dust and test them once a week.
- Make a fire action plan so that everyone in your home knows how to escape if there's a fire.

- Keep the exits in the home clear so that people can escape if there is a fire.
- Take extra care in the kitchen.
- Never leave candles lit in rooms that nobody is in.
- Make sure cigarettes are stubbed out properly.
- Close all doors at night.
- Don't overload electricity sockets.

Your local fire authority can help you with advice about installing smoke detectors and evacuation techniques.
MANAGING HEALTH AND MEDICATIONS

Getting the best from Health Professionals

As a Carer you will most likely have a lot of contact with health care professionals. One way of thinking about working with them is to consider yourself as an important part of the team. This team can include public health nurses, pharmacists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech therapists, social workers as well as GPs.

Some tips for Carers dealing with health professionals include:

- Know who the health professional is. Get information about names, organisation, titles and the role they have in the treatment of the person you care for
- Take someone with you to appointments
- Make a list of questions so you won't forget anything
- Keep a diary of the person's problems or symptoms
- Ask for information to be written down, particularly about diagnosis or about medications
- Ask your doctor for any printed material on support available or additional information on cared for person's condition.

Your own health is important

Your health is very important and your doctor can be an important person in your own support network. If at all possible find a doctor you have confidence in, can talk to and feel comfortable with. Make sure your doctor knows about your caring role and the demands it makes on you. It is important to arrange regular health check ups for yourself.

Medication

There are two types of medication; those that require a doctor's prescription and those that do not. It helps to have an understanding of why the person you care for needs to take medication and be aware of any side effects associated with same.
Helplink South

Telecare Sensors

Range of telecare sensors that can help protect you in your home:

**Smoke (wireless)** - Monitored smoke alarm raises an automatic call to the response centre.

**Monitored Carbon Monoxide or gas** - Warns of dangerous levels of poisonous gas given off by faulty heating equipment.

**Rogue Caller** - Fitted near the door to raise an alarm if you’re in any doubt about the caller.

**PIR - Intruder Alarm** - Detects an intruder and raises an alarm to the call centre.

**Fall Detector** - Automatically detects a serious fall and raises an alert to the call centre.

**Minuet Watch** - This has been developed to help encourage telecare users to wear their personal triggers throughout the day. By combining an alarm button with a high quality watch, users are more likely to wear it and as a result, will be provided with additional protection as their ability to raise an alarm is increased.

Independence & Peace of Mind at the touch of a button

*If you are 65 or over why not avail of a Socially Monitored Alarm for as little as €1.70 per week through the Seniors Alert Scheme.*

We guarantee a high quality standard and we are the first in the Republic of Ireland to receive the Telecare Services Quality Mark. Having achieved this mark of quality, Helplink South is proud that they ensure the best possible telecare service for the Monitoring and Installation of the Socially Monitored Alarms. Range of Telecare Sensors that can help protect you in your home (not funded)

www.helplinksouth.com

Call: 090 6445080

gemma@helplinksouth.com helplinksouth1@gmail.com
Some questions you might want to ask the doctor or pharmacist about medications are as follows:

- What is the name of the medication and what is it for?
- Are there any possible side effects? What should I do if there are any side effects?
- How long will the person need to take this medication?
- Will the medicine affect other medical problems the person has?
- What should I do if a dose is missed?
- Will the medicine interfere with other medicines taken?
- Is there anything the person should avoid while taking the medicine such as alcohol, cigarettes, driving?
- Check that the person is taking the lowest possible effective dosage

The person you care for may be on more than one type of medication and knowing when to take each one can be confusing. A pharmacist can divide the week's medication so that it makes it easier to monitor the dosage.

These are available at supermarkets and local shops as well as at pharmacists. If the person you care for is already on prescription medication or you have any doubts about the medications you are buying you should always seek the advice of a pharmacist or doctor.
O' Flynn Medical offer a wide range of medical equipment, mobility aids and appliances including a range of Stryker Air Mattresses that provide stability, comfort and protection to people with pressure ulcers.

MediRent provide a range of medical equipment to enable people remain in the home. Free professional advice, assessment and product demonstrations.

To view all our Home Care Products visit: www.oflynnmedical.com
THE MYMED APP FOR MEDICATION MANAGEMENT!

It’s not always easy to remember what medicine you need to take and when, but you will get the most benefit from prescribed medicines by ensuring they are taken exactly as directed.

If you have a smart phone or tablet you can download the MyMed App.

The App by DocMorris helps by providing a simple and accurate way to organise daily medicine for you or someone in your care. It securely downloads your prescription details and automatically sets an alarm reminder for you.

To get started, bring your prescription to your local DocMorris pharmacy and they will set it up.
Drugs Payment Scheme

The Drugs Payment Scheme allows individuals and families who do not hold medical cards to limit the amount they have to spend on prescribed drugs. Under the Drugs Payment Scheme, no individual or family will have to pay more than 144 euro per month for approved prescribed drugs, medicines and appliances.

Family expenditure covers a nominated adult, their partner and children under 18 years. Dependents over 18 years and under the age of 23 years who are in full-time education may also be included.

A dependent with a physical disability or a mental handicap or illness who cannot look after themselves fully, who lives in the family home and who does not hold a current medical card, maybe included in the family expenditure under this scheme regardless of age.

All those who are ordinarily resident in Ireland are eligible to apply for the Drugs Payment Scheme as long as they do not hold a current medical card. You can use the Drug payment scheme in conjunction with a Long Term Illness Book.

The application forms can be obtained in your local Pharmacy. Families should be registered by a nominated adult family member. The completed form should be returned to your Health Service Executive. Once the registration form has been processed, each person named on the form will receive a plastic swipe card which they must present when having prescriptions filled at a community pharmacy.

All members of a family should use the same pharmacy throughout a month to obtain prescribed medication. A national database for pharmacists is in the planning stages, but until it comes about, the whole family will have to attend the same pharmacy all the time and keep receipts for prescribed medication.

These receipts can then be returned to the pharmacist at the end of the month. In return, the family will get back any money over 78 euro spent in that month.
PERSONAL CARE SKILLS

Communication and Listening Skills
Communication between a Carer and the cared-for person is essential for reaching a mutual understanding.

Communication can occur in different ways, the main methods of which are: verbal (through spoken and written communication) and non verbal (through body language and tone of voice).

The method for communicating can change for each message and person you communicate to for e.g. you may have to pay particular attention to your voice when communicating to someone with a hearing impairment.

Here are some tips for your effective communication:

- Listen to how you are speaking and how your voice sounds. The pitch, rhythm and rate of your voice are important especially if the cared-for has a hearing impairment.
- Be patient. Allow time for your cared-for to decode your message, finish their sentences, or make an expression especially if they have a physical impairment.
- Observe body language and facial expressions. Check that you have understood their message by repeating it back to them.
- Listen for any sounds your cared-for makes that they use to communicate such as clicking or smacking their lips.
- Respond in a way your loved-one understands.
- Don’t patronise and treat your cared-for with respect. People with profound physical disabilities are likely to be mentally alert.
- Position yourself accordingly when communicating. Ensure you are eye level and at a desired distance.

Aids for communicating
There are numerous practical aids and equipment to assist us in communicating with a disability.

Symbols or pictures which represent certain words can be very useful and can assist the person making choices

Items such as electronic writing boards, sound amplifiers, pen and paper could be considered.

Visual aids such as image enhancers and sound aids are available on computers to assist those who are visually impaired or have impaired hearing.
PERSONAL CARE TASKS

Considerations when assisting in personal care tasks:
- A person may find it difficult to undertake their day to day personal grooming requirements due to increased grip strength to hold objects (such as soap or a brush), or due to reduced movement capability.
- Respect that dressing and undressing is a private procedure and ensure the surrounding area is private.
- Knock before entering the room and make sure curtains are closed.
- Understand the importance of a mirror within easy reach.

How to assist with: FEEDING

Loss of appetite, muscle wastage and weight loss are very common conditions associated with older people, people with terminal illness and other adults or children with disabilities.

Numerous small measures can make it easier for the person receiving care to eat such a pain relief, good oral care, treatments for constipation and other gastro-intestine complaints. Common sense can also help through serving food in a series of smaller meals more frequently rather than three larger meals per day.

Tips for feeding:
- Ask the person how much they would like. Do not put too much on the plate as this can be off putting.
Prior to feeding assist with toileting if they so require and wash their hands thoroughly.

Ensure the person is sitting in an upright position and is comfortable.

Ask which food on the plate they would like to eat first.

Ensure the food on the fork is in their line of vision so they are eating.

Encourage swallowing between each mouthful.

Add extra nutrients to their diet if needed, for e.g. wheat germ can be added to soups, shredded carrots to tuna fish, and grated lemon or cheese to salads. Add powdered skimmed milk to soups or milk shakes for extra protein.

Remain sitting for about half an hour after eating to allow time for food to settle.

Wash hands after feeding.

**SHOWERING AND BATHING**

**General preparations:**

- Prepare the environment and yourself before starting.
- Gather everything you need such as a change of clothes, towels, toiletries, and a hoist.
- The room should be warm and draught free and private with any blinds closed, and brightly lit so you can both see what you are doing.
- Have a bin at hand in case it’s needed.
- Wash hands thoroughly before starting.

**ASSISTING WITH A BATH**

- Follow the general preparation guidelines (see above).
- Ask the person if they would like to use the toilet before starting.
- Check the bath is clean and run both hot and cold taps. Add desired bath oil or bubble bath if required and check the temperature of the water.
- Check the bathroom floor is dry and not slippery.
- Put bathmat down to prevent slips.
- Assist with undressing, getting into the bath and using a hoist if required.
- Use different coloured clothes/flannels for washing the genital area, and the face and body.
- Start with face and neck and ears cleansing. Dry with towel. Change flannels and wash trunk, chest, back arms, legs, feet, under the breasts, under
skin folds, under the arms and lastly the genital and anal area and rinse thoroughly.

- Let the water out and assist the person out. Use a hoist if required.
- Wrap a large towel around them immediately. Dry the person thoroughly paying particular attention to folds of flesh. Assist with dressing and ensure they keep warm.
- When the person is warm and dry, clean the bath dispose of rubbish and ensure there is no water or oil on the floor to prevent slippages.

**USING A HOIST**

- Explain what you are doing
- Put a towel around their legs for their modesty
- Keep talking to the person whilst moving it into position telling them what is going to happen next
- Apply brakes
- Get the person to check the temperature of the water with their foot
- Adjust the temperature of the water accordingly, if required
- Remove the towel before gently lowering them into the bath.

**ASSISTING WITH SHOWERING**

- General preparation is the same as for a bath
- Ensure there are handrails and a non-slip mat if required
- Ensure there is a comfortable shower seat available if required.
- If the shower seat has wheels, apply the breaks
- Ensure the room is warm and check the temperature of the water
- Allow the person to use the shower head to wash themselves if possible
- Wash using the same guidelines as outlined in ‘assisting with bathing’
- Dry the person and clear up as previously described
- Keep water away from persons face as this can be frightening
**SHAVING**
- Ask if they would like to use a traditional razor blade or an electric razor.
- If using a traditional razor, ask if they have preference for shaving foam, gel, or soap.
- For a treat you could apply a mix of yoghurt and honey to the skin prior to the shave. This softens and prepares the skin and keeps the skin moist. Clean off with a warm towel before you proceed.
- Place a hot damp towel over the face to soften the face and open the pores.
- Be careful around the lips as this area is the most sensitive on the face with lots of nerve endings.
- Wash the razor thoroughly before the shave or use a new blade.
- Put on shaving gel, foam or other shaving product of choice.
- Gently stretch the skin on each cheek.
- Shave down with the e direction of the hair on each cheek.
- Ask the person to tilt their chin upwards.
- Shave upwards in the direction of the hair under the chin and under the jaw-line.
- Shave sideways from cheek to mid chin on both cheeks.
- Shave down from nostrils as close as possible to the lip. This should always be the last place to shave because the entrance to the nose is a source for bacteria.

**HAIR CARE**
Having the hair washed can be a relaxing and refreshing experience. Brushing or combing of the hair should be done at least once a day or as required. Washing and shampooing the hair should be done in the bath or shower but it can be done over a sink if necessary or in the bed if the person is unable to get out of bed.

**Washing hair at a sink or basin**
- Ensure you are prepared with towels and shampoo ready.
- Protect the persons back and shoulders from any water leakage if washing at the sink by wrapping towels and/or a water resistant wrap around the shoulders.
- Use a hose or spray attachment if possible but if that is not available gently rinse the persons hair using your hands or se a pre-cleaned jug for the purpose.
- Apply shampoo and gently message into scalp and hair.
- Rinse thoroughly being extremely careful not to poor water into their eyes.
• Apply conditioner if required and brush gently through hair
• Rinse thoroughly
• Wrap a warm towel around the hair to soak up excess moisture
• Towel dry gently
• Brush or comb through and style as required
• Be careful when using hairdryers that they are not too hot
• Show them their finished result in a mirror

Washing hair in bed
There is an inflatable tray designed to support the head and neck of a person who is confined to bed to assist them in having their hair washed. Ask your Public Health Nurse of GP where you can source one.

ORAL HYGIENE AND DENTAL CARE
Good dental care is required for speaking, chewing and overall health and well-being.

Tips for oral hygiene and dental care
• Clean teeth at least twice a day for at least 2-3 minutes
• Replace their toothbrush every 2-3 months
• If the person cannot get to the bathroom give them a bowl of water, toothbrush, toothpaste, towel and a glass of water to rinse
• Ask if they need any assistance
• The gums, tongue and roof of the mouth should also be brushed with toothpaste to remove plaque, stimulate gums and freshen breath
• If you need to clean their teeth for them, be patient and gentle and explain what you are doing
• Dentures should be removed and cleaned twice a day to remove plaque, food particles and staining
• Dentures should be left to soak overnight in a denture cleaning solution and then brushed with a toothbrush and toothpaste
• If their mouth is dry or crusted, clean the inside of the mouth with cotton buds soaked in warm water
• If lips are cracked or dry, lip balm can be useful in restoring and maintaining lip moisture
• Be aware of bleeding, swollen or red gums, receding teeth and signs of decay and refer to a Dentist for advice
• Home visits can be arranged if necessary
We offer PHECC and FETAC courses:

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>€195</td>
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<tr>
<td>Care Skills (4 day module)</td>
<td>€200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications (4 day module)</td>
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<td>Work Experience (4 day module)</td>
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<td>Introduction to Nursing (4 day module)</td>
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<td>Emergency Medical technician (4 week)</td>
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<td>Emergency First Responder (6 day)</td>
<td>€600</td>
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<td>Cardiac First Responder (1 day)</td>
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Call the Irish Ambulance Training Institute for course details

Lo Call: 1890 25 30 78

www.ambulancetraining.ie
CARING SAFELY IN THE HOME

NAIL CARE
• Soak fingernails and toenails for desired soaking time (usually 5 minutes for fingernails and 15-20 minutes for toenails)
• If possible use professional nail clippers or nail clippers scissors with a straight edge
• Use extreme caution when cutting to prevent damage to nearby tissues
• If a person has diabetes their nails should be checked and cut by a qualified chiropodist or podiatrist

MANAGING URINARY INCONTINENCE
• Learn to recognise the non-verbal cues a person gives about needing to go to the toilet and respond to them quickly
• Schedule frequent visits to the toilet that suits the cared-for person
• Try to get a picture of how and when accidents are happening
• Some indications that a person may need to urinate include picking at their clothes near the groin area or fidgeting
• Urinary incontinence can be assisted with absorbency pads which can be put inside regular underwear
• Incontinence wear should be changed frequently, keeping skin clean and by using lotions and powders to protect the skin
• Ensure your cared-for has adequate fluid intake
• If assisting with toileting ensure clothes are easy to get on and off
• If required put a commode next to the bed, particular at night
• Provide adequate lighting to and from the bathroom
• Night time incontinence can be reduced by reducing fluid intake after a particular time in the evening and by using an absorbency pad if required.

HYGIENE & INFECTION CONTROL
Infection
If your cared-for person is ill, frail or has a low immune system, they may be particularly vulnerable to infection, so it is essential to maintain a hygienic and a clean habitable environment.

Infection can be spread in the following ways:
• Sources: People and animals are the most common carriers of many bacteria and viruses.
• Victims: The most vulnerable are those who have not been vaccinated and those who have low immunity.
• Direct Routes: A person can catch an infection directly by touching something that is contaminated; by sharing a needle with a contaminated person; through an exchange of bodily fluids or saliva, or through sexual activity with an infected person.
• Indirect Routes: Indirect routes include: airborne (germs can be carried in droplets of fluid), food; Food (can be contaminated if not cooked, stored or
handled correctly); clothing or equipment (can harbour germs) and insects (can be hosts)

Symptoms of Infection:
• Pain or swelling
• Localised redness
• Loss of movement
• Areas that are hot to touch
• High temperature, increased breathing and pulse rates
• Headache and thirst
• Hot, dry skin and rash
• Loss of appetite
• Weakness and apathy

PREVENTING INFECTION
The best way to prevent infection and ensure a clean habitable environment is to adhere to a personal hygiene policy. The Carers Association recommends the following:

Personal hygiene
• Shower regularly and keep hair washed and neat.
• Wear clean clothes.
• For hygiene reasons nails should be kept short, clean and varnish free. False nails are not permitted to be worn to work.
• All cuts/ sores/ boils must be covered with a blue-water proof plaster. This is to protect you from acquiring an infection as well as to protect your cared-for from acquiring an infection.
• Wear sensible footwear which encloses the toe and heel.

Washing hands
Wash hands regularly throughout the day especially after:
• Going to the toilet
• Assisting with toileting
• Handling rubbish
• Tea breaks
• Handling money
• Before serving food
• Coughing, sneezing, touching face/ hair/ nose /mouth
• Handling cleaning chemicals
• Regularly throughout the day
Hands should be washed as per the instructions on the Hand Wash Poster (see Page 95); the key points to remember in the hand washing process are:

1. Remove all jewellery.
2. Ensure sleeves are pushed up
3. Hot water is applied to the hands
4. Soap is dispensed onto the hands and warm water added.
5. All parts of the hands & wrists should be washed as per the instructions on the Hand wash Poster
6. Hands must be rinsed thoroughly to remove all traces of soap and dried properly to avoid irritation.

Antibacterial gel should be applied to dry hands immediately after washing; apply as per the Hand-Rub Technique poster.

**Disposable gloves**

Disposable gloves should only be worn for short periods and changed frequently. Hands should be washed before where necessary, and after using disposable gloves.

**Where disposable gloves are used they should be discarded following:**

- Cleaning duties, handling refuse, handling or preparing raw food, and continence duties
- Gloves are also discarded if they are ripped, torn or have become loose due to over wearing.

In addition to adhering to a hygiene policy, Carers are also recommended to:

- Get vaccinated (ask your GP for recommended vaccinations)
- Keep informed (watch the news, read the paper or go online to keep informed on any outbreaks of viruses.
If you’re looking for a respite break with a difference this year, why not consider Cuisle Holiday Centre. Based in beautiful grounds of Donamon Castle in Co. Roscommon, this specialist holiday centre offers a unique combination of facilities including:

**Accessible Fishing**
Cuisle has 31 wheelchair accessible bays and is a popular spot for anglers or anyone looking to take up a new hobby! They even have an in-house fishing instructor.

**Onsite Restaurant**
Enjoy mouth watering food at Cuisle’s onsite restaurant. Cuisle is the only respite centre in Ireland that has a restaurant and an award winning chef.

**Nightly Entertainment**
Cuisle has a fully licenced bar with nightly entertainment throughout the season. Always good when on your holidays!

**Shopping Trips**
Roscommon town, with its lovely independent boutiques, is less than a 10 minute drive from Cuisle. If it’s more high street that you’re after, the Athlone Town Shopping Centre is a 40 minute drive.

**Facilities & Staff**
Cuisle has an excellent reputation for respite breaks. A combination of specialist equipment, highly qualified staff and the highest standards in customer service mean that guests often don’t want to leave!

**Day Trips**
Ideally located in the midlands, Cuisle is within a short drive of Galway, Knock, Castlebar, Athlone and many other interesting locations. So whether its arts, heritage or history you’re interested in – it’s all on your doorstep at Cuisle.

**Onsite Gym & Jacuzzi**
Stay fit while on your holidays at Cuisle’s wheelchair accessible gym. Or unwind at their Jacuzzi after a relaxing massage.

**Wheelchair Transportation**
Nationwide pick up and airport transfers can be provided by their fully wheelchair accessible buses. Busses can also be used on day trips.

**34 Bedrooms**
Cuisle is the largest respite holiday centre in Ireland with 34 en-suite bedrooms offering B&B, half and full board options. It’s a great place to take a large group or to meet smaller groups.

Contact Ailish or Kate on 090 6662277 or see their website for more information: www.cuisle.ie

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**Healthcare Courses now available Nationwide**

The Irish Ambulance Training Institute, the award winning national training institute headquartered in Ballybrit, Galway is offering a wide range of courses for those working as, or seeking employment in the healthcare sector. The Institute is long established in delivering courses in the First Aid and Emergency Care fields. On offer are the PHECC accredited Emergency Medical Technician and Emergency First Responder qualifications. We also offer an extensive range of FETAC accredited courses for those working as or seeking employment as healthcare assistants. The Institute is offering the most comprehensive range of healthcare training courses available throughout the country. Courses on offer include FETAC Level 5 Nursing Studies Modules and Healthcare Support Modules including Care of the Older Person and Occupational First Aid.

With our wide range of courses on offer the Institute has something on offer for anyone seeking a relevant qualification in the healthcare field. Course applicants may also be eligible for funding assistance depending on individual circumstances. Early application is advised as spaces are limited.

Contact the Irish Ambulance Training Institute on 1890 253 078, info@ambulancetraining.ie or www.ambulancetraining.ie for further details.
GOOD HAND WASHING TECHNIQUE
FOOD SAFETY

In order to minimise any health risks, you need to keep your kitchen and cooking utensils clean, store food correctly and prepare food carefully.

Follow these steps to ensure food safety:

Buying Food:
- Check expiration dates. Don’t buy food, which has expired or will expire before you use it.
- Check that packaged goods are wrapped accordingly and are not damaged.
- Check that fruit and vegetables don’t have broken skins.
- Don’t buy fish or meat that has a strong odour.
- Check that your eggs aren’t cracked and have been cleaned.
- Pack fruit and vegetables and any other foods you will eat raw separately, and place meat and fish products in plastic bags to prevent leaks in case of spillage.

Storing Food:
- Store foods according to its packaging guidelines.
- Store raw foods on a separate shelf in the fridge.
- Put raw meat and defrosting foods on a plate to prevent dripping.
- Place fruit and vegetables in the bottom of the fridge, and meat in the coldest part.
- Store food in the fridge or freezer as soon as possible after purchase.

Cleanliness
- Cover any cuts with plasters.
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after preparing foods, and as soon as you have handled raw meat.
- Wash knives separately, and clean utensils thoroughly.
- Change and wash cloths and towels regularly. Soak dish cloths overnight in bleach.
- Regularly disinfect bins, cupboard handles, and taps.
- Clean your fridge regularly.
- Keep pets away from all food and kitchen services.
Preparation
• Follow frozen food guidelines and your freezer guidelines correctly.
• Do not use foods from damaged packaging for e.g. from damaged or dented tins.
• Do not use foods past its expiry date
• Wash all fruit and vegetables thoroughly.
• Use separate chopping boards and knives each for cooked and uncooked foods.

Cooking
• Follow cooking guidelines exactly on all products
• Ensure all meat and fish is cooked thoroughly
• Do not reheat food more than once
• Have separate chopping boards and knives for working with raw foods.
NUTRITION AND DIET  
by Rachel Joy, Dietitian

A healthy diet coupled with active living is the key to maintaining good health throughout life as well as preserving independence right through to old age. In the short-term, a healthy diet provides us with energy to fuel day-to-day activities, while over the long-term, promotes health and reduces the risk of heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and some cancers.

In order to achieve a healthy, balanced diet, it is important to choose the right foods in the correct proportions. This provides the body with the essential nutrients needed for health while also maintaining a healthy weight. Healthy eating does not mean you cannot enjoy your favourite foods; it is all about getting the balance right. In Ireland, the food pyramid provides guidance on the type and amount of foods that should be chosen each day (figure 1).

The bottom shelf of the food pyramid contains breads, cereals and potatoes. These are known as carbohydrate foods and provide us with the energy needed to carry out day-to-day activities. These foods should form the basis of every meal. Choose 6+ servings per day (one serving is equivalent to a bowl of breakfast cereal, 1 slice of bread, 1 medium potato or 2 tablespoons of cooked pasta or rice). It is best to choose wholegrain varieties wherever possible in order to provide fibre in the diet. Fibre is essential for healthy bowel function along with adequate fluid and physical activity. Eating more foods rich in fibre helps prevent constipation and safeguards against other bowel problems. In addition, aim to drink 6-8 glasses (1½-2L) of fluid per day to support hydration and exercise for at least 30 minutes four times per week for general health and wellbeing.

The next shelf is fruits and vegetables. Choose at least 5 servings each day (one serving is equivalent to ½ glass of fruit juice, 2 tablespoons of cooked vegetables or salad, small bowl of homemade vegetable soup, 1 medium sized fresh fruit or a small bowl of cooked or tinned fruit (preferably in natural juice). Fruit and vegetables provide vitamins and minerals essential for good health and help to prevent diseases such as heart disease and some cancers. These foods also provide an additional source of fibre in the diet.

Figure 1: Food pyramid
Three servings of milk and dairy-based foods are required each day. These foods are a rich source of calcium and essential for bone health. One serving is equivalent to 1 cup of milk, 1 carton of yoghurt or 1 oz of cheddar or edam cheese. Low-fat options should be chosen. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones because it helps the body to absorb calcium. Vitamin D is made in the body through the action of sunlight on the skin, and is sourced in the diet from oily fish e.g. salmon, trout, herring, sardines, mackerel, cod liver oil and egg yolk. Fortified foods also provide a rich source of vitamin D e.g. milk, breakfast cereals, margarine and orange juice.

Two servings of meat, fish and alternatives should be chosen each day in order to provide protein in the diet. Protein is essential for growth and repair in the body and for maintaining muscle. One serving is equivalent to 2 oz of cooked lean meat or poultry, 3 oz of cooked fish, 2 eggs (not more than 7 per week), 6 tablespoons of cooked peas or beans, 2 oz cheddar type cheese (preferably low fat), 3 oz nuts. These foods provide iron and vitamin B12 in the diet, essential for healthy blood. However, they also provide a source of saturated fat which can lead to raised blood cholesterol levels, therefore it is important to trim visible fat from meat and remove skin from chicken. Choose oily fish once per week to provide essential fatty acids necessary for heart health.

Foods from the top shelf should be chosen sparingly. These foods include oils, butter, margarine, chocolate, crisps, sweets, cakes and biscuits. They are concentrated sources of calories, fat and sugar; often with little other nutritional value. They should be enjoyed in moderation only as part of a healthy diet and exercise.

In summary, a good diet is important for good health. Eating a variety of foods can help you manage your weight, improve general wellbeing and reduce the risk of conditions including heart disease, stroke, some cancers, diabetes and osteoporosis. All you need to do is eat sensibly, choosing a range of foods from the five food groups each day to make sure you have a balanced diet and in the correct proportions. Most of all – enjoy your food!
MOVING AND HANDLING YOUR RELATIVE

Back strain is one of the most common injuries sustained in the process of moving a person. If you attempt to move your relative incorrectly, you are likely to injure yourself or aggravate your loved one’s condition. If you must move your relative regularly, you must get specialist help. You should not have to deal with moving a person without training or specialist aids.

If you are caring on your own, it’s essential that you talk to your GP or public health nurse to arrange for a specialist such as a physiotherapist or an occupational therapist to assess your situation and show you the correct way to move your loved one.

The Carers Association also offers Patient Moving and Handling training. To find out more call the National Care Line on 1800-24-07-24 or visit www.carersireland.com

The technique of moving a patient doesn’t involve lifting but instead you move a person by transference of body weight. If your relative needs a high level of assistance, if they have to be helped into a bed or a bath regularly for example, then you should be shown how to use specialist equipment such as a hoist. You also should be shown how to maintain it.

The main types of moving and handling equipment respond to the patient’s level of ability.

For people with no ability to help in the move, use equipment that takes all of their body weight: hoists, slings and slide sheets. A hoist is essential if your relative has to be moved regularly from a chair to a bed or into a bath. Most hoists involve sitting the person in a sling and, once they are securely in place, operating an electric winch system to lift her.
A healthcare professional should advise you on the hoist that is most suitable and demonstrate how to use it.

To help prevent pressure sores, variable pressure mattresses made of spongy material with a series of air pockets that inflate and deflate at different times can help. They distribute the body’s weight more evenly so that the points where the body presses on the mattress are varied.

People who can bear some of their own weight, sit up with help or pivot themselves, mostly need slide boards and slide sheets to take some of their weight. A slide sheet is a strong, thin piece of material with a slippery surface that allows you to move the person across the bed when she needs to be turned. You slide it underneath her and as you pull it towards you, she is automatically moved across with it. A slide board is a shaped piece of wood that can be used as a bridge between a bed and a chair, so that your relative can slide across the board from one piece of furniture to the other.

Grab handles, lifting handles and handling belts are used to help individuals who just need support to move on their own. A handling belt is a broad, thick belt with handles on it that you can hold onto when helping your loved one to stand up or walk. It means you don’t have to hold them by the arms and so can prevent bruising.

People with some upper body strength may be able to use bed blocks with handles. They can be improvised by tying two or 3 similar sized books together, the person presses down to raise herself to sit up, shift their position or use raise onto a bed-pan in bed.

A rope ladder is a device that enables a person with reasonably strong hands and arms to raise himself to a sitting position: one end of the ladder is fastened to the bottom end of the bed, the user then pulls on the rungs to raise up.

Before moving your relative, ask yourself:

- Is the area safely clear of obstacles like trailing wires, chairs, books/newspapers, is the floor dry and not slippery
- Are you wearing clothes that allow ease of movement and low shoes with good traction
- Is the equipment you’re using clean, safe and ready
- Can you actually move and handle your loved-one on your own or are two people needed
- Is your relative mobile enough to help with part of the procedure, can they move themselves to the edge of a chair, pull up with their arms or push down on the bed with their feet for example?
Prepare to move
- Know what equipment is needed, where to place the chair or wheelchair, what side of the bed to work on.
  Position surfaces as close as possible to each other
- Always explain to your loved one what you’re going to do and why
- Check that they’re happy with this before you start
- Encourage them to help in the move if they can, this can promote their independence

During the move:
Stand with a wide base of support, slightly flex your knees and keep your back straight.

  - Always make movements on the count of 3
  - Bend your legs, not your back
  - Use your legs to do the work
  - Don’t hold or grab your relative under the underarms
  - Don’t let them hold or grasp you around your neck
  - Pivot your whole body in the direction of the move, don’t twist or turn your trunk
  - Give praise and reassurance to your relative

Repositioning:
  - make sure that your loved one’s body is well aligned in the new position
  - support with pillows as needed

Taking stock post-move:
  - observe how the move went, was there enough help, is the equipment appropriate, how much help did your loved one need, how well did they tolerate the movement, is there new position comfortable, were there any complaints of pain or discomfort.

Pressure area management:
A pressure sore or bedsore is a broken area on the skin caused by a loss of blood supply from continuous pressure from lying or sitting in the same position for long periods without moving. It’s a painful condition that can deteriorate seriously and must be treated and managed carefully.

Common places for pressure sores are at the buttocks, shoulders, elbows, the heels and ankles and the knees. Warning signs are that the skin is hot, shiny and red, swollen or torn especially over bony areas.

If you press the red area and hold for 3 seconds, the skin should appear white when you take your finger away. If the area is still red, this is an indication of pressure damage. You should immediately seek medical advice and treatment.
Preventing pressures sores:

- Turn your loved one in bed (or remind them) at least every 2 hours. Remind them to stand if they tend to sit for long periods. Use an alarm to help them remember, a kitchen timer or a mobile phone.
- Keep the skin as dry and clean as possible, but avoid rubbing too vigorously when drying.
- Monitor the time sitting on commodes.
- When assisting the person getting out of bed, take your time and always ensure that the skin is not dragged along the sheets.
- Make sure the sheets are not wrinkled.
- Ensure that your relative’s chair is the right size, giving enough room between the arm rest and the hips so as not to pinch.
- Pyjamas or nightdresses should not be bunched up underneath your relative’s body.
- A person using a wheelchair should shift their weight every 10 to 15 minutes or be helped to reposition himself at least once an hour.
- Areas with less fat should not be massaged. Even slight friction can remove the top layer of skin and damage blood vessels beneath it.
- Use pillows or foam wedges to raise the legs from mid calf to ankle, raise the heels off the bed and reposition the shoulders and head.

HOUSING AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

As a Carer, an important part of our work is ensuring that the person we care for has the best quality of life possible through enhanced independence and dignity. Technical aids and appliances, as well as the right modifications to the home and accessible transport are all vital elements in independent living. It is also most important that the Carer looks after her/his own health. Carers assist the person who needs care on a daily basis as follows:

- Getting from one room to the other
- Safety getting up and down stairs
- Taking a bath or a shower
- Getting onto and off chairs
- Getting in and out of bed
- Using the toilet
- Security
- Getting to and from the home
- Making sure you do not injure yourself
DISABLED PERSONS GRANT SCHEME
The Disabled Person's Housing Grant Scheme assists those who require alterations to their homes as a result of physical disability, a severe intellectual disability, or a severe mental illness for which they are receiving treatment. Alterations could include making a dwelling wheelchair accessible or installing a ground floor bathroom and toilet. The grant is funded jointly by the Department of the Environment and Local Government, and local authorities.

Application for the grant is made to your local authority which will provide guidelines in relation to procedures and information on works that will be grant aided. Procedures may vary between local authorities.

You must not do any of the work until your application is approved. Applications to the local authority must be accompanied by a detailed itemised estimate from the contractor together with specifications of the proposed work.

The contractor's Income Tax Number and VAT number must be included.

When the local authority receives your application it will ask your H.S.E. to arrange a call from an Occupational Therapist who will be required to provide a report back to the local authority.

OWNER OCCUPIED HOMES
Application for the grant is made to your local authority which will provide guidelines in relation to procedures and information on works that will be grant aided. The maximum grant available is €30,000 and the grant will cover up to 90% of the cost of the works to private houses.

The local authority may enquire as to how you intend to meet your portion of the cost of the adaptation. You may fund your share of the cost from your own resources or by means of a loan from a bank, building society, etc. If you are unable to obtain a loan from a bank or building society, your local authority may be able to advance you a house improvement loan to cover your share of the cost.

New House or Building your own House
Where a house is less than one year old or where a new house is being specifically provided and suitably designed to meet the needs of a disabled person the grant will not normally exceed €14,500
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MyHomeReach

Providing care for a loved one from a distance is a constant worry and challenge for the care giver.

HealthComms MyHomeReach solution enables the care recipient to stay in constant contact with a network of both formal and informal carers via simply toasting the photo of a care.

Cares can participate in daily activities such as medication reminders and activities of daily living.

MyHomeReach mobile allows you to easily connect to your family, friends or the person you are helping. MyHomeReach will send details of your location using built-in GPS functionality making it easier and quicker for assistance to be received.

MyHomeReach is available across a variety of desktop, touch screen and mobile platforms.

Tel: +19271148
Email: myhome@healthcomms.com
Website: www.HealthComms.com
Rented Accommodation
The grant is not available to people in rented accommodation.

Local Authority House
If you live in a local authority house the local authority will meet the full cost of approved alterations. The disabled person must occupy the house as his/her normal place of residence.

NOTE: Funding is based on the level of funding available in each Local Authority area and is at their discretion.
THE DISABLED DRIVERS AND DISABLED PASSENGERS SCHEME
From the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, provides a range of tax relief's linked to the purchase and use of vehicles by disabled drivers and disabled passengers in Ireland. Under the terms of the scheme you can claim remission or repayment of vehicle registration tax (VRT), repayment of value-added tax (VAT) on the purchase of a vehicle and repayment of VAT on the cost of adapting a vehicle, up to a maximum of €9,525 for a disabled driver and €15,875 for a disabled passenger.

In order to qualify for tax relief under the scheme, you must have a valid Primary Medical Certificate. A Primary Medical Certificate confirms you are severely and permanently disabled.

**There are certain conditions underlining the scheme:**

The first rule is engine size. For disabled drivers, the engine size must be less that 2,000 cc. For disabled passengers, the engine size must be less than 4,000 cc's. Otherwise, the Revenue Commission can deny your claim.

The next rule applies to a minimum spending level. For disabled drivers, you are not required to spend a minimum amount on your conversion features. For instance, a conversion for a disabled driver may be hand controls, an electric hand brake release, or a steering ball.

For disabled passengers, however, they must spend at least 10% of the net value of the vehicle (this is the retail price less the VRT and VAT). So for example let us suppose a disabled passenger requires a swivel seat and the net purchase price of their new vehicles is €22,000. Under the rules, the customer must spend €2,200 on the conversion(s).

The office in Monaghan can be contacted on **Telephone: 047 62100**

**Refund of VRT and VAT On Disabled Person’s Vehicle:**

Severely and permanently disabled persons are entitled to repayment of Vehicle Registration Tax (VRT) and Value Added Tax (VAT) paid on specially constructed or modified vehicles. Repayment of VRT and VAT is not available on a leased vehicle. The scheme may apply to an adapted vehicle for use by the person with the disability as a passenger. An Original Primary Medical Certificate from the local health service must be provided confirming that the person's disability falls within the rules. These generally require that the person is wholly or almost wholly without the use of both legs, or without the use of both hands or arms.
Other categories of disability are also included. The completed Form is returned to the Revenue in Co Monaghan and if they are satisfied, a letter of Authorisation is issued to the person exempting them from VRT.

On receipt of the completed application form, invoice for the cost of the vehicle and cost of adaptation and Vehicle Registration Certificate (or log book), VRT and VAT will be refunded.

The vehicle must not be disposed of within 24 months.

Fuel Repayment Scheme:
Excise Duty paid on fuel actually used in the disabled driver’s vehicle may be repaid, up to an annual limit of 2728 litres (600 gallons). Claims are made every four months.

Disabled Person's Parking Card:
The person with the disability may park his/her vehicle at parking meters, in disk parking areas and designated areas. This card, once issued to the person with the disability, can be carried with them and allows their own car or a car in which they are a passenger to be parked in designated areas.

Driving Lessons:
People with disabilities can get driving lessons at specialist driving schools at the Disabled Drivers Association and the Irish Wheelchair Association.

The Motorised Transport Grant
Is a means tested HSE payment for people in Ireland with disabilities who need to buy a car. This payment is also for disabled people who need to have a car or other vehicle adapted in order to enable them to drive, and as a result, earn a living. To be eligible you must be over 17 years and hold a driving licence and be physically and mentally capable of driving and your disability must impede your use of public transport and you must require a car or other vehicle in order to retain employment.

Contact:
Disabled Drivers Association
Ballindine, Co. Mayo
Tel: 094 9364054 for further information.
CONTACTS:

Disabled Drivers Section, Revenue Commissioners
FREEPOST, Coolshannagh, Monaghan
Tel: (047) 82800.

Disabled Drivers Association of Ireland
Ballindine, Co Mayo
Tel: (094) 64266/64054.

Irish Wheelchair Association
Blackheath Drive,
Clontarf,
Dublin 3.
Tel: (01) 8338241

Information for Independent Living
Comhairle provide a website titled
www.assistireland.ie which is an online resource providing information on assistive technologies for people with disabilities, older people and their Carers. Information Sheets from the website are available from Assist Ireland on 1890 277478.

Contact:
Comhairle
7th Floor,
Hume House,
Ballsbridge,
Dublin 4
Ireland
Tel: (01) 6059000
ORTHOPAEDIC BOOTS AND SHOES:
For children under 18 years of age, two pairs of orthopaedic boots or shoes are paid for annually to people with medical cards or on the long term illness scheme. Children over 18 years qualify for one paid annually. These are supplied on prescription from your orthopaedic surgeon.

Contact:
Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus,
Old Nangor Road,
Clondalkin, Dublin 22.
Tel: (01) 4572326.

HEARING AIDS
Hearing testing and the fitting and repair of hearing aids are services provided by the H.S.E., having previously been provided by the NRB which has been abolished.

Advice and information on hearing difficulties are also provided. Services are targeted to school children and adults with medical cards.
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Financial Assistance Available
- Take Control
- Budgeting Tips
- Reducing Outgoings
- Reasons behind Debt
- Priority Debts Explained
- Secondary Debts Explained
- the Money Advice Budgeting Service (MABs)
- Retirement Funds by Denis Maloney
Financial Assistance Available
Many Carers do not apply for financial assistance because they are unsure who to contact or are put off by the procedures. Don't feel ashamed or embarrassed about asking for assistance. If you do not, you and the person you care for could lose out on money specifically allocated by government for helping people who are ill, have a disability or who are frail.

Take Control
Many of us are so busy with our everyday lives that we give little or no attention to planning our finances. It is very important to take control of our finances. The following are steps to help control your finances.

Make a Budget
A budget is a simple way to make sure that the demands you place on your income can be met. There are some simple things to bear in mind when you start to look at your income and spending:

- List all the income into your house
- List all the bills you have to pay
- If you are paid weekly, budget for the week. If it is monthly, budget for the month.
- Count all spending even bills that occur only occasionally or once a year. Include the costs of special occasions in your budget e.g. Christmas, Birthdays
- A once off unexpected expense can blow a budget plan apart therefore it is advisable where possible to have an emergency fund to meet these unforeseen costs.
Reducing your Outgoings
Try to identify areas of your spending that you could possibly cut back on.

With your budget in front of you see if the following plan might help:
- Put a mark against payments that cannot be changed e.g. your rent
- Look at bills or payments that could be reduced e.g. electricity, gas, telephone.
- You may be able to negotiate lower mortgage payments
- Consider how you might budget for weekly essential items such as groceries, clothing etc.

Look at items such as entertainment, although it might make sense to have total cutback here it is necessary to leave room for a social life for you and your family.

Being in debt can be:
- A difficult place to be
- A lonely place to be
- And it can be a desperate place to be

See overleaf for reasons behind and steps to ease the burden of debt.
BEING IN DEBT
Debt problems are more often than not solved with time and effort. You have probably taken the most important and difficult step in recognising that you might have a money problem.

Your money difficulties can have arisen for various reasons.

The most common reasons for Carers are:
• Changes in life’s circumstances
• Illness of loved one
• Having to leave employment to provide full time care

Other reasons may include:
• Relationship breakdown
• A drop in income
• Increased expenditure
• Just not enough to go around

Take the Following Steps:

List and Evaluate Your Debts
• Take a look at what debts you need to give immediate attention to because of the serious consequences attached like losing your home (Priority Debts)

• Highlight the debts where legal action has already taken place. Mark the ones where legal action is pending. These debts need your immediate attention as the consequence of ignoring them could be severe.

• Have you arrears on electricity, gas or phone bills. If they are not attended to you will be disconnected. Credit agreements not secured on your property which are in arrears could mean you receiving a court summons or goods being repossessed.

It is very important that you, without delay, make contact with those to whom you owe money in order to explain your financial situation. You can do this in person, by phone or by letter. Our advice is to make contact by letter. Do remember to keep a copy.
WHAT ARE PRIORITY DEBTS?
Some debts are more important than others.

Important debts such as mortgage arrears, rent arrears, fines and maintenance payments are called priority debts.

They are called this because:
• Your home may be at risk
• You may be evicted
• Your electricity, gas or telephone may be disconnected
• Your failure to pay a fine or a civil debt may result in a prison sentence
• Your car or goods on hire purchase could be repossessed.

Let others know if someone is putting pressure on you.
If any money matters are troubling you, don’t hesitate to contact the MABS Helpline 1890 283 438 for information and advice on money management and debt advice. MABS is a free, confidential, non-judgmental and independent money and debt advice service.
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WHAT ARE YOUR SECONDARY DEBTS?

These are debts where money has been loaned to you without you having to provide any security. These include lots of different types of debts where the creditor hasn't got extra powers e.g. they cannot take your home. The most common Secondary debts include:

Examples:
- Bank Overdraft
- Catalogue
- Debts
- Credit Card Debts
- Credit Sales Agreements
- Credit Union Loans
- Personal Debts to friends and family
- Personal Loans with Finance companies

Though you can be taken to court if you have failed to keep up the agreed payments, as long as you don't ignore the problem and you respond to court documents with details of your financial circumstances, you will generally only have to pay what you can afford in line with your budget.

Who can help me?:
- Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABs)
- A Financial Advisor
- Solicitor
- Bank
- Other family members

For further information and advice go to www.mabs.ie
Caring for Yourself,
The Carer With Yoga
Relax, Restore, Rejuvenate

Information for Carer Support Groups or to Find a Local Class
contact:
Irish Yoga Association
Email: info@iya.ie
Phone: 01 4934672
Web: www.iya.ie
Registered Charity No: CHY 1827
Living with hearing loss

People forget the impact that good hearing has on the quality of their lives and, unfortunately, they feel that hearing loss is just something they should put up with. However, Dr Nina Byrnes, Hidden Hearing’s Medical Advisor, strongly disagrees.

“A certain amount of hearing loss is normal with age, but you don’t have to tolerate it. If you notice that you are suddenly favouring one ear over the other or are finding that you are not hearing as well as you normally would it is important to go and get checked out.”

At Hidden Hearing, Dr Nina explains, the hearing test takes an hour and is completely painless. The hearing specialist takes a complete medical history, examines the ear, and goes through the various grades of hearing. Then, depending on the results, they may recommend you get a hearing aid. Hidden Hearing has a comprehensive range of aids available, and they can tailor them according to your needs.

“At Hidden Hearing the hearing tests are genuinely free and you are under no pressure to buy a hearing aid,” Dr Nina reassures. “It’s a decision you make with your family.”

For more information or to book a free hearing test, call 1800 882 884 or visit www.hiddenhearing.ie
Hearing Aid Audiologists are health professionals who assess and manage individuals with hearing loss. The growth in demand for Audiological services in the Republic of Ireland is being driven by a number of factors including the general aging of the population and the increase in the size of the cohort moving into retirement age. One of the primary contributing factors to age-related hearing loss and the most common cause of acquired hearing loss in adults is exposure to excessive noise in both occupational and vocational settings.

Bonavox has been providing professional hearing care in Ireland since 1967. The company offers advice and treatment for hearing loss, tinnitus, ear-wax removal, ear-mould fittings, hearing protection, industrial screening and rapid hearing aid repairs. Located nationwide, Bonavox has branches at the Dundrum Shopping Centre and North Earl Street in Dublin and on Stephens Street in Waterford. Bonavox also has 26 regional clinics, partnering with well-established opticians, pharmacies and medical surgeries in provincial towns throughout Ireland.

The company provides free hearing tests and prides itself on its unrivaled hearing aid after care service and impartial advice. Bonavox also stocks a wide range of digital hearing aids and assistive listening accessories that are customised for each individual hearing loss, lifestyle and budget. The company also carries a comprehensive range of hearing protection to cover the needs of musicians to factory and construction workers. For more information on the DREAM™ range, DOC™ solutions or other Bonavox products and services please see, www.bonavox.ie.
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LOOKING AFTER YOU

• Your Own Health & Well Being
  • Keep Healthy
  • Take a Break From Your Caring Situation
  • Getting Out & About
  • Tips For Reducing Isolation
• What if I am not Coping?
• Feelings Associated with the Caring Role
• How to Deal with Feeling Stressed
• Support Groups
• Counselling
• Coping with Stress
• Health & Emotions
• Carers are Important!
YOUR OWN HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The caring role makes many demands on you the Carer. It is therefore important to look after your own physical and emotional health.

Here are some tips on how to take better care of you yourself:

Keep Healthy
By making time for regular exercise this will help you feel more energetic and provide a break from your daily activities. Always try to have healthy and regular meals. It is not always easy to do but in the long term it is important for your health and well being.

Tiredness and exhaustion can often add to the stresses of caring it is vital to try and get enough sleep and rest. Take special care of your back especially where lifting is involved. Get professional advice on how to lift properly and avail of any technical aids such as hoists where possible.

Take time for yourself
Getting into the habit of making time for you as a regular part of the day is important. Don’t feel guilty about this time as it is for you. Planning ahead and pacing yourself will also help. If possible plan activities such as housework, for times when you are feeling at your best.

Although it can be easier said than done you need time to yourself every day to relax. It does not need to be long; even fifteen minutes can do wonders. Try to take time to sit and relax, listen to music or read a book.

Getting Out
Continue, if possible with activities you enjoy outside the home as it is important to follow your own interests outside your caring role. Some carers feel guilty when they leave the house to enjoy and activity without the person they care for. If you are finding it difficult to get out talk to other family members, the local Carers Resource Centre manager or your Public Health Nurse.
Take a Break from your Caring Situation

Breaks can be taken in your home or away from it. They might be for a few hours a day or week. You can use this time to sleep, do shopping, have a holiday yourself or just to “do nothing” – a luxury that Carers rarely if ever get to enjoy.

Reduce the Isolation

It’s easy to become isolated when you are a Carer. You may become too busy to keep up with friends and family, people may visit you less and thus loneliness often becomes the worst part of being a Carer. Sometimes just talking to someone who understands what you are going through can be a great help. Your local Carers Association Resource Centre or Outreach Service can put you in touch with other people to share similar experiences. When ideas, feelings, concerns, information and problems are shared, the experience of caring can seem less isolating.

WHAT IF I AM NOT COPING?

Most Carers will tell you they have times when they feel weighed down and unable to cope. If you are feeling this way it is vital to speak with someone about it – your family, friends, GP or contact your local Carers Association Resource Centre.

Alternatively, call the National Freephone Careline on 1800 24 07 24
Carers, throughout their caring role experience a range of different feelings. There are no right or wrong feelings as they are a normal and natural reaction to caring.

Each Carer responds differently to the demands of caring. Feelings are always individual. It is important to regard your feelings as signposts as they will tell you when things are not going well and may need attention.

The following are some of the feelings that Carers often experience:

**Love and Commitment for:**
- The person you are caring for
- The opportunity to care for your loved one at home
- The opportunity to give back the love to a parent who cared for you all your life

**Frustrated and Angry at:**
- The person you are caring for
- Others in the family who don't share the caring
- Having to be a Carer
- Lack of supports and services
- The loneliness and isolation
- Friends that no longer contact you.

**Guilt for:**
- Not wanting to be a Carer
- Believing you bear some responsibility for the illness or disability
- Losing your temper with the cared for person
- Needing a break from caring
- Placing the person you care for in residential care (either short or long term)

**Sadness for:**
- Loss of a relationship with the parent, husband or wife or child you once knew
- Loss of the life you once had
- Loss of the life you planned
- Loss of a sexual relationship with your partner
- Loss of opportunities for the person you are caring for.

**Overwhelmed, Confused and Shocked by:**
- The diagnosis of illness or disability
- Finding yourself caring and realising the changes this will bring to your life

**Afraid about:**
- What will happen if you don't cope
- Picking up your life after the caring role ends
- What will happen to your loved one if you die?
- Who will care for him/her?
FEELING STRESSED?
Stress is a part of all our daily lives but too much stress can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion. Carers are very vulnerable to stress due to the demands of caring. Stress may cause physical symptoms such as headaches or problems sleeping. Some people become emotional or anxious.

Feeling Depressed
Sometimes being a Carer can be overwhelming. Over time you may stop feeling sad or angry about your situation and just feel numb. Even happy times don't seem to lift you and simple tasks seem to take too much energy. You may find you are sleeping too much or waking early or during the night, feeling worthless or agitated most of the time and have difficulties making decisions.

These changes may be signs you are suffering from depression. Depression is a serious illness which is often overlooked. It is common and treatable. Talk to your doctor, who will help find the best treatment for you.
How can I deal with difficult feelings?

Feelings are individual and so too are ways of dealing with them.

However, there is a way to deal with difficult feelings that many Carers say is very helpful that is by talking to someone.

This can be to family and friends, other Carers in a support group or to a qualified counsellor.

**SUPPORT GROUPS**

Support groups provide cares with the opportunity to:

- Meet other Carers in a similar situation
- Have a break from their caring role
- Access Information
- Share their feelings in a non judgemental situation
- Reduce isolation

Sometimes family and friends do not understand the condition of the person you care for but people in the support group will understand.

Support groups bring together Carers in local areas.

**Your local Carers Association Resource centre holds regular support group meetings.**

**FREEPHONE:**
1800 24 07 24

for more information.
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Counselling involves talking to someone who understands the stresses and emotions involved in caring and can work with you to give you the encouragement, support and ideas to improve your situation. It may assist with the many changes in your relationships and roles as well as dealing with the strong feelings associated with caring.

Counselling is usually one-to-one so it is important you feel comfortable with the counsellor you choose. Anything said is completely confidential, so it’s a good chance to talk about those things you may feel you cannot raise with family or friends.

STRESSES OF CARING

The constant demands of caring and the many changes in family life for a Carer may bring about a range of feelings and emotions. There are no right or wrong feelings. All Carers respond to the demands of caring in their own way. Some of the feelings that family Carers often say they experience include:

- Feeling overwhelmed, confused and shocked
- Feeling love and commitment
- Feeling guilty
- Feeling angry and frustrated
- Feeling stressed

Caring for a severely incapacitated person at home is not easy. Carers can feel a deep sense of satisfaction in doing a very important job of work at home which maintains the independence and dignity of the person being cared for.

The Carer can feel that the work he/she is doing at home is unrecognised and unappreciated by the state. Depending on family circumstances, attitudes within the home can vary from supportive words and actions to lack of interest to criticism of the Carer and the quality of care provided.

The relationship between the Carers and the person being cared for varies from family to
family. Factors affecting the relationship between both include the nature of the relationship (daughter-mother, son-mother, mother child, and so on), and the quality of the relationship before the caring situation arose.

Issues centred on the 'control' exercised by one party over another can be crucial. The need for the Carer to assist the cared-for-person in independent living has to be balanced with the expectations of both and the perceptions of both of the role of the Carer. The tendency to 'exert control' over the other person applies to both parties.

The context in which the caring takes place is also important. For example, if the Carer has to give up work to care at home, the financial strains of being a Carer, the expressed or implied longer-term financial benefits for the Carer (such as 'understandings' on property inheritance rights) and many other 'hidden' factors can come into the equation.

Important also are the caring duties involved and the health of the Carer. The physical and emotional stresses caused by very intensive long-term care at home can be high. Many Carers suffer a range of physical and emotional difficulties, with in some cases, serious deterioration in the Carers health.

**CHOICE FOR CARERS**

There are many issues which contribute to the build-up of stress, anxiety and worry and a general sense of being 'taken-for-granted'. Carers feel that the extent of their work and contribution in providing over 90% of all social and health care in local communities is grossly underestimated.

With greater awareness of the existence of Carers, there is a general feeling of goodwill towards Carers amongst the general public and policy-makers.

Carers can become angry. However, when they see the lack of the 'follow-through' policies and supports they need.

Carers should have choices. If the Carer wishes to remain working at home adequate supports need to be provided. These supports include practical assistance with caring duties, respite care (residential and home-based), training and education opportunities for social interaction, involvement in the planning and delivery of services supporting Carers and finance to recognise the value of their work and to cover the additional costs of providing care at home.

It is also important that Carers have their own personal and self fulfilment needs recognised and supported.
Key issues for Carers in providing choice and coping with stress include:

Family/Supports:
- It is important to involve family members from the beginning so that all the responsibility does not fall on you. If they cannot give day-to-day care they may be able to give you a break from caring or financial contributions towards the cost of caring.
- Accept help from friends or neighbours if they offer.

Health:
- Visit your GP regularly for check-ups and make sure they are aware of problems or stress you are going through.
- Make sure you maintain a well-balanced diet as this will help you to feel and cope better.
- It is important to exercise regularly by taking a walk or exercising in the home.
- Try to get enough sleep.
- Visit your doctor as soon as possible if you feel anxious or depressed.
- Take care when lifting the cared for person to ensure you do not damage your back.

Other areas include:
- Practical problems
- Emotions
- Coping strategies
- Sense of recognition as a Carer

Coping Strategies and Compensations:

In devising strategies for coping with the stresses of caring at home, important issues to consider include:

- The Carer's reasons for caring
- How and why the Carer is confined to the home
- Each Carer's way of keeping in touch
- Public and Personal appreciation
- The way in which the Carer as an individual copes with difficult situations
- Carers worst fears
Disability Law Solicitors

We have acted and advised in related areas such as housing, education, equality, discrimination and welfare law.

We hold a free monthly Disability Law Clinic at our offices.

We also facilitate consultations outside of these hours free of charge.

If you have any queries, please contact our partner, Gareth Noble, head of our Disability Law Department.

KOD Lyons Solicitors
Ushers Court
31-33 Ushers Quay
Dublin 8

Tel: 01 6790780 • Email: info@kodlyons.ie
Web: www.kodlyons.ie • Twitter: @KODLyons
Health and Emotions:

In addressing the Carer's health and emotional needs, issues to be considered include:

- What are the conflicting demands?
- Being on call 24 hours-a-day for years
- The dependency of other people on the Carer
- Lack of choice
- When and where does the duty of the Carer stop?
- The expectations and understandings of Irish society of ‘family’, ‘Carer’ and the role of the Carer in society
- The dignity of the Carer and the cared-for-person
- The physical health of the Carer, e.g. back care and muscle strain
- The patronising of Carers by people who mean well
- The denial of the Carer's right to be angry
- The sense of isolation and having to ‘soldier on because we are powerless’
- The fine line between being seen as having a legitimate right to complain and being seen as whining.
CARERS ARE IMPORTANT

The Carers Association can help to overcome the sense of isolation and despair. Life can be better especially if you can get some time to yourself away from the caring situation.

Your Association can help with:

**Freefone National CareLine 1800 24 07 24** - for a confidential chat with someone who cares about you.

**Pamper Days** - 'treat yourself' to a day off and enjoy yourself with other Carers.

**Recognition and Awards** - Carers of the Year Awards & Young Carer of the Year Awards.

**Coping with Loss** - help with coming to terms with the loss of the person for whom you cared.
Surfing the Net - come in to our local Carers Resource Centre and have a look at the Internet

Resource Centre - if you are in town, drop in and have a cup of tea, leave your shopping with us for a while, relax, make a few telephone calls you might not be able to make from home and find out what other Carers are doing.

Empowerment - Information is power. We can provide you with information and contacts which you need e.g. on how to get Carer’s Allowance, an adaptation or extension to your home, grant-aid towards an adapted vehicle for a person with a disability, education and training services, medical cards.

Back to Work - after your work at home as a Carer ends, you may be able to avail of the Back-to-Work Allowance Scheme to get into paid employment.

Work Opportunities - Carers on Carer’s Allowance can work in paid employment for up to 15 hours per week. We may be able to provide the supports which allow you to take up part-time work.
(Note: Income from work may be considered as means).

Support Groups - Where Carers can meet other Carers in similar situations, gain information on entitlements, legal issues, health and nutrition etc., gain support and advise from the Carers Association. These meetings help to reduce isolation that Carers feel both socially and geographically.

Carers need to consider their own needs as well as those of the person they care for. If their health begins to suffer, caring will become more difficult and it will not be easy or possible in some cases to do the things they need to do.
YOUNG CARERS

- Things Young Carers Do
- How The Carers Association Helps Young Carers
- Online Resources
- Relevant Contacts
- Annual Young Carer of the Year Award
Part of services provided by The Carers Association, our Young Carers Programme is working with young people up to age 25 who have caring responsibilities.

Young Carers look after someone in their family who has an illness, a disability, or is affected by mental ill-health or substance misuse. Young Carers often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult.

**Things Young Carers do:**

- Household chores like cooking, washing, and cleaning.
- Minding brothers and sisters.
- Personal care – helping to dress, wash and feed someone
- Giving medication
- Giving emotional support and listening to someone’s problems,
- Getting up to assist someone in the night
- Interpreting because of language or communication issues

The Carers Association aim to help create a network of support for Young Carers across the country and ensure service providers and schools understand their needs and respond appropriately.
What we do for Young Carers:

- Activity Groups with other young Carers
- A dedicated Young Carers Support Programme in Dublin – **Call Gary, our Young Carers Support Officer on 01 4532000**
- Supply helpful information
- Provide online support, chat rooms, and forums through our social media channels and dedicated website: www.youngCarers.ie
- Liaise with other services that can help
- Work with schools on support programmes
- Training to help to stay safe and will
- **Freefone Careline – 1800 24 07 24**

Every year we hold our annual Young Carer of the Year Award to recognise the work Young Carers carry out daily in the home for family members. Young Carers often go unrecognised along with their own social, health and educational needs. The awards strive to raise awareness for all of Irelands’ young Carers and the improvement of services nationwide.
COPING WITH BEREAVEMENT

- Loss & Bereavement
- Understanding Grief
- The Loss of Someone Close
- Support Groups
- When Your Situation Changes
- Changes to Your Life
- What You Can Do
- Where to Find More Information
LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Everyone experiences loss during life. However, for Carers many of the changes and losses experienced come quickly and often. These losses can lead to feelings of grief.

Grief is a natural reaction to a loss. It is not an illness. It is as much a part of your emotions as joy, sadness etc. Grief can occur not only through death (bereavement) but also from major changes and losses in our lives, such as:

- Separation or divorce;
- Changing or losing your job;
- Moving or migrating;
- Children leaving home;
- Being a Carer and losing your sense of being and individual. You may also lose your independence, privacy and time for yourself
- Missing out on employment and career opportunities and your financial security
- Not seeing friends or family due to caring commitment;
- Missing the relationship you used to have or might have had with the person you care for;
- The person you care for going into residential care so you feel you are no longer valued or needed.
- These kinds of losses may affect your self esteem and confidence and your hopes and dreams about the future. You may also experience grief before an actual loss occurs.
- This may happen when someone you care for has a terminal illness and you know you will have to face a loss

Feelings of Grief

Everyone responds to grief differently. If you are grieving you may sometimes feel physically unwell as well as emotionally upset. Physical symptoms can include shortness of breath, dryness of mouth, loss of appetite, crying, tiredness and sleep problems. Grief can also cause deep feelings of loneliness, anger, fear, guilt, rage and resentment, confusion, ongoing sadness, not wanting to go out or do the things you used to do. These symptoms can be frightening but are normal reactions to grief.

Recognising your grief and talking about how you're feeling can help. Making some
time, each day, for yourself and having some plans in place for those bad times may make it easier to cope.

Some of the signs described above may also be symptoms of other problems so it's a good idea to talk about them with your doctor. Make sure your doctor knows about your caring role and how it affects you. If you are feeling very anxious or fearful, have trouble looking after yourself or think about hurting yourself, it is very important to get professional help from your doctor, a counsellor or a psychologist.

ONGOING GRIEF

There may be no clear beginning or end to your feelings of grief. In some cases, loss may be felt for years or sometimes for a lifetime. The constant reminders may make it difficult or impossible to resolve your feelings of grief.

Carer support groups can help you get through times when your grief seems overwhelming. They can also be a safe place to talk about feelings such as anger and resentment. Walking, or any form of exercise, deep breathing or writing in a journal are other safe ways to release angry feelings, blame or resentment. For some people crying can be a great release.

RELATIONSHIPS

Caring for a partner

Caring for a partner can mean changes to your relationship. It can be hard to feel romantic when it seems that you've become more like a nurse or parent, and less like a spouse, lover or friend. These changes can be difficult to adjust to and it may take a long time for some Carers to feel comfortable in these new roles.

Caring for a parent

For some people caring for a parent is an opportunity to repay the care they received as a child. For others, finding themselves in
the role of caring for a parent can be very upsetting. You may miss having someone you can turn to for support or feel uncomfortable about providing personal care such as bathing and toileting.

**Caring for a child**

Caring for a child with special needs can be both rewarding and challenging. Parents expect that their children will grow up to become adults and start their own lives. Parents may grieve for the hopes they had for their child for the future. Carers may feel frustrated they can't stop what is happening to the child or solve the problem. They may feel guilty about having less time and energy to spend with other members of the family. They may worry there are not enough services to support their child.

**SUPPORT GROUPS**

Whatever your situation there is a support group you can join to meet other Carers with similar experiences. Support groups can be a safe place to talk about your worries and to hear how other Carers have coped with difficult situations. Carer support groups offer different types of support and if you find that one particular group doesn't suit you then ask about others in your area.

Your Carer Resource Centre can help put you in touch with Carer support groups in your area. Contact them on 1800 24 07 24
STAGES OF CARING

When you first become a Carer

Becoming a Carer may be a slow and gradual transition or it may happen over night. If you have gradually taken on a caring role by doing a few extra tasks it may have taken a long time for you to become aware of the changes in your life.

If you became a Carer as the result of an accident, the birth of a child with a disability or a sudden illness the immediate changes in your life and your relationship with the person you care for may be very frightening and stressful. You may have mixed feeling about the changes in your life. These are normal feelings and reactions.

After you've been caring for a long time

If you have been a Carer for a long time you may have stopped thinking about the things you would like to do and instead spend all of your time thinking about the things you have to do.

You may have forgotten what your life was like before you were a Carer or you may think about it all the time.

Other people might expect that you are used to being a Carer and you don't need their help and support anymore. You might not remember the last time anyone asked about you.

Trying to maintain your interests and activities is a very important part of looking after yourself. It's not selfish to be healthy and happy. In fact it can make it easier to continue caring.
WHEN YOUR SITUATION CHANGES OR YOU STOP BEING A CARER

In the future, your role as a Carer may change. The transition of moving someone into residential care or adjusting to the death of the person you cared for is not easy. There will be changes in your routine and lifestyle.

You may miss the companionship and at the same time be relieved to have more time for yourself. You might feel guilty or worried about what to do next.

If you are considering residential care you might wonder if you are making the right decision:

- Will the person I care for be looked after properly?
- What will other people think of me?
- Have I done everything I could?
- Am I a failure because I can't care for them at home anymore?
- What will I do with my life when I am not so busy?
It can be hard to think about your own needs but it's important to be realistic and try to decide what's best for everyone including you.

**Only you can decide if the responsibility of caring is too much for you.**

Remember there are still many ways to help care for your relative or friend even if they are living in a nursing home.

**If the person you cared for dies your whole life can change.**

Other people may understand that you feel grief for the person who has died but they may not realise that you can also feel the loss of not being a Carer anymore. Good days and bad days may come and go. It may take a long time for you to get used to a new routine.

You may miss all the things you used to do and the workers you used to see and life may seem very lonely.

If you feel it's been a long time since you had the energy to do things you like to do, or if you feel you're not really interested in anything, then a bereavement counsellor may be able to help. Talking to them about your loss and what it was like being a Carer may help you start to feel like trying to get out and about again.

**Where can I get more information?**

The Carers Association provides a publication on bereavement for Carers entitled *The Carers Companion Handbook* and offers a free bereavement counselling service where funding is available.

You can contact your Local Resource Centre who can provide you with more information on available supports and services or contact our Careline 1800 24 07 24.

**WHO TO CONTACT**

**The Carers Association Careline:**  
Tel: 1800 24 07 24

**Other Useful Contacts:**

**Bereavement Counselling Service:**  
Tel: 01 839 1766  
Web: www.bereavementireland.org

**Console:**  
Helpline: 1800 201 890  
Web: www.console.ie

**Irish Hospice Foundation:**  
Tel: 01 679 3188  
Web: www.hospice-foundation.ie
DIRECTORY OF USEFUL CONTACTS

The Carers Association
Head Office
Market Square
Tullamore
Co. Offaly
Tel: 057 9322920

Web: www.carersireland.com
FB: www.facebook.com/carersassociation
Twitter: www.twitter.com/carersireland
**RESOURCE CENTRES**

- **Cork**  
  Peter Cox  
  9 Tuckey Street, Cork  
  Tel ................................. 021 4806397  
  Mobile............................. 086 1727169

- **Dublin/Meath/Wicklow/Kildare**  
  Anne Flynn-Supports  
  Mary Fitzsimons-Services  
  35 Boyne House, Greenmount Office Park, Harold’s Cross, Dublin 6  
  Tel ................................. 01-4532000

- **Kerry**  
  Tralee CDP, Rock Business Park, Rock Street, Tralee, Co. Kerry  
  Karen Gearon  
  Tel ................................. 066 7121399  
  Mobile............................. 086 8562500

- **Kildare**  
  C/O: Aras, Main Street, Newbridge, Co. Kildare  
  Anne Flynn  
  Mobile............................. 0860213749  
  Mobile............................. 086 0400423

- **Kilkenny**  
  Priors Orchard, Johns Quay, Kilkenny  
  Pat Grogan  
  Tel ................................. 056 7721424  
  Mobile............................. 086 1727742

- **Laois /Offaly**  
  Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
  Alison Hackett-Supports  
  Tel ................................. 057 9322920  
  Mobile............................. 086 7957086

- **Limerick**  
  Unit 1 Georges Quay House, Georges Quay, Limerick  
  Collette Devlin  
  Tel ................................. 061 310803  
  Mobile............................. 086 1726270

- **Longford/Westmeath**  
  5 St John Tce, Blackhall, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath  
  Caroline Poole  
  Tel ................................. 044 9347922  
  Mobile............................. 0861727269

- **Mayo**  
  Curran, Achill, Co. Mayo  
  Eileen McNamara  
  Mobile............................. 0863775702

- **Roscommon**  
  Carnagh, Kiltom, Athlone, Co. Roscommon  
  Bernie Dowling  
  Tel ................................. 090 6489296  
  Mobile............................. 086 8099494

- **Sligo**  
  Castle House, Castle Street, Sligo  
  Rosaleen Doonan  
  Tel ................................. 071 9143123  
  Mobile............................. 086 1726664
• **Tipperary**  
  8 Sarsfield St., Clonmel, Co Tipperary  
  Richie Molloy  
  Tel ........................................ 052 6170454  
  Mobile .................................. 086 1727048

• **Waterford**  
  ‘Ware Court’, Sargents Lane,  
  1 Georges Street, Waterford  
  Jennie Farrell  
  Tel ........................................ 051 857970

• **Wexford**  
  24 Henrietta St., Wexford  
  Marian Mahon  
  Tel ........................................ 053 9140511  
  Mobile .................................. 0861726589

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**GOVERNMENT**

• **Irish Government Website**  
  [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)

• **Bereavement Grant**  
  Bereavement Grant Section  
  Social Welfare Services Office  
  Government Buildings  
  Ballinalee Road  
  Longford  
  Tel ........................................ 043 45211  
  Web: [www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Bereavement-Grant.aspx](http://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Bereavement-Grant.aspx)

• **Department of Health and Children**  
  Hawkins House,  
  Hawkins Street,  
  Dublin 2  
  Tel ........................................ 01 6354000  
  Web: [www.dohc.ie](http://www.dohc.ie)

• **Department of Social Protection**  
  Social Welfare Services Offices,  
  College Road,  
  Sligo  
  Co. Sligo  
  Tel ........................................ 1890 500 000  
  Web: [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

*Continued overleaf*
• **Department of Social Protection - Carers Section**  
  Carer's Allowance Section  
  Social Welfare Services Office  
  Government Buildings  
  Ballinalee Road  
  Longford  
  Ireland  
  Tel: 043 334 0000  
  Local: 1890 927770  
  Web: www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Carers.aspx

• **Domiciliary Care Allowance**  
  Social Welfare Services Office  
  Department of Social Protection  
  College Road  
  Sligo  
  Tel: 071 915 7100  
  Local: 1890 500000  
  Web: www.welfare.ie

• **Homemaker’s Scheme Section**  
  Department of Social Protection  
  McCarter’s Road  
  Ardaravan  
  Buncrana  
  Co. Donegal  
  Tel: 01 471 5898  
  Local: 1890 690690  
  Web: www.welfare.ie

• **National Disability Authority**  
  25 Clyde Road  
  Dublin 4  
  Tel: (01) 608 0400  
  Web: www.nda.ie

• **Workplace Relations Customer Services**  
  Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation  
  O’Brien Road  
  Carlow  
  Tel: 059 9178990  
  Local: 1890 80 80 90  
  Web: www.workplacerelations.ie

**HEALTH**

• **Health Service Executive**  
  Web: www.hse.ie

**NUTRITION & DIET**

• **Abbott Nutrition**  
  4051 Kingswood Drive  
  Citywest Business Campus  
  Dublin 24  
  Tel: 01 4691500  
  Web: www.abbottnutrition.ie

• **Bord Bia**  
  Clanwilliam Court  
  Lower Mount St  
  Dublin 2  
  Tel: 01 668 5155  
  Web: www.bordbia.ie

• **Love Irish Food**  
  Web: www.loveirishfood.ie
ORTHOPAEDIC BOOTS AND SHOES

• Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus
  Old Nangor Road
  Clondalkin
  Dublin 22
  Tel ............................... 01 4572326
  Web: www.sbhi.ie

INFORMATION

• Citizens Information Board
  Ground Floor
  George's Quay House
  43 Townsend St
  Dublin 2
  Tel ............................... 076 1079000
  Web: www.citizensinformation.ie

• Comhairle
  National Information Services
  7th Floor
  Hume House
  Ballsbridge
  Dublin 4
  Tel ............................... 01 6059000

• Disabled Drivers Section
  Office of the Revenue Commissioners
  FREEPOST
  Coolshannagh
  Monaghan
  Co. Monaghan
  Tel ............................... 047 82800
  Web: www.revenue.ie

• Disabled Drivers Association of Ireland
  Ballindine
  Co Mayo
  Tel ............................... 094 64266/64054
  Web: www.ddai.ie

• Irish Wheelchair Association
  Blackheath Drive,
  Clontarf,
  Dublin 3.
  Tel ............................... 01 8338241
  Web: www.iwa.ie

• Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)
  Helpline ........................... 0761 07 2000
  Web: www.mabs.ie

• Young Carers
  Young Carers Programme
  The Carers Association
  Market Square
  Tullamore
  Co. Offaly
  Tel ............................... 057 9322920
  Web: www.youngcarers.ie

References
The Carers Association would like to thank Citizens Information and Abbott Nutrition for allowing us to reference their work.
OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS
A

- **Active Retirement Ireland**
  Tel: ..........................................01 873 3836
  Web: ........................................www.activeirl.ie

- **Age Action Ireland**
  Tel: ..........................................01 475 6989
  Web: ........................................www.ageaction.ie

- **Age and Opportunity**
  Tel: ..........................................01 805 7709
  Web: ........................................www.olderinireland.ie

- **Age NI**
  Tel: ..........................................028 90 24 57 29
  Web: ..................................www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland/

- **Ageing Well Network**
  Tel: ..........................................01 612 7040
  Web: ........................................www.ageingwellnetwork.ie

- **Alone**
  Tel: ..........................................01 679 1032
  Web: .......................................www.alone.ie

- **Alzheimer’s Society of Ireland**
  Head Office - Tel: .................01 207 3800
  National Helpline: ..............1800 341 341
  Web: ........................................www.alzheimer.ie

- **Arthritis Ireland**
  LoCall: ....................................1890 252 846
  Web: ........................................www.arthritisireland.ie

- **Aware**
  Head Office - Tel: ....................01 661 7211
  National Helpline: ................1890 303 302
  Web: ........................................www.aware.ie

B

- **Bethany Bereavement Support Group**
  (No charge for service)
  Tel: ........................................087 990 5299
  Web: .......................................www.bethany.ie
  Please visit website for details of support group in your area

- **Bord Gais**
  24hr Emergency Ph Line: ..........1850 20 50 50
  Customer Enquiries: .............1850 632 632
  Web: .......................................www.bordgais.ie

C

- **Care Alliance**
  Tel: ...........................................01 874 7776
  Web: ......................................www.carealliance.ie

- **Carers Association**
  Tel: ...........................................1800 240 724
  Web: ......................................www.carersireland.com

- **Citizens Information Services**
  LoCall: ....................................1890 777 121
  Web: ......................................www.citizensinformation.ie

- **Commission for Energy Regulation**
  Tel: ...........................................1890 404 404
  Web: ......................................www.cer.ie

- **Concern Worldwide**
  Tel: ..........................................01 417 7700
  Web: ......................................www.concern.net

- **Console**
  National Helpline: ..............1800 201 890
  Web: ......................................www.console.ie

- **Consumers’ Association of Ireland**
  Tel: ...........................................01 497 8600
  Web: ......................................www.consumerassociation.ie

- **Crime Victims**
  Office Telephone: .................01 408 6118
  Helpline: ..............................1850 211 407
  Web: ......................................www.crimevictimshelpline.ie

D

- **Dementia Services Information and Development Centre**
  Tel: ...........................................01 416 2035
  Web: ......................................www.dementia.ie

- **Department of Health and Children**
  Tel: ...........................................01 635 4000
  Web: ......................................www.dohc.ie

- **Department of Social Inclusion**
  Tel: ..............01 704 3968/704 3245/704 3614
  Crime Victims Freephone: .............116006
  Text: .......................................085 133 7711

- **Department of Social Protection**
  LoCall: ....................................1890 66 22 44
  Web: ......................................www.welfare.ie
USEFUL CONTACTS

Dublin City Council
Customer service: .....................01 222 2222
Web: ........................................www.dublincity.ie

Energy Action Ltd.
Tel: ...........................................01 454 5464
Web: ....................................www.energyaction.ie

Electric Ireland
LoCall: .................................1850 372 372
Emergency and 
Electricity Interruptions: ........1850 372 999
Web: ........................................www.electricireland.ie

European Anti Poverty Network
Tel: ...........................................01 874 5737
Email: ..............................enquiries@eapn.ie
Web: ........................................www.eapn.ie

Family Diversity Initiative
Web: ........................................www.familydiversity.ie

Financial Regulator
LoCall: .................................1890 777 7777
Web: ........................................www.centralbank.ie

Friends of the Elderly
Tel: ...........................................01 873 1855
Web: ........................................www.friendsoftheelderly.ie

GROW
LoCall: .................................1890 474 474
Web: ........................................www.grow.ie

Health Promotion Unit
HSE Info Line: .......................1850 24 1850
Web: ........................................www.dohc.ie

Health Service Executive
HSE Info Line: .......................1850 24 1850
Web: ........................................www.hse.ie

Health Promotion Departments
HSE South:
Cork, Kerry.........................021 492 1641
Wexford ...........................053 235 22
Kilkenny .........................056 776 1400
Waterford .........................051 842 911
Carlow ...........................059 914 3630
South Tipperary .................052 6177327

HSE West:
Galway ..............................091 548320
Limerick City.......................061 483203
Limerick County...............069 61430
Clare ................................065 686 5837
North Tipperary ...............067 42353
Mayo ...............................094 904 2101
Sligo ..............................071 913 5071
Letterkenny .................074 916 8013
Donegal, Leitrim .............072 52000
Roscommon .....................090 663 7549

HSE Dublin North East
Meath, Louth, Cavan,
Monaghan .........................046 907 6400
North County Dublin ........01 882 3414

HSE Dublin Mid Leinster
South Dublin City...............01 463 2800
South County Dublin ........01 235 5402
Wicklow, Kildare ..........01 201 4296
Longford ....................1800 242 505
Laois, Offaly, Westmeath ..057 935 7800
Web: ........................................www.hse.ie

Independent Age Ireland
Tel: ........................................051 399 989
Web: ........................................www.independentage.ie

Irish Association of Pension Funds
Tel: ........................................01 661 2427
Web: ........................................www.iapf.ie

Irish Council for Civil Liberties
Tel: ........................................01 799 4504
Web: ........................................www.iccl.ie

Irish Hard of Hearing Society
Tel: ........................................01 817 5700
Web: ........................................www.ihha.ie

Irish Heart Foundation
Tel: ........................................1890 432 787
Web: ........................................www.irishheart.ie

Irish Hospice Foundation
Tel: ........................................01 679 3188
Web: ........................................www.hospice-foundation.ie
USEFUL CONTACTS

- **Irish League of Credit Unions**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 614 6700
  Web: ........................................www.creditunion.ie

- **Irish Osteoporosis Society**
  Tel: ...........................................1890 252 751
  Web: ........................................www.irishosteoporosis.ie

- **Irish Patients Association**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1  272 2555
  Web: ........................................www.irishpatients.ie

- **Irish Rural Link**
  Tel: ...........................................0 9 0  648  2744 / 648  2745
  Web: ........................................www.irishrurallink.ie

- **Money Advice & Budgeting Service**
  Helpline: ................................1890 283 438
  Web: ........................................www.mabs.ie

- **Mental Health Ireland**
  Helpline: .................................0 1  284 1166
  Web: ........................................www.mentalhealthireland.ie

- **National Adult Literacy Agency**
  Tel: ...........................................1800 20 20 65
  Web: ........................................www.nala.ie

- **National Consumer Agency**
  Tel: ...........................................1890 43 24 32
  Web: ........................................www.consumerconnect.ie

- **National Council for the Blind**
  Locall: ......................................1850 33 43 53
  Web: ........................................www.ncbi.ie

- **National Immunisation Office**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 867 6108
  Web: ........................................www.immunisation.ie

- **National Women’s Council**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 878 7248
  Web: ........................................www.nwci.ie

- **Nursing Homes Ireland**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 429 2570
  Web: ........................................www.nhi.ie

- **Pensions Board**
  Locall: ......................................1890 656 565
  Web: ........................................www.pensionsboard.ie

- **Pensions Ombudsman**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 647 1650
  Web: ........................................www.pensionsombudsman.ie

- **Rights Monitor**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 799 4503
  Web: ........................................www.rightsmonitor.org

- **Senior Help Line**
  Locall: ......................................1850 440 444
  Tel: ...........................................046 955 7766
  Web: ........................................www.thirdageireland.ie

- **Sonas aPc**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 260 8138
  Web: ........................................www.sonasapc.ie

- **St. Francis Hospice, Dublin**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 832 7535
  Web: ........................................www.sfh.ie

- **St. Vincent De Paul**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 838 6990
  Web: ........................................www.svp.ie

- **Sustainable Energy Ireland**
  Locall: ......................................1850 376 666
  Web: ........................................www.seai.ie

- **The Institute of Public Health**
  Tel: ...........................................0 1 478 6300
  Web: ........................................www.publichealth.ie

- **Third Age**
  Tel: ...........................................0 4 6 955 7766
  Web: ........................................www.thirdageireland.ie

- **The Samaritans**
  Tel: ...........................................1850 60 90 90
  Web: ........................................www.samaritans.org
HELPFUL ORGANISATIONS
ACTIVE RETIREMENT IRELAND
Active Retirement Ireland is a national network of over 498 local Active Retirement Associations with over 23,000 members. ARI believes that older people have the right to be full and participative members of our society.

Contact:  Tel: 01 873 3836  Email: info@activeirl.ie  Web: www.activeirl.ie

AGE ACTION IRELAND
Age Action is a charity which promotes positive ageing and better policies and services for older people. Working with, and on behalf of, older people Age Action aims to make Ireland the best place in the world in which to grow older. This year we are celebrating our 20th year helping older people. For some older people, the challenges posed by ageing can be too much to tackle on their own. Last year, Age Action helped 30,000 older people.

The services we provide throughout Ireland include:
- An Information Phone Line
- Computer Training
- Garda vetted volunteers to assist you in light DIY
- Advocacy & Lobbying Government

Contact:  Tel: 01 475 6989  Email: info@ageaction.ie  Web: www.ageaction.ie

AGE & OPPORTUNITY
Age & Opportunity is the national not-for-profit organisation that promotes opportunities for greater participation by older people in society through partnerships and collaborative programmes. Age & Opportunity works in a developmental way with public and private organisations to deliver practical programmes like the Bealtaine festival, Go for Life sports and activity programme, Ageing with Confidence courses and the anti-ageism AgeWise workshop.

Contact:  Tel: 01 805 7709  Email: info@ageandopportunity.ie  Web: www.ageandopportunity.ie
AGEING WELL NETWORK
The Ageing Well Network brings together leaders from every aspect of the ageing sector, united by the shared goal of making Ireland the best place in the world in which to grow old. The network aims to bring together people who play pivotal roles in the creation, implementation and provision of policy, research and services, but who would not necessarily otherwise meet, in the hope that they can inform and advise each other.

Contact: Tel: 01 612 7040 Email: info@ageingwellnetwork.ie Web: www.ageingwellnetwork.ie

ALONE
ALONE works with vulnerable older people, providing long term housing, a befriending service and support in the community. Trained volunteers befriend and support older people in the community, and provide them with crucial companionship.

Contact: Tel: 01 679 1032 Email: enquiries@alone.ie Web: www.alone.ie

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF IRELAND
The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is the leading dementia-specific service provider in Ireland. It is a national voluntary organisation with an extensive national network of branches, regional offices and services that aims to provide people with all forms of dementia, their families and carers with the necessary support to maximise their quality of life.

Contact: Tel: 01 207 3800 Email: info@alzheimer.ie Web: www.alzheimer.ie

BETHANY
The Bethany Bereavement Support Group is a voluntary parish-based ministry which aims to help the bereaved and grieving. Bethany members are trained to listen with understanding, accept those suffering loss as they are, and support them through the grieving process.

Contact: Tel: 087 990 5299 Email: bethanysupport@eircom.net Web: www.bethany.ie
CARELOCAL
CARELOCAL has been providing services on a voluntary basis for over 30 years in the Dublin City Council area. CARELOCAL volunteers visit an older person in their local area once a week in the older person's home.

Contact:  Tel: 01 612 8000  Email: info@carelocal.ie  Web: www.carelocal.ie

CARE ALLIANCE
Care Alliance Ireland is the national network of voluntary organisations supporting family carers. Its vision is that the role of family carers is fully recognised and valued by society in Ireland.

Contact:  Tel: 01 874 7776  Email: info@carealliance.ie  Web: www.carealliance.ie

CARERS ASSOCIATION
The Carers Association is Ireland's national voluntary organisation for and of family carers in the home. Family carers provide high levels of care to a range of people including frail older people, people with severe disabilities, the terminally ill and children with special needs.

Contact:  Tel: 1800 24 07 24  Email: info@carersireland.com  Web: www.carersireland.com

CENTRAL BANK OF IRELAND
The Central Bank of Ireland is responsible for both central banking and financial regulation. It is a new structure and replaces the previous related entities, the Central Bank and the Financial Services Authority of Ireland and the Financial Regulator.

Contact:  LoCall: 1890 777 777  Email: enquiries@centralbank.ie  Web: www.centralbank.ie
CITIZENS INFORMATION
The Citizens Information Board is the statutory body which supports the provision of information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public and social services. It provides the Citizens Information website, www.citizensinformation.ie, and supports the voluntary network of Citizens Information Centres and the Citizens Information Phone Service 1890 777 121. It also funds and supports the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) 1890 283 438.

Contact:  Tel: 01 605 9000  Email: info@ciboard.ie  Web: www.citizensinformation.ie

COMMISSION FOR ENERGY REGULATION
The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) works within the framework of national and EU energy policy which aims to create a European single electricity market that best meets the needs of Europe’s energy consumers.

Contact:  Tel: 01 400 0800  Email: info@cer.ie  Web: www.cer.ie

CONCERN WORLDWIDE
Concern Worldwide works with the poorest people in the poorest countries of the world to enable them to transform their lives. Concern seeks out those who most urgently need support, and works with them through thick and thin to tackle poverty, hunger and disaster.

Contact:  Tel: 01 417 7700  Email: info@concern.net  Web: www.concern.net

CONSOLE
Console is a Registered Charity supporting and helping people bereaved through suicide. Console promotes positive mental health within the community in an effort to reduce the high number of attempted suicides and deaths through suicide.

Contact:  National Helpline: 1800 201 890  Email: info@console.ie  Web: www.console.ie
CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND (CAI)
The Consumers' Association of Ireland (CAI) is Ireland's independent, self-funded and non-profit organisation, founded in 1966 and registered with charity status. Its members are ordinary consumers from areas spread right across the country who see the need for and who support such an organisation.

Contact:  
Tel: 01 497 8600  Email: cai@consumerassociation.ie  
Web: www.consumerassociation.ie

CRIME VICTIMS HELPLINE
Crime Victims Helpline is a national helpline which offers support to victims of crime in Ireland. Established in 2005, its aim is to support, inform and empower victims of crime and all those affected by crime.

Contact:  
National Helpline: 1850 211 407  Email: info@crimevictimshelpline.ie  
Web: www.crimevictimshelpline.ie

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND CHILDREN
The Department of Health and Children's statutory role is to support the Minister in the formulation and evaluation of policies for the health services. It also has a role in the strategic planning of health services.

Contact:  
Tel: 01 635 4000  Email: info@health.ie  Web: www.doh.ie

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION
The Department of Social Protection is dedicated to promoting a caring society through ensuring access to income support and other services, enabling active participation, promoting social inclusion and supporting families.

Contact:  
Web: www.welfare.ie

disABILITY.IE
disABILITY.IE is an online information service for people with disabilities and special needs, as well as their family and friends. It is a specially constructed/designed website with links to a broad range of information relevant to the needs of the user.

Contact:  
Email: info@disability.ie  Web: www.disability.ie
BLUEBIRD CARE
Building on extensive experience within the caring professions, Bluebird Care has revolutionised the way care is delivered in Ireland by concentrating on high quality customer service, whilst at the same time upholding the very best in professional care service provision both in the home and in the community. They have offices throughout Ireland, and are HSE approved and members of both the Irish and UK Home Care Associations.

Contact: Call or visit web to find out about offices in your area: General Tel: 0818 227 052 Web: www.bluebirdcare.ie

ENERGY ACTION LTD.
Energy Action was established in 1988, with the core objective of alleviating fuel poverty in Dublin by provision of insulation in the homes of older people. It is also a training centre for unemployed people and at any given time has around 60 people in training.

Contact: Tel: 01 454 5464 Email: info@energyaction.ie Web: www.energyaction.ie

EUROPEAN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK IRELAND
EAPN Ireland is a network of groups and individuals working against poverty. It is the Irish national network of the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN Europe), which aims to put the fight against poverty at the top of the EU, national and local agenda.

Contact: Tel: 01 874 5737 Web: www.eapn.ie

FAMILY DIVERSITY INITIATIVE
The Family Diversity Initiative is coalition of organisations working with and representing the interests of diverse families in Ireland. This coalition recognises that the family exists in many different structures and circumstances.

Contact: Email: info@familydiversity.ie Web: www.familydiversity.ie

FRIENDS OF THE ELDERLY
Friends of the Elderly is an Irish charity that works to alleviate loneliness and isolation amongst older people who live alone or feel alone. It believes in supporting people to remain independent and to live at home for as long as possible.

Contact: Tel: 01 840 8222 Email: info@friendsoftheelderly.ie Web: www.friendsoftheelderly.ie
INDEPENDENT AGE
Independent Age helps older people to live with independence and dignity in their later years. Its practical support enables older people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible and lead active and fulfilled lives.

Contact:  Tel: 051 39 99 89  Email: independentage@eircom.net  Web: www.independentage.org

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN IRELAND (IPH)
The Institute of Public Health in Ireland (IPH) promotes cooperation for public health across the island of Ireland by strengthening public health intelligence, building public health capacity and policy and programme development and evaluation. It works with a range of partners to bring people and organisations from across the island together to promote collective action for sustained improvements in health.

Contact:  Tel: 01 478 6300  Email: info@publichealth.ie  Web: www.publichealth.ie

IRISH ASSOCIATION OF OLDER PEOPLE
The Irish Association of Older People is a membership based organisation which was set up in 1990 with the support and encouragement of the National Council for the Elderly as a company limited by guarantee. The Association derives its vitality from an understanding of the needs and aspirations of older people through direct contact with individuals and groups working with and for older people.

Contact:  Tel: 01 214 0737  Email: iaop@oceanfree.net  Web: www.olderpeople.ie

IRISH ASSOCIATION OF PENSION FUNDS (IAPF)
The IAPF seek to influence the future direction of pensions in Ireland so as to increase the financial security of all retired people. It represents members' interests at all levels by actively lobbying the Government, the Pensions Board, the Revenue Commissioners, the Social Partners and other relevant agencies.

Contact:  Tel: 01 661 2427  Email: info@iapf.ie  Web: www.iapf.ie
IRISH COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES (ICCL)
The Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) is Ireland’s leading independent human rights watchdog, which monitors, educates and campaigns in order to secure full enjoyment of human rights for everyone. The ICCL is an entirely independent organisation and does not rely on government support or funding.

Contact:  Tel: 01 799 4504  Email: info@iccl.ie  Web: www.iccl.ie

IRISH HOSPICE FOUNDATION
The Irish Hospice Foundation aims to facilitate the practice of hospice care in all its aspects. It does this by working independently as well as in partnership with the statutory, voluntary and professional bodies concerned with hospice and palliative care in Ireland.

Contact:  Tel: 01 679 3188  Email: info@hospice-foundation.ie  Web: www.hospice-foundation.ie

IRISH MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE ASSOCIATION
The Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association was founded in 1985 by a small group of friends, relatives and carers of Motor Neurone Disease (also referred to as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis - ALS) sufferers. The Association functions mainly as a support organisation for people who have MND, their carers and families.

Contact:  Freephone: 1800 403 403  Email: info@imnda.ie  Web: www.imnda.ie

IRISH RURAL DOCTOR'S GROUP
The Irish Rural Doctor's Group is in existence since 1984. An annual conference of Rural Doctors is held in Westport every year to discuss the problems of depopulation, youth and medical provision in rural areas and for older people.

Contact:  Tel: 098 36287 / 36134  Email: safehome@rural-health.net
IRISH RURAL LINK
Irish Rural Link is the national network representing rural communities. Irish Rural Link represents the interests of community groups in disadvantaged and marginalised rural areas by highlighting problems, advocating appropriate policies and sharing experiences and examples of good practice.

Contact: Tel: 090 648 2744 or 648 2745  Email: info@irishrurallink.ie  Web: www.irishrurallink.ie

IRISH SENIOR CITIZENS PARLIAMENT
The Irish Senior Citizens Parliament is a representative organisation of Older People in Ireland. The Parliament is a non-partisan political organisation working to promote the views of older people in policy development and decision-making.

Contact: Tel: 01 856 1243  Email: seniors@iol.ie  Web: http://iscp.wordpress.com/

IRISH WHEELCHAIR ASSOCIATION
The Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) was founded in 1960 by a small group of wheelchair users committed to improving the lives of people with physical disabilities in Ireland. IWA has gone on to become an important provider of quality services to people with limited mobility throughout the country.

Contact: Tel: 01 818 6400  Email: info@iwa.ie  Web: www.iwa.ie

MEALS ON WHEELS
The Meals on Wheels service is available to people in the community who are unable due to age, illness or disability to cook their own meals and is operated on a voluntary basis. Referral and access to Meals on Wheels Services is by word of mouth, social workers, GPs, hospitals and self referral. Please check with your local Health Nurse to see if your area is covered.

MONEY ADVICE AND BUDGET SERVICE (MABS)
The Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) is a free and confidential service for people with debt and money management problems.

Contact: Helpline: 1890 283 438  Email: helpline@mabs.ie  Web: www.mabs.ie
**MS IRELAND**
MS Ireland is dedicated to enabling and empowering people affected by Multiple Sclerosis to live the life of their choice and to their fullest potential. MS Ireland has a vision of Irish society where all people affected by MS live positive and active lives in the community.

**Contact:**  
**Information Line:** 1850 233 233  
**Email:** info@ms-society.ie  
**Web:** www.ms-society.ie

**NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY (NALA)**
The National Adult Literacy Agency is an independent charity committed to making sure people with literacy and numeracy difficulties can fully take part in society and have access to learning opportunities that meet their needs.

**Contact:**  
**Tel:** 01 412 7900  
**Email:** literacy@nala.ie  
**Web:** www.nala.ie

**NATIONAL ADVOCACY PROGRAMME**
A partnership between Third Age, HSE and Nursing Homes Ireland, the Third Age Advocacy programme provides an independent advocacy service for older people in long-stay nursing home care. Advocacy is an empowering process. Advocacy for older people is taking action to help them say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain any services they need.

**Contact:**  
**Web:** www.thirdageireland.ie; www.myhomefromhome.ie

**NATIONAL CONSUMER AGENCY (NCA)**
The National Consumer Agency (NCA) is a statutory body established by the Irish Government in May 2007. It aims to defend consumer interests and to embed a robust consumer culture in Ireland.

**Contact:**  
**Helpline:** 1890 432 432  
**Web:** www.nca.ie

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PENSIONERS ASSOCIATIONS**
The National Federation of Pensioners Associations was founded in 1976 and currently has twenty Pensioners Associations affiliated to it, representing in the region of 29,000 pensioners. The Federation represents Pensioners from the Public Service, Semi-State Bodies and from private industry.

**Contact:**  
**Tel:** 01 831 2851 / 086 813 7672  
**Email:** nfpasec@eircom.net
NATIONAL WOMEN’S COUNCIL OF IRELAND (NWCI)
The National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI) is the national representative organisation for women and women's groups in Ireland promoting equality, human rights and empowerment for all women. It has a vision of an Ireland where all women and men have equal power to shape society and their own lives.

Contact:   Tel: 01 878 7248  Email: info@nwci.ie  Web: www.nwci.ie

NURSING HOMES IRELAND
Nursing Homes Ireland is the representative organisation for the private and voluntary nursing homes sector. This sector is a key part of the Irish health service.

Contact:   Tel: 01 429 2570  Email: info@ nhi.ie  Web: www.nhi.ie

OFFICE FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION (OSI)

Contact:   Tel: 01 704 3245  Email: social.inclusion@welfare.ie  
Web: www.socialinclusion.ie

OLDER WOMANS NETWORK IRELAND (OWN)
OWN Ireland is national networking linking individuals and groups of women aged 55+. It provides a forum for older women to meet together to share their experiences and discuss issues of concerns.

Contact:   Tel: 01 884 4536  Email: info@ownireland.ie  Web: www.ownireland.ie

PENSIONS BOARD
The Pensions Board is a statutory body set up under the Pensions Act, 1990. It regulates occupational pension schemes, Trust RACs and Personal Retirement Savings Accounts in Ireland.

Contact:   LoCall: 1890 656 565   Email: info@pensionsboard.ie  
Web: www.pensionsboard.ie
PENSIONS OMBUDSMAN
The Pensions Ombudsman investigates and decides complaints and disputes from individuals about their occupational pension schemes, Personal Retirement Savings Accounts (PRSAs) and Trust RACs where there is both maladministration and financial loss. He is completely independent and impartial.

Contact:  Tel: 01 647 1650  Email: info@pensionsombudsman.ie  Web: www.pensionsombudsman.ie

RETIREMENT PLANNING COUNCIL OF IRELAND
The Retirement Planning Council promotes the concept of planning ahead for retirement. It is a not-for-profit organisation with charitable status and is supported by almost 250 private and semi-state bodies.

Contact:  Tel: 01 478 9471  Email: information@rpc.ie  Web: www.rpc.ie

RIGHTS MONITOR
Rights Monitor is a website featuring information about human rights in Ireland under international law from three Ireland-based NGOs: Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC), the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL), and the Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT). The site's current focus is on Ireland's examination by the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) under the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Contact:  Web: www.rightsmonitor.org

SENIORCARE.IE
SeniorCare.ie provides information relevant to care and support of older people in Ireland. This includes information on home help, medical and disability aids, nursing homes, retirement villages, health and fitness, senior’s finance and many others.

Contact:  Web: www.seniorcare.ie

SENIOR HELP LINE
Senior Help Line is a national confidential telephone listening service for older people provided by trained older volunteers. The LoCall number 1850 440 444 is available for the price of a local call anywhere in Ireland. Senior Help Line is open every day and every evening 365 days a year. Trained volunteers listen empathically, providing information, practical and emotional support to callers. Senior Help Line is a Third Age programme.

Contact:  Web: www.thirdageireland.ie
**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL**
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is the largest, voluntary, charitable organisation in Ireland. Its membership of 9,500 volunteers throughout the country is supported by professional staff, working for social justice and the creation of a more just, caring nation. This unique network of social concern also gives practical support to those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, by providing a wide range of services to people in need.

**Contact:**  
Tel: 01 838 6990  Email: info@svp.ie  Web: www.svp.ie

**SONAS aPc**
Sonas aPc is dedicated to enhancing the lives of older people with impaired communication, especially those with dementia. It is a charitable organisation and relies on funding from the HSE to subsidise its workshops & services.

**Contact:**  
Tel: 01 260 8138  Email: info@sonasapc.ie  
Web: www.sonasapc.ie

**THIRD AGE FOUNDATION**
Third Age is a voluntary organisation with a number of international, national, regional and local programmes all promoting the value and contribution of older people. Third Age has over 1,000 volunteers working throughout Ireland as listeners, befrienders, tutors, advocates and more. Third Age also promotes the third age, before and after retirement, as a positive life stage. Third Age has a vibrant local programme offering activities, programmes, services and outreach to local members.

**Contact:**  
Tel: 046 955 7766  Web: www.thirdageireland.ie

**WOMEN’S HEALTH CARE**
The aim of the Women’s Health Care website is to help provide an insight into women’s health issues in Ireland. Some of the articles on the site cover areas such as menstrual cycle issues, menopause, infertility, pregnancy, miscarriages, etc.

**Contact:**  
Web: www.whc.ie

**VOLUNTEER STROKE SCHEME**
The Volunteer Stroke Scheme is a registered charity that provides help for people with stroke in Ireland.

**Contact:**  
Tel: 01 455 9036  Web: www.strokescheme.ie
At Guerin Media we are honoured and delighted to welcome you to the first edition of The Carers Companion. We hope that you will find it useful, accurate, relevant, informative and thorough. We also hope that it will be of genuine worth during your day to day life and perhaps offer advice and information that may not have been readily to hand.

Our aim with The Carers Companion from the outset was to create a brand new publication dedicated to and designed specifically for the thousands of carers that give so much of themselves on a daily basis around the country. We aspired to cater for your requirements, to cover all aspects that are of concern and to highlight relevant information that may prove useful for you. The advice and information included has been sourced for experts in each relevant field and is as current as we could possibly make it.

We have also included a directory of services which we hope may help to give you easy access to facilities and assistances in your area.

Without the work, assistance and diligence of the Carers Association this publication would quite simply not have happened. They shared in our vision; their wealth of knowledge directed the editorial content and their desire and willingness to participate was inspirational from the very beginning. To all in the Carers Association we offer a sincere thank you and we genuinely look forward to working closely with you on all future editions.

We must also make special mention to the generosity and support of our contributors, sponsors and advertisers. It is an unfortunate fact of life that there is a cost involved in everything and without the benevolence of these fine companies a publication such as The Carers Companion would never reach fruition. Your backing has turned an idea into a reality and we urge our readers to actively support those who have generously supported this project.

As with any first edition we look forward to our reader’s comments and criticism. We look forward to incorporating any improvements you can suggest for future issues so please let us know what you think. Thanks for taking the time to pick up a copy.

It remains only for us to wish you all a healthy and happy 2013.

The Guerin Media team