

“Recall”

The Newsletter for Dementia Carers

Spring / Summer 2020

For more information about anything in this newsletter or to find out more about our support for carers of people living with Dementia, contact:

Sally Stratford, Involvement and Development Worker for Dementia and Frail Elderly.

Or Roma Mills, Carers Policy and Engagement Manager.

Tel: 01992 58 69 69
Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk
Web: www.carersinherts.org.uk

Carers in Hertfordshire,
The Red House,
119 Fore Street,
Hertford, Hertfordshire,
SG14 1AX.

Making Carers Count

Anyone experiencing mental health distress can call the Hertfordshire Crisis Helpline for emotional support and signposting. You can also call if your mental health is impacted by the current coronavirus outbreak or you are worried about someone else.

Hertfordshire
Crisis Helpline

01923 256391

Available to provide
emotional support

24 hours a day
every day of the week

Calls charged at your standard local rate

Welcome

We are all living through a difficult time, so I wanted to say hello and let you know that Carers in Hertfordshire is still here to support you in a variety of ways (information below).

In this newsletter I have also included some information about other services that can support you and tips on how to manage different and difficult behaviours at home.

Sally Stratford, Involvement and Development Worker for Dementia and Frail Elderly.



How we can support you during the coronavirus crisis

Our offices remain open Monday to Friday, 9am - 5.30pm, (4.30pm closing time on a Friday). Our Carer Support Advisors are available to give support and advice relating to your caring role over the phone from 9.30am - 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am - 4pm on Fridays. Our other services include:

Carers' Passport Discount Card - this gives you access to savings and offers in businesses across Hertfordshire. It also helps to identify you as a carer, particularly helpful at **some** supermarkets to access their priority shopping hours.

Admiral Nurses - our team of specialist Dementia nurses are available to provide practical and emotional support (mainly remotely during this time), even if the person you care for is in a residential or nursing home.

Hertswise Carer Support Groups - we are supporting all members of these groups through regular phone calls.

Keep in Touch Calls - we offer calls to any carers who would like regular support and a chat.

Bereavement Support - we offer support for three years after the death of the person you cared for. Currently, support would be via telephone.

Make a Difference - this scheme provides a small one-off payment to help you access a break to improve your health and wellbeing. It could be used to access some technology to help communicate with family and friends.

Website - At www.carersinherts.org.uk you will find some online learning and activities to do whilst self isolating including our sleep and resilience workshops.

Other services' updates

Age UK Hertfordshire has changed its services to support people during this period. Below is a table showing the changes they have made.



<p><u>Active Ageing</u> Chalmers Court, Clitheroe Health & Wellbeing and 10 to 3 Clubs, are closed until further notice. Staff will contact clients weekly for catch-ups. Delivery of essentials is available to those most at risk.</p>	<p><u>Help in the Home</u> Cleaning visits are halted until further notice. Staff will contact clients weekly for catch-ups. They are still supporting clients who need shopping.</p>	<p><u>Visiting Scheme</u> The face to face scheme has been replaced with weekly telephone calls. Delivery of essentials is available to those most at risk.</p>
<p><u>InTouch</u> This service is running as normal, although high risk clients who may need urgent help are being identified first due to high demand.</p>	<p><u>Information & Advice</u> Providing information and advice on COVID-19 as well as help with: benefits, scams, grants, domestic abuse, social care and housing.</p>	<p><u>Telephone Club</u> This service is running as normal, although high risk clients who may need urgent help are being identified first due to high demand.</p>
<p><u>Nutrition & Dietetics</u> All requests will be responded to over the phone or via online support. Delivery of essentials is available to those most at risk.</p>	<p><u>Hertswise</u> Face to face groups and sessions have been replaced with telephone support. Delivery of medication and other essentials is available to those most at risk.</p>	<p><u>Hospital & Community Navigation</u> Hospital & Community Navigation Service teams are no longer based in hospitals, instead they are giving support through phone calls and online. Delivery of essentials is available to those most at risk.</p>

More information about Age UK's services can be found at www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/about-us/ or call 0300 345 3446.

Alzheimer's Society are working together across the county to provide welfare calls to anyone who may need help and advice. The Dementia Support Team can provide emotional support and practical tips and advice. The team can keep in touch at an interval that suits your needs. The telephone number for the Herts team is 01707 378365 and is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or email: central.herts@alzheimers.org.uk



Those that have recently had a diagnosis through the Memory Service and any new referrals will also receive a post diagnostic support call to establish how the charity can help during this time.

Nationally, the Alzheimer's Society are offering a new service "Companion Calls". If anyone would like a social call from a friendly voice at the end of the phone, there are teams of volunteers and staff making these calls. Please get in touch with the Dementia Support Team to arrange.

The charity is also able to offer support with accessing national services, activity packs and support for those who's loved ones are in a care home. Please do get in touch for help.

The Society's National Dementia Connect Support Line can also offer personalised information and is available on 0333 150 3456. There is also an online forum for people to discuss their Dementia-related issues called Talking Point that is available at <https://forum.alzheimers.org.uk/>





Hertfordshire Partnership University

NHS Foundation Trust



The **Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust** (HPFT) services for those who need support and care most are continuing as normal. This includes all inpatient and urgent community and crisis services.

HPFT's inpatient services are open and an inpatient unit at Elizabeth Court in Stevenage has been re-opened to care for any service users who become unwell with COVID-19. However, visiting to all inpatient units is restricted, with permission to visit only given in exceptional circumstances. Please contact the unit you wish to visit to check their current arrangements before making your journey.

HPFT will not start any non-urgent treatment during the 12 weeks beginning 8th April 2020. This is so they can focus on providing care and support for those who are the most unwell. If someone has made a referral on your behalf and your needs are non-urgent, you may have to wait longer for your initial appointment.

Face-to-face appointments have been switched to telephone appointments where possible, and clinic appointments have been postponed where this can be done safely. Service users whose care is due to change have been contacted by HPFT, either by letter or telephone. This covers all the services under the Community Mental Health Services for Older People (CMHSOP).

HPFT's Single Point of Access (SPA) is still open and available on 0300 777 0707. You can also email hpft.spa@nhs.net or for more information visit www.hpft.nhs.uk/ They have also enhanced their SPA service with increased psychological therapies now directly available.

HertsHelp is a network of community organisations in Hertfordshire working together. They are here to listen and help you find independent support, guidance and information you need to get the most out of life.

During this time, they are helping people with accessing food deliveries, collecting medication and many other things.

Their support is available by calling **0300 123 4044** or emailing info@hertshelp.net and the website is at www.hertshelp.net/



Live Better With Dementia offer a discount to holders of our Carers' Passport Discount Card. They are offering a 40% discount on all of their products to everyone at the moment. They sell products that help with memory and forgetfulness, coping with stress and changes, difficulty sleeping, and more.

To access this discount visit their website at <https://dementia.livebetterwith.com/> and enter 'SAVE40' in the discount code on checkout.



Carers Week 2020 - Making Caring Visible

Carers Week is still taking place (8th - 14th June 2020), but will be a bit different this year without face to face events. We are trying to plan some online activities and something for carers not online and will share details on our website, social media and other communications.

The theme this year is 'Making Caring Visible' and you should be able to find out more about what is planned nationally via Carers UK - the national charity that oversees the week - by visiting the website www.carersweek.org or for the Carers UK helpline call 0808 808 7777.

Advice from the Carers in Hertfordshire Admiral Nurses

Our Admiral Nurse Team (*pictured below*) have produced a list of tips on how to cope with agitation and restlessness in people with Dementia. Some of their tips are listed below, but the full document is available on our website, along with suggestions of activities to do in self-isolation, at www.carersinherts.org.uk/taking-care-of-you/coronavirus-self-isolation-activity-ideas or we can post it to you if you cannot access it online - please contact us to request this.

Is the person you care for in pain?

There are a few things to check if the person with Dementia is in pain - Are they taking their medication? Are any items of clothing rubbing or otherwise uncomfortable? Have they been able to exercise that day? If you are concerned that they are in pain, contact their GP for a review.

Is the person you care for constipated or do they have a urine infection?

This may be the case if you have noticed that there have been changes to the person's toilet habits, or if they complain of discomfort when they go to the toilet. Another symptom of urine infections is that the person with Dementia is more confused than normal. If you are concerned about this, please contact their GP.

Is the person you care for hungry or thirsty?

Some people with Dementia cannot communicate fully or they may forget to eat, so remember to offer drinks and food regularly throughout the day and encourage the person to drink. It may be that the person prefers several smaller meals and snacks during the day. It is a good idea to offer finger foods and food that is familiar to them.

Is the person missing the physical exercise and activity that they were previously used to?

The person may pace in the home - there is often a reason for this. They may need the toilet or would like to go out for their daily walk / time in the garden. If you are not shielding, remember that you can take daily exercise, and this may have a benefit both yourself and the person you care for. You could also try some indoor exercises – you can find some suggestions on our website at the link at the top of the page.

Is the person you care for experiencing sleep disturbance?

It's a good idea to try and keep to a consistent bedtime. It also helps to make sure that the bedroom environment is comfortable - consider blackout blinds if there is too much light. If the person wakes up in the night, gently remind them that it is still the night time - some people find a clock that shows if it is night or day bedside the bed is helpful.

The person you care for may be anxious and worried about the COVID-19 situation and changes to their routine.

Day to day routines may have changed, so it may be useful to try to develop new routines at home - such as consistent times for meals and bed. It can be good to limit watching the news to once a day (if this is upsetting for the person). Music can also be useful to help somebody feel more relaxed. However, try to prevent over-stimulation, as very bright lights and loud noises can be distressing.

The person you care for may express false beliefs.

For example, the person might ask where their mother is, or want to get home in time for the children to come back from school. Be aware of these thoughts and beliefs and try not to argue. Instead, ask the person with Dementia to tell you about their mother, child, or whoever/whatever they may be talking about.

If you feel you would benefit from support from our Admiral Nurses, that we host in partnership with Dementia UK, please call 0300 123 4044 or discuss with us, if and when you speak to us.

