



bywyd
GWASANAETH CYNNAL GOFALWYR
CARERS OUTREACH SERVICE

The Carer

Registered Charity No: 1066262

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Established 1991

We applaud you all for
having the love,
strength and
courage to care!



Helping unpaid carers during the Covid-19 pandemic

Carers Outreach is still here to support unpaid carers during the Corona virus pandemic. Some of the ways we can help include:

- Keep in touch calls
- Video calls
- Emotional support
- Signposting to community support services
- Essential travel letter
- Essential shopping letter
- Help to access essential items such as food deliveries, prescriptions and medication and personal protection equipment

Contact us for support and information, our contact details are inside.



Translated into Welsh by
Angharad Edwards



Our Chief Officer reflects on...

Caring times

Over the last few decades, as technology advanced and more people moved away for employment, we saw a decrease in community spirit.

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places emphasis on the importance of community support and during the Covid-19 pandemic we have seen how amazing communities are when they work together.

All the people who have volunteered to either help out vulnerable people within their communities or to support the NHS are truly inspiring. This has highlighted the goodness in our society and my sincere hope is that once we are safely on the other side of the pandemic this community spirit continues to flourish.

Seeing people gather on their doorsteps and balconies to clap for the NHS was really moving and I have a new found gratitude and appreciation for things previously taken for granted such as

- Our wonderful health service
- Community spirit
- Plentiful food

Like many others I had to self isolate for 14 days after my son had a high

temperature. When my isolation period ended it felt like a privilege just to get back in the car to go shopping.

At Carers Outreach we are grateful every day to all our wonderful unpaid carers who never hesitate to go the extra mile for their cared-for.

And while we always use this newsletter to remind our unpaid carers that they are valued, I would like to take this opportunity to also thank the following workers and organisations who have braved life on the frontline whilst we have all been safe at home. I invite you to join me in thanking for their amazing contribution, bravery and generosity of spirit the

- Key workers who kept the country going.
- The health workers who risked their health to save ours.
- The home carers who continued to visit the vulnerable at home to provide personal care.

On behalf of our unpaid carers, our board of trustees, our volunteers and our staff - thank you all very much indeed.

~ Llinos



Thank you for being awesome



Update from Carers Outreach

Hubs and hospitals

During the Covid-19 pandemic we have been working remotely. Following government guidelines we closed our carers hubs and all our staff were provided with the means to work from home. Our hospital based staff have also been working from home. We have been busy answering your emails and phone calls and, because we understand what a challenging time this has been, we have been trying to make as many calls out to carers as possible.

We have collected information about community services during Covid-19 for each of the 3 counties. We also have information about other aspects of life during lockdown. Please continue to contact us with your queries. As always, we will do our best to help you.

Groups and activities

Our groups and activities have been cancelled, along with home visits and other face to face contact. However, some groups have managed to

continue in a 'virtual' capacity. The Conwy 25-50 group meets for a video conference catch up over a cuppa.

Respite

The good news is that the Gwynedd carers' break fund is still available for Gwynedd carers to apply to. You are welcome to apply to the fund for additional home care - but please note that home care services are severely stretched at the moment. Please get in touch with Helen Evans on our Bangor hub telephone number to discuss your needs. Once we are out of lockdown we will be processing payments for days out etc.

Carers Caravans

As soon as we hear that the caravan sites are back up and running we will contact everyone who has a booking to speak to you about it.

Remember friendly support is just a phone call away!



Stay in touch



By phone:

Bangor and Llangefni: 01248 370797

Colwyn Bay: 01492 533714

Email: help@carersoutreach.org.uk

www.carersoutreach.org.uk

Contact Carers Outreach Service for information or support in your caring role



Spotlight on mental health

Join our closed Facebook group

We have set up a closed Facebook page to support carers whose loved one has a diagnosed mental health condition such as bipolar, schizophrenia, or personality disorder.

We realise that these carers can receive less acknowledgement and support from friends and family than carers of someone who has a physical disability or illness. So many of these carers tell us they feel alone and isolated which negatively impacts their mood. And because of the lack of recognition that they are carers, friends and family don't reach out to them.

These carers are under tremendous strain trying to cope with the ups and downs of caring for a person who has a severe mental health condition.

Our aim is for these carers to unite through the power of social media, and help them realise that they are far from alone, and can get through this together! We hope to create a positive group where we can share ideas, share information, support each other and hopefully also develop an actual support group.

For more information contact

Laura Williams

 **01248 370797**

 **help@carersoutreach.org.uk**

Tips for caring for a loved one with a mental illness

- Don't feel responsible for your loved one's mental health - mental health issues can affect anyone at any time.
- Find out as much as you can about the diagnosis. Check out well known mental health organisations that have good online information and helplines for carers.
- Speak to your loved one about how their illness is affecting you both.
- To reduce isolation spend time with people who can support you and understand what you are going through - join our closed Facebook group (see above article).
- Create a mental health resource pack to refer to in times of crisis (we can help you with this); include useful telephone numbers, details of mental health organisations and helplines. Also include details of what strategies have worked well for you and your loved one in the past.
- Have a list of emergency contact numbers handy in case you are called away and another person has to step in to your caring role.
- Look after your own mental health! Don't underestimate the power of a walk in the fresh air, a good meal, good company and a good night's sleep.

Laura Williams is a Support Officer for unpaid carers of people who have a mental health diagnosis. You can contact Laura through our Bangor carers hub, our website, or our Facebook page.



Live laugh love

Keeping safe during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Friends with usually hectic lives have told me that, aside from money worries, they welcomed the opportunity to stand back from demanding jobs and gladly accepted the challenge to self isolate whilst having the opportunity to focus on their homes and gardens. I guess this was an unexpected way to avoid burnout for many.

On the other hand retired people, and others who cannot work due to personal circumstances, who have been used to volunteering on a wide variety of projects, now find themselves without a role and are struggling to come to terms with being redundant.

Of course none of this is relevant to unpaid carers; they have no choice but to carry on because someone relies on their support on a daily basis. Many carers experience social isolation from the onset of their caring role! My hope is that now most of the population are discovering what it means to be confined to home they will have a better understanding of the issues facing carers. I hope this will lead to increased benefits, more respite and greater recognition and support for carers.

Ultimately every situation is unique and each individual will be impacted differently according to their circumstances and personality. We all react and adapt in our own way; for example because I am a 'pack animal' I'm finding it difficult to cope with being away from people, whilst one friend is loving her solitary time and thriving in her own company. Carers are no different; some adapt easily to their caring role whilst others will struggle with the restrictions imposed by becoming a carer.

~ Mari Gruffydd

Positivity corner

“Stay flowing like water
Rocks can be shattered
Wood can be broken or burnt
But look what water can do!
Stay flowing like water”
~ Meranda Mer

“A person who has good thoughts cannot ever be ugly. You can have a wonky nose and a crooked mouth and a double chin and stick-out teeth, but if you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely.” ~ Roald Dahl

Just when the caterpillar thought the world was ending, she turned into a butterfly.





Make an isolation strategy

Make a list of daily chores and stick to it. You could tackle a messy drawer, clean the oven, weed the garden, paint a door. Remember to write in rewards for doing the less pleasant chores, such as phone a friend, watch your favourite program or read a book or magazine. Try to keep positive - you could pin up some inspiring quotes to help you through the difficult days.

Update your Emergency Plan

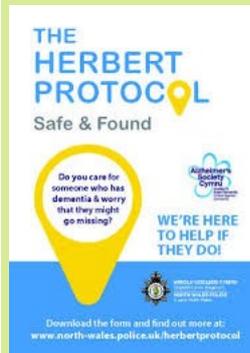
It is important that all carers think about how to keep the people they look after safe and well in the event of them being unable to care, due to an accident, being unwell or some other problem. Contact Carers Outreach for a copy of our Emergency Plan sheet.

Scams awareness

Unfortunately there are people who would take advantage even during a pandemic. Be on your guard against people offering miracle cures, only use trusted sources of information and protect your financial information. For more information visit

<https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/>

The Herbert Protocol



The Herbert Protocol is a national scheme being introduced locally by the North Wales

Safeguarding Board and North Wales Police to encourage carers and family members to

compile useful key information which could be used in the event of a vulnerable person going missing. This can include details of places frequented, medication required, general routines, description and recent photograph.

Further information and the form can be found at:

www.north-wales.police.uk/herbertprotocol

Seeking a scholarship?

The Open University (OU) Carers Scholarships Fund offers carers the opportunity to study for free.



For more information visit

<http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/fees-and-funding/carers-scholarship-fund>