

Wandsworth Carers' Centre



Ten Things Every Carer Should Know

1. **Look after yourself!** You are very important. Carers often suffer physical and mental ill health because of caring. Make sure you know how to care safely (e.g. do not risk injuring your back through lifting incorrectly), eat well, get enough sleep and find out what works for you to reduce stress. For more information contact us on **020 8877 1200** and find out about the free services we offer. You can also visit the taking care of yourself pages on Carers Trust website www.carers.org/help-directory/taking-care-yourself.
2. **Take a break.** Caring can be hard work and stressful. Having a break can make all the difference. Speak to the social worker, key worker, or care co-ordinator of the person you are caring for about arranging respite care. You may be able to get financial help towards the cost of a break. Our breaks project can provide information, advice and support; call **020 8877 1200** for more information.
3. **You are not alone.** There are some 20,000 unpaid Carers in Wandsworth and many will be experiencing similar things to you. You can meet other Carers by joining one of the many local support groups for Carers. See the central pages of our bi-monthly Bulletin or call us on **020 8877 1200**.
4. **Tell your doctor.** All too often, Carers can be so preoccupied with the health and well-being of the person they support that they ignore their own health needs. However, paying more attention to yourself can be very positive for you and the person you support. Tell your GP about your caring role so he or she can help you to stay healthy. They can also put you in touch with other organisations that may be able to help.
5. **Ask for a Carer's Assessment.** Many Carers have a legal right to an assessment of their own needs. An assessment gives you the chance to talk about the impact that caring is having on your life and what might make things easier for you. For more information speak to the social worker, key worker, care co-ordinator of the person you are caring for or contact Adult Social Services Access Team by phone: **020 8871 7707**, email: accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk, visit www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/guide/assessments or ask at the Carers' Centre.
6. **Make sure you are getting your full entitlement to financial support**
Caring can be costly, so it is important to make sure you claim your full entitlement to benefits and tax credits and that you protect your pension. The benefits system is very complicated, and it is changing, so it is best to get professional advice. Contact Wandsworth Carers' Centre Information and Advice project for advice and a benefits check.

7. **Get a grant.** You may be eligible for the local Carer's Grant, which is non means-tested and you can get up to £250 to use towards something that will help to improve your quality of life. Contact the Adult Social Services Access Team on [020 8871 7707](tel:02088717707) or Wandsworth Carers' Centre for more information.
8. **Decide on the help that is best for you.** If you have been assessed (through a Carer's Assessment) as needing support services to help you in your caring role, you can choose direct payments. They give you the power to buy in and arrange help yourself instead of receiving it through adult social services.
9. **Get support if you are juggling work and care.** Working and caring can be very stressful so take advantage of your rights as a working Carer to request flexible working and time off for emergencies. Jobcentre Plus can support Carers looking for work - call [0845 6060 234](tel:08456060234). You can find information on caring and working, returning to work, and leaving work to care for someone on www.gov.uk or www.nhs.uk/carersdirect, or contact the Carers' Centre [020 8877 1200](tel:02088771200).
10. **Help is out there.** Wandsworth Council's Adult Care Information Service provides information and contact details of numerous local and national services. Phone [020 8871 7707](tel:02088717707), visit the website www.wandsworth.gov.uk/acis or email acis@wandsworth.gov.uk.

For more information about all this and much more
pick up a copy of the Wandsworth Carers' Guide
from Wandsworth Carers' Centre

Visit www.carerswandsworth.org.uk and follow us on facebook



Useful Contacts

Wandsworth Carers' Centre	020 8877 1200
Wandsworth Adult Social Services Access Team	020 8871 7707
NHS Carers Direct (open evenings and at weekends, including bank holidays)	0808 802 0202 (free)
Disability and Social Care Advice Service (DASCAS)	020 7978 7306
Wandsworth Citizens Advice Bureau	0207 042 0333