



COASTAL
PRIMARY CARE
NETWORK

CARERS INFORMATION



COASTAL PCN

Carnon Downs
Chacewater
Perranporth and
St Agnes
Surgeries





WHO ARE WE

The Coastal Primary Care Network (PCN) has over 29,200 patients and is rural in character but flanked by the beautiful north coast of Cornwall.

We are very close to the main hospital, Royal Cornwall Hospital Treliske and we have the highest numbers of over-65s population for any PCN in the county.

The practices in this PCN have commenced a programme to create stronger links between the four practices plus the wider health and social care community. The aim is to create a more sustainable and resilient PCN servicing the needs of its patients and ensuring the best possible care. The model in which we operate is around creating closer integration with community nursing teams, social prescribing and coordinated frailty management.

- We are committed to developing a team that trusts each other so that we can innovate and encourage continual improvement. We seek to have transparency with patients and our partners
- We have developed an integrated care team approach to better support patients and their families within our community
- We believe in patient-centred care that is meaningful, personalised and valuable to each individual patient. This includes listening to, informing and involving patients in their care each step of the way. This will enable patients to effectively manage and make informed decisions about their health and care achieving better outcomes.

The individual surgeries regularly appear in the Top Ten Practices in the county based on the latest findings from the 'GP Patient Survey' - a huge ongoing national poll involving more than a million people a year. The survey covers everything from the trust patients have in their doctor, to the attitude of reception staff and how easy it is to get an appointment.

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WHERE DO I START?

Did you know that every day in the UK 6,000 people just like yourself become a carer for a loved one? Whether a family member or a friend that is older, disabled or seriously ill, there is help available and you are doing something very special.

By informing your local GP surgery that you are now a carer for someone, you may be entitled to additional vaccinations to protect yourself and the person you are caring for, especially if either of you are vulnerable to infections.

You may also be put in touch with the care coordinator for that surgery who can help to support you as a listening ear and also to advise and put you in touch with others who offer support such as local carers support groups, respite centres and people who offer 'help at home' services such as sitting with your loved one while you go shopping/attend appointments etc.

GETTING THE RIGHT HELP & ADVICE

Caring for someone can be both physically and mentally tiring. It's important to find out what help and support is available to both yourself and the person you are caring for as soon as possible.

Many charities have advice helplines and websites that can help you onto the right path for your individual circumstances.

This could begin with an assessment by your local social services department, they are not there to judge you, but to assess what care is needed and is being provided, and this can result in you being offered help in the form of an additional trained person coming in to give you a break or additional equipment or devices that could greatly improve mobility or independence to the person you are caring for, as well as making your job easier. In some circumstances minor adaptations could be made to their home to achieve this.



You and the person you care for may also be entitled to certain monetary benefits, this could be in the form of carers allowance or disability benefit although there are many others available including help with energy costs and transport. Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can assist you with information on what is available to you, as well as helping you to complete any forms. Many of the charities listed in the back of this booklet can also offer help with this.

ADAPTING TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

Becoming a carer for someone can be challenging, especially at first when it's all relatively new.

Depending on the type of condition of the person you care for has, the level of care you provide can change quite rapidly, being a bit of a rollercoaster where their condition deteriorates for a while but then improves or stabilises, or may involve lots of appointments with healthcare professionals.

Staying informed and being open and honest with yourself, the person you care for and the professionals is very important.

There may be times when you feel you are not being told everything and being kept in the dark by the professionals, so building good communication with them is important for you to be able to provide the care you want to give your loved one. This can make for a better understanding of what the care involves and what to expect in the future, as well as what they expect from you.





LOOKING AFTER YOU TOO

Although you want to do your very best for the person you are caring for, it is important to not lose your own identity.

Sometimes it's very easy to lose sight of what you used to enjoy doing, you involve yourself so much in doing your best to care for someone that you lose contact with your friends, or stop doing activities that once brought you so much joy.

Just a little time out, whether to meet a friend for a coffee, take the dog for a walk, sit in a park with a book, or spend an hour at the gym is so important for your health and wellbeing.

You can get so caught up in the needs of others that you forget to take time out for yourself. Asking other family members, friends, or neighbours you know well, to sit with the person you care for, just an hour here or there, can give you that breathing space you need to remember who you are and what you enjoy doing, while also giving you a bit of time to yourself to recharge.

Perhaps the person you care for no longer sleeps very well, meaning you too are losing out on important sleep. To have someone every now and then that can stay with your loved one while you have an undisturbed night's sleep can really make a difference, if you have no one close by there are people out there that can help.



CONTINUE WORKING WHILE BEING A CARER

Juggling work and caring for someone can be very stressful and tiring. It may sometimes feel like there aren't enough hours in the day!

You have statutory rights as an employee to request flexible hours of employment within your workplace, these can include:

- Home working
- Working part time
- Job sharing
- Flexitime

All employees have the right to request flexible working hours if they have worked for the same employer for over 28 weeks. If you have a contract of employment, it may be more generous with contractual rights, so its worth checking with your employer.

All employees also have the right to 'take reasonable leave' to deal with an emergency/unforeseen matter -though usually unpaid. Being open with your employer about your changed circumstances is always advisable so that you can get the help and understanding from them that you need at that time.



CONTINUE WORKING WHILE BEING A CARER

Some employers may even have a 'carers policy' within their policies and procedures, which could give you additional help such as counselling support services and, if you are a member of a union, they may also be able to offer help and support.

Some carers consider giving up work completely to look after a loved one. This can, however, have an impact on your future pension entitlements as well as your income and quality of life.

Before making this big decision it is worth finding out if you could get any support with your care commitments to enable you to continue working, - such as benefits or help from social care to provide someone to assist with caring for your loved one while you are at work.





USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

Cornwall Carers Service - cornwallcarers.org.uk

Launched in July '21 this is a partnership of Rural Community Charity, Disability Cornwall & IOS, Age UK, Barnardo's, & Promas. They deliver a range of high quality support services to unpaid carers in Cornwall completely free of charge.

Carers Corner -cornwallft.nhs.net

Works with other groups and organisations such as Care & Support in Cornwall resources and Care Act Care to gives advice & information about carers personal budgets and longer term support.

Carers UK -carersuk.org

Providing information, guidance & practical support as well as a listening ear on all aspects of being a carer. They could assist with caring for your loved one while you are at work.

Carnon Downs Carers Group 01326 376208

Running for 22 years and set up by local volunteers. Meeting every 3rd Tuesday at the Falmouth Hotel, for both carers and their loved ones to meet, share experiences and gain support from each other.

Reflections Day Centre -reflectionssouthwest.com (01209 718586)

A daycare centre for dementia sufferers of all ages run by fully trained and experienced staff. Activities and care for your loved one while you have a well-deserved break. Lunch and transport to and from the centre can be provided.

Age Uk -ageuk.org.uk (0800 6781602)

Offering information and advice for the over 60s



USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

Disabled Living Foundation -dlf.org.uk (03009990004)

Advice and Information on equipment for independent living

Independent Age -independentage.org (08003196789)

Information and advice for older people, their families and carers.

Marie Curie -mariecurie.org.uk (08000902309)

Support for people, their families and carers, living with a terminal illness

Alzheimer's Society -alzheimers.org.uk (08001503456)

Information for people with dementia and their carers

Citizens Advice -citizensadvice.org.uk (03444111444)

Local offices for advice/representation on rights, benefits, debt & housing.

Turn2us -turn2us.org.uk (08088022000)

Information and advice on all benefits and grants

Stroke Association -stroke.org.uk (03033033100)

Information, support & advice to help all affected by stroke.

Organisations & support available in your area can be found at

Carersuk.org/local support (08003196789)



CONTACT US



For more help and advice contact your own surgery and ask for their Care Co-ordinator who will call you back to answer any questions and try to help address any needs you may have.