

## **CONTENTS**

### **PREFACE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

SECTION 1 Discharge from hospital  
Caring at home  
Choosing a home

SECTION 2 Money and benefits

SECTION 3 Assessing needs

SECTION 4 Coping with your feelings

SECTION 5 Looking after your health

SECTION 6 Breaks from caring

SECTION 7 Carers in employment

SECTION 8 Carers of people with mental health issues

SECTION 9 Carers of people with Dementia/Alzheimer's

SECTION 10 Carers and Parent Carers of Children

SECTION 11 Young Carers

SECTION 12 When the person you are caring for dies

SECTION 13 Life after caring

SECTION 14 Appointeeship, Power of Attorney and

Enduring Power of Attorney

SECTION 15 Carers of People with Eating Disorders

SECTION 16 Carer Support Services

Useful Contacts including GP's, Dentists and Local Pharmacies

This document is also available in large print

## **PREFACE**

As a result of the Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000 the National Assembly allocated specific funding for carers in recognition of their role. The Carers Special Grant is intended to encourage and support services for carers which are more responsive to their needs.

In Merthyr Tydfil a variety of practical advice, support and information is available, provided by both statutory and voluntary organisations. Representatives from each voluntary and statutory organisation which provides services to carers and carers themselves meet on a quarterly basis. This group is known as the Merthyr Tydfil Carers Strategy Network and will provide leadership and direction for planning and further development of Carers Services in Merthyr Tydfil, The group's objectives are:

- To enhance the voice of carers and carers organisations in the planning of services.
- To identify deficiencies in provision of services for carers.
- To develop new and existing services for carers.
- To provide an information resource base for carers and professionals.
- To ensure appropriate use of funding allocated for carers services.

- To monitor the carers strategy, review and update it when necessary.
- To inform and influence the strategic planning for children, young people and adult services.
- To support carers representatives on planning bodies, Local Health Board or other appropriate bodies.
- To inform the Health, Social and Well-Being agenda through ensuring communication with all the agreed Planning Frameworks.

The first task of the network was to invite carers to participate in the development of a Carers Strategy for Merthyr Tydfil. To this end a carer's conference and carer's focus groups were held during 2002 to identify carers' needs. One of the first needs identified by carers, which came from these meetings, was the development and publication of a carer's information booklet.

It can be very daunting for new carers when trying to find out about the range of services and type of support available. It is therefore important to ensure that carers are provided with appropriate information and advice that meets the progressive needs of both carers and the people they are supporting.

The Carers Strategy Network is confident that this information booklet will go some way to meeting the support needs of carers.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the UK there are nearly seven million carers. These people care for others usually within their own homes. Carers are people who take on the responsibility of someone else usually due to illness, disability or because they are unable to manage on their own. Carers can be anyone - mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, siblings, children, neighbours or friends. Carers can carry out a variety of tasks such as practical support (e.g. shopping, cleaning and cooking), personal care (e.g. help with bathing and toileting), emotional support and help with financial affairs. The cared for do not have to necessarily live with the person providing the care.

For many people across the UK caring is a full time job. The difference to being in full time employment is that with caring there are no fixed hours, no salary and no training. Although some people take on the role of carer because they feel they have no alternative, many take on the role because they love and are committed to the person to whom they provide care.

Carers often make huge sacrifices in order to be able to care for someone. Many carers give up their employment, which often drastically reduces their income. They also give up their time, personal freedom, and social activities to be able to care in the way that is needed. Caring can be time consuming and emotionally and physically demanding, which for older carers, can be especially difficult particularly if they are doing heavy lifting, bathing etc.

Within Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council there are many carers who are caring for others who have a wide range of needs. The people being cared for can include individuals who are experiencing physical illness or disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health problems; They may be young carers, parent carers, working carers, middle aged or mature carers which in itself can create a range of differing problems for which solutions need to be found.

The Care Standards Act 2000 was introduced to provide national standards of care which are designed to improve the quality of care services, to support family carers and recognise the critical importance of having a well recruited, trained and motivated staff team to provide quality care. These paid care workers are important to unpaid family carers. Every organisation providing care must provide evidence that they meet these standards.

To ensure this The Care Standards Inspectorate in Wales (CSIW) has been established to ensure that services meet the standards that the public expects.

They regulate the following services:

- Care Homes for adults
- Children's Homes

- Residential Family Centres
- Domiciliary Care Agencies
- Nurse Agencies
- Independent Fostering Agencies
- Boarding Schools
- Adoption Services
- Voluntary and private health care
- Day care services for children - including day nurseries, childminders, playgroups, out of school clubs, crèches and play schemes

The booklet has been developed taking account of issues raised through the Vulnerable Adults strategy, unified Assessment Guidance and the Supporting People initiative.

### **Who should use this document?**

This document is intended as a reference aide for anybody working with or caring for people experiencing physical illnesses or disabilities learning disabilities or mental health problems. It will have specific relevance to:

Carers • The cared for • Primary Healthcare Teams • Service planners and providers • General Practitioner

### **How should I use this document?**

The document is not intended to be read in its entirety however is intended as a reference book which can be referred to as and when required.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Development Officer and the Carers Strategy Network would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the content and structure of the Carers Information Booklet.

### **EDITORS ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

With special thanks to Sue Parker, Beth Price, Yvonne Parfitt and Luan Emery for their help and support in the collation of information and publishing of the Carers Information Booklet.

The information booklet can be obtained from:

Sonia Lloyd-Williams, Development Officer, Carers Strategy Network,  
89-90 High Street, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8UH Tel: 01685 353900

## **SECTION 1**

This section of the booklet will look at:

- Discharge from hospital
- Caring in the home
- Floating support
- Sheltered housing
- Residential and nursing homes
- Choosing a home

### **DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL**

Health and Social Services work together to ensure the person you care for has a safe and comfortable return home from hospital.

When the person you care for goes into hospital they will be assigned a person who will be their main link during their stay (named nurse). As well as all the medical questions the named nurse will ask about circumstances at home. This will help them to assess whether you and the person you care for are able to cope at home or if you both require further care or rehabilitation when they leave hospital. Both your concerns are easier to sort out before leaving the hospital, so please tell someone.

The 'discharge plan' is discussed when first admitted to hospital, maybe on the day of admittance. By assessing needs as early as possible it gives the hospital more time to ensure the appropriate services are in place before returning home.

### **HOW NEEDS ARE ASSESSED**

The hospital needs to know how much additional help you the carer and the person you care for will require to enable you both to manage as independently, at home, as possible. By assessing both your needs they will understand the problems you, the carer and the person you care for will face, confirm both your eligibility to services, and help to arrange the most appropriate services for you both.

This can range from moving the bed downstairs, arranging for homecare workers to help with a person's personal needs, installing lifting aids, etc. At this time a social worker is usually assigned to the person being cared for. He/she will provide written details of the 'Care package'.

**N.B.** A carer's assessment should be asked for and carried out before the patient is discharged.

For the majority of carers, caring for someone will normally begin after the period of hospitalisation but for many this is a gradual process as the cared for becomes increasingly dependant on their carer.

There are a number of organisations that can assist carers, for example:

- If the patient is over 60, the hospital or a social worker can refer onto Age Concern Hospital Discharge Service who is able to provide a support worker for 6 weeks to assist with practical tasks like shopping, cleaning, cooking, benefits advice, etc.
- If the patient is being discharged from a psychiatric hospital, Hafal, Mind etc. are some of the organisations able to provide initial and ongoing support to the person and the carer / family.

Please see other sections or the useful contact list.

### **CARING IN THE HOME**

A range of support is available should you, the carer and the person you care for choose to provide care in the cared for person's home.

This includes:

- Homecare workers who will call in at pre-arranged times to provide practical personal assistance e.g. getting the cared for person up from bed, washing and dressing, making their breakfast - any tasks which are personal to the person being cared for. Homecare workers do not provide a cleaning service.
- Cleaning and shopping services may be available where there is an assessed need. This can be arranged through social services
- Meals on wheels - lunchtime meals
- Night sitting service - when the person being cared for does not sleep at nights, or is particularly demanding, a night sitter can be provided.
- Merthyr Tydfil Crossroads provides opportunities for carers to have regular breaks from caring. This can be for the carer to visit the hairdresser, have a night out, or just have a well earned rest
- Hafal Merthyr provides advice, information, advocacy, respite breaks, small housing maintenance tasks, and ongoing support to carers of people experiencing long-term mental health problems and mental illness.
- Young Carers scheme provides support and activities to young people caring for a relative or friend

- Age Concern Morgannwg provides advice and information, help to complete forms and many other services. They also have a Carers Outreach Worker who provides a support service for carers.
- Alzheimer's society provides help and information to carers and sufferers on Alzheimer's and related disorders

**NB** There is a charge for some of these services.

### **SHELTERED HOUSING, NURSING AND RESIDENTIAL CARE**

Although many people who are being cared for are looked after at home, there may come a time when this is no longer possible or practical. At some point the person you are caring for may benefit from care outside of the home. The decision to look for alternatives to caring will not be easy, because, you as a carer, may feel that you are 'letting down' the person you care for. You also may feel guilty because you are unable to cope with the emotional and physical demands of caring placed on you. For this reason it is important to consider all the options available to you and the person being cared for and the implications of any decisions that are taken. If possible all the family who currently provide support and care, or who may be expected to in the future, should be involved in the decision.

You, as a carers, may want to explore options such as additional help in the home, sheltered accommodation, private care, or residential and nursing homes. Your social worker and GP should be able to help you consider what would be the best option for the person you are caring for. When making your joint decision it is important to look at what kind of accommodation or additional support will best meet the needs of the person in question.

### **SHELTERED HOUSING / FLOATING SUPPORT**

These schemes are often in the form of bungalows, ground or first floor flats or can be adapted multi-storey blocks. This type of accommodation is probably best suited to people who wish to continue to live independently but require some support and assistance with some tasks. Such accommodation usually means that people have their own flat, but have additional facilities, for example, a warden service. Wardens can be there to carry out a range of duties and check that everything is well on a daily basis.

Support can be provided to assist people who need additional support with their daily living skills e.g. cleaning, washing, money management, budgeting, etc. This is often referred to as 'peripatetic' or 'floating' support.

There is support available from the voluntary and statutory sector see useful contact list or phone your local Social Services for information.

### **RESIDENTIAL & NURSING HOMES**

In terms of residential homes these are usually best suited for people who can no longer manage living at home and may need support and assistance in areas such as washing, dressing etc but don't need nursing care. Residential homes can be run by Social Services, voluntary organisations or privately. All homes must be registered. This means that the home must be registered and checked by the Care Standards Inspectorate and meet criteria set by the Care Standards in Wales to ensure it provides a certain standard of care and service. Everyone should have access to the inspection reports. Nursing homes are best suited for people who need nursing care, as a qualified nurse must be on duty at all times.

### **CHOOSING A HOME?**

Your Social Services Department will be able to provide you and the person you care for with details of homes in your area. It is possible for you both to choose a home in any part of the country as long as it is able to meet the assessed need, and the home can take residents under the normal Social Services arrangements.

If Social Services are not paying the fees then you and the person you care for can make your own arrangements.

If you both find you are not happy with the home initially chosen, you are able to move to a different one. It is recommended that you both visit several homes before making your final decision. This will help to give an idea of what you are looking for and the different types of support and facilities that are available. It is some times possible to arrange to have a 'trial stay', for the person you care for, at the home. This will enable you and the person you care for an opportunity to see if it is suitable, if it meets their support needs and is somewhere where the person you care for will be happy. Make sure that before visiting any homes you have prepared a list of questions that you both would like answers to.

## **WHAT SHOULD YOU, AND THE PERSON YOU CARE FOR, CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING A HOME?**

It can often feel uncomfortable for the carer when they are choosing a home for the person they care for. Below is a checklist that may be useful when visiting homes:

- How are GP services arranged?
  - Does the district nurse call?
  - Are the inspection reports available?
  - What aids and equipment are available?
  - Will the home meet the person's needs?
  - What are the staffing levels?
  - Choice of food / do they cater for different dietary requirements?
  - Telephone for residents to use - is it accessible?
  - Is there a garden that residents can use?
  - Is there a warm and friendly atmosphere?
  - Is there space for residents to have a television in their own bedroom?
  - Do they offer other facilities such as chiropodist, dentist, optician, library, hairdresser and storage of personal items?
  - Do you have to pay for these services?
  - Does the home look and smell clean?
  - Does each resident have his or her own bedroom?
  - Does each room have its own toilet / washing facilities?
  - Are visitors able to visit at any time? - in particular children, grandchildren
  - Are visitors made to feel welcome?
  - Are the rooms spacious enough for moving about comfortably, and having your own possessions on display?
  - Are the clothes the home buys for their client new or second hand?
  - Are the clients offered entertainment? E.g. trips out, (shopping etc) bingo, stimulation.
  - Does the client have their own money to spend as they wish?
- These are a few issues to consider that will help you feel confident that the home you are selecting will deliver the best care for the person you care for will be comfortable when they eventually live there. Obviously there are more but each list will be specific to the cared for person's needs on entering a home.

## **SECTION 2**

This section of the booklet will look at money matters and benefits.

- Benefits
- Advice
- Homecare charges
- Cost of residential / nursing care
- Direct payments scheme

Benefit claims can be complicated and time consuming. But they are ultimately worth doing. Please see below for a list of some benefits carers or the person they are caring for may be entitled to.

### **BENEFITS**

**Carers Allowance (CA) (Invalid Care Allowance ICA)**

This is a benefit for people of 16 or over that spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a friend or relative. This person must be in receipt of Attendance Allowance or middle or higher Care Component of Disability Living Allowance.

Carers can get this allowance if you work but your earnings are limited to a specific amount. Carers cannot get this benefit if you are in full time education.

This has now been extended to carers over 65 but is an 'overlapping' benefit.

There are a number of benefits which 'overlap' with CA and these are

- Incapacity Benefit
- Sever Disablement Allowance
- State Retirement Pension
- Widow's Pension
- Contributions based Job Seeker's Allowance

However it might be worth applying even if you claim any of the above because you may qualify for a Carer Premium. Please contact your local Department of Works and Pensions, CAB or Age Concern for more individual advice.

### **Disability Living Allowance. (DLA)**

This is a benefit for people under the age of 65. It is split into two components;

- The Care Component is for people who need help with personal care.
- Mobility component for people who are unable to, or have difficulty walking

But people experiencing mental illness or mental health problems may also meet the criteria and this may enable access to AA/DLA benefits. This is not a means tested benefit.

### **Disabled Persons Tax Credit (DPTC)**

This is a benefit for people who are only able to work part time, because of their disability, and have previously been in receipt of another disability benefit. This benefit is means tested and depends on your savings and the amount you earn.

### **Income Support (IS) and Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG)**

This is a top up benefit for people in receipt of other benefits. This is a means tested benefit and ALL income and savings are taken into consideration when this benefit is assessed.

### **Attendance Allowance (AA)**

This is a benefit paid to people aged 65 and over who has difficulties coping with the additional costs of an illness or disability for at least six months. This is paid at two rates;

- Higher for people who require assistance with their personal care by day and night.
- Lower for those who require assistance with their personal care by day OR night. This is not a means tested benefit.

### **Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC)**

This is a benefit designed to top-up earnings of low-paid workers. It replaces Working Families Tax Credit and Disabled Persons Tax Credit. Child Tax Credit brings together various support for families with children: the child element in Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Working Family's Tax Credit, Disabled Persons Tax Credit and the Children's Tax Credit - into one streamlined system. Both tax credits came into effect in April 2003.

The tax credit is made up of one basic element with additional support for Couples, Lone Parents, People working thirty hours plus a week and Disabled Workers.

For more information on this benefit please contact the local benefits agency or the Tax Credit Information Pack is available on [www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/taxcredits/welfare\\_advice\\_orgs.htm](http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/taxcredits/welfare_advice_orgs.htm) or the New Tax Credit Response Line on 0800 500 222

### **The Social Fund**

This is a fund that people on Income Support can access. It is for expenses they cannot afford out of their income. Help is in the form of grants or interest free loans. You or the person you care for may be able to get a Community Care Grant for extra bedding for someone who is bedridden or a washing machine for someone who is incontinent. The grants are means tested.

## **Housing Benefit**

This is a benefit to help towards the cost of rent. If on Income Support you are automatically entitled to Housing Benefit. This is a means tested benefit and ALL income and savings is taken into consideration.

## **Council Tax**

People on low income or on Income Support can claim Council Tax Benefit. Apply to your local Council Tax Office if you have savings of less than £16,000.

## **Terminal illness**

In the event that someone is being cared for, and is suffering from a terminal illness, they are able to claim benefits such as AA and DLA. Please notify the benefits agency of the situation who will advise you of the fast track process for these claims.

## **BENEFIT ADVICE**

Many carers are unaware of the benefits that are available to them. For example People on Income Support or on a low income can get help with the cost of dental and eye care and with prescriptions. Leaflet AB11 can be obtained from the GP's surgery or from the Post Office.

The Benefits Agency also produces a number of free leaflets, which are available from your Post Office or local Benefits Agency. There is also a list of useful telephone numbers provided with this pack.

The benefits system is confusing and forms can often be difficult we advise you get help with the completion of the relevant forms. It is advisable to keep photocopies of all forms and correspondence.

The Citizens Advice Bureau have an independent benefits advice worker who is able to provide home visits and is available every Tuesday, 10am to 1pm on a weekly basis at Sanctuary Counselling & Training in the Johnny Owen centre at Gurnos. They will also be able to provide outreach advice for other organisations. Age Concern also offers benefits advice and can help with the completion of forms.

## **Useful websites**

Dept of work and pensions [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)  
Age Concern [www.ageconcernmorgannwg.org](http://www.ageconcernmorgannwg.org)  
Hafal [www.mentalhealthwales.net](http://www.mentalhealthwales.net)  
Alzheimer's Society [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)  
Local Benefit Information & Advice Agencies  
Age Concern Morgannwg,  
Carers Wales, Riverhouse, Ynysbridge Court,  
Gwaelodygarth, Cardiff, Tel: 029 2081 1370  
Benefits Enquiry help-line Tel: 0800 882200  
CAB Tel: 01685 379474  
Hafal Merthyr Tel: 01685 373322

## **HEMOCARE CHARGES**

Homecare charges are the elements of the care package provided by social services. The following information gives a basic outline of the way finances are considered when you are being assessed.

- The amount paid for home care depends on the package of care required.
- The cared for's income and disability benefits are taken into consideration when being assessed for homecare.
- If financial circumstances alter then you must inform your Care Manager/Social Worker immediately.
- No details of savings are taken into consideration.
- If you think the amount you are expected to pay has been calculated incorrectly then you should contact your care provider immediately.
- A carer's financial situation must not be taken into consideration when the cared for person is being financially assessed.

## **COST OF RESIDENTIAL / NURSING CARE**

Should someone you care for go into residential or nursing care the National Assistance Act requires that they pay towards the cost. If they cannot afford to pay the full cost the Local Authority (via the allocated care manager) will undertake a financial assessment to determine the residents' contribution.

Information must be provided on all income and capital assets in order to complete a financial assessment. In cases where benefits are not being claimed then assistance will be provided to enable the person to claim their full entitlement.

Further information regarding charges can be obtained from your local Social Services department, the number of which can be found in the useful contacts section.

## **DIRECT PAYMENTS SCHEME**

Direct payments are seen as putting flexibility into carers hands. They enable them to set up assistance in the best way to suit their and the cared for's needs. Continuity is one asset and flexibility is another. Direct payments use a support agency in Pontypridd, see details below, and these act in an advisory role, deal with administration, problem solve and support the carer in their choices.

The direct payments scheme gives the local authority the power to make cash payments for community care direct to individuals who have been assessed as requiring Community Care services within the county borough. Direct payments are designed to bring about improvements in the quality of life of people able to and who would like to manage the Care Services in place to support their needs.

Direct Payments are a different way of the Local Authority fulfilling their existing community care responsibilities. This service can and will run alongside other services already being accessed by the individual or could be used instead of the care plans in place. Direct Payments promote independence and aid in social inclusion by offering opportunities for choice and self-determination.

**For more information or advice on direct payments please contact:**  
Centre for independent living CIL Direct Payments Scheme:  
Unit 6, Maritime offices, Maesycoed, Pontypridd, CF37 1DZ  
Tel No: 01443 408418

## **SECTION 3**

This section of the booklet will look at how needs are assessed and how an assessment can lead to improved services for carers and the cared for person.

- How do I get an assessment?
- Individual care plans
- What types of services are included in a care package?
- Referrals / Access to other services

The Social Services Department is responsible for ensuring that people live as independently as possible in the community. The Borough Council will endeavour to ensure that people in Merthyr Tydfil receive the support services they need. To ensure that resources are used properly, they have priorities, and have to work within the law.

The Carers Act (1995 / 2000) states that all carers are entitled to have their needs recognised and assessed independently of the cared for's assessment, and incorporate them, as far as possible, into the care package being provided.

In April 2005 The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 came into force. This places a legal duty on local authorities to inform carers of their right to an assessment. When they carry out an assessment, they will have a duty to consider any work, study and leisure interests that a carer may have.

### **HOW DO I GET AN ASSESSMENT?**

First the carer needs to contact the local social services duty desk and ask for an assessment of needs. The duty social worker will need to ask some personal questions relating to the carers personal circumstances, or the disability of the individual they are supporting. They may also need to make a home visit.

During the visit, the social worker should be informed about any difficulties you have, and they will explain whether, and how, they can help.

In some cases, they are able to tell carers / individuals straight away what help or support they are able to provide. In other cases they may have to liaise with other organisations before a package of care can be provided. They will work with other service providers to ensure that the package you receive is co-ordinated. They will need to have your permission before they are able to do this.

M.T.C.B.C, Social Services Dept has established clear eligibility criteria. Their main priorities are people who would not be able to live in the community without their support e.g. hospital leavers; young people leaving care homes, people with mental health problems, etc.

**Social Services Duty Desk 01685 724507**

### **INDIVIDUAL CARE PLAN FOR THE CARED FOR PERSON**

Once it has been agreed that support is needed, an Individual Care Plan will be produced in partnership with social services. This will detail the support the person you care for will receive e.g. homecare service, night sitting etc. It will also include any help

to be provided by other organisations e.g. Crossroads, mental health organisations, Age Concern, Young Carers, etc.

The care package and support you receive will be reviewed on a regular basis. However it is important that if there are any changes, e.g. if someone you care for becomes ill or has a relapse of their illness, you must contact social services to inform them. This care plan applies to adults please see section on Carers and Parent Carers of Children/Someone with special needs for information on children's services.

### **WHAT TYPE OF SERVICES CAN BE INCLUDED IN A CARE PACKAGE?**

The care package and support will be regularly reviewed and may include:

- Practical aids to daily living e.g. hoists, bath aids, wheelchair, etc
- Day Care Support Services,
- Home Sitter Services,
- Meals on Wheels,
- Respite services,
- Community Nursing
- Chiropody home service
- Access to family support services, counselling and Support, etc
- Attendance at day care centres or supported employment schemes.

### **REFERRALS / ACCESS TO OTHER SERVICES**

The care package can also be useful to access the help available from other local authority departments or other organisations in order to improve the quality of life of the person being cared for and to encourage independence.

#### **These include:**

- Grants (Renovation, Disabled Facilities, Minor Works)
- Housing Adaptations
- Lifeline' Telephone Alarm Service
- Sheltered Housing
- Medical and Nursing Aids

These are some of the organisations which are able to provide additional support to the family, or individual, being cared for either in the short or longer term.

#### **These include:**

Merthyr Tydfil Crossroads, caring for carers Tel: 01685 382366  
Hafal (formerly NSF Cymru Merthyr) Tel: 01685 373322  
Hafal Family Support and advocacy service Tel: 01685 373322  
Barnardos Young Carers schemes Tel: 01685 382422  
Alzheimer's Society Tel: 029 2043 1990

#### **Other help available includes:**

Free travel on local bus services in Wales  
Equipment loans - British Red Cross Tel: 01443 493333  
Carers help-line (Carers Wales) Tel: 0808 8087777  
CALL - mental health help-line Tel: 0800 132737  
Hafal Merthyr house maintenance service Tel: 01685 373322



## **SECTION 4**

This section of the booklet will look at how carers can cope with the variety of feelings that caring for someone can produce in a person.

- Fatigue
- Coping with your feelings
- Coping with changes in relationships
- Anger and resentment

### **FATIGUE**

Carers often complain of feeling exhausted when looking after the person they care for. The hours they work are often well in excess of what any paid worker would be expected to tolerate. Some of the ways of dealing with this problem are practical and involve asking other people to help.

Organisations have been established purely for the purpose of helping you and the person you are caring for, so it is important that you take advantage of all the help that is available from statutory and voluntary services. Try not to feel that you are wasting people's time or that you are not meeting your responsibilities or duty to care when you ask for the help you need.

Carers are often afraid to admit that they cannot cope so are afraid to take advantage when friends and family offer to help. Don't be afraid to ask other members of the family or friends to help out with caring.

People often tell carers that they would not be able to cope as well as they do. Sometimes carers are only able to cope because they have to!!! The carer must offer to show them what they can do to help.

Carers should try, however difficult it may seem, to make sure that they have some time to themselves - to do the things that they want to do - whether watching television, reading, pursuing a hobby or just having a catnap.

Finally carers might like to try some relaxation techniques. There are lots of books available on these subjects in your local library.

### **COPING WITH YOUR FEELINGS**

Caring for someone else can put a great deal of strain on your emotional health. Looking after people can be very satisfying, but more often than not carers can be affected by a variety of feelings. These can include isolation, guilt, exhaustion, stress, helplessness, depression and anger, and it is important that carers find a way of dealing with these feelings. Finding someone to talk to can be difficult but if they will listen then 'sound off' it will help you and the person you care for.

### **COPING WITH CHANGES IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP**

For many carers, particularly those looking after a partner, it is hard to accept changes in the relationship with the person they care for over a period of months or years. This is especially true where the person being cared for has a progressive illness or a disability, which causes or accelerates their decline as they get older. It can be helpful to try and concentrate on the relationship they have now, rather than on what has been and is

being lost. For some carers, however, the person they care for is so different from the person they used to know that the care they give now is often given out of love for the person they used to be.

Many people find that one of the best ways to help overcome all these feelings is to talk about them to other people. As many of the issues around caring are personal and private, they may find it easier to talk to someone they know well such as a close friend or relative, or they may prefer to talk to their doctor or social worker. Many carers find that they need to talk to someone who is or has been in a similar position to themselves and find that they benefit from attending a Carers Support Group in their area.

Alternatively, they sometimes feel that they wish to consider professional counselling. Seeing a counsellor does not mean that there is something wrong with you, but it can help people to see things more clearly, from a distance, to talk over feelings and generally help them feel more able to cope.

There are a number of voluntary organisations and private agencies, private practitioners may offer counselling. Often GP's will have a counsellor attached to their practice, or they are able to refer carers to one, so it may well be worth talking to him or her about it first.

### **ANGER AND RESENTMENT**

Carers may sometimes become angry and resent the person they care for because of the restrictions caring places on their lives. This is a perfectly natural and understandable reaction to certain situations and carers cannot make it go away by pretending it doesn't exist. If carers find that their anger gets too much for them, they should try to walk away from the situation, even if only for a few minutes, take some deep breaths to calm down and try not to feel guilty because they've have these feelings.

Some people find it helpful to think of themselves and the person they care for as sharing resentment against the disease or disability, rather than the carer, feeling resentment against the person cared for.

Sanctuary Counselling are one of the organisations that provide a free counselling service for any-one who needs to talk. Their counsellors are professionally trained and accredited to a high standard. If you require their services then contact the Counselling and Training Manager on: Merthyr Tydfil 01685 374774

## **SECTION 5**

This section of the booklet will look at caring for your physical health.

### **LOOKING AFTER YOUR HEALTH**

Seven million people care for a relative, friend or partner, or for a child with a disability. This is one in every six people within the population. They care part or full-time for people who cannot manage without their help because of a disability, illness or frailty.

Every year significant numbers of carers are forced to stop caring because of illness or injury. Much of this can be prevented with more information, support and guidance.

Carers may become so engrossed with looking after someone else that they neglect their own physical and mental health. It is important they remember their well-being is just as important as that of the person they care for. They will actually be better equipped to care for that person if they keep themselves as well as possible. The following tips may help:

#### **DIET**

The first step in looking after physical health is to try to eat a reasonably healthy diet. Remember to:

- Eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, fish, poultry, and starchy foods (like bread, potatoes, pasts and rice).
- Try to avoid too many sweet and fatty foods
- Look for foods high in fibre and low in sugar, fat and salt, many of which need very little preparation before cooking.

#### **EXERCISE**

Regular exercise is another important aspect of good health. Carers may feel that they already get a lot of exercise in their daily caring routine, but they also need an opportunity for stretching and relaxing their body. This is a form of relaxation if they are able to take time away from the person they care for. Difficult, though it is, both the carer and the cared for will benefit.

#### **MANUAL HANDLING**

Many carers need to move the person they care for and it is important that this is carried out properly, carefully and safely. In general, it is possible to avoid excessive strain on the back by getting as close as possible to the person being lifted. The knees should be bent, keeping the back straight so that the legs share the weight. Also remember that being overweight can add extra strain on the back. A district nurse or occupational therapist should be able to demonstrate the correct way to move someone.

#### **DENTIST / OPTICIANS, ETC**

Carers should try not to neglect their teeth, by going to a dentist regularly. Bad teeth can cause other problems as well as being very painful. Similarly, they should try to make sure that their eyesight is checked regularly and corrected if necessary.

#### **GP**

Keeping well is especially important. Carers should not ignore their own health because of caring responsibilities. Many carers regard their GP and community nurse as the most important sources of support they receive.

### **Does your doctor know you are a carer?**

It is advisable that carers inform their doctor they are a carer. It is recommended that carers ask their doctor to record this on their notes, maybe even on the notes of the person they are caring for. This will help the primary health care team (doctors and nurses) understand the extra stress carers may be experiencing and ensure they provide the help, support and information needed.

Healthcare staff should be encouraged to consider carers as partner in caring. Being able to be clear about the consultation is important and carers may find it useful to:

- Write down questions they want to ask
- Record the answers
- Ask for clarification on any areas they are not clear on

This process will help in relaying information and as a reference at a later date. A carer will often need information that will enable them to care safely and effectively. It helps if the person being cared for tells the doctor that they agree for the carer to be informed about their condition or illness.

A carers' health needs are as paramount as the cared for. If a carer is worried about their own health, they should make an appointment especially for themselves

### **ACCESSING INFORMATION**

The GP's surgery can be a good place to start looking for information. Look at notices and leaflets in the waiting-room. Ask the receptionist or practice manager if they have other information that could help carers, such as local support groups, carer's centres and voluntary organisations who provide advice, information and support.

Ask the doctor for information about the illness or condition of the person being cared for, or their medicines and treatment. If the person being looked after is an adult, they have the right to privacy, so the doctor may be reluctant to share medical information.

### **BE ASSERTIVE**

Remember "If you don't ask, you don't get": It may be useful to note the following points:

- Carers are a key part of successful care arrangements.
- Healthcare staff and social workers should consider carers as a partner in the care team. If carers feel they are not being properly involved, speak up. If carers don't say what's worrying them, they may assume that everything's OK.
- Doctors and other health professionals can often arrange services
- It's therefore useful to prepare before any appointments so that carers can inform professionals what problems they may have, and what help is needed.

### **Carers should ask themselves the following questions:**

- Is anything about my health worrying me?
- Am I getting enough sleep?
- Do I have aches and pains because of what I do for the person being cared for? (E.g. back pain)?
- Do I suffer from stress or depression?

- Do I need help with housework / shopping / bathing / having time off or other caring tasks?
- Am I feeling isolated or lonely?
- Do I worry about money?
- Is my sex life affected by my caring role?
- Do I know how to get emergency help for the person I care for?
- Is there an agreed plan with my GP for the person being cared for if, I, the carer suddenly falls ill or has an accident?

All of the points above and more need to be thought about by all carers and seek help if you need it. It's not a crime to say 'I cannot cope PLEASE help me'!!!! Both you and the person you care for will benefit in the long term.

## **SECTION 6**

This section of the booklet will look at taking a break from caring

### **BREAKS FROM CARING**

Everybody needs time off from the demands of caring, whether it's for only one hour or for planned regular respite breaks. Getting time off brings enormous benefits. Time to yourselves gives carers the chance to meet a few of your own needs. Sometimes you may want to do nothing but rest, relax or sleep. But as people get used to the caring routine you may find that you want to do other things. This could include time to catch up with friends or spend time with the rest of the family, catch up with the housework, or get jobs done that cannot otherwise be done, take up a new interest, etc. Any or all of these things can help carers recharge batteries and feel a lot better. Regular breaks or time out can make it possible for carers to carry on a caring role otherwise, exhaustion and ill-health can cause an inability continue your caring role. The person being cared for can also benefit from respite care, as they are often able to make new friends, start new hobbies and increase their independence.

### **WHO PROVIDES BREAKS?**

Help with having a break is provided by a variety of different organisations including Social Services, Health Authorities, voluntary organisations, private organisations and individuals. The amount of care they provide varies. There are several organisations within Merthyr Tydfil who provide carers with breaks including:

- 'Breaks for Carers' partnership: Merthyr Tydfil Crossroads, Hafal Merthyr (formerly known as the National Schizophrenia Fellowship) and Young Carers which is funded by the National Assembly Special Carers Grant.

For a list of other organisations please see the useful contacts list or get in touch with you local Social Services.

### **WILL IT COST ANYTHING?**

Services provided by the voluntary sector are usually free. Social Services care is assessed according to the charging policy in Merthyr Tydfil and may also involve a financial assessment. Whether or not carers or the person being cared for have to pay depends on the kind of support or care that they need, who provides it, where they live and the financial resources of the person being look after, and in some cases, their own financial resources. Most day care is relatively inexpensive, but residential care or living-in care can be costly.

### **CAN I GET HELP WITH THE COSTS?**

Sometimes it is possible to get help towards the cost. This is usually available through welfare benefits (see section 2). The person being cared for will be expected to contribute through any benefits they are already receiving. It is also important to realise that where regular periods of residential care are provided, this can mean benefits could be affected, depending on the duration of the stay.

### **Benefits advice is available from a range of sources including:**

Age Concern Morgannwg, Welfare Benefits Adviser, the Citizens Advice Bureau or Social Services have a benefits advisor. All these organisation can offer information and advice.

## **WHAT TYPE OF BREAKS ARE AVAILABLE?**

Many carers and people who are cared for find that their needs will continue to change and it is important to recognise that different sorts of services will suit them at different times. There are three main types of break you may want to consider:

### **Short break away from home**

Friends and family are often able to provide opportunities for short breaks. There are also several organisations that can help. They can provide someone who comes into the home to do the same job as the carer, or provide a sitting or befriending service. If these services are used regularly, it is possible to build up a relationship with the person who is offering these services to you. It is important to note not all services will suit every carer or the person being cared for. For example black or minority ethnic carers may prefer people who understand their culture coming into their home or providing services. People caring for individuals experiencing mental health problems or learning disabilities may also need specialist services.

### **Breaks at home**

If carers want some time to themselves they may not always want to spend this time away from their home. There are several choices available including:

Day care -This involves the person being cared for going to a Day Centre or accessing some other form of activity. These are usually a part of the social services provision in the area. Social workers or key workers are able to make a referral for this service.

The carers special grant partnership - Both Merthyr Crossroads and Hafal Merthyr (for carers of people experiencing mental health problems) are able to provide staff to take the person being cared for on outings. This can include shopping trips, going to the cinema, going swimming or taking up other sporting activities

Young Carers scheme -This project gives carers under the age of 18 the chance to have 'timeout' to enjoy the sort of things that other young people enjoy, e.g. sports and recreational activities.

### **Longer breaks**

Sometimes carers may find that they need overnight respite, or they may have a family wedding and need a longer break. Usually, this will involve the person being cared for staying away for a period of time in a residential home that is appropriate to his or her needs. This type of break may under certain circumstances be available from the 'Breaks for carers' partnership. Longer respite breaks, on a regular basis, can be included in your care package and these are accessed through Social Services.

Merthyr Crossroads, Hafal Merthyr, and Social Services may be able to provide help. See Useful Contacts section.

## **SECTION 7**

### **CARERS IN EMPLOYMENT**

This section of the booklet will look at the difficulties carers experience when caring and staying in employment.

Caring is demanding at the best of times but when someone is also trying to hold down a job, the difficulties are often compounded. Carers find it difficult to juggle the demands of paid work with their caring role. Often they give up work altogether or have to restrict their lives because they do not know help is available. Even when they do know about services they face huge difficulties accessing the right support. Problems arise when the person being cared for is ill, or when services don't arrive on time or not at all because of staff sickness, etc.

Before giving up employment carers should be aware of the implications of this as any decision will impact on their financial circumstances and also their employment and pension rights. They should also consider that there are initiatives which can help them. On a personal level a job can be important and offers its own respite or break from the person being cared for. A recent government initiative to introduce family friendly working practices has helped and has the potential to be more useful if employers are willing to adopt policies and procedures to help the situation.

Under the Employment Relations Act (1999) carers have a right to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant. As a result of this many employers now provide a limited number of paid 'carer' days for emergencies (usually 5) and if carers need extended leave are often able to grant unpaid leave. Employers may also offer 'job share' within their organisation or adopt a flexible working system. They could offer different working hours, reduced hours or home working. The important thing is to keep the employer informed of your caring role and discuss with them the implications of this role. If you are a member of a trade union, they will be able to help in these discussions.

You will need to speak to your employer and find out if they have a policy on staff with carers' responsibility. It is advisable to tell your employer what is happening at home many will be sympathetic and only too happy to help.

The local authority has a direct payments scheme which may also be useful, e.g. for a variety of reasons home care may not be provided at the times you want it to be, the direct payments scheme provides carers and individuals with the opportunity to have flexible, appropriate care. Carers may be able to reduce their hours of work and claim benefits to subsidise your income, e.g. Care Allowance,

Attendance Allowance for the cared for, etc. It is important that carers have access to all relevant information to enable them to make an informed choice.

See Section 2 on Money and Benefits and the useful contacts pages will enable you to make an informed choice on your caring role and employment.

## **SECTION 8**

### **CARERS OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**

Carers of people experiencing long term mental health problems and or mental illness often do not see themselves as Carers or having needs. This is mainly because they are faced with issues distinct from carers of people with physical disabilities. Carers often feel isolated due to the stigma attached to mental ill health and they are less likely to access support or to attend support groups.

The implications of caring are more likely to be emotional rather than physical or practical. Carers are much less likely to receive mainstream statutory services like homecare or to access carer assessments in their own right and require a different type of service to be provided.

Carers will often only realise they need support when the person they are caring for is admitted into a psychiatric hospital but there will usually be a Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) worker involved with the case prior to admission.

### **HOW TO ACCESS HELP AND ADVICE**

When a carer realises that the person they care for is ill their first point of contact should be their GP or CMHT worker if they have one.

If the cared for is reluctant to contact their GP liaison nurse, or CMHT worker the carer should make an appointment to discuss their concerns. The carer can also contact a mental health voluntary organisation e.g. Hafal Merthyr or Mind SANE etc. These will be able to provide information, advice and support for the carer.

If the mental health problem is more serious the behaviour of the individual may alter. The following actions need to be taken:

- Telephone your GP and explain the problem and request an urgent home visit or contact the duty officer at the CMHT or your named worker.
- The GP will, if he considers the situation urgent, contact an Approved Social Worker, for an assessment usually at ST. Tydfil's Hospital.
- The assessment will determine whether the person you care for should be admitted to hospital or what follow up treatment is required.

The assessment will decide if an admission is necessary and whether it should be voluntary or compulsory. Every effort is made to persuade an individual to take treatment or be admitted to hospital voluntarily.

### **VOLUNTARY OR COMPULSORY ADMISSION**

In extreme cases compulsory admission is necessary if someone is assessed as being a risk to the safety of others or a risk to themselves, e.g. if someone is saying that they intend to commit suicide they are a 'risk to themselves'.

A 'voluntary' admission, is always the first option, and this is when the 'patient' has agreed that it would be in his/her best interests to be admitted into hospital.

The person being cared for will be continuously assessed during their stay in hospital and will be offered treatment to improve his or her condition they do not have to accept this treatment if admitted on a voluntary basis.

## **INFORMATION**

Whilst the person being cared for or supported is in hospital, carers often feel frustrated at the lack of information that staff is able to provide. Ward staff are extremely busy and are often unable to give carers specific information about the person in hospital. This is often because of patient confidentiality. Under the Mental Health Act patients are able to refuse permission for any details to be given to their relatives, which often places staff in a difficult position.

Hafal Merthyr, Mind, CMHT, GP liaison nurse etc. are able to provide information on mental illnesses, medication and side effects, advice and support to carers and people using the mental health service.

N.B. This is general information not individual information the ward staff would give.

## **FAMILY SUPPORT & ADVOCACY SERVICES**

Advocacy is when someone you trust represents you in a situation where you are unable to do so yourself. An advocate will provide you with the information and help you to understand your rights. They will ensure you have your say about the care and treatment you and the person you care for receive and to make a complaint if you are unhappy with services.

Carers may need ongoing support, advocacy and representation to attend section '117' care plan review meetings, representation at tribunals, complaints, representation, etc. Once again advice and information can be accessed through Hafal, SANE, CMHT and Sanctuary etc.

Age Concern Advocacy Project  
Mind  
Community Mental Health Team  
01443 431944  
01685 721671

**See useful contacts list.**

## **CARERS AND RELATIVES INFORMATION AND SUPPORT POINT (CRISP)**

At St Tydfil's hospital a new initiative is being piloted. Sessions will be held twice weekly and carers will be able to obtain general information and advice from St Tydfil's ward staff and Hafal staff. Information is available on mental health medication and side effects, mental health services in the area, family support and advocacy, etc.

## **SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT**

Hafal Merthyr Hyder provides opportunities for people experiencing mental health problems or mental illness, to regain or learn new practical skills and obtain qualifications which will help them to build confidence, self esteem and improve future prospects.

## **HOUSE MAINTENANCE SERVICE**

Hafal Merthyr Hyder also provides a house maintenance service which involves doing small tasks around the home e.g. gardening, mowing the lawn, painting and small carpentry jobs. For more information and advice contact Hafal in 01685 373322 or Mobile 07855 785085

A useful information book on all matters relating to mental health issues is  
A guide to Services for MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING. This can be obtained  
from VAMT on 01685 353900

**GP LIAISON SERVICE**

This service can be accessed through your GP practice manager. The service offers educational support and therapeutic interventions for patients and their carers and advice to staff in their management in these cases. The GP Liaison Nurse signposts to the most appropriate services, ensuring patients receive the highest quality of care.

## **SECTION 9**

### **DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMER'S**

This section of the booklet will look at issues relating to caring for people who are suffering from any form of Dementia and Alzheimer's

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or any other form of dementia is a difficult and demanding task. There are no simple answers to the problems you will face; no simple rules to follow that will work every time.

The Alzheimer's Society produces information to help family carers, care workers and others who support people with dementia. They produce advice sheets on the daily care of people with dementia, information on welfare benefits and sorting out financial affairs.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of the family of disorders known as dementias. Dementia is the progressive decline in the ability to remember, think or reason. Although usually associated with the elderly it can also, unfortunately, affect younger people. Dementia does not only affect the person suffering from the disease it also alters the lives of family and friends who are close to them.

Younger sufferers of dementia may have different needs. They could have dependant children, still be in employment at the time of diagnosis and have financial commitments different to an older person. They find it difficult to rationalise the losing of such skills at an early age and find it hard to access appropriate information and support. All this information can be obtained from the Alzheimer's Society website or by telephoning their helpline.

As the people they have loved or cared for gradually deteriorate, relationships change and new, unexpected demands are placed upon them. Hopes and plans for the future evaporate as the carer becomes immersed in the task of caring for a severely disabled and often difficult person. Carers can access help and support from the Alzheimer's Society who provide advice and information on their website and also publish a monthly newsletter to members of the society. There is also a range of services within Merthyr Tydfil able to offer practical and emotional support.

A Carers group has now been set up for carers who care for people who have memory loss, Dementia or Alzheimer's the group meets the first Monday of every month @ The Busy Bees Centre Gurnos 1.00 till 3.00.

For more information on this please contact The Carers Development Officer on 01685-353900.

**See useful contacts section**

## **SECTION 10**

### **CARERS AND PARENT CARERS OF CHILDREN/SOMEONE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

This section of the booklet will look at issues relating to caring for children or people who have special needs.

#### **Local Authority Social Services Department**

A dedicated Team for Children with Disabilities was established in July 2002.

Fundamentally, the purpose of the Team is to provide services based on the assessed need and in accordance with the principle of the Children Act 1989.

All referrals for assessment are taken by the Intake and Early Assessment Team and then routed to the Children with Disability Team. For further information please call 01685 - 724506.

#### **Key service objectives include:**

- Ensuring the safety and protection of all children. Children with disabilities may be even more vulnerable, given that the nature of disability can act as a significant barrier to the detection of abuse and the Team accept the critical importance of remaining alert to the potential for abuse of disabled children.
- Providing accurate, timely and sensitive assessments in partnership with children, young people and their parent / carers.
- Providing advice, advocacy and practical assistance in response to identified need/s.
- Providing a supportive role to children and young people, their parents, carers and siblings.

#### **Introduction and Statement of Intent**

- Children and Young People with a disability have a right to lead lives which are as normal as possible.
- To minimise the social consequences of their disability, Social Services, in cooperation with other agencies, will assess their needs and provide services in partnership with the child and their families / carers.
- Children with a disability will be seen as children first. The principles that underpin the Department's work with children and families in general will apply to work with children with disabilities.
- The aim of the service provision is to minimise the effect of a service user's disability to enable them to achieve their full potential.

#### **Services Provided**

In addition to the support provided by the Children with Disabilities team to children with disabilities and their families, services currently available include:

#### **Family Link**

This is a family based respite service, which has been operational for a number of years. Typically, the child with a disability stays with their link family for short prearranged periods throughout the year. These arrangements are generally long standing and

although some parents find the initial idea daunting, once established this is a valued service.

### **Leisure Link**

This is a sessional service run on a one to one or small group basis, designed to provide inclusive leisure opportunities. The Leisure Link worker will ideally involve the disabled child in already established local activities.

### **Sitting Service**

This service is provided by MENCAP in the family or carers own home. It is designed to be a very flexible service arranged as required between the family and the sitter to a predetermined number of hours per week.

### **General Domestic Services**

These services are provided by an independent provider in response to the need for practical support / assistance in the home in order that parent carers can continue to care. The provision of these services is normally time-limited and clearly prescribed and includes cleaning, shopping and other household tasks.

### **Support in the Home**

This is a personal care service provided through mainstream support in the home services.

### **Welfare Benefits Advice**

This is a critical service provided by the departmental benefits advisor and provides families with up to date advice and support with benefit claiming.

### **Listening to Children**

A multi agency group whose remit is to champion the right of children and young people to have their voice heard and respected and for their views to have impact. The, Listening to Children Group has been delegated by the Framework for Partnership to lead the work on participation and support the development of youth forums. It supports the Young People's Advisory Group and represents their views within the Partnership.

### **Local Education Authority**

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council acknowledges the basic duties of the LEA as laid out in the Education Act 1996 and the Code of Practice.

It is estimated that 20% of pupils in England and Wales will have special educational needs at some time in their school career. Some of these needs may be short term but others will be long lasting and may require special provision.

Help is provided through the Portage Service, a home visiting service for preschool children experiencing problems with their development. The Portage worker assesses the needs of each child and with the parent builds on the skills the child already possesses.

Parents can access a Portage worker by requesting an assessment from the Senior Medical Officer (SCMO) after discussion with your GP or Health Visitor. The SCMO will, in consultation with the Principal Educational Psychologist, decide if the Portage service is suitable.

For more information Tel: 01685 724600

### **Contact a Family**

They provide support for families who care for children with disabilities and special needs. For more information Tel: 029 2044 9569

#### Gellideg Family Assessment and Support Centre

Gellideg is a Social Services Centre in Merthyr. They aim to promote the safety and well-being of children in Merthyr Tydfil. Referrals are made through Social Services as a part of the case work plan agreed with other agencies and the family concerned.

They offer support, advice, information and services that promote positive open working relationships with the children and families referred to the Centre.

An assessment is carried out on the needs of a child, the capacity of a parent to respond to those needs and the impact the family and the environment has on meeting these needs.

Within the services are staff which offer a range of individual and family focus groups, both in the Centre and within the community.

They liaise with other agencies to enhance communication so enabling the children and families to link with other appropriate services within the community.

They offer parent and toddler sessions to provide an opportunity for socialisation for both parents and children. This also offers the parents opportunities to have shared experiences.

There is a positive parenting group which advises parents of appropriate boundary setting and promotes parenting skills, self esteem and confidence.

Counselling, advisory and Educational support to families experiencing substance misuse, alcohol dependency and medical problems is also offered.

For further information Tel: 01685 375237

## **HIV Co-ordinating Centre**

Co-ordinate HIV related health promotion and care services run by LA and voluntary agencies. It does not provide a service itself but can put you in touch with agencies that do. For further information Tel: 02920 402516

## **GUM Clinic (Genito Urinary Medicine Clinics)**

The clinic provides

- HIV pre and post test counselling
- Medical monitoring and treatment
- Counselling information for partners and carers
- Information on sexual health.

For further information Tel: 01443 443597

## **Kenshole**

Kenshole Children's Centre has a number of different professionals who are involved with the overall care of your child.

### **Consultant Paediatrician**

This doctor has experience of children with development delay, learning disabilities and physical disabilities. The medical assessment will focus on any problems related to your child's health, understanding the reason for the problem and whether medical treatment might be helpful.

### **Special Needs Health Visitor**

This person is a qualified nurse and Health visitor who has chosen to work in a specialist area supporting families in the community. They can arrange home visits; see your child at clinics at Kenshole or at specialist schools. They provide an essential link between the Centre and families attending Clinic to provide advice and support

### **Occupational Therapy**

Using purposeful activity and play the OT works with the child to help them attain the highest possible quality of life.

### **Physiotherapy**

This enables your child to develop their movement and mobility while helping the family to help their child with these skills.

### **Play Specialist**

They are qualified to provide specific activities to enable your child to develop play skills in a safe, secure and friendly atmosphere.

## **Speech and Language Therapist**

They offer specialist help to infants and children who are potentially at risk of failing to develop speech and language skills.

**For more information Tel: 01685 872411 ext 4663/4664**

Action for a Children's Centre for Educational and Physical Therapy (ACCEPT) at Kenshole

ACCEPT is a group of parents of children with special needs who live in the Merthyr and Cynon Valleys. They work in partnership with the Trust and have set the following objectives:

- To constantly promote the idea that parents will 'have a say' in the way the Centre is run.
- To support Kenshole Children's Centre in any way they possible can - especially in the form of fundraising.

The group would welcome new members - please contact the Centre Coordinator at the above telephone number who will give you a contact name and phone number.

## **Law Yn Llaw**

Law Yn Llaw offer families with children of pre-school age with special needs the choice of a place within their local playgroup or parent and toddler group.

Depending on the needs of the child and on family circumstances the following support can be offered:

- Links with local groups
- 'One to one' support in the group
- Transport to and from the group
- Help with payment of group fees
- Special equipment

For further information Tel: 01685 886906

## **Merthyr Tydfil Play Forum (MTPF)**

They are a registered charity with members from both voluntary and statutory organisations working in partnership to develop and improve opportunity for play for all children and young people in the Borough.

## **Playschemes**

Playschemes are provided to allow children to play freely during school holidays. The school provides the equipment and events are organised by staff.

### **After school clubs**

These provide a place for children to enjoy a safe environment until parents arrive home from work. Support workers help in existing after school clubs and work with children with special needs.

### **Teenschemes**

These are schemes appropriate to teenagers including trips to the cinema, swimming, etc. This is for children aged 12-16 (19 with specific needs) during the Easter and summer holidays and is highly attended by young people with specific needs.

### **Workshops**

Organised one-day workshops in arts, crafts and games are available.

For further information Tel: 01685 353959.

### **Merthyr Tydfil Parents Forum**

This group represents the views of people with a learning disability and their carers/families within Merthyr. It aims to ensure information is disseminated to families at a local level and that parents views are valued.

For further information Tel: All Wales Forum 029 2067 9984

### **Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP)**

SNAP was formed more than ten years ago to help families negotiate the bureaucratic maze of the special educational needs decision making process.

By providing independent information and support, SNAP Cymru encourages parents and carers to become partners with the professionals involved.

SNAP offers information and support. They offer independent, free and confidential services to families of children and young people who have, or may have, special educational needs.

For further information Tel: 029 2038 8776 / 01443 693276

### **Sure Start**

Sure Start work with a number of groups and organisations with Merthyr Tydfil to help create a happy stimulating environment for children and their family members. They offer a number of initiatives for families with children aged between 0 and 3. They also work in partnership with other organisation within the Borough.

### **These include:**

- All kinds of advice where parents can find out about the first steps of parenting and help with children's sleep problems. They offer advice with behavioural problems and help with development delays. Support to mums is offered when post natal depression is diagnosed and help with practical things like breast feeding.

- Homestart provide a support service for families who are facing difficult times and are under threat of breakdown. Volunteers are referred to families to provide a listening ear, help with the children, a break for parents, practical help, reassurance etc.
- Wales Pre-school Playgroups exist to enhance the development, care and education of pre-school children in Wales. Sure Start works with existing preschool groups offering advice and training opportunities.
- Mydiad Ysgolion Meithrin is a voluntary organisation offering Welsh medium playgroups, toddler groups and nurseries. It provides an integrated curriculum developed through creative and physical play.
- Sure Start Health Team work with families and children ages 0 to 3 to improve health through supporting parents, caring for children and promoting young children's health. They offer parenting skill courses and provide play opportunities. They also support families of children with special needs.

For further information Tel: 01443 693276

### **Stroke Association**

Provides a Day Service in Merthyr Tydfil for people aged 18 - 55. Stroke is an isolating, frustrating and depressive illness.

Family dynamics are overturned following a stroke and wives, husbands and children take on the role of carer. The toll on the emotional and physical well being of carers is tremendous. There might be other problems brought on due to personality changes. What the Family Day Service offer are Group Meetings where clients are encouraged to become involved in activities available.

This offers a meaningful amount of respite for the carer. They also have the peace of mind the cared for is in safe and secure surroundings.

The Stroke Association Family Support Organiser will visit the family helping in with both practical and emotional support if required.

For further information Tel: 01685 375245

### **TEDS**

Provide counselling, information and advice to substance (drugs and alcohol) misusers, their families, carers and friends

For further information Tel: 01685 880090

Other Contact numbers are:

Carers Wales 0808 808 7777

Parent line 0808 800 2222

NHS Direct Wales 0845 4647

National Aids Helpline 0800 567123

Eating Disorders Association 01603 621414

MENCAP 0808 800 0300

Disability Alliance Helpline 020 7247 8763

Homestart 01443 382822

Sure Start 01443 693276

Muniad Ysgolion Meithrin 01443 690424

LEAP (RNIB) 029 2045 0440

### **STATEMENTING AND TRANSITION**

Children have special needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for a special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age or
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definitions of the above or would do so if special provision was not made for them.

Pupils will have needs and requirements which may fall into at least one of the following four areas.

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Behaviour, emotional and social development
- Sensory and/or physical

If you have concerns about your child's education please contact the head teacher or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) at the school.

A pack for carers and parent carers can be obtained from the local educational department at Ty Keir Hardie.

For more information on Transition you can contact the Transition Officer based at the disability team on 01656-727010.

### **THE STATEMENTING PROCESS**

The Local Education Authority (LEA) Special Educational Needs (SEN) officer will write the final statement, you will be sent a 'proposed' or 'draft' statement.

All parts listed below will be completed except part 4, which will be left blank.

- Part 1 gives you're own and your child's name and address, your child's date of birth, home language and religion.

- Part 2 gives details of all your child's special educational needs as identified in the statutory assessment.
- Part 3 describes:
  - All the additional help the LEA thinks your child should get to meet the needs listed in part 2
  - What the long-term aims are
  - The arrangements for setting short-term goals, regularly reviewing your child's progress towards those goals, and how your child's progress is to be monitored.
- Part 4 tells you about the school your child will attend to get the additional help set out in part 3, or how any arrangements will be made out of school hours.
- Part 5 describes any non-educational needs your child has, as agreed between the LEA and the health services, social services or other agencies.
- Part 6 describes how your child will get help to meet the non-educational needs described in part 5

## **TRANSITION**

Children with Special Needs, whatever their origin nature and seriousness of their disabilities have the same fundamental rights as their fellow citizens of the same age, which implies first and foremost the right to enjoy a decent life, as normal and as full as possible. (United Nations (1975) the Declaration of the Rights of Disabled People) Recognising disabled children does not however imply a denial of a child's particular needs, therefore it will be important for care managers and transitional workers alike to understand the needs of young people, and be sensitive and knowledgeable about their diversity when addressing their individual transitional plans.

The LEA has a policy that is a working document that facilitates a young person's transition from childhood to adulthood, providing a framework of actions that enable them to make this a transition seamlessly.

The policy is utilised in conjunction with the recognition which each young person's transitional period will take into account the variances that occur as a result of the diversity of their individual needs.

The LEA policy applies to young people aged 14-25 who have a disability or specific learning needs whom the health authority or Disabled Children Team support through their transition. The policy encompasses young people with disabilities who are in the looked after system.

## **Fulfilling the Promises**

The Learning Disability Advisory Group was established by the Welsh Assembly Government to prepare a draft framework for people with a learning disability. The service framework covers services for children and adults.

'Fulfilling the Promises' follows on from the All Wales Strategy (1983) and endorses the continued relevance of the strategies guiding principles. 'Disabled children whatever their origin nature and seriousness of their handicaps and disabilities have the same fundamental rights as their fellow citizens of the same age, which implies first and foremost the right to enjoy a decent life as normal, as normal and full as possible.' (United Nations 1975)

The Learning Disability Group have principles they follow. These and other relevant information on statementing and transition can be obtained from The LEA at Ty Keir Hardie, Merthyr Tydfil. Tel: 01685 725000 and ask for the Education Department.

### **People with special needs**

Within the Disability Team there are a number of social workers/care managers and community care workers who have responsibility for all areas of disability, i.e. learning disability, physical disability, sensory impairment, autism and epilepsy. Young people transfer to the adult disability team at the age of 18, a specific care manager manages this transition with responsibility for transition, he/she is based in the disability team.

During transition the young persons needs and wishes are identified and the appropriate package of support is put in place. This is monitored and reviewed regularly.

Services are usually provided by Local Authority (in house) services, which include day services, support in the home/continuing social care, respite and accommodation services. Services are commissioned from the voluntary and private sectors as necessary.

The Disability Planning Framework and associated groups have responsibility for developing a strategy for adults with a disability and for the planning and development of future services.

Information on the disability team and services can be obtained by telephoning: 01685 383723.

### **Confidentiality**

The young person owns the information about themselves and where a referral is made to another agency the informed consent of the young person/carer or family member will be sought. It is accepted that information is required to shape future services and this information will be shared for strategic planning purposes and develop a needs analysis for service uses.

With transition there are Transitional Workers. They aid the child through transition from childhood into adulthood. Their level of involvement varies according to the degree of need of the young person and level of support required. Their role encompasses advising care managers of opportunities available and to act as an intermediary between the children and families and the care management teams. The inclusion of a transitional worker in the process intrinsic to this process.

Responsibility for continued assessment and case management is with your Children with Disability Team Manager. The level of involvement of the transitional worker will depend on the complexity of the needs of your child and where a child care social worker has identified, in year nine that a TW is necessary at this stage.

When a young person reaches 18 they are considered an adult and they become the responsibility of the Adult Disability Team and they will provide continued care

management. For more information Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council produces a 'Guide for Parents and Carers' and this can be obtained from The Head of Educational Services @ Ty Keir Hardie. Also contact this address for other organisation which provide advice and services for children and young people with special needs.

All this can be obtained by Tel: 01685 724642

## **SECTION 11**

### **YOUNG CARERS**

#### **Who is a young carer?**

“A young carer is someone who takes responsibility for someone who is ill, disabled, elderly, experiencing mental distress, affected by substance use, or has substantial responsibility for caring for a sibling. A Young Carer could be from any family. They may be the person providing all of the care but may also help someone else to provide the care. Care is not only the things people can see like changing bandages, helping someone to use the toilet or to have a wash, but it is also about how you feel or think because of your caring role”.

As well as practical and personal support, many young carers offer a high degree of emotional support. This can often be more difficult to identify during assessments.

All professionals should recognise that young carers have additional needs and therefore may need a greater degree of understanding during any contact.

Merthyr Young Carers Project offers a variety of support services to young carers living within the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil and up to the age of 18 years.

They can be contacted on 01685 382422. Their website is [www.merthyr-ycs.info](http://www.merthyr-ycs.info).

## **SECTION 12**

This section will deal with the practical steps to be taken when someone dies

- When someone dies
- How to register the death
- Paying for the funeral

### **DEALING WITH PRACTICAL ISSUES WHEN SOMEONE DIES**

When someone dies:

If the death occurs at home the doctor is the first person to contact. If there is a clear cause of death he or she will then be able to give you a death certificate showing the cause of death. If the death is sudden or the cause uncertain, there will be a post mortem. The nearest relative will need to agree to this. In certain cases the doctor will need to report the death to the coroner in order for an autopsy to be carried out to establish the cause of death. Once this has been established, the coroner will issue a death certificate.

How to register the death

The death certificate must be taken to the Registrar's Office within 5 days to register the death. The registrar will need the following information about the deceased person:

- Date and Place of birth
- Date and Place of death
- Former Occupation
- Married status - maiden name if a married woman

The Registrar will provide you with a green certificate which should be handed to the Funeral Director. He/she will also provide you with a death certificate. You may need a few copies of this, particularly if the deceased person has saving or current accounts in building societies, banks. The Benefits Agency and Insurance companies will also need a copy.

### **Paying for the funeral**

The basic cost of a funeral will include a hearse, the coffin, and removal of the body and funeral directors fees. Then costs increase depending on the type and size of funeral you want, the type of coffin you choose, the service you require e.g. you will need to pay cemetery or crematorium fees, fees for the minister, church, organist, flowers and notices in the newspaper. A basic funeral will cost from approximately £1,500.

There is a leaflet providing full details on what benefits are available to help with funeral costs: "New bereavement benefits" which is issued by the department of work and pensions.

**Sanctuary Counselling and Training offers FREE bereavement counselling.**

Tel: 01685 379474

Cruse Bereavement Care Merthyr Tydfil

Tel: 01443 477700

The Registrar's Office is in Glebeland Street, Merthyr Tydfil.  
Tel: 01685 723318

## SECTION 13

### LIFE AFTER CARING

For many carers, the end of their caring task comes about with the death of the person they care for. Feelings of grief and loss affect different people in different ways and it is important that carers should not feel pressured by others to accept one or other kind of help in coming to terms with their loss. If you want to be alone, be alone; if you want to be with others, be with them. Try not to be influenced by others who tell you how you ought to feel or behave.

You may feel frustrated, sad, shocked, angry or a range of other emotions. You may feel a sense of relief at being able to rest for a while, immediately followed by guilt. Most carers will recriminate themselves - if only I hadn't gone out, If only I hadn't lost my temper, if only, if only... This is perfectly natural you will feel a range of feelings and this is normal. Don't be afraid to talk to friends and family, they all want to help and feel useful at this time. If you don't want to talk to friends or family your GP can refer you to a counsellor or counselling organisation.

You may feel resentful at having been left to take care of the practical things, e.g. Arranging the funeral, returning aids and equipment, sorting through personal clothes, correspondence and memorabilia,

#### Practical Tips:

- Do express your emotions, don't bottle up your feelings and remember there will be a whole range of feelings you will experience.
- Do allow yourself time to grieve - Grief has to run its course
- Do let people help but don't be persuaded or bullied into doing something you instinctively know you don't want to do.
- Do try and keep busy. At least for the first few weeks
- Take things one day at a time
- Try not to turn to drink or drugs
- Don't make any major decisions for a few months

There are many organisations you can talk to and they are included in the section useful contact numbers.

## **SECTION 14**

This section of the booklet deals with:

- Appointeeship
- Power of Attorney
- Enduring Power of Attorney
- Court of protection and the Public Trust Office

### **APPOINTEESHIP**

This is where someone, if it is accepted by the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP), can act for the cared for and will become responsible for dealing with all their social security affairs and Inland Revenue tax credit affairs.

### **This includes claiming and receiving**

- Social security benefits
- Social security pensions
- Social security allowances
- Inland Revenue tax credits

Any money you receive on their behalf must be used in their and their dependent's interest. You must, on the clients' behalf, report all changes of circumstances laid out in the yellow pages of their benefit book or on the accompanying letter.

### **How long can I be an appointee?**

#### **You will be an appointee until**

- The person you are the appointee for becomes well enough to manage their own affairs.
- The person you are an appointee for dies, or
- You or the DWP/IR decides to end the arrangement because it is not working properly.
- You wish to end the arrangements because you no longer wish to continue as an appointee.

If you wish to end the arrangement you must write to your local DWP or Inland Revenue office giving them at least one month's notice.

### **What if an overpayment occurs?**

If an overpayment occurs YOU may be required to repay the overpayment yourself depending on how the overpayment occurred.

You will be responsible for repaying any overpayment of benefit that happened because you

- Knowingly made an untrue or incorrect statement about yourself or the client.
- Failed to report a change in your own circumstances
- Failed to report a change in the circumstances, which you knew about, in respect of the client.
- Failed to obtain relevant information about the circumstances of the client.

All appointees are responsible for the collection and administration of the person's social security benefits, pensions and allowances and Inland Revenue tax credits.

### **POWER OF ATTORNEY**

This overrides all Appointeeship with the Department of Works and Pension.

Attorney - The person who is to act on your behalf is called the attorney and this is usually a responsible relative, friend or a professional person. The attorney can only carry out things/tasks stated in the power of attorney. They are not required to keep regular accounts, receipts or records but it is advisable.

Power of attorney is a legal way to have one person act on behalf of another. One person can sign this formal document that gives another person the authority to act in their name and on their behalf.

There is no set form of words for a power of attorney. A power of attorney may give someone the power to carry out specific tasks. These can be signing cheques, selling property or they may be given wide, general powers of managing all the person's money and property. Power of attorney do not stop the person who gives power of attorney from continuing to act on their own behalf it merely gives another person the ability to carry out the responsibility.

It is essential to ensure that a power of attorney states your wishes exactly, be careful in your choice of attorney because there is no official supervision of attorneys.

It is best to consult a solicitor when drawing up a power of attorney to discuss exactly what is required. You may want the person to have specific powers or to have wide ranging powers. E.g. someone to handle your affairs while you are abroad or wide range would include the attorney to attend to all your financial affairs. You should also decide on how long the power of attorney should last be it for a limited period or indefinitely.

### **Important Considerations**

You may lose capability suddenly from an accident or illness, or gradually through dementia or other aging processes.

A power of attorney is only valid if the person signing is fully capable to grant it. Your solicitor has a professional duty to be sure about this. The solicitor may want to check this by speaking to your GP. This is to protect you and to ensure that no one can say the power of attorney is invalid.

### **ENDURING POWER OF ATTORNEY**

Enduring power of attorney (EPA) is the means by which a person can appoint someone they trust to act for them, should they become mentally incapable. An enduring power of attorney must be registered with the Public Trust Office once the person has lost mental capacity.

It is only possible to grant an enduring power of attorney if the person is capable of understanding what it is and what it is intended to do. It may be advisable to seek the advice of your GP.

The person seeking enduring power of attorney will be required to complete a form which is obtained from a solicitor.

**NB: IT IS ADVISABLE TO SEEK INDEPENDENT LEGAL ADVICE.**

It is important to consider carefully who to appoint as an attorney and what power to grant them. A person may appoint more than one attorney and divide responsibilities between them.

**An attorney can be made responsible for**

- Signing cheques.
- Withdrawing money
- Buying or selling shares or houses
- Using assets to finance residential or nursing care.

An attorney cannot

- Direct where the person should live
- Direct what medical treatment or care the person should receive.

Once the enduring power of attorney form has been completed it may be used as an ordinary power of attorney unless restricted by the client.

**COURT OF PROTECTION AND THE PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE**

If a person has lost mental capacity and has not made an enduring power of attorney, it may be advisable to apply to the Court of Protection at the Public Trust Office for a receiver to be appointed. This will ensure that anyone acting on behalf of the person with dementia, mental illness, etc does so with legal authority.

All the above information is available from the Carers Wales helpline or on their website. For more local advice and information please contact your Citizens Advice Bureau.

We strongly recommend, you contact your solicitor before actioning any of the above information.

## SECTION 15

This section deals with carers of people with eating disorders.

Caring for children and adults with an eating disorder can be distressing and people are unsure of how to proceed. There is advice, information and training on how to support people with eating disorders offered through the Eating Disorders Association. (EDA)

EDA is a leading UK charity who provides information, help and support for people whose lives are affected by eating disorders. They offer a range of services including:

- A national helpline and
- Support service for young people 18yrs and under along with
- Self-help groups
- Postal and telephone contacts as well as
- Membership
- Information and training.

As a parent you bear your and your child's pain. Parents often feel very guilty about their child's illness - instead of soul-searching for the reasons for the eating disorder, try to plan what to do next. The sooner help is found the better the outcome.

Research studies suggest that people with learning disabilities have one or more eating disorders. Clinical work and literature reviews have also shown that people with learning disabilities may present a wide range of diagnosable eating disorders. (Gravestock & Robinson 1998: Royal College of Psychiatrists in press)

When dealing with this disorder you start by accessing reliable information through your GP, a counsellor or nurse. EDA has a range of leaflets available one called A Carers Guide. There is a charge for this leaflet but it helps to answer many of the questions asked by carers.

There is a wealth of help out there but locally Sanctuary offer counselling for children and adults with eating disorders. Also nationally the Eating Disorders Association offer many support mechanisms.

Eating Disorders Wales 01443 491092  
National Phone Number 0870 7703256  
Helpline 0845 6341414

**Also see useful contact pages**

## **SECTION 16**

### **CARERS SUPPORT SERVICE**

This section will look at the local services available to provide support to carers.

#### **Carer groups**

Merthyr Branch Carers Wales meet 7-9pm on the 3rd Thursday of every month at Ty Gwyn Day Centre, Merthyr Tydfil. Their purpose is to offer support, help and advice to carers. They organise social events, eg day trips and evenings out.

All are welcome at the group meetings and the venue is wheelchair accessible.

Please contact Christine O'Keeffe 01685 376736 or Harry Harbord 01685 385887 for more information.

Dementia Support Group meets on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 4pm at St Tydfil's Hospital

#### **Family support & advocacy service**

Hafal Merthyr provide support to carers and families of people experiencing long term mental health problems by providing advice, information, advocacy and representation.

#### **CRISP**

At St Tydfil's hospital a new initiative is being piloted. Sessions will be held twice weekly and carers will be able to obtain general information and advice from St Tydfil's ward staff and Hafal staff (Hafal is a voluntary organisation which provides family support and advocacy services to carers of people with mental health problems). Information is available on mental health medication and side effects, mental health services in the area, family support and advocacy, etc.

#### **ACTS**

A programme of family intervention for carers of people experiencing serious mental illness e.g. schizophrenia, manic depression, etc. For more information contact St Tydfil's Hospital.

#### **Age Concern**

Age Concern has a carer's outreach support worker who supports carers of older people and older carers. This service provides advice and information, emotional support, help to complete forms, home and office appointments or just a friendly ear to listen to you, the carers' needs.

#### **Cancer Aid**

Offer the following services to any family member whose life has been touched by cancer. Counselling, information, befriending, aromatherapy, reflexology, self-help groups, free transport for clients - to and from hospital and the availability of a drop-in centre.

All phone numbers are included in the booklet.

## **USEFUL CONTACTS**

### **A**

Access Group, Merthyr Tel: 01685 373237  
Accessible Caring Transport Tel: 01443 478013  
Adref Ltd Tel: 01685 350099  
After Adoption Working in Wales Tel: 029 2066 6597  
Age Concern Cymru Tel: 029 2037 1566  
Age Concern Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 376018  
Age Concern Morgannwg Tel: 01443 485505  
Age concern Aberdare Tel: 01685 879959  
All Wales Forum Tel: 029 2067 9984  
Arthritis Care Merthyr & District Branch Tel: 01685 377678  
Association of the Transport Group Merthyr Tel: 01443 693087  
Alzheimer's & Dementia Tel: 01443 431944  
Alzheimer's Society Tel: 029 2043 1990

### **B**

Barnardos Young Carers scheme Tel: 01685 382422  
Barnardos Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 382422  
British Heat Foundation Merthyr Branch Tel: 01443 690975  
British Red Cross Glam Tel: 01633 257131  
British Red Cross (equipment loans) Tel: 01443 493333  
Benefits Agency Tel: 01685 306500  
Benefits Enquiry Helpline Tel: 0800 882200

Textphone (for those who have speech or hearing problems) Tel: 0800 243355  
Busy Bee Family Centre, NSPCC Tel: 01685 373659

### **C**

CALL - mental health help-line Tel: 0800 132737  
Cancer Aid Tel: 01685 379633  
Care and Repair Tel: 01685 723771  
Carers help-line (Carers Wales) Tel: 0808 808 7777  
Carers Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 370736  
Carers Wales Tel: 029 2081 1370  
Centre for independent living Tel: 01443 408418  
Childline Tel: 0800 1111  
Children with Disabilities Team Tel: 01685 724506  
Children Rights Project (Tros Gynnal) Tel: 01685 353952  
Children in Wales Plant Yng Nghymru Tel: 029 2034 2434  
Citizens Advice Bureau Tel: 01685 379997  
Community Active Travel Tel: 029 2088 6117  
Community Health Council Tel: 01685 384023  
ext 213 / 4  
Contact the Elderly Wales Tel: 029 2051 4996  
Crossroads (Merthyr) Tel: 01685 382366  
Crossroads (Cynon) Tel: 01443 477560  
Cruse Tel: 01443 477700

Cruse Bereavement Care Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 384831  
Community Mental Health Team Tel: 01685 721671  
Contact a Family Tel: 029 2044 9569

## **D**

Diabetes UK Merthyr Tel: 01685 883246  
Diabetes UK Cymru Tel: 029 2066 8276  
Direct payments Scheme Tel: 01443 408418  
Unit 6, Maritime offices, Maesycloed, Pontypridd, CF37 1DZ  
Disabled Photographers Group Tel: 01685 370736  
Disabled Living Foundation Tel: 020 7289 6111  
Disabled Transport Group Tel: 01443 693087  
Drugaid Tel: 029 2088 1000

## **E**

Eating Disorders Wales Tel: 01443 491092  
Education Authority Tel: 01685 724642  
Epilepsy Wales Tel: 01685 377166

## **G**

Gellideg Family Centre  
Gingerbread (Wales)  
Gofal Cymru (mental health supported housing)  
Gofal Housing Trust  
Tel: 01685 375237  
Tel: 01792 648728  
Tel: 029 2081 3199  
Groundwork Merthyr & RCT Tel: 01685 883880  
GUM Clinic Tel: 01443 443597

## **H**

Hafal Family Support and Advocacy Service (mental health Tel: 01685 373322  
Hafal (ex NSF) Tel: 01685 373322  
Hafod Housing Association Tel: 029 2081 5230  
Heartbeat "95" Tel: 01685 382672  
HIV Centre Tel: 029 2040 2516  
Holidays:  
Holiday Care Tel: 01293 774535  
The Winged Fellowship Trust Tel: 020 7833 2594  
Hollies Health Centre Tel: 01685 384023  
Homestart Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 382822  
Housing Association Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 352800  
Housing Association Wales & West Tel: 0870 013 1930

## **I**

Institute for the Blind, Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 370072

## **K**

Keith's Taxis Tel: 01685 350700  
Special needs transport, Disabled transport, with escorts available  
Kenshole Tel: 01685 872411 Ext. 4663

**L**

Lifeline (Merthyr CBC) Tel: 01685 725336  
Law yn Llaw Tel: 01685 886906  
League of Friends of Merthyr Hospitals Tel: 01685 371404  
Local Education Authority Tel: 01685 724600

**M**

Macmillan Cancer Relief Tel: 01443 410264  
Make a Wish Foundation UK Tel: 01685 721188  
MENCAP in Wales Tel: 029 2074 7588  
MENCAP Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 370607  
Mendicants, Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 385831  
Manic Depression Fellowship Cynon/Merthyr Pendulum Tel: 01685 377539  
Merthyr Crossroads, caring for carers Tel: 01685 382366  
Merthyr Eyelights Tel: 01685 377800  
Merthyr and the Valleys MIND Tel: 01685 359183  
Merthyr Tydfil Borough Credit Union Ltd Tel: 01443 411923  
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Tel: 01685 725000  
Social Services Department Tel: 01685 724507  
Elderly Duty Desk  
Mental Health Duty Desk  
Children's Services Duty Desk  
Merthyr Tydfil Parents Forum Tel: 029 2067 9984  
Merthyr Tydfil Play Forum Tel: 01685 353959  
Merthyr Tydfil transport Scheme Tel: 01685 386646

**N**

National Kidney Research Tel: 01443 445052  
National Childminding Association Tel: 01495 217932  
NCH Action for Children Wales Tel: 029 2022 2127  
Neighbourhood Watch Association Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 389749  
New Tax Credit Response Line Tel: 0800 500 222  
News Pathways Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Service Tel: 01685 379310  
NSPCC Committee Merthyr & District Tel: 01685 722274

**P**

Parentline Tel: 0808 800 2222  
Parents Forum Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 374391  
Parkinson's Disease Society Tel: 01443 690572  
People First Tel: 01873 856006  
Person to Person Citizen Advocacy Tel: 01685 384111  
PHAB Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01443 691548  
Prince's Trust Cymru Tel: 029 2043 7000  
Prince Charles Hospital Tel: 01586 721721  
Hospital Discharge Scheme (Age concern) Tel: 01443 485077  
Police (Merthyr) Tel: 01685 722541

**Q**

Q Care Tel: 01685 370222

**R**

Red Cross Tel: 01443 493333  
RNIB Tel: 0845 766 9999  
Registrar's Office Tel: 01685 723318  
Rathborn Tel: 01685 352900  
Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) Tel: 029 2033 3038

**S**

Safer Merthyr Tydfil Tel: 01685 353999  
Sanctuary Counselling Tel: 01685 379474  
SCOVO Tel: 029 2049 2433  
Shelter Cymru Tel: 01792 469400  
Sheltered housing Tel: 0808 800 4444  
Shop mobility Tel: 01685 373237  
Social Services Duty Desk Tel: 01685 724507  
St John Ambulance Tel: 01443 453273  
SNAP (Special Needs Advisory Project) Tel: 01443 693276  
SSAFA Forces Help Merthyr Tydfil Division Tel: 01685 371470  
Stroke Association Tel: 01685 375245  
Sure Start Tel: 01443 693276

**T**

TEDS Tel: 01685 880090  
Travel  
Free travel on local bus services in Wales  
Community Active travel Service Tel: 01685 370309  
Disabled Transport Group Tel: 01443 693087  
Keith's Taxis, Tel: 01685 350700  
(Special needs transport, Disabled transport, with escorts available)  
Merthyr Tydfil transport Scheme Tel: 01685 386646  
Talking Newspapers Tel: 01685 377898  
Tarian (Merthyr Women's Aid) Tel: 01443 693737  
Travel freedom Tel: 01443 831000  
Tydfil Training Tel: 01685 371747

**V**

Valleys Race Equality Council Tel: 01443 401555  
Victim support Tel: 01685 384405

**W**

WEA Tel: 01685 382710  
Women's Royal Voluntary Services Tel: 029 2074 7717

**Y**

Young Carers Project Tel: 01685 382422  
Young women's Housing Association Tel: 029 2025 9159

**GP PRACTICES**

Dr Prasad 1 Yew Street Tel: 01443 690271  
Dr Chillal B 66a Cardiff Road Troedyrhiw Tel: 01443 693249  
Dr Shah PS Aberfan Community Centre Tel: 01443 690382

Dr Srivastava AK Brookside Surgery Tel: 01443 692647  
Dr Chakrabarti AK Dowlais Medical Practice Tel: 01685 721400  
Dr Menon L Gurnos Clinic Tel: 01685 722436  
Dr Rahim A Gurnos Clinic Tel: 01685 350035  
Dr Chandran VS Gurnos Clinic Tel: 01685 721266  
Dr Nath ML Health Centre Tel: 01443 410242  
Dr Srivastava AK Mount View Surgery Tel: 01443 692647  
Dr Chillal B The Aberfan Surgery Tel: 01443 693250  
Dr Menon L The Hollies Health Centre Tel: 01685 722436  
Dr Iyer BR The Hollies Health Centre Tel: 01685 723363  
Dr Rahim A The Hollies Health Centre Tel: 01685 350035  
Dr Chandran VS The Hollies Health Centre Tel: 01685 721266  
Dr Jones H The Pontcae Surgery Tel: 01685 723931  
Prof. Richards JP Ty Morlais Tel: 01685 722782

### **PHARMACIES**

Boots the Chemist Tel: 01685 723088  
Dowlais Pharmacy Tel: 01685 350350  
Georgetown Pharmacy Tel: 01685 377824  
Grove H V (Aberfan) Tel: 01443 690226  
Grove H V (Troedyrhiw) Tel: 01443 690315  
National Co - op Chemists Tel: 01685 722771  
Pearn Dowlais Tel: 01685 722230  
Pearn Gurnos Tel: 01685 384616  
Price M (Mr) Tel: 01685 722334  
Price M (Mr) Tel: 01685 359298  
R.W.Walters Tel: 01685 723419  
Sheppard A & J M Ltd Tel: 01685 377077  
The Square Pharmacy Tel: 01443 410268

### **OPTICIANS**

Aylward Tel: 01685 723007  
Cohens Optician Tel: 01443 410382  
Darlington Optician Tel: 01685 723785  
Merthyr Optical Centre Tel: 01685 388384  
Rayners Optician Tel: 01685 727652  
Specsavers Tel: 01685 371201