

Voluntary Action Shetland



Carers Summer Newsletter

Covid-19 Advice for Carers

Any carers who are looking for up to date medical information or guidance about Coronavirus, can have a look at the following page:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/>

The Scottish Government also has a dedicated page for information for carers and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-unpaid-carers/>

with changes to Social Security being found here:

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-security/benefits-for-carers/>

The National Carer Organisations have produced a Question and Answer factsheet to explain what the Coronavirus Act covers and highlights the measures that are most relevant to carers. As guidance is still being

produced for the different measures in the Act, they don't have all the details on how individual measures will work, so they will be updating the factsheet as they get more information.

The factsheet can be viewed on their website:

<https://www.carersnet.org/2020/03/covid-19-advice-for-carers/>

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) have developed a Coronavirus Community Assistance Directory that allows you to search for help and support in your local area. You can view this here:

<https://covid-19.scvo.org.uk/>

Have you heard from us?



We have been trying to contact all carers registered with our service for whom we have a telephone number. This is to see how you are coping and to pass on some information which might be relevant for you.

If you haven't heard from us, it could be that we don't have your number. If you would like to have a chat with us then please provide us with a contact number, for us to then call you.

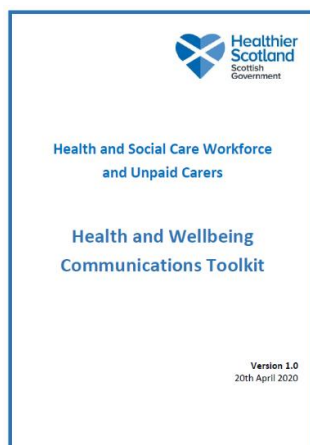
Keep well during Coronavirus



Carers who are interested in further information on a range of key areas of health and wellbeing for example self-care, exercise, relaxation, sleeping and managing stress and anxiety should take a look at the following link:

<https://www.promis.scot/resource/coping-and-self-care/>

There is also a wellbeing toolkit available by accessing the same website above, which contains important messages, links and resources.



PPE for Unpaid Carers



Since the 27th April, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been made available for unpaid carers.

Priority will be given to unpaid carers who have received a shielding letter for themselves or the person they care for. PPE will also be offered to any carers if they, or the person they care for, has a suspected case of Covid-19 and is displaying symptoms.

VAS Carers Centre are now taking queries from carers in the first instance. We are then asking you to contact the project team directly by email, providing your phone number and someone will then give you a call back to discuss your needs. Please forward your email, along with your telephone number to shet-hb.ppeproject@nhs.net and state that you are an unpaid carer.

Please note that if you don't provide your phone number they will be unable to call you back.

The Scottish government have now published their guidance on unpaid carers providing personal care:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-unpaid-carers-providing-personal-care/pages/overview/>

There is also a useful video link which explains the correct order to put on and take off PPE. The video can be found at:

<https://vimeo.com/393951705>

The Scottish Government have issued some further guidance recently on testing for key workers. Key workers include staff and volunteers in third or public sector organisations including unpaid carers:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-key-workers-in-Scotland/>

If you have any coronavirus symptoms – a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss of taste or smell – and need to book a test in Scotland, you can book online at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 0300 303 2713.

COVID-19 Guidance on Self Directed Support Option 1 and 2



The Scottish Government have now published COVID-19 guidance on Self Directed Support (SDS) Options 1 & 2 for Local Authorities and Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs), and highlights the importance of allowing supported people and unpaid carers to use their SDS budgets in a more flexible way.

To read the guidance in full:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-self-directed-support/>

Short Breaks for Strange Times



During this period of uncertainty and lockdown, it is important that those in a caring role are still able to take regular breaks in order to look after their own health and wellbeing.

We are delighted to announce that our Short Break Grant Scheme is open again to carers after securing additional funding from the Scottish Government COVID-19 Supporting Communities Fund, managed by Lerwick anchor organisation Voluntary Action Shetland. These funds will enable us to provide individual grants to support carers to take a much needed break during these difficult times.

For full information about our grant scheme, including details of how to apply, please visit:

<https://www.shetlandcarers.org/news/short-breaks-for-strange-times>

It is important for carers to try and take some time out from their regular domestic and caring routines. This will help promote good health and wellbeing.

For ideas of how to take a break at these times please visit:

<https://www.shetlandcarers.org/news/short-breaks-for-strange-times>

Carer Emergency Grants

With Awards for All funding, we are able to offer a range of small grants of up to £50 to provide emergency financial support to families to minimise the additional financial burden on carers during Covid-19 lockdown.

The **Covid-19 Carers Emergency Fund** is available to benefit carers and the people they care for living within Shetland.

We understand that carers, the people they care for and their families may face unexpected difficulties due to their circumstances changing due to Covid-19 lockdown. We are therefore offering a range of small grants of up to £50 to provide emergency financial support to families to minimise the additional financial burden on carers. This fund will remain open from 7th May until funds are used.

Eligibility Criteria

- Applicants must be carers, young adult carers or young carers. A carer is defined as someone who provides unpaid support to a family member or friend who could not manage without this help due to a long-term illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse problem.
- The carer must live in Shetland.
- Parent/guardian must sign applications for young carers under 16.

If you are not known to our service, we will require the name of someone who can confirm you are a carer

What can be funded?

1. GRANTS FOR HOUSEHOLD FOOD - Up to £50 can be made available to help purchase household food. This will be given out by way of voucher either for supermarket or a local shop. This excludes alcohol, tobacco or scratch cards.

2. GRANTS FOR UTILITY BILLS - Up to £50 can be made available to help with utility bills. Please provide details of how this is currently paid so that we can make suitable arrangements.

3. GRANTS FOR ENTERTAINMENT / LEISURE - It is important for your own health and wellbeing that you continue to have time out from your caring role. We understand that during these times Carers cannot access a traditional type of break and we can provide a small grant of up to £40 to pay for something that will help you have a break, for example; Audiobook subscription, Magazine subscription, Arts and crafts materials, Online fitness membership.

For further information and details on how to apply, please visit:

<https://www.shetlandcarers.org/support/covid-19-emergency-funding-for-carers>

Caring Behind Closed Doors

Caring behind closed doors

Forgotten families in the coronavirus outbreak

April 2020

Carers UK published their report recently on the impact of the pandemic on unpaid carers in the UK. The report highlights the increasing number of carers who are now caring 24/7 with no or very limited support:

http://www.carersuk.org/images/News_and_campaigns/Behind_Closed_Doors_2020/Caring_behind_closed_doors_April20_pages_web_final.pdf

Colleagues at Carers Scotland have also issued a press release about what this report means for carers in Scotland:

<https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/news/the-forgotten-families-in-lockdown-unpaid-carers-close-to-burnout-during-covid-19-crisis>

The Cabinet Secretary, Jeane Freeman, has published her response to the research. The letter outlines the Scottish Government's main actions to improve

support and advice for unpaid carers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

You can view the letter here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-letter-from-the-health-secretary-to-carers-scotland-about-support-and-advice-for-unpaid-carers/>

Scambusters Shetland



For the latest Scam Alert bulletin, please visit the following page and share its content with your friends, family and neighbours:

<http://www.shetland.gov.uk/tradingstandards/ScamAlerts.asp>



Which? also offers a free weekly scam alert service with an email sent direct to your inbox – visit www.which.co.uk/scam-alerts to sign up.

Contact Trading Standards for a free Scambusters! Shetland advice pack on protecting yourself from a variety of scams.

01595 744887

trading.standards@shetland.gov.uk
www.facebook.com/ShetlandTradingStandards

Take a Break



Take a Break is Scotland's short breaks fund for carers of disabled children, young people and their families. Take a Break grants can be used for a break away, towards leisure activities or outings; sports equipment and much more.

To find out if you may be eligible to apply and how to make an application, please visit:

<http://takeabreakscotland.org.uk>

Online Survey



Dr Jenni Connelly, who is a researcher at Stirling University, has recently been in touch with us. Over the next few months she is looking to collect data on the health and wellbeing of unpaid adult carers.

She is then looking to use the data to apply for funding to develop initiatives to support the health of carers. The initial data collection is through an online questionnaire and will take roughly 30 minutes to complete. If anyone is keen to help with this, please see the following link to the survey:

<https://stirling.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/health-and-wellbeing-of-family-carers-copy>

Tablet Loan Scheme



With Awards for All funding, VAS Carers Support Service has been able to purchase a supply of 12 Android Tablets. We are now able to offer these tablets to carers on loan to enable you to stay in touch with your loved ones.

During these unprecedented times of lockdown, it has become increasingly important that family members are able to stay connected by having regular contact with their friends and family.

This can be done by a variety of different methods, including social media, and all tablets will have a range of these installed and be ready to use by carers. Once the tablet has been received, VAS Carers Support Service can provide some telephone support on the use of the tablet, if required.

We will loan the tablets out to carers for an initial period of 4 weeks. If we have new loan requests during that period we may ask for the tablets to be returned at the end of the 4 week period to be reissued. But you may be able to borrow the tablet for longer than the initial 4 weeks. You, or someone of your behalf, will be asked to sign to acknowledge receipt of the tablet on delivery.

The tablet loan scheme has been set up to support :

- carers who currently do not have access to a mobile phone or tablet for themselves or their cared for person
- carers who have very limited / no support around them and who would benefit from regular contact with family and friends virtually
- carers who are currently experiencing social isolation due to the lockdown

For further information and details on how to borrow a tablet, please visit:

<https://www.shetlandcarers.org/support/tablet-loan-scheme>

Emergency Planning

An emergency plan is a plan you set out for the care of an adult or a child in case of emergencies. It makes provisions for occasions when you are unable to fulfil your caring role, and it sets out the practical arrangements for short-term, unplanned periods.

Having a plan in place can stop an emergency becoming a crisis and can give you and the person you care for peace of mind. Emergency planning is relevant to all carers, irrespective of the age of the carer, the age of the person they care for or the health needs or disability the cared-for person has.

Carers who do not already have an emergency plan in place may want to talk with family and friends about who could take over their caring role if they become ill or need to self-isolate – particularly while social work services are under additional pressure during coronavirus outbreak. It will also be important to make sure you have key information about the person you care for easily available – so

that anyone taking over care has all the information they need.



VAS can help you create an emergency plan. For more information about this, please check out the following link:

<https://www.shetlandcarers.org/info/documents/emergency-planning>

Carers Week



This year, Carers Week runs from 8th to 14th June 2020 and the theme is “*Making Caring Visible.*” Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities all through the UK. It also helps people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities, to identify as carers and access any support they need.

As a result of the Coronavirus outbreak, people across the country are continuing to face new challenges. Many people are taking on more caring responsibilities for their relatives and friends who are disabled, ill or older and who need support.

Due to Covid-19, we have had to consider different ways of delivering activities and events during Carers Week. Some of the activities we have planned this year include a virtual coffee morning with quiz, a mug and treat competition and a relaxation audio exercise delivered by Diane Taylor of Shetland Resolve.

Please look online for details of other activities during the week.

www.shetlandcarers.org

<https://www.facebook.com/ShetlandCarers/>



The Joy Inside



Mind for You have created a NEW service – The Joy Inside – for people living with dementia and their families during Covid-19 lockdown.

The service has been specifically designed to provide people living with dementia, and their families, interactive entertainment and fun during lockdown. Most are missing their usual support groups whilst dealing with additional pressures and they wanted to create something to help.

The Joy Inside gives people the ability to socialise with others, outside of their own families, helping to decrease loneliness. They host an event every Wednesday completely free of charge for carers to

offload and unpack the week's ups and downs with others that understand.

For more information, please visit:

<http://mindforyou.co.uk/joy-inside/4594939748>

Mind Your Head



The Mind Your Head team, based at Market House are open for business as usual. They provide support via telephone, emails, messaging, or website contact form requests. *Please note that Market House reception is currently closed to the public.*

Mind Your Head cannot offer face to face support at the moment, but hope that you won't hesitate to get in touch if you feel that you need help during a tough time, regardless of recent events. Mind Your Head will also continue to give you informative and uplifting content on their social media channels.

Carers may find the following links useful at this time:

Mind Your Head Coronavirus Support: <https://www.mindyourhead.org.uk/support/coronavirus>

Feel Good Bags:

<https://www.mindyourhead.org.uk/resources/feel-good-bag>

Online Book Club:

<https://www.mindyourhead.org.uk/news/beyond-the-room>

Contact details:

www.mindyourhead.org.uk
01595 745035
mindyourhead@shetland.org



Online Groups

Please note that due to the current coronavirus outbreak, there are no face to face groups taking place at the moment, but if anyone needs support they should contact VAS Carers Support Team (contact details below). Any queries about Stepping Out or FAB (Families Affected By) can contact Karen Hannay on 745091.

Sibling Group is now online as a virtual group, and challenges are set fortnightly! This is aimed at young people who have a sibling with an additional support need, or might be doing a small amount of caring. Contact Laura on laura.russell@shetland.org to find out more.

Lego Group is also online as a virtual group, with fortnightly challenges! This is aimed at any young person who has an interest in lego! Contact Laura on laura.russell@shetland.org to find out more.

Parents Group – we are unable to meet face to face at the moment, but parents can be added to the online Carers Discussion page. This is aimed at parents/carers who have a child with additional support needs, and can provide peer support. Contact laura.russell@shetland.org to find out more.

We also have a private [Carers Discussion Group](#) on Facebook. If you would like an invite to join this group, please get in touch with us and provide your email address, so that we can send you an invite to join. We hope this group enables us all to get views on different topics - everyone on it will be a carer but there are many different caring roles. It's important to respect the views of others and, if posting a comment, not to put anything confidential on - especially regarding the person that you care for. Therefore we would encourage you to use an initial instead of someone's name.



CAB Outreach drop-in sessions

Shetland Islands CAB has cancelled its drop-in sessions at the bureau office in Lerwick and in rural health centres. Local CAB advisers will continue to provide advice and support to folk across the isles by phone and by email. If you need advice, please call the bureau on 01595 694696 or email sicab@shetland.org

This decision has been taken to minimise the risk to clients, volunteers and staff during the current coronavirus outbreak. If you are waiting for Shetland CAB to call you back, please remember that the call will show as “number withheld” as all the advisers are working from home.

You can contact us:

www.shetlandcarers.org

carers@shetland.org

Kirsten Marcus: 01595 743980

Laura Russell: 01595 743946/743909

Amanda Brown: 01595 743923

jim.guyan@shetland.org





Caring for someone?

VAS Carers Centre invites Carers to enjoy activities and events online

Carers Week Events

Thursday 11th June 2020
10.30am

Take part in our virtual coffee morning and quiz!

carers week



'Mug and treat' competition
Relaxation exercise
Information from various services...



Please look online for details of other activities during the week.

www.shetlandcarers.org

Tel: 01595 743980

 Shetland Carers

 @ShetlandCarers