

Carer Support FAQs – COVID 19

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1) Is there help available for shopping?

Ask family and friends if they can do shopping for you.

People could use online shopping methods if possible or ask family and friends to do this for them who may live far away but can do this online and by phone.

For regular deliveries, order well in advance to secure a slot. Do not wait till you run out of something as there will be a high demand on this service.

Deliver shopping/food to the door only if possible. If you have to go in, wash your hands regularly and keep a good distance apart.

Asda have a volunteer card scheme which enables a volunteer or friend to use a prepaid card for purchasing shopping for you.

<https://cards.asda.com/volunteer>

They also have a hotline number for those who have received a shielding letter. Tel 0800 028 1966.

Sainsburys also have a volunteer card scheme which can be purchased online. Choose how much you want to add and the person you wish to receive it. Cards can be purchased via the following link.

<https://www.sainsburysgiftcard.co.uk/>

There is also a telephone ordering service for shielding customers who are unable to order online. Contact customer service on 0800 636262 for further details.

Morrisons have a doorstep delivery service for vulnerable customers ordering basic groceries. Payment is made directly to the delivery driver with your bank card. Tel. 0345 611 6111 and select Option 5. Any order placed before 4pm will aim to be delivered the next day. In order to use this service you must live within 10 miles of a Morrisons store.

There is a limit of three per item whilst using this service.

<https://my.morrisons.com/doorstep-deliveries/>

Tesco have priority slots for delivering to vulnerable customers. Tel. 0800 917 7359.

<https://www.tesco.com/help/priority-slots-faq/>

Some pharmacies are offering online/telephone consultation and will deliver medication to you. Please contact your local pharmacy for further info.

If you are struggling please let us know and we will connect you to sources of support/services where possible.

Source: Information guide for staff use when carers contact us for support and information during the COVID 19 situation (V1.1 Draft 18/03/2020), Edinburgh Carer Support Team

2) Can I still receive an Adult Carer Support Plan?

The Coronavirus Act temporarily relaxes the duty in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 which provides all carers with the right to an Adult Carer Support Plan or a Young Carer Statement. It also relaxes the duty to provide a needs assessment for people who require care.

This means that as a temporary measure, local authorities do not have to undertake a full assessment for carers, or the people they care for.

This is to enable local authorities to prioritise people with the greatest needs and to avoid any unnecessary delay in providing support.

Local authorities will still be expected to do as much as they can to comply with their duties to meet needs during this period and these amendments would not remove the duty of care they have towards an individual's risk of serious neglect or harm. The duty to provide social care support and carer support will remain in place.

Constitution Secretary Michael Russell said:

"The bill does not remove the obligation on local authorities to provide care; it removes the obligation to undertake a full assessment, if that assessment cannot be undertaken in such a way that will expedite the delivery of social care. If there is a difficulty in the bureaucratic system, the provision will reduce that"

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

The ECST will continue to offer an ACSP via telephone or consultation through NHS Near Me in order to capture information, identify carers who are at risk of crisis and offer support. Where appropriate, a carer support payment can be made following the completion of an ACSP.

3) How do I set up an Emergency Plan for the person I care for?

Carers who do not already have an Emergency Plan in place may also 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 the coronavirus outbreak. It will also be important to make sure that you have key information about the person you care for easily available – so that anyone taking over their care has all the information they need. Where carers and family and friends are unable to provide essential care for someone, they should contact Social Care Direct.

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

Please contact the ECST if you would like assistance with setting up an Emergency Plan.

4) Can I get a Carer's Emergency Card from Social Care Direct?

Social Care Direct are running a reduced service due to the coronavirus pandemic and will not be processing Emergency Card applications until further notice.

Source: *Jacqueline Walker, Social Care Direct, 30/03/20.*

A temporary emergency card can be provided until the service resumes. Please contact ECST for further info.

5) Can I still access short breaks?

Over the coming weeks it is inevitable that short breaks services will not be running as normal, if at all. Many organisations are looking at how they can deliver things differently. Shared Care Scotland have started to pull together a list of short breaks for strange times. These include everything from online courses, virtual museums, exercise programmes, read-alongs, and websites for children and young people, as well as support services that are delivering online. Visit the Shared Care website for further details:

<https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/resources/short-breaks-for-strange-times/>

Source: <https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/factsheets/coronavirus-covid-19-sources-of-advice-and-help>

6) I am financially struggling – is there any funding I can access to help?

Families and individuals in Scotland facing emergency situations can apply for a Crisis Grant from their local authority through the Scottish Welfare Fund. An additional £45 million for the Scottish Welfare Fund has been announced, which more than doubles the current £35.5m Fund.

To find out more about the Scottish Welfare Fund and how you might apply visit <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/scottishwelfarefund> or phone 0131 529 5299.

The Scottish Government have been working with the UK Government, Energy UK and Ofgem to ensure energy suppliers support vulnerable customers, particularly those on prepayment meters who may struggle to top up their account. We would urge people who are having difficulties topping up their pre-payment meters to contact their supplier in the first instance, all of whom have committed to taking extra steps to support customers at this time.

We would advise anybody concerned with their fuel bills to contact Home Energy Scotland on its free phone number, 0808 808 2282, or online [here](#)

Source: <https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/factsheets/coronavirus-covid-19-sources-of-advice-and-help>

7) Will my Carer's Allowance be affected?

Changes have been made by The Scottish Government to carers benefits to make sure carers' can continue to access support such as Carers Allowance, paid for by the DWP during the coronavirus outbreak.

Carers will continue to receive Carer's Allowance from the DWP, even if they are no longer able to provide the required 35 hours care in person because they, or the person they are caring for, are ill or self-isolating as a result of COVID-19. This means that care such as cooking meals and then delivering them, or providing emotional support over the phone will count towards the 35 hours of care.

Rules have also been relaxed so ensure that a carer who is not able to provide 35 hours of care because they, or the person they are caring for, are ill or self-isolating, their Carer's Allowance will continue to be paid.

Carers may also be able to receive support from the UK Government, such as Universal Credit and financial help available for the self-employed. We would encourage anyone in need to apply for all of the support to which they may be entitled.

Carers in Scotland in receipt of Carer's Allowance on the qualifying date of 13 April 2020 will also receive a Carer's Allowance Supplement payment of £230.10 in June.

Source: <https://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/news/changes-to-carers-benefits>

8) The person I care for has a long term health condition and is high risk from coronavirus. Should they be shielding?

The Scottish Government has information online for people who are shielding and their carers which includes details of support organisations. People who have been asked to "shield" are those at the very highest risk and specific arrangements have been made to offer support. Click [here](#) for information on shielding. There are a range of support lines that have been set up to support people who are shielding and their carers to help ensure there is help with practical issues. Click [here](#) for more information on these organisations. If you or the person you care has not been included in the shielded category but you feel that they or you should be, you should talk to your GP.

As noted above, for those at high risk without family or community support, a national helpline has also been set up: **0800 111 4000** to help offer support with practical issues such as shopping and picking up medicines and to link individuals with other support in their communities.

Specific information has been produced by NHS Inform to give advice for people with specific medical conditions. Click [here](#) to read more. If you feel you need more information about coronavirus but do not have symptoms, there is a free general information helpline which can be reached on **0800 028 2816**. The helpline is open from 8.00am to 10.00pm each day.

Source: <https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/factsheets/coronavirus-covid-19-sources-of-advice-and-help>

For further information about accessing support with shielding in Edinburgh please contact the City of Edinburgh council on 0131 200 2388.

9) I am concerned about transmission of coronavirus between myself and the person I care for. Can I access Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

This is a developing area of support and protocol is being devised. If you caring for someone who has symptoms or is high risk from coronavirus and would like to know if you can access Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), **contact the Edinburgh Carer Support Team on 0131 536 3371 for further information.**

Source: *Madeleine Martin, Interim Carer Service Development Manager, 22/04/20.*

10) What help is available for feeling stressed and anxious during the coronavirus pandemic?

We know this is a difficult time for everyone's mental health and wellbeing, and the strain for carers can be even more so.

It is perfectly normal to feel worried during exceptional and frightening times such as this. However, if you are starting to feel overwhelmed, it's important to acknowledge your feelings and speak to someone you trust, whether that's a friend, a family member, your GP or a helpline such as Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87 or NHS 24 on 111.

The [Breathing Space website](#) has a range of information about mental wellbeing and links to other organisations. It also provides information on accessing their support if you require BSL interpretation.

The [Mental Health Foundation](#) provides generic advice including information on e.g. staying connected with family and friends; being active; tips on stress management and on keeping a daily routine. [Click here](#)

For children and young people, [Young Scot](#) have published an online resource containing advice, and also links to other help and support.

For those suffering with an eating disorder, support and advice can be found [here](#)

For those with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), tips on how to keep well can be found [here](#)

People with autism or carers of people with autism can contact [Scottish Autism](#) who provide advice via email and a call-back service.

If you are feeling stressed or anxious, consider how you feel when you have constant exposure to media coverage and graphic news stories. Although it is important to stay informed, consider taking a break if you feel things are getting on top of you.

NHS guidance encourages individuals who are displaying symptoms, and their families, to self-isolate. It is important that you try and stay as connected to your friends/family and co-workers as much as possible via Skype, email, video-calling and telephone.

Social media can be an excellent way to keep in touch with your loved ones. However, as with news coverage, you should be mindful of your use of social media. Use it to promote positive interactions, and put your device away if it starts to negatively affect your mood. Many smartphones allow you to set time limits for certain apps such as Facebook or Instagram.

It is important to maintain, where possible, your normal daily routine. This means going to bed at the same time every night and waking at the same time each morning, maintaining a

healthy diet and staying physically active.

Getting a good night's sleep is crucial for feeling emotionally healthy the next day. We all feel better after a good night's sleep. Think about creating a consistent routine to ensure you get the amount of sleep you need, but also about ensuring your bedroom is quiet, dark, and a relaxing environment to sleep in.

If you know someone who is self-isolating, contact them by telephone to offer a chat and to ask if they need anything brought to them. If you know a person who lives alone and who has no access to a telephone, you can help by safely reaching out to ensure they have what they need to survive this difficult time.

Source: <https://www.carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/factsheets/coronavirus-covid-19-sources-of-advice-and-help>

Further help with reducing stress and anxiety can be accessed by downloading the Feeling Good app from the Foundation for Positive Mental Health:

<https://www.foundationforpositivementalhealth.com/>

Use the following username and password to access the app:

Username – **coboost1** Password – **positive**

Source: <https://www.foundationforpositivementalhealth.com/>