

Carers Handbook

A guide to help people who support a family member, partner, friend or neighbour



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Section 1 – About this Handbook

This handbook is published by City of Cardiff Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.

The handbook provides basic information on most things carers need to know. More detailed information can be provided by the organisations mentioned throughout the handbook or from the websites below:

www.cardiff.gov.uk/carers

www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/carers

www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/information-for-carers

Every effort has been made to make sure the information in the handbook is correct and up to date.

A Carers Directory entitled “Do you look after someone?” is also available. The Directory has details of a number of organisations that support carers and is kept up to date by the Vale Centre for Voluntary Services. If you would like a copy, it can be downloaded from the websites mentioned above or call OneVale on 01446 700111 or the Patient Experience Team at Cardiff & Vale UHB on 029 2074 5307 / 029 2074 5692.

Details of organisations mentioned in this Handbook can also be found either on the internet or local phone directories.

Is this Handbook for you?

If you help a relative, friend or neighbour with household tasks e.g. shopping, personal care e.g. bathing or medical care e.g. reminding them to take their medication, then you are a carer. You don't have to live in the same house as the person you care for to be their carer, but they must live independently and not in a residential or nursing home. Carers are not paid a wage to provide support but can be in receipt of benefits or allowances.

This handbook has been written for carers aged 18 or over, caring for someone aged 18 or over. If you are a parent or guardian caring for a child under 18, please contact your local Children Services department:

Vale of Glamorgan - Contact One Vale on 01446 700111

Cardiff Children's Access Point on 029 2053 6490

Are you a young carer?

Young carers are children and young people under the age of 18 whose lives are affected in some way by caring for another person, usually a family member. Many young carers have the same responsibilities and face the same issues as adult carers. Caring can affect their lives as children. It can lead to limited opportunities, education problems, bullying, lack of understanding from peers, isolation, and health and emotional difficulties. They also worry that if they talk to someone, their parents may get into trouble, they will be separated from their families or their family will be broken up.

For further information contact:

Vale of Glamorgan - Contact One Vale on 01446 700111
Cardiff Children's Access Point on 029 2053 6490

Section 2 – Getting help from Social Services

In order to obtain help from your local social services department, you and the person you care for may be offered an assessment of need. The person you care for may have an assessment called an Integrated Assessment. As a carer, you are entitled to have your needs considered and this is called a Carer's Assessment.

Carer services are always linked to the person cared for, so if you care for someone who lives in Cardiff then you need to contact City of Cardiff Council. Likewise if the person you care for lives in the Vale of Glamorgan, then Vale Council is the appropriate council to contact.

What happens first?

When you contact social services either for an assessment for the person you care for, or for you as a carer, you will be asked for some basic information. If it appears that the person you care for needs community care services they will be offered an assessment of their care needs. If it appears that you are providing regular and substantial care to that person, you should be offered a Carer's Assessment. Even if the person you care for is refused an assessment or chooses not to be assessed themselves, you can still request a Carer's Assessment.

Unified Assessment

A social worker or health professional will assess the needs of the person you care for. This is called an Integrated Assessment. As their carer, you should contribute to this assessment. As a result of the assessment, a Care Plan may be put together. This will list the needs of the person you care for including what and how services will be provided to meet those needs. The support that may be available includes:

- help with personal care,
- a place in a day centre,
- aids and equipment for daily living,
- respite to give both you and the person you care for a break.

Carer's Needs Assessment

You have a right to request a Carer's Assessment if you are providing unpaid, regular and substantial care to someone. The assessment looks at your needs as a carer. Support can include:

- access to training
- information on carers events
- a break from caring
- signposting or referral to other services

To request a Carer's Assessment call Contact One Vale on 01446 700111 if you care for someone living in the Vale of Glamorgan.

If the person you care for lives in Cardiff call the Contact & Assessment team on 029 2037 5520.

Children and Families Assessment

Children and young people under the age of 18 who have care needs, or carers under the age of 18 (young carers) are assessed under a different system than adults, but the process should allow for the same outcomes. A personal plan should be produced for each child in the family, both for those who need care and those who carry out caring responsibilities.

Parents who care for a disabled child under the age of 18, are also assessed under this system. However, if you do not think your needs were considered during that assessment, you have the right to request a separate Carer's Assessment, particularly if your needs in relation to education, employment and training were not addressed.

For an assessment contact:

Vale of Glamorgan - Contact One Vale on 01446 700111
Cardiff – Children's Access Point on 029 2053 6490

Eligibility Criteria

The council aims to provide its services to those in the greatest need. To do this it uses eligibility criteria. An Integrated Assessment looks into people's care needs and the risks to their independence, safety and well-being. The risks are assessed as critical, substantial, moderate or low.

If the risks are critical or substantial and could be managed by providing care services, then the person is eligible to have those needs met. Eligibility is not based on income but on a person's need for support and relates only to the person you care for.

Eligibility for services for carers currently varies in Cardiff and the Vale and this will be explained during the Carer's Assessment. A new law being brought in by Welsh Government in 2016 will change eligibility for carers and will ensure all local authorities follow the same criteria.

If you or the person you care for are assessed as not being eligible for health or social care you will be offered advice and information about other support from voluntary and private organisations.

Paying for Services

If the person you care for is assessed and is eligible to receive services, then they may have to contribute towards the costs. You cannot be asked to contribute towards services for the person you care for, but if you are married to them or you are their partner, any joint income and savings will be taken into consideration. Costs of services vary, however charges are based on their ability to pay and they may be entitled to a free service.

The financial assessment is not mandatory but without having one, the support will need to be paid for in full, subject to a maximum charge of £55 per week for non residential community based services (£60 from April 2015). There is a capital threshold which is reviewed annually, and in some cases the support will need to be paid for in full. It is worth bearing in mind that not all capital is treated in the same way. For these reasons, it is recommended the person you care for has the financial assessment.

If the person you care for is paying in full for their services, they can choose not to use those offered by social services but to find care themselves. The Vale Council has a directory of care services which can be obtained by calling Contact One Vale on 01446 700111.

Direct Payments

Direct Payments offer a way in which people can make their own care arrangements. Instead of receiving services through the council you can choose to receive the money and buy the services elsewhere. This gives you and the person you care for more choice and control.

There are certain restrictions on Direct Payments. The person completing either the Integrated Assessment or Carer's Assessment will be able to give more advice and refer to you to a Direct Payments Officer if appropriate.

If you no longer want to provide the same level of care

At no point should it be assumed that you are willing and/or able to continue to provide care, either at all, or at the same level you currently provide it. Therefore during both the Integrated Assessment and the Carer's Assessment you should always ensure that social services or health are aware of what type and level of care you are willing to continue to provide.

Any care that is needed but that you no longer wish to provide, must be considered when putting together the package of care for the person you care for.

Telecare

Telecare refers to a range of services and devices that enable vulnerable people to live with greater independence and safety in their own home.

Telecare devices usually link to the 24-hour a day, 365-days a year monitoring centre in either Barry or Cardiff, where trained operators are quickly alerted to an accident or emergency and take appropriate action. This may be by contacting the emergency services, contacting a nominated carer or relative or simply by providing assistance and reassurance via the monitoring equipment.

Alternatively, the Telecare service may be directly linked to a personal carer or relative, or may be 'stand alone' (e.g. an automatic reminder to take medication).

Telecare is available to any member of the community, of any age, who would like to feel safer, more protected or more secure in their own home. This may include:

- People with disabilities
- People living with serious chronic illnesses
- People leaving hospital following major or minor surgery or illness
- People who simply wish to have greater personal security

More information on Telecare can be obtained by ringing C1V on 01446 700111 or 029 2087 2087 in Cardiff.

Protecting vulnerable adults

People who need care and support have to trust everyone that they rely on for help. We know that abuse can happen and that it can take many forms. It may be carried out by any one of a range of people including:

- family
- friends
- neighbours
- paid staff
- carers
- volunteers
- other service users or strangers.

Abuse is anything that harms another person.

Those who are vulnerable and unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation may be at particular risk. They may be vulnerable due to physical disability, mental ill-health, a learning disability, age or frailty.

If you are being abused or you think that someone else is being abused, do not assume that someone else is doing something about it. You could tell someone you trust. This could be, your advocate, your family, a doctor, a nurse, someone from your church, a police officer, a care manager or social worker.

For the Vale call Contact OneVale 01446 700111

For Cardiff call the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Team on 029 2053 6436.

If you need to make the call out of hours, the number for both Cardiff & the Vale is 029 2078 8570.

If you believe that a crime has been committed, you should contact the police.

Section 3 – Getting help from Health Services

Health services to help you and the person you care for are available through your GP, hospital and community health services. There are a number of ways you can access these services.

GPs/Primary Care

- Register yourself as a carer with your GP practice – a note on your medical record can explain why you need home visits or have certain health issues.
- Find out if your GP surgery has a Carers Champion.
- Book a double appointment – this will give you and the person you care for more time with your GP.
- Home visits – you have a right to a home visit if you or the person you care for are unable to get to the surgery.
- Prepare for an appointment – writing down questions before you go means that you won't forget to ask anything.
- Providing the best care – if you are not confident about helping with medical care you can ask at your local surgery for extra training.
- Health and Wellbeing courses are run by the local health board for carers and people with long term health conditions, covering managing pain, tiredness and emotions (see section on Support Available).
- Flu jabs – you may be entitled to a free flu jab if you register your caring role with your GP.
- Request a puncture-resistant 'sharps box'.
- Ask your District Nurse about collections of clinical waste.
- GP out of hours service – available when the surgery is closed. The number is on your surgery answer machine. If you need face-to-face treatment and cannot get to the clinic, request a home visit.
- NHS Direct Wales – a 24 hour telephone advice and information line staffed by nurses and health information advisers. Contact 0845 46 47. The website also has a lot of information on local organisations that can help you as a carer or the person you care for www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk.

Prescribed Medications

It is likely that the person you care for will be on prescribed medication. If you are involved with helping the person you care for with their medication you should ask your GP for advice on what has been prescribed. All prescription medication also comes with an information sheet which gives details on the medication and its potential side effects.

If you still have questions, talk to the pharmacist when collecting the prescription. They will have detailed knowledge, and will also advise on any over-the-counter medications that should not be taken at the same time as prescription medication.

If you are administering the medication, speak to your GP or a district nurse for advice. You should never be asked or expected to do this without some guidance.

Hospital Care

Hospital appointments

If you have more than one hospital appointment, try arranging them for the same day. Contact details will be on the appointment card or letter. If you need to, you can book an ambulance to attend an outpatient appointment (see Transport section).

Caring for someone in hospital

If the person you care for is in hospital, you can be involved in their care or let the hospital staff take charge. Ward staff can let you know how to help and give information about treatment or particular health conditions.

Both University Hospital of Llandough and University Hospital of Wales have Information and Support Centres which can provide a range of advice and information to both patients and carers. Ward staff will be able to give you more information.

Hospital Discharge

It is best to start planning discharge as soon as possible after the person has been admitted. A plan of action outlining what, who and how care is to be provided will be drawn up. This is called the hospital discharge plan and helps ensure everything is in place by the time the person you care for is ready to leave.

The ward staff should involve you in decisions about discharge. They should give you a leaflet – Planning Your Discharge – which will explain what will happen.

The discharge plan may include:

- the expected date of discharge
- what happens on the day of leaving
- any assessments required
- arrangements for transport home
- care package
- equipment
- changes to the home
- contact with health professionals or outpatient appointments.

If you are not happy with the support agreed or put in place, tell the person organising the discharge. Staff should never make assumptions about the type and level of care, if any, that you are willing or able to provide. If you do not think your needs are being taken into consideration, tell the ward staff and if necessary, ask them to contact the hospital social work department.

If the person you care for requires discharge directly to a care home, under Cardiff and Vale UHB's 'Choice Protocol', you are entitled to be fully involved throughout the process.

Age Connects Hospital Discharge Service

Age Connects run a free hospital discharge service for people over 60 years old. This is in addition to, and does not affect, any other support you are offered. Contact them on 029 2068 3693.

If you are finding it hard to cope

Even with the arrangements in place you may find it hard to cope. Don't carry on in silence, as you may be able to get more support. Contact your GP, social services, care co-ordinators or Community Psychiatric Nurse for more advice.

Section 4 – Support Available

If you are finding caring at home increasingly difficult you may benefit from extra help in the home, a break, or consider residential or nursing care. For more information about what care options are available request an Integrated Assessment from social services for the person you care for. If you prefer not to have an assessment and are able to cover the costs yourself, you can contact a care agency directly. If you do not wish to approach social services you can contact an organisation relating to the illness of the person you care for to provide information, advice and support. Details of a range of organisations can be found in the Carers Directory (see 'About this Handbook').

Domiciliary Care (help in the home)

This may include help with personal care for the person you care for, like dressing, washing, using the toilet, getting out and about, preparing meals or help with domestic tasks. Domiciliary care may be available through social services when the person you care for has an Integrated Assessment (see 'Getting help from Social Services' section). If you or the person you care for can cover the full costs, prefer not to be assessed by social services, or want additional care to that assessed, you can contact an agency in the Vale Council's Directory of Care Services directly. If you live in Cardiff, call the Contact & Assessment Team for more advice on 029 2037 5520. Domiciliary care is for the person you care for, and therefore they may be financially assessed.

Respite/Sitting Service (short breaks)

Respite offers you a break, with someone else looking after the person you care for and, in some cases, taking you out of the caring situation. Respite can either take place in your own home or elsewhere. You can obtain respite through being assessed by social services or directly contacting a respite agency listed in the Vale Council's Directory of Care Services. Respite is also available through some voluntary organisations.

Respite is considered a service for the person you care for, and therefore they may be financially assessed.

Residential and Nursing Care

If you are unable to continue caring at home, you may consider residential or nursing care for the person you care for. Nursing homes offer a high level of support for people with complex health care needs or challenging behaviour. Residential homes offer a lower level of support for people who are more independent.

You can ask social services to assess the person you care for and they will then assist you to find a nursing or residential home and possibly help with fees. If you can, or want to cover the costs yourself you can still ask social services to assess the person you care for, to identify their needs and to help you manage this process.

If you don't want to involve social services, you can contact a home directly through the Vale Council's Directory of Care Services or go on www.chooseacarebed.co.uk which details the current care homes in Cardiff and the Vale, with details of any vacancies. Each home has separate assessment procedures. The Care and Social Services Inspectorate also provides information about care homes and they can be contacted on 0300 062 8888.

Carers Wales has produced a publication on choosing a residential or nursing home. To request a copy, contact them on 029 2081 1370. Age UK also publishes a number of factsheets and checklists to help people choose a care home (www.ageuk.org.uk).

Extra Care

People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes and their own front doors with care and support available on site. Extra Care Housing is also known as 'very sheltered housing', 'assisted living', or simply as 'housing with care'. It comes in many forms, including blocks of flats, bungalow estates and retirement villages. It is a popular choice among older people and can be an alternative to a care home.

Supported Living

For younger disabled people there are various alternatives to residential care, such as supported or independent living schemes. For more information contact Disability Rights UK on 020 7250 3222.

NHS Funded Care

If the health care needs of the person you care for cannot be met by social services then they may be entitled to a package of care provided by the NHS. This includes accommodation and nursing support provided at home or in a nursing home. For more information contact your GP/social worker or, if the person you care for is in hospital, the ward staff.

Specialist Services and Support

There are also many organisations that provide specialist advice, information and support depending on the needs of the person you care for. Details for some of these organisations can be found on the internet or in the Carers Directory (see 'About this Handbook' section).

Counselling

Counselling is an opportunity to talk with someone trained to help you see things in a different light and find ways to help you cope or make positive changes. You can discuss almost anything, for example retirement, loneliness, anxiety, stress, painful family relationships and grief. Some GP practices have counsellors attached to their surgeries, or they can signpost you to a counsellor in your area.

Support Groups

You may find it useful to meet with others who have experience of being a carer. Support groups provide an opportunity to meet other carers, share advice, information, tips, and a chance to relax and make friends. Some groups are open to the cared for person as well. Many specialist organisations run support groups including those which are age appropriate or culture specific and their details can be found in the A-Z Directory.

Carers Training Days

The Vale of Glamorgan Council runs a number of training days specifically for Vale carers throughout the year. They include stress management, manual handling, first aid and managing challenging behaviour. For information or to register for a course contact the Carers Development Officer on 01446 704604.

Health and Wellbeing Courses

The NHS Education Programme for Patients and Carers (EPP) runs free health and wellbeing courses for people living with a long term health problem and for carers.

They provide a variety of courses, including a course of 6 sessions of 2½ hours each, an introduction course for 4 hours or carers workshops.

For more information contact 029 2033 5403.

Primary Mental Health Support Service

The Service offers two open access courses “ACT-ion for Living” and “Stress Control”. For more information ring 029 2090 6210.

Carers Events

A variety of events are run for carers throughout the year. Details can usually be found on the websites given in the ‘About this Handbook’ section.

Carers Newsletter

Both the Vale and Cardiff Council produce quarterly newsletters for carers. They outline upcoming training courses and events, provide information on new and existing services, and any other items that are felt to be useful to you as a carer. To be added to the mailing list for the Vale newsletter call 01446 704604. Cardiff’s newsletter is automatically sent to carers known to Health & Social Care.

Housing Support

For information on Housing in the Vale of Glamorgan contact the Supporting People Team on 01446 709793. For Cardiff either call into the Advice Hub at Marland House or phone them on 029 2087 1000.

Advice and Information

Sometimes getting the right advice at the right time is all that you need. There are a variety of ways to find the information you need, including this Handbook and the Carers Directory.

City of Cardiff Council has Community Hubs where you can go to get a range of advice and information on a range of council services. To find out where your nearest Hub is, go to www.cardiff.gov.uk/hubs or call C2C on 029 2087 2087.

There are also information points in both University Hospital of Wales (Heath Hospital) and University Hospital Llandough. For more information on these Information and Support Centres, contact the Patient Experience Team on 029 2033 5468 or 029 2074 5359

The Vale of Glamorgan has a contact centre 'Contact One Vale' (C1V).

Other Services

Following a Carer's Assessment you might be able to get other services to help you continue caring or to be able to go to work, take part in leisure activities or continue with some form of education. You will need to discuss this with the person completing the Carer's Assessment with you to decide what would help you. See "Getting help from Social Services" section.

Section 5 – Work and Leisure

Working Carers

You may want to carry on working for financial reasons, as well as to have time away from your caring role. Extra support from social services, voluntary and statutory organisations and your employer may make it easier for you to balance working and caring.

You may not feel comfortable talking to your employer about your caring responsibilities in case you are seen as less able to do your job. But employers value skilled, experienced and committed members of staff, so it is in their interest to accommodate your needs. The ways in which your employer may be able to help include:

- allowing you to ring home to check on the person you care for,
- a guaranteed parking space,
- ability to go home during lunchtime
- flexible working/job sharing.

Legislation called the Work and Families Act allows carers the right to request flexible working.

If you need to take a short period of time off work you may be able to take special or compassionate leave, and extended periods may be taken as unpaid leave or a career break. This allows you to keep your options open and return to your job. However, working part-time or taking unpaid leave can affect your redundancy or maternity rights. You can discuss balancing working and caring with your manager, personnel officer or union representative.

Carers UK have produced a leaflet entitled, "Supporting Working Carers: a carer's guide". Visit www.carersuk.org for more information.

Adult Education and Training

You may want to train because you are thinking of returning to work and want to top up your skills, learn strategies for looking after yourself or for leisure. There are many ways to learn, for example distance-learning, courses on the internet or day/night school. The Open University, for example, has funding for carers via its Carers Project. If you don't want to commit yourself to a course, there are a range of taster sessions you can try which are usually free or low cost. Check the local press and library for details or contact your local Adult Education Centre.

Volunteering

If you would like to work, but don't want to commit yourself to employment or training, you might like to consider volunteering. This provides an opportunity to gradually introduce you back to work and build your confidence and skills. For more information contact your local volunteer bureau.

Health & Leisure

It may not be at the top of your list of priorities, but it is important that you look after your own leisure interests, health and well-being. Taking time out for yourself can be difficult when you are a carer, but finding just a small amount of time to yourself can help you cope better.

Exercise and Leisure Opportunities

The list below outlines a few ideas of opportunities available.

- Cinema Pass – if you accompany a disabled person to the cinema you may be entitled to a cinema pass. There is a small annual administration cost but you are then entitled to free cinema entry. For more information call 0845 123 1292 or visit www.ceacard.co.uk.
- Exercise Referral Scheme – A 16-week activity programme designed to your needs. During the 16-week programme activities within the Councils' leisure facilities are charged at a concessionary rate. You have to be eligible for the scheme and referred by your GP. Contact your GP surgery for more details, or if you live in the Vale you can contact the Vale's Exercise Referral team by calling 01446 403000.
- Active Cards – City of Cardiff Council offers discounted activities at their leisure facilities. If you are receiving benefits you may be entitled to a card. Contact Connect 2 Cardiff on 029 2087 2087 for more information.
- Free swimming for people over 60 – available at council run leisure centres. To register take along proof of age to your local pool.
- Walking in the Vale – A great way to relax and possibly something you and the person you care for can enjoy together. Short, guided walks are organised by Valeways at various locations all year round. Contact on 01446 749000.
- Walking for Health is a series of organised led walks throughout the city, designed to encourage Cardiff's residents to exercise more. Contact on 029 2087 3633 for more information.

Section 6 – Money Matters

Financial Help – Benefits

You or the person you care for may be entitled to financial help depending on age, needs and income. You can either contact organisations directly or seek advice from an independent organisation such as Citizens Advice Bureau. The Department for Work and Pensions has a freephone confidential helpline for disabled people and carers on 0800 88 22 00.

You may also be able to get financial support through charities and benevolent organisations that offer loans and grants to help pay for items and services other schemes will not fund. These are listed in “A guide to grants for individuals in need”, available from Barry and Cardiff Central Libraries. You can also get support from your local Credit Union, a non-profit financial co-op where you can save money and have access to low-cost loans.

Benefits for you and the person you care for

There are a number of benefits that both you, or the person you care for, may be entitled to. Benefits can be complex and regularly change and because of that, we have not included them in this Handbook.

To ensure you are both receiving all your entitlements and getting all the financial support available to you, it is worth getting in touch with organisations such as City of Cardiff Council Advice Hub, Citizens Advice Bureau, Age Connects etc who have specialist advisors who can help you with this. Details can be found in the Carers Directory (see ‘About this Handbook’ section).

If you live in Cardiff, you can get help from the Council’s Advice Hub in Marland House. You can contact them on 029 2087 1000.

Section 7 – Legal Matters

Carers sometimes need to take responsibility for the financial and legal affairs of the person they care for. Planning ahead can save time, effort and money. Things you may need to take care of include:

- Benefits – you can either become an ‘agent’ or an ‘appointee’. Contact the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Bank and building society accounts – accounts can be changed to joint accounts or you can take out a ‘Third party mandate’. Contact the relevant bank or building society.
- Lasting Power of Attorney – This is a legal procedure which enables you to give someone else responsibility to make decisions about financial and health matters. For more information contact the Public Guardianship Office on 0300 456 0300.

Making a Will

A will is a written record of what happens to a person’s property and finances after they die. A person can write their own will, however if it is not done properly, there can be problems. Most solicitors will help draw up a will.

Legal Advice

Free legal advice is available from organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau who offer weekly drop in sessions in the University Hospital of Wales. The Legal Services Commission can help locate free or low cost legal information and advice services, put you in contact with a specialist solicitor, help you access aid (help towards legal costs), produce information sheets and offer a independent and confidential telephone helpline on 0845 345 4345.

Legal Rights for those caring for someone with mental health issues

If you need information on caring for someone with mental health issues can contact Hafal on 029 2056 5959 or 01446 733331. If the person you care for has a dementia, contact the Alzheimer’s Society on 029 2043 4960.

Section 8 – Maintaining and Adapting Your Home

Aids and Adaptations

Using special equipment and adapting where you live can make it easier for you to care for someone at home and for them to continue living there. Help is available through a social services assessment, health services, and voluntary organisations. The person you care for can be offered an Occupational Therapy assessment as a result.

The aids and equipment that can be provided include easy-grip cutlery, walking sticks, commodes, bed raisers, crutches, grab rails, hoists, orthopaedic shoes, risers, chairs, scooters, walking frames, wheelchairs, and adjustable beds. All of these items of equipment can assist with everyday living.

You can get aids and adaptations through:

- **Social Services** - the councils' Occupational Therapy Service work with people of all ages who have a substantial and permanent disability and they will also look at your needs as a carer. Therapists address everyday activities in people's homes that disabilities make difficult or impossible and look into ways of resolving the difficulties.
- **Health Services** – free on loan. However, you need to be referred by a GP or nurse to the Community Physiotherapy Department.
- **Shops** – there are a number of mobility shops where aids and equipment for daily living can be purchased. These are listed in the phone book.
- **Free Ads** – you can find second-hand equipment for sale in local papers or disability magazines. You should make sure that the equipment is in good condition and will suit your needs.
- **British Red Cross** – they loan items such as wheelchairs, backrests, bath seats, bedpans, commodes, walking sticks for a small fee. Contact 0844 412 2756 for more information.

You or the person you care for may be able to get a grant to pay for or contribute towards the cost of repairing, improving or adapting your home.

Some aids and adaptations can be collected via the Joint Equipment Service. Contact 029 2087 3676.

Some grants are means tested or have conditions attached, so make sure you understand before agreeing to any work. Some of the housing grants available include:

- **Disabled Facilities Grants** – for disabled people and their carers to make homes more suitable to live in. A Disabled Facilities Grant requires an assessment by a qualified Occupational Therapist. These are then dealt with by Vale of Glamorgan Council's Housing Department or the Disabled Facilities Service in Cardiff.
- **Housing Assistance/Housing Renewal Grants** – depending on the area you live in, this assistance could cover bringing a property up to a reasonable standard of repair and includes insulation, structural improvements, heating, fire precautions or a conversion.
- **Home Safety Grant** – these are available from the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Housing Section to assist in making your property safer, to avoid falls and accidents.

NEST

Nest is the Welsh Government's fuel poverty scheme. It aims to help reduce the number of households in fuel poverty and make Welsh homes warmer and more fuel-efficient places to live. Contact 0808 808 2244.

Care and Repair

Care and Repair is a voluntary organisation which works with carers and older or disabled homeowners. They help them remain at home by carrying out repairs, improvements and adaptations such as installing handrails, building an adapted bathroom or mending a dripping tap. They can also help with applying for grants and loans, filling in forms, arranging estimates, monitoring work and offer advice and support. For more information contact your local office: Cardiff on 029 2047 3337 and Vale of Glamorgan on 01446 704308.

Section 9 – Transport

Getting out and about can make a big difference to carers. An Integrated Assessment for the person you care for should address mobility needs. The mobility component of Disability Allowance can be used towards the motability scheme.

Blue Badge Scheme

This provides parking concessions for people with certain disabilities. For more information contact Cardiff's C2C on 029 2087 2087 or Contact One Vale on 01446 700111.

Travel to outpatient appointments

You can book an ambulance for either you or the person you care for to attend an outpatient appointment either through your GP practice or through the Non-Emergency Transport Centre. If you are booking transport for the first time, call 0800 32 82 332 between 8.30 am to 6 pm on weekdays. To book subsequent appointments, this can either be arranged by the clinic or you can call 0300 100 00 12 between 8 am and 5 pm weekdays.

To qualify for transport from the regional centres, you or the person you care for will need to meet certain criteria, for example you need a stretcher for the journey, you need continual support to walk or you receive regular dialysis or cancer treatment.

Entitlement will be established when you contact the transport booking centre; if you are not granted hospital transport you will be offered contact details for alternative transport providers.

Community Transport

There are schemes that can help you:

- **Voluntary Emergency Service Transport (V.E.S.T)** – a service for elderly, disabled and housebound people as well as community groups. They also run a dial a bus service which takes people from their homes into Cardiff City Centre. Contact them on 029 2049 0325.
- **East Vale Community Transport** – a service for local organisations, mainly for disabled and older peoples' groups, however anyone can use their services. Contact them on 029 2070 5138.

- **Greenlinks** - Transport for all in the rural Vale of Glamorgan. A seven seater people carrier and a 13 seater mini bus with access for all are driven by volunteers, where and when you want transport.

To book transport call the freephone number 0800 294 1113. You must book 24 hours in advance.

- **Dinas Powis Voluntary Concern** - provides a support service to individuals, groups and organisations, in particular the elderly and people with disabilities who seek to improve the quality of life. Part of this service is the provision of community transport. For more information please ring on 029 2051 3700.

Public Transport

Traveline Cymru provides up to the minute information about bus and train timetables, helps with planning your journey and gives advice on current disruptions. Contact on 0871 200 22 33.

People over 60 years old and disabled people are entitled to free travel on all local bus services in Wales and certain cross border services into England. If the person you care for cannot travel on their own, they can apply for a companion bus pass where a person can travel with them for free. Contact the Vale Council on 01446 700111 or City of Cardiff Council on 029 2087 2087 for more information.

Shopmobility

Shopmobility provide powered wheelchairs or scooters and manual wheelchairs to people with limited mobility, enabling them to shop and use other facilities in a town or city centre. For more information contact the Shopmobility.

Motability

The Motability Scheme enables disabled people to obtain a car, powered wheelchair or scooter simply by using their government-funded mobility allowances. The scheme is open to anyone who receives either the Higher Rate Mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance or the War Pensioners' Mobility supplement.

Section 10 - Caring for someone who is terminally ill

The level of care you choose to provide for someone who is terminally ill is a personal decision. Talk to your GP, social worker or relevant voluntary organisation for help and advice. If any of your care needs are likely to change you can request an Integrated Assessment and/or Carers Assessment. You may also be entitled to financial help.

There is a faster process for claiming certain allowances for people with a life expectancy of less than 6 months.

Making Arrangements in Advance

You or the person you care for may not initially want to talk (or think) about making any end of life arrangements. However for some people it can be of comfort. You may wish to discuss the funeral arrangements, if they have a will or donor card, and where their documents are kept.

Emotional Support

This will be a difficult time for everyone, and even though you will be thinking about the person you care for, you must also consider your own needs. Sometimes it's useful to be able to talk about issues to someone who isn't a member of your family or a friend. Counselling is a way of talking through your feelings and looking at ways of coping with the situation. Organisations such as Marie Curie have a service to support carers of people with terminal illness and George Thomas Hospice Care may also be able to provide support.

When the Person You Care For Dies

While it may feel as though there are many things to do, it is still important to give yourself time to deal with your emotions. Even if you felt you were prepared, you may still be in shock. If you would like to talk about your feelings contact Cruse on 029 2022 6166 who offer free help to people who have suffered bereavement. They also have a free young person's helpline on 0808 808 1677.

Registering the Death

When a person dies at home, their GP or GP out-of-hours service will need to be contacted to get a Medical Certificate and Formal Notice. In certain circumstances the death might need to be referred to the Coroner. If so, the Coroner's officers will advise you what happens next.

The death needs to be registered within 5 days at the Registrars Office. They will provide a certificate of Burial or Cremation for the funeral director and a death certificate, which may be required for dealing with the person's finances.

Tell Us Once

Most local councils run a service called Tell Us Once - it lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go.

Your local registrar will tell you about using Tell Us Once and give you a unique reference number to access the service online or by telephone. You may be able to use it at the time you register the death.

When appropriate, Tell Us Once will notify:

- HM Revenue and Customs
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
- Passport Office
- Local authority

You will have to let the relevant organisations know about the death yourself if your local register office doesn't offer the Tell Us Once service or you choose not to use it.

Using Tell Us Once will help you to notify all organisations of the death but is no guarantee that everyone who the deceased was known to will be informed. Be prepared to receive a phone call or mail addressed to the deceased. This can be an upsetting experience but most organisations informed of the situation will understand and amend their records if you ask them. If you do not wish to do this yourself ask a friend or relative to help as it will help avoid any future contact.

Paying For the Funeral

Before paying for the funeral, find out if there are any arrangements in place, like a scheme or prepayment plan. Funerals can be expensive, so work out how much you can spend before you start the arrangements. As funerals can be paid out of the deceased's estate, banks and building societies will often release money in advance. Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to get help to pay for the funeral costs through a funeral payment available from the Department for Work and Pensions.

If you can't get help paying for the funeral, you can ask the funeral director if it is possible to pay in instalments.

Changes for You

If you were being supported financially by the person you cared for, you may be able to apply to their estate for financial help by contacting the solicitor or personal representative dealing with the will. If you are on benefits, then their death may affect your entitlement, although you can claim Carer's Allowance for a further 8 weeks. If you shared a joint account, you can carry on using it. However, if they paid bills from their sole account they will no longer be paid so you may need to make alternative arrangements. A Lasting Power of Attorney ends as soon as the person dies, so you will be unable to conduct business on their behalf.

If you lived in their home, their property will become part of the estate and passed to the people named in the will. However, if the person you cared for lived in social housing, their partner, husband or wife can usually inherit the tenancy and stay in the home. If you would like to talk to someone, please call one of the carers' organisations who can refer to a relevant organisation.

Section 11 – Emergency Situations

Emergency Duty Team

Both Cardiff & Vale social services departments provide an emergency service outside normal office hours. The service only deals with situations that cannot wait until the next working day.

The service can be called if you or the person your care for is in urgent need, or you want to report your concerns about a vulnerable adult or child in need of protection.

If it is a medical emergency you must phone an ambulance or your GP.

The Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on 029 2078 8570 and are available:

Monday – Thursday 5.00 pm – 8.30 am

Throughout the weekend from Friday 4.30 pm until Monday 8.30 am

Bank holidays 24hrs

Emergency Card Scheme

Many carers worry how the person who relies on them would cope if anything happened to them. Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan councils have set up the Emergency Card Scheme to help alleviate these worries. If something should happen to you, such as an accident or sudden illness, the card can alert the emergency services that someone relies on you who cannot manage without help.

The Carers Emergency Card is a credit card-sized card that you carry at all times. Whoever finds the card will be directed to the helpline and reference number on the card. Social services will hold emergency contact details which are taken when you register for the scheme and, with a brief phone call, can arrange help for the person you look after. When registering, you will need to provide social services with the details of what you want to happen in this situation. If you don't have anyone to stand in for you, local social services teams can make arrangements if the person you care for would be at risk if left alone. The card is only used when you are unable to make arrangements yourselves.

In the Vale call 01446 704604 to join the scheme and in Cardiff call 029 2037 2037.

Section 12 – Making a Complaint

If you are unhappy about any of the services you are receiving you should tell someone. You have a right to complain. All the organisations supporting you or the person you care for, including the council, the Health Board, your GP, the Department for Work and Pensions and all the service providers should have complaints procedures. Most organisations have leaflets or booklets that tell you how to make a complaint and how they will try to resolve the problem.

If you can't resolve the problem with the organisation involved, then for care providers you can contact the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales on 029 2047 8600. For public sector organisations you can contact the Ombudsman on 0845 601 0987.

If you have a complaint about the services provided by Cardiff or Vale councils, call the number below and ask to speak to their Complaints Officer.

Cardiff Council – Connect 2 Cardiff - 029 2087 2087

Vale of Glamorgan Council – Contact OneVale - 01446 700111

If you are unhappy with the treatment or care you receive from Cardiff & Vale UHB, make a complaint as soon as possible to senior staff on duty at the time of the incident or the appropriate ward, hospital or community manager. Otherwise contact a member of the Complaints Department on 029 2074 4095. You can also e-mail concerns@wales.nhs.uk, or write to the Chief Executive, Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board Headquarters,, University Hospital of Wales, Heath Park, Cardiff CF14 7XB.

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Community Health Council

The Community Health Council is an independent NHS 'watchdog' that represents the interests of local patients and the public in the NHS.

They provide a free independent client-led advocacy service that covers all aspects of NHS treatment and care. The level of support you require is tailored to your individual requirements.

The CHC will assist patients, and or their representatives, to access information about concerns and offer advice on the options available. They will also support patients, and/or representatives, to forward their concerns to a health organisation for investigation. Contact them on 029 20377 407 or advocacy@cavogchc.org.uk.