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Take care of yourself this Christmas

Sarah looks after her husband and often has family round at Christmas, so it is a busy time for her with her caring role.

"Every year, I dread and look forward to Christmas at the same time, it can be stressful and a lot of work for me. Here are some of my ideas for dealing with Christmas.

Try and plan as much as you can in advance, particularly if the person you look after likes or needs routine.



I find it helps to think about and agree an approach in good time before Christmas. Speak with your family and friends about how you're going to approach Christmas as well as discuss any worries or concerns you have. Everyone being on the same page (or as close as you can be) can help alleviate stress, reduce conflict and help the festive period to run smoothly.

Don't be afraid to ask for help. As a carer it's essential you try and get a rest and some time for yourself over the Christmas period.

If you've got friends and family who could help, even for a couple of hours, ask them. Many people don't realise the impact caring can have on you and may be able to offer support if you explain.

Talk to other carers who will understand, you may be able to get comfort and support by communicating with carers in the same situation. There are online chats and forums available over Christmas such as Carers UK and Health Unlocked Care Community. It can be cathartic to write your thoughts and feelings down.

Find out in advance which local services are available over Christmas. If you think you may need local services, contact them or look on their website to find out their Christmas opening hours. Think about pharmacies and GPs surgery opening times to make sure you've got all the medication you need to see you through to the New Year.

Treat yourself through the festive period. I have a special shelf just for me which has Christmas goodies, candles, my favourite chocolates, biscuits and toiletries.

Think about having a complete break and do something you enjoy, even if it is for a few hours. If you haven't got anyone who could help, or the person you look after needs more intensive care, consider using a replacement care service." (Read more about taking a break on pages 10 and 11).

Key numbers for urgent support

Adult Social Care. 0345 6080191, 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week including Bank Holidays. Same number for Emergency Duty Service

National Domestic Abuse 24-hour helpline: 0808 2000 247

Samaritans 24-hour helpline: Call free from any phone: 116 123

The Sussex Mental Healthline 24-hour helpline: 0800 0309 500

NHS 111: For less serious health issues, call free from any phone

Our Carer Support Workers can help you plan for a care emergency. Call us ahead of Christmas on 01323 738390.

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Welcome to this edition of

CareLine

Welcome to the Winter 2021 edition of CareLine.

25th November marks Carers Rights Day, a key date for everyone looking after a relative, friend or neighbour who couldn't manage without their support. Caring is an important part of our lives and is hugely rewarding.

But it can also take its toll, so it makes sense to be informed about your legal rights and the help available – you can find out more on our website at cftc.org.uk, and please do spread the word!

With Christmas swiftly approaching, for many of us life is about to get even busier. We were delighted to include some words of wisdom in this edition from a local carer, Sarah, on how to manage the festive period and still look after you. We're also pleased to be working with the NHS to share messages on looking after yourself this winter – again you'll find plenty of information on our website or, as ever, do give us a call about this or any of the articles in this edition.

Wishing you and yours a peaceful Christmas. I hope that you can take some time this festive season to do something restful and enjoy a moment of calm.

With best wishes,

Jennifer Twist, Chief Executive



State of Caring 2021 research

Carers UK's 2021 State of Caring report is the largest and most comprehensive survey of carers in the UK, 8,500 carers and former carers took part. It has revealed, unsurprisingly, the situation for carers has significantly worsened during the pandemic, with 55% of carers still having reduced or no access to day services and a third having reduced or no access to paid care workers.

Carers are seeing an impact on their finances which are hit particularly hard. Many carers face additional costs, including on equipment and care costs and increased fuel payments. Costs are compounded by carers having to reduce their working hours or leave employment. Over a third (36%) of carers say their financial situation has worsened since the start of the pandemic. The rising cost of living impacting on carers' ability to afford their bills and live a life outside of caring is concerning.

You can read the full report at: carersuk.org. Please get in touch with us if you need information or support, we are here for all carers.



HSJ Awards 2021 finalists

We are thrilled and delighted that our work, with NHS East Sussex CCG and local GP practices, has been shortlisted for the 'System Led Support for Carers' award at the HSJ Awards 2021. Our work supports carers in Hastings identified by GP practices, so that more carers can receive the support that they need. The HSJ Awards are an accolade of healthcare service excellence in the UK.



Wellbeing session for Hastings carers

The initiative aims to improve carers' health and promote positive wellbeing, reduce carer crisis and family breakdown and deliver a consistent approach to give carers support. Carers who experience health inequalities as well as hidden carers, who are not known to local services, have been assisted through the project. The project so far has enabled 30% more carers to receive one-to-one support compared to last year.

Over 1000 entries were received for this year's HSJ Awards. The official awards ceremony will be held on 18th November 2021.

Additional help for carers

Care for the Carers is providing additional support for carers who are looking after someone with a mental health condition.

James Baker, Senior Team Leader Mental Health, and Richard Pettitt, Carer Support Worker, are an experienced mental health team working with carers and organisational partners in East Sussex. James explains more.

"The enhanced service offers further and focused support to carers who are looking after people with severe mental illness and carers who may have complex caring responsibilities and circumstances. This initiative will also enable us to reach more carers in the community and improve



Relaxing with a cup of tea

recovery and outcomes for carers and the person they care for.

Through this additional support, we are providing information and guidance that empowers and equips carers with an understanding of mental health conditions, as well as the health and social care systems that they are likely to encounter and liaise with. This knowledge can help carers to feel more confident when giving support and advocacy for the person they look after, especially when dealing with doctors and social care professionals.

We are particularly focusing on mental illness that causes significant impairment or disability, including severe depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, alcohol and/or drug misuse problems (dual diagnosis) and obsessive-compulsive disorders.

Other support for carers includes one-to-one carer clinics, peer support, wellbeing activities and improving carers skills and understanding of mental health and mental health services.



Richard at a Carers Clinic

An online mental health carers group is available on the first Monday of the month, 3pm-5pm, which will be expanded to include evening and weekend carers groups

so that more carers have the opportunity to come along. There are also twice-monthly walking carers groups in Uckfield, Eastbourne and Hastings for carers to take some time out and enjoy a relaxing walk and talk.

Carers Clinics are now running at Woodlands at Conquest Hospital in Hastings and Cavendish House, Hastings, as well as at the Shed Project in Eastbourne which runs on the second Friday of the month.

We are proactively working with our partners, Sussex Health and Care Partnership and East Sussex County Council, so that carers can be identified and referred quickly.

Both organisations have received carer awareness training from Care for the Carers."

If you are looking after someone with a mental health condition and would like support and information, please get in touch with us. Details of carers groups are at: cftc.org.uk/whats-on, or call us for more details.

Dementia support groups



Dementia support groups are a great way to relax and unwind.

Care for the Carers run three monthly specialist 'Making Memories' support groups for carers of people with Dementia.

Carers can bring the person they care for with them or come along on their own. The groups are facilitated by an experienced Carer Support Worker and are all in-person.

"I was so surprised that my husband could join in with the quiz and give answers."

The groups are a relaxed space for carers, and the person they look after, to socialise and meet others in a similar situation. Group activities include reminiscence sessions, quizzes, word games, musical bingo and musical entertainment.

Carers have told us how important the groups are to them and the person they care for, and how they look forward to going.

"It meant I could get advice from the leaders and so helpful to hear other carers and realise that my problems are the same."

"This has been a lifeline for me. Meeting and chatting with others and seeing my husband happy at the same time without the worry of what's happening with him at home."

The atmosphere at the groups is relaxed and carers say they feel comfortable, at ease and accepted, and there is a lot of fun and laughter! Carers can access information if they want to, and also share their own resources, experiences and what has helped them with other carers.

There are a variety of Dementia groups in East Sussex for people with Dementia and carers, including Know Dementia, Ivy House support group and Memory Lane, along with many other clubs and singing groups.

The Alzheimers Society has a handy online directory to find support and groups near you at: alzheimers.org.uk/find-support-near-you, or call 0330 3330804. You may have a Local Dementia Action Alliance, such as Eastbourne and Wealden, who can give information on local groups.

"It brings back memories of the past, we both enjoy when we do those activities."

Our Making Memories Dementia groups are available in Seaford, Bexhill and Hailsham and are free to attend. To find out more and book a place, get in touch.

Search for a local group to you at cftc.org.uk/whats-on and at: dementiaaction.org.uk or email: dementiaactionalliance@alzheimers.org.uk.

You can also phone us, and we can let you know about the groups in your area.

Upcoming events

There are a range of free events available for carers across East Sussex. Here's just a few, and check our website and e-newsletter for more activities, or get in touch. Funding is available for any respite activities of your choice, including the cost of replacement care.* Please contact us to find out more.

Baking for Christmas

Join Community Chef, Robin van Creveld, on 6th December for a free Stollen baking workshop. 10.30am-2pm. Learn how to make Stollen, the classic German Christmas bread. Book your place at: eventbrite.co.uk/e/cooking-for-carers-stollen-making-workshop-tickets-205162706177, call 07766 526217 or email: robin@communitychef.org.uk. When booking online, there is a £1.76 booking fee refunded upon attendance. All ingredients are provided. Workshops are held at the Covid-19 secure Lewes Community Kitchen which is close to public transport.

Afternoon tea, December

Join a complimentary afternoon tea at Mortain Place care home, Eastbourne. 7th December, 2pm-3.30pm. Contact Josh Pearmain 07776 663715 or email: joshuapearmain@barchester.com.



Afternoon tea, dates for next year

Carers who live in Wealden are invited to a complimentary afternoon tea at East Sussex National Hotel, Uckfield, on Thursday 20th January or Thursday 17th February. Both teas start at 3pm. For more information and to book, contact Hannah, 01323 738390 or email: info@cftc.org.uk.

Online Mindfulness sessions

Take some time out of your day and join online, lunchtime mindfulness sessions every Thursday at 12.30pm-1pm from 6th January through to 10th February 2022. For further information and to book your place, contact Hannah, 01323 738390 or email: info@cftc.org.uk.

Santa Stroll



What's red and white and is seen by water? A Santa Stroll at Sovereign Harbour of course! Join a Santa Stroll for four miles around Sovereign Harbour, Eastbourne, with the Rotary Club of Sovereign Harbour and raise money for Care for the Carers. 11th December, starts at 11am. Find out more: peoplesfundraising.com/event/santa-stroll. A Santa suit is included in the ticket price.

All events are on our website at: cftc.org.uk/whats-on, or get in touch.

* Thank you to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports and the Pears Foundation via Community Match Challenge.

An insight into aphasia



SayAphasia is a charity based in East Sussex, founded five years ago by Colin Lyall who lives with aphasia himself.

SayAphasia supports people with aphasia and their families to live well and raise public awareness of aphasia. Here they give their insights.

Imagine not being able to speak, read or write like you can now. Suddenly you can't order a coffee, easily share your day with someone or chat to your kids. Facebook doesn't make sense and you cannot write a letter, email or text. That's what it can be like living with aphasia.

Aphasia is caused by an injury to the brain with one in three people experiencing it after a stroke. 24/7 you've lost your language, your ability to connect, to be heard and to listen. 350,000 people are living with aphasia in the UK along with those who are caring for someone with aphasia.

Aphasia not only impacts the person who has it, but also those around them. Aphasia is different for every person, but the good news is your language skills continue to improve for years after a stroke.

When living with someone who has aphasia, conversation can be one of the trickiest things to maintain. You can't just chat like you used to. Sometimes conversation will be impossible. That is OK, just sit together, watch TV, hold hands, try to maintain a sense of humour.

Life can be hectic, especially at Christmas, but if you are having an

important conversation, make sure:

- It is at a time of day when neither of you are tired. Choose a quiet space, sit together with a cuppa, turn off the TV or radio and put your phones on silent.
- You chat as equals. Resist the urge to sneak in 'therapy'. Focus on getting the message across in any way you can and maintain a sense of humour.
- The person with aphasia does not need to speak in full sentences. None of us do in conversation, honest!
- If speaking is tricky, use a pen and paper. Help the person with aphasia by writing or drawing the most important words or ideas in your conversation such as 🏠 'town' 🛒 'shopping'. The person can then point to your words or drawings to help express their opinion.
- When discussing different options, such as a plan for the week or a present list, write and draw options. Writing or drawing options reduces some of the mental load, you don't have to remember, you can see what you are talking about. This leaves more head space for your partner to form an opinion.
- You use visual props such as calendars, photos on your phone and objects can help a person with aphasia's understanding rather than hinder their speech.
- If you have understood, there is no need to correct any mistakes. Just reply as you would to anyone else and keep that conversation flowing. If you haven't understood, repeat back what you think they mean. The person you look after can then correct you or let you know that you have understood and the conversation can carry on.

Further information about SayAphasia is available at: sayaphasia.org. Or call Firle Beckley on 07866 671604 or Colin Lyall on 07796 143118.

Stollen Christmas Recipe



Community Chef, Robin Van Creveld, has helped thousands of people improve their cookery and

nutrition skills. Robin has held baking and cooking workshops for carers during the year and here he gives his recipe for a Christmas favourite, stollen.

"Stollen is a classic German Christmas bread, usually associated with Dresden. The dough can be made with low gluten flour and is enriched with butter, sugar, egg and alcohol and spice infused fruit. This type of stollen usually has a thick vein of marzipan running through it. Bake at a lower temperature than most dough as the high fat and sugar content makes burning more likely."



Ingredients

300g plain white flour (more for dusting)
125g/ml warm milk
5g dried yeast
5g salt
1 egg
50g sugar
50g butter
150g marzipan

Fruit for stollen to be mixed in advance

125 mixed dried fruit
50ml whisky and 75ml wine or orange juice
5g cinnamon powder and 2g cardamom powder
25g almonds, chopped
50g butter (melted)

For the glaze, slowly bring to the boil the following:

30g apricot jam, 45g butter, 30g sugar and 15ml milk

To finish: Icing sugar or sugar nibs

Method

Stage 1: Sponge. In a large bowl mix together the milk, yeast, sugar and 100g flour. Mix, cover and ferment for 120 minutes.

Stage 2: Dough and ferment. Rub the butter into the remaining flour, add the salt and mix together with the sponge and egg to form a soft dough. Turn this out onto a dry surface and knead for 5 minutes. It is sticky dough, so work it quickly with wet or oiled hands. Put this back into the oiled bowl, cover with a damp tea towel or a plastic bag and allow it to rise in a warm place for 90–120 minutes.

Stage 3: Forming, proofing and baking.

Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured surface and press or roll out the ball to an oblong 20 x 30cm with the longer side facing away from you. Sprinkle the fruit and nuts over 2/3rd of the dough and gently press into the dough. Using your hands, roll the marzipan into a sausage about 20cm long. Place this at the bottom of the dough nearest to you. Roll up the dough and place seam side down with the edges gently tucked under and place seam side down onto an oiled and dusted baking sheet. Leave it to prove in a warm place until it has doubled in size again, then bake at 170°C for 35-40 minutes.

Stage 4: Glaze and decorate. Transfer to a wire rack and brush repeatedly with melted butter.

When it is completely cool, brush with the apricot glaze and dust with a lot of icing sugar or sugar nibs.

Robin's recipe for Greek Christmas Bread, Christopsomo, is on our website at: cftc.org.uk.

Taking a break

Caring can be exhausting, lonely and isolating. Taking a break from caring (known as respite), although it may seem difficult to prioritise, is important for your own wellbeing and quality of life. You may prefer a few, regular hours a week, a day here or there, a holiday or a combination of breaks. Here we look at some respite options.

Flexi-TeleCheck service

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) provides a free, flexible service for carers to take a short break for a few hours a week. The person you care for can receive a telephone check service from trained operators. Calls can be booked in advance, or on the same day, for welfare checks, prompting to eat or drink, medication reminders or a brief, informal chat to give reassurance. You can leave home for up to four hours at a time and the person you look after can have as many calls as you feel is suitable.

To access the service, register with the free Carers Respite Emergency Support Service (CRESS) if you haven't already (see Emergency respite below) and get an assessment.

Local services

The Association of Carers provide a free Respite and Befriending service, usually three hours each week. By having a regular, set time, carers can look forward to their break and plan what they want to do. The person who is being looked after can spend time with a vetted volunteer who has similar interests and experiences.

The British Red Cross offer short-term support for a person who has had a recent stay in hospital to smooth the process of settling back into a normal routine.

Sitting services can also be paid for from care providers with paid respite services in East Sussex.



Volunteers can offer free respite care

Day care centres

Day centres and clubs, run by ESCC or local organisations, offer the person you care for the opportunity to socialise, make friends and take part in activities while you take a break. They provide varied activities including cooking, singing and music, quizzes, games and arts and crafts. There are also specialist day centres, such as for people with Dementia. Transport can often be provided and there may be a charge. Search for Day Centres on the Carers Services Directory at: 1space.eastsussex.gov.uk.

Help at home

Another option is to bring in a paid care worker or personal assistant to help (also called homecare). It can be regular, perhaps weekly, or for a short period so you can take a holiday. If the person you care for needs 24-hour supervision, you can arrange live-in care. ESCC has information about homecare providers on their website, or give us a call.

Carers activities and groups

Carers can attend free activities and groups which give an enjoyable break for a few hours. Care for the Carers offer year-round activities and events such as baking workshops, walks, visits to gardens and venues, spa days and afternoon tea.

Many other free carers groups are available locally, for example, Carers O'Clock, is a monthly drop-in with lunch for carers. Carers who would like to attend carers groups, activities and events can apply to have respite and replacement care paid for,* please get in touch with us.

Emergency respite

Carers can sign up for a free Carers Card that identifies you as a carer in an emergency. The Carers Card enables you to set up a Carers Respite Emergency Support Service (CRESS) plan with ESCC which includes contact details for up to three people who could provide short-term support for the person you care for in an emergency. You can apply for a Carers Card on our website or phone us and we can help.

Local care homes

Local care homes can offer paid short-term care, medical aftercare and regular respite care, with daily enrichment activities and personalised menus.

Friends and family

Friends and family may be able to temporarily help so you can take a break. They could move into the property of the person you care for or invite the person you care for to stay with them.

Assessments

East Sussex County Council may be able to help arrange respite care. Respite care is considered a service to the person you care for and they can have their own needs assessed to find out if they meet eligibility criteria. There are a range of respite care options that could be provided to support you and the person you look after.

You can also request a Carer's Assessment from ESCC to look at the support and respite options that would help you in your caring role. Depending on your assessment, you may be eligible for a direct payment that can pay for respite care so that you can take a break.

Grants

To assist with respite care, we may be able to help you to apply for a grant so that you can take a short break, so please get in touch.

There are grants available to pay for replacement care, even if you pay for respite care, so you can look after your own health. Carers can apply for a Health Appointment Respite Grant (HARG) to attend healthcare appointments, training courses, carer engagement opportunities or job interviews.

Respite is a vast topic, and we are unable to cover everything in this article. We will be adding respite care information on our website at: cftc.org.uk, and please do get in touch with us to discuss the various options that are available, we are here to help.

Further information

Contact us about respite options and grants. cftc.org.uk. 01323 738390

**East Sussex County Council: <https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/social-care/carers>
Adult social care: 0345 6080191 (8am to 8pm, seven days a week)**

East Sussex Carers Services Directory: <https://1space.eastsussex.gov.uk>

Association of Carers: associationofcarers.org.uk. 01424 722309

British Red Cross: redcross.org.uk. 01622 690011

* Thank you to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports and the Pears Foundation via Community Match Challenge. Photo: Association of Carers.

Welcome to the latest businesses to sign-up to

The East Sussex Carers Card

The card has three functions:

- Identifies you as a carer in an emergency
- Emergency respite plan
- A discount card

View the full directory of hundreds of services, local businesses, retail and leisure attractions at:
cftc.org.uk/get-a-carers-card or call 01323 738390.
See the latest offers below. Check full details, terms and conditions on the website directory, or get in touch with us.



Eden Landscapes. East Sussex
01825 768696/07787545982
edenlandscape.co.uk
5% discount on labour costs.



Driving
Miss Daisy®
We're There For You

Driving Miss Daisy. Eastbourne & surrounding areas. 07511 134411
drivingmissdaisy.co.uk
10% off sales over £50.

With an East Sussex Carers Card you can set up a CRESS (Carers Respite Emergency Support Service) plan as part of your carer's assessment. Care for the Carers can help you to set up a CRESS plan if you do not want a carer's assessment.

Discounts for carers

If you do not wish to put an emergency plan in place but would still like to benefit from discounts for carers, apply for a Carers Card directly from Care for the Carers: **Call 01323 738390, or visit www.cftc.org.uk/get-a-carers-card**

Show or mention the Carers Card with all offers and discounts. See terms.

This card is also available to parent carers. Please note: older versions of the emergency alert card are still valid to be used for Carers Card discounts.

You can get hospital parking for £1.70 at the Conquest Hospital, Hastings, and Eastbourne District General Hospital by showing your Carers Card.

Help us to help all unpaid carers STAY WELL THIS WINTER



Be protected

Consider boosting your immunity with the flu and Covid-19 vaccines.



Be Healthy

Contact your local Carers Organisation for support and ideas on how to make time for yourself and stay connected.



Be Prepared

Plan for events which may affect your caring role and find out if you can get financial support to keep you well and warm.

If you look after a relative, friend or neighbour, we would like to encourage you to focus on your wellbeing, improve your physical health and maintain social connections. This winter there is more need than ever for you to look after yourself and the person you care for. Colds, flu and being able to stay warm at home can all affect your ability to stay well. **Contact your local carer organisation to register yourself or get information for someone you know.**

Care for the Carers East Sussex

Highlight House, 8 St. Leonards Road, Eastbourne, BN21 3UH
01323 738 390, info@cftc.org.uk, www.cftc.org.uk
Registered Charity No.1074906

Amaze - Supporting Parent Carers

Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG
01273 772289, registration@amazesussex.org.uk, www.amazesussex.org.uk
Registered Charity No.1078094



Contact us

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

I am a carer:

- ☐ Send me future editions of **CareLine** via email instead of post
- ☐ Send me **CareLine** by post
- ☐ Update my address
- ☐ Contact me about the help available
- ☐ I would like to be part of the **Carers Voices network**

I am no longer a carer:

- ☐ Reason _____
- ☐ Unsubscribe me from **CareLine**
- ☐ Send me the **"After Caring"** booklet

Please complete. Post to Care for the Carers, **FREEPOST RTAC-GURC-XUJC** Highlight House, 8 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, BN21 3UH