

### TOP TEN TIPS FOR CARERS

1. **Tell your GP you're a Carer.** It's important that you register as a Carer with your GP surgery. If they know you have caring responsibilities, they can monitor your own health more closely and support you more appropriately. In Hertfordshire you can now do this on line by completing a form that will inform your GP, Social Services and Carers in Hertfordshire at the same time – <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/care-and-carers/carers/tell-us-youre-a-carer.aspx> In Buckinghamshire you can register directly at your GP practice by asking for a form.
2. **Take care of yourself.** Carers tend to put the health of the person they're caring for first and their own health last. If you feel unwell, visit your doctor – don't put it off!
3. **Request a Carer's Assessment.** In Hertfordshire either contact Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Social Services on 0300 123 4042 or Carers in Hertfordshire on 01992 586969. They can signpost you to appropriate services and support. In Buckinghamshire please contact Buckinghamshire County Council on 01296 383204 or online - <https://www.careadvicebuckinghamshire.org/s4s/WhereILive/Council?pageId=4856>
4. **Take time out if you can** - to do the things you enjoy, whether it's to meet a friend, have your hair done, go for a walk or go to an art class. Consider accepting support from family and friends, or support services are available from various agencies such as Age UK, Turning Point / Crossroads and the Hospice's Carer Support Volunteer Service.
5. **Accept help.** People like to feel that they can help and you shouldn't feel guilty, selfish or neglectful to either ask for help or accept it. We all need help from time to time – it doesn't mean you're not managing but it will help you to manage better.
6. **Communication is key.** Be open and honest about how you want to communicate and be communicated with. Does phone or email work best or would you prefer a friend or family member to take charge? If you don't say, people won't know.
7. **There's lots of advice, information and support out there.** You may find it helpful to talk to carers in similar situations or simply to chat to other people. There are online support groups, telephone support, carer support groups as well as some very useful websites including [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org) [www.carersinherts.org.uk/](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk/) and [www.carersbucks.org/](http://www.carersbucks.org/). For those in Hertfordshire, Herts Help can find solutions to every day issues Tel: 0300 123 4044 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday.
8. **Everyone is different.** What might help one person won't help another but getting the right support will empower you and build your confidence. It's good to be aware of services but also to do what feels right for you.
9. **Financial support.** If you need advice about benefits, caring whilst working, debts or other financial concerns, in Hertfordshire you can liaise with the Money Advice Unit on 01438 843456, [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/macmillan\\_benefits](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/macmillan_benefits), Carers in Hertfordshire Carer Planning Service on 01992 586969, Adult Social Services on 0300 123 4042, or you could ask at your local council offices. In Buckinghamshire, contact Carers Bucks who can signpost you to other agencies such as **Age UK Bucks**, the **Beaconsfield Advisory Service** or one of the CABs, depending on your location. An independent solicitor can help you with a Lasting Power of Attorney if this is required.
10. **The Hospice of St Francis can help.** We offer an assessment for carers using the Carer Support Needs Assessment Tool (CSNAT). We also offer various courses including Caring with Confidence, Care Towards the End of Life for Carers, First Aid for Carers and Practical Caring for Carers which are all run in collaboration with Carers in Hertfordshire. Our Carer's Coffee support group meets once a month over Zoom. For more information contact [info@stfrancis.org.uk](mailto:info@stfrancis.org.uk) or call 01442 869550 and ask for Claire Hewitt or Melanie Stockwell or visit our website at <http://www.stfrancis.org.uk>