



For carers, By carers

When problems arise

Even in the best of situations there will sometimes be problems or times when you feel overwhelmed or unable to cope.

What carers would like to share with you

- Don't let things develop into a crisis before talking to someone and asking for help.
- Think ahead, consider what would happen if you're unexpectedly unavailable and create an emergency plan for you and the person you are caring for, with information such as their daily routine, any medication they take and when, and if possible details of who could take over the caring role temporarily. Keep this in a place where you (and anyone else) can easily access it.
- If someone offers help, take them up on it. Sharing the caring can really help.
- Carers groups and online forums and discussions can offer great suggestions for ways to sort problems and make you feel less alone. Most importantly they will offer a supportive sympathetic listening ear.
- Be honest with yourself. Is your mood affected? Are you feeling anxious or irritable or weepy? These are very natural feelings, and we have all been there. Recognise this, talk to someone you trust, it may be time to ask for help.
- It is OK to feel angry or frustrated at times. Walk away even if this is only briefly and give yourself a few moments to feel calmer.
- Try to take regular breaks from caring – some time to yourself, meet a friend for a coffee or a walk.
- When you are having a difficult day try to think about the positive times you have shared.
- A good day often follows a bad day!



Did you know?

- Carry a Carers Card, available from Alzheimer Scotland. If you are involved in an emergency or accident this will let emergency workers know you are a carer and give emergency contact details.
- Carers Scotland has useful advice and resources for creating an emergency plan, available at – carersuk.org/scotland.
- Technology can help with everyday life: e.g. GPS locators can show you where the person you care for is. Alzheimer Scotland can provide more information on this type of technology.
- The Herbert Protocol scheme can help the police find the person you care for if they go missing. Ask an Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Advisor for more information.
- Alzheimer Scotland's National Dementia Advisor Service can provide information, advice and advocacy around navigating health and social care systems and accessing support.
- Alzheimer Scotland's 24 hour Freephone Dementia Helpline can offer emotional support and signposting, call **0808 808 3000**.

"Seeking professional support is not a sign of failure – it's the opposite. Our community psychiatric nurse was excellent at foreseeing problems ahead and giving timely advice."

*"Being able to talk about your problems with someone is important.
Alzheimer Scotland's Helpline has been a lifeline for us."*

Top Tips for Carers

- Put in place as soon as possible a Power of Attorney and Advance Statement that truly reflects the wishes of the person with dementia – it's key for future proofing.
- As a carer you have rights protected by legislation.
- If you provide regular care you are entitled to a Carer's Assessment which will enable Social Services to offer you advice and support.
- Don't become isolated. Engage with family, friends and neighbours. Explain the situation to help them understand your feelings.
- Keep handy a list of important phone numbers such as for the GP, Social Work and, of course, Alzheimer Scotland.
- Keep a diary of appointments where you record all the support and advice available, and any action taken.
- Technology and apps can help people with dementia to live well and safely and can provide peace of mind for carers.
- Remember that before you were a carer you were the person's family, friend, partner or neighbour – that will never change, even as your caring responsibilities increase.
- Your own health and wellbeing are VITAL. Try to make time for yourself. Continue with your hobbies and sports. Accept help.

Contact Alzheimer Scotland for more help and information

Further information

This is one of a series of 'For Carers, By Carers' leaflets:

- Going for a diagnosis
- Helping someone with dementia to live well
- Working with professionals and services
- Going into hospital
- Moving into a care home
- Looking after yourself
- When problems arise
- Grief and loss

Email activevoice@alzscot.org or

Visit www.alzscot.org/ndcan for copies.

Useful contacts

Alzheimer Scotland's
National Dementia
Advisor Service
0300 373 5774

Alzheimer Scotland's
24 hour Freephone
Dementia Helpline
0808 808 3000

www.alzscot.org



About NDCAN

We are a national, member led campaigning and awareness raising group of current and former dementia carers in Scotland. Formed in 2011, we exist to make the voices of dementia carers heard and to raise awareness of the issues impacting on carers. Find out more about NDCAN and how to join us at **www.alzscot.org/ndcan**

'For Carers, By Carers' were first created in 2016 by NDCAN members, with funding from The Life Changes Trust, to share their knowledge to help other carers. In 2024 members reviewed and updated them.

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