

Introduction



Perhaps the most difficult thing about becoming a carer, if you are not familiar with the way health and social services are organised and delivered, is to find your way around the maze of services and knowing which are relevant to your specific situation and who to contact.

This information pack has been designed to help you find your way around and to prevent you from wasting your precious time as a carer and to reduce your stress while you may be adapting to a new situation.

The pack cannot be a complete list of everything available, but it contains useful information about social and health care services and voluntary organisations in Islington, and some services provided by national organisations.

How Islington Carers Centre (ICC) can help

ICC is the umbrella organisation for all categories of carer in Islington and for carers who live outside the borough but who care for an Islington resident. We provide a range of specialist services for carers: welfare benefits and housing advice, raising grants for respite and equipment, advocacy, on-going practical support, signposting to other services including young carers support, a number of client-based support groups, Health & Relaxation Days, information meetings, a Flexible Breaks Scheme, day trips and other social events.

Tel: 020 7263 9080

Email: islingtoncarers@btconnect.com

Website: islingtoncarerscentre.org

How Social Services can help

Social Services teams are based in the community or in hospitals and are responsible for providing you with information, assessing the needs of the person you look after and providing services to meet those needs.

Social Services may provide personal care (washing and dressing) and help with housework and shopping, disabled equipment for use around the

home through Occupational Health, a meals service if you are unable to cook, respite breaks from caring and residential or nursing home care if needed. Social Services also run an Emergency Card Scheme so that you can plan emergency provision if you become unable to look after your relative or friend for a short period. You should ask about this during your Carers Assessment.

Social Services can organise the care for you or you can have Direct Payments and organise the services you need yourself or you can have a mixture of the two.

If you think the person you care for needs support, contact Social Services and ask for a **community Care Assessment**. You can be present during the assessment. A **Statement of Need** will be produced and a **Care Package** arranged. As carer you are also entitled to a Carer's Assessment; and Social Services have the responsibility to enable you to remain in work, to study and have some leisure time.

How your GP can help

Your GP may be able to help by arranging other support services for you and the person you care for such as counselling, hospital respite, referral for continuing care (nursing care) and nursing home care, district nursing, community physiotherapy, continence services etc.

How voluntary organisations can help

These may be local or national charities which cater for a specific disability or provide information and support for yourself and the person you care for.

How the information pack is organised

This information pack provides general information relevant to all carers and some specific information depending on the type of carer you are, such as someone looking after an elderly person or someone with a mental health problem; it combines information on social and health care services and services provided by other agencies.