

Support Network

Mental Health Services

.....have you a relative or a friend who has a mental health issue? Do you provide support to them? Then this Factsheet is worth reading.

Cheshire West and Chester Council has the lead responsibility to support someone who provides care and support to a relative or close friend experiencing mental illness on a regular basis. Mental Health Services are provided on a partnership basis in Cheshire, and we work closely with other agencies such as Making Space and Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Trust in this area of work.

This Factsheet explains the support services that are available to you, how you can make contact with them should you need to do so, and how you can influence the continued development of Mental Health Services across Cheshire.

Providing Information

Family Support Workers – work across Cheshire West to provide support and information to carers referred to them by other professionals from either Community Mental Health Teams (specialist Mental Health Teams) or Primary Care Services (Community Health and Social Care Services).

The Family Support Workers role may also involve assessing your needs as distinct from those of the person that you support.

Adult Social Care & Health Factsheet G7

This may lead on to other support services being accessed to help you in your caring /support role.

Family Support Workers are able to help you in a variety of ways from providing information, sign posting on to other professionals, to assisting you to have your views and opinions listened to.

Carer Link Workers – are available throughout Mental Health Services, and Primary Care Services [e.g. GP surgeries, in patient wards, Community Mental Health Teams].

Should you need information and advice about your caring / support role then you could ask to speak with a Carer Link Worker from the service you are in contact with most often. Also look out for noticeboards on wards, within GP practices and other services, which display information about what support is available.

Care Coordinators – the person you are supporting may have a Social Worker or Community Psychiatric Nurse working with them to assist them with their mental health and wellbeing. Should this be the case this person could also provide you with information and advice that may assist you with your support role. The contact details can be found on the Care Plan of the person you are supporting. If this is not available you could contact the Cheshire West and Chester Council Helpline who would be able to identify for you the telephone number of the service you need to speak to.



Young Carers - If you are 18 or under and care and support a member of your family with a mental health problem there is help available. Looking after a relative can affect different parts of your life. It can be difficult to get homework done, get to school on time, and be able to go out with friends, or talk to someone of your own age who understands. As a young carer you have the right to advice and support, and there are specialist projects in Cheshire West which can help.

Cheshire Carers Centre – The Carers Centre provides information, advice and support services to all carers in Cheshire West e.g. people who support older people, or people with a learning disability etc.

They have access to a wide range of helpful information and contacts that may be of assistance to you in your support role.

Providing a Break

Overnight Breaks – we provide a small number of overnight breaks away for carers most in need of this type of support through working in partnership with Making Space. These breaks offer a chance to get away and relax. They are provided in hotel settings within Cheshire West.

Day Breaks – we provide within Cheshire day break opportunities for carers specific activities. This could give you the opportunity to meet other local carers, to have some space and time to focus on yourself, and hopefully also to have some fun.

Chance to Meet Sessions – Regular information sessions for new carers and existing supporters are provided by us that give you the opportunity to speak with a range of professionals involved in Mental Health Services and Health & Wellbeing promotion. Such sessions take place in each locality so

also provide you with the opportunity to meet other people with similar experiences to yourself to share your own knowledge and skills too.

Carer Support Groups – these take place monthly and are facilitated by Family Support Workers, Carer Link Workers and Carers themselves. These groups provide an opportunity to meet other people supporting someone experiencing mental ill health, as well as getting up to date information on Mental Health Service developments / issues.

Other services also have carer groups which may be of interest to you and you can discuss opportunities to meet other carers in such groups with Carer Link Worker.

Emotional Support

Emotional support for someone in a caring /support role is a very personal matter; you need to determine how such support should be provided in a way that best suits you as an individual.

Family Support Workers, Carer Link Workers and Care Coordinators can all offer a listening ear, information and support to assist you to determine how best to meet your emotional support needs.

However meeting with others in a similar position to yourself is often the most helpful, and will allow you the opportunity to add to your own natural support networks of family, friends and colleagues.

In each locality there are a range of self help groups and the Family Support Worker for your area would be able to direct you to these if this is something you wish to pursue.

Local libraries also offer information on mental health and wellbeing, so again this may be something you wish to check out with the librarian.

Carers UK will also provide information and signposting to local services. The Cheshire Carers centre has outreach workers that can offer emotional support. See Contacts section for helpful information points.

Supporting you to Maintain your own Health & Wellbeing

We recognise and acknowledge the demands placed on you in your support role, and this Fact Sheet is one way in which we hope to ensure that carers / supporters know how to access a range of information and support that could enable them to maintain their own Health & Wellbeing.

Very often when the person you support is most ill you focus on their needs as opposed to listening to what your body or mind is telling you about your own. This is a natural response to seeing someone you care for experience mental distress in all of its guises.

However if you ensure your own mental and physical wellbeing you may be more able to support the person you care for, you may find the following point's helpful:

- Keep physically active
- Eat healthily
- Drink in moderation
- Value yourself and others
- Talk about your feelings
- Keep in touch with friends and loved ones
- Get involved and make a contribution
- Learn a new skill
- Do something creative
- Take a break
- Ask for help

Cheshire Carers Fund – the Cheshire Carers Centre administer a grant to which

Carers can apply for up to a maximum of £250. You could use the money you are allocated for a hobby, leisure activity, college course etc that would also provide you with a break from your support activities.

The Carers Centre is also able to offer information and advice on concessionary arrangements for Carers at leisure centres etc. The centre can also offer you Carers Relaxation vouchers worth £25, which can be exchanged for pamper / beauty/ relaxation treatments at participating colleges across Cheshire West.

Young Carers Projects – an opportunity to meet other young carers, take part in art sessions, outdoor activities, go on day trips, go on holidays, get help with homework, have someone to listen to you and get advice and information.

PALS Service - The Patient Advice and Liaison Service aims to provide an accessible link to information about the Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Trust (CWP). It also aims to provide help with compliments, concerns, complaints and comments. This includes providing a speedy mechanism to resolve specific concerns. This can be done confidentially if necessary.

Having a Voice

There are a number of ways in which you can share your views on services received and on how they continue to develop.

To share personal views on the services the person you support and or yourself have accessed, you could do this by:

- Speaking with the professional involved [Family Support Worker, Carer Link Worker, Care Coordinator etc]
- At review meetings
- In writing to the service

Should you wish to participate in consultation forums that influence the development of Mental Health Services across Cheshire West then you could do so through the following forums:

- Carer Support Groups, the views of carers are fed in to the Mental Health Forum and to the Senior Manager for Mental Health Services within Adult Social Care and Health Services.
- Mental Health Forums are established consultation forums and are held regularly across the county. They feedback views to other decision making meetings.
- Carers Strategy Group meets quarterly to ensure that the Carers Strategy for Mental Health Services is delivered and carers attend representing each part of the county. The carers who attend this meeting are nominated from local Carers Support Groups.
- You can also register your contact details with the Cheshire Carers Development Initiative. They will keep you informed of any events and opportunities where you can have your say on issues that matter to you.

Contact Details

Benefits & Pensions Agencies

Disability Benefits helpline tel 08457-123456

Carers Allowance Unit tel 01253-856123

Pension Service tel 0845-6060265

Carer Link Workers

Available through the service that is involved in the care to the person that you are supporting.

Carers UK

Tel 0808-808-7777 [Wed & Thurs 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 4pm] Answer machine also available

www.carersuk.org

Cheshire West and Chester Council Helpline:

0845-11-33311

Cheshire Carers Centre

Carers Helpline - 0800-085-0307

Email:

advice@cheshirecarerscentre.org.uk

Freepost – Cheshire Carers Centre,
NWW 4633A, Northwich, Cheshire,
CW9 5AN

Cheshire Carers Development Initiative

Room 18 Stanlow Abbey Business Centre
Dover Drive

Ellesmere Port

Cheshire

CH65 9BF

Tel 0151-357-2800

Email: angie.morrison@crossroads.org.uk

Making Space -Family Support Workers

Tracey Upton - Vale Royal: 01606 786710

Sue Chick - West Cheshire: 0151 357 7585

Making Space

46 Allen Street

Warrington

Cheshire

WA2 7JB

Tel 01925-571680

Website – www.makingspace.co.uk

Mental Health Forums

West Cheshire: **WCMHF**

c/o 92 Weston Grove

Upton

Chester

CH2 1QN

MIND

www.mind.org.uk

NIMHE

www.nimhe.org.uk



Royal College of Psychiatry

Helpful leaflets available from www.partnersincare.co.uk

Rethink

www.rethink.org/carers

Young Carers Projects

East Cheshire Crossroads [Macclesfield
Borough, Wilmslow, Knutsford]
Sunderland House
Sunderland Street
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK11 6JF
Tel 01625-511044
Email: ycp@crossroads.org.uk

**West & Central Cheshire [Vale Royal,
Chester, Ellesmere Port, Neston]**

St Johns Ambulance for Vale Royal young
Carers
Chester & Ellesmere Port Carers
Canal Street House
Canal Street
Cheshire West and Chester Council CH2 4EJ
Tel 01244-341499
Email: info@young-carers.sja.org.uk

PALS Service

Helen Chadwick, PALS Officer
Cheshire & Wirral Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust
Trust Board Offices, Upton Lea
Liverpool Road, Chester
CH2 1BQ
Tel:01244 364217
Fax:01244 364333
e-mail: helen.chadwick@cwp.nhs.uk

