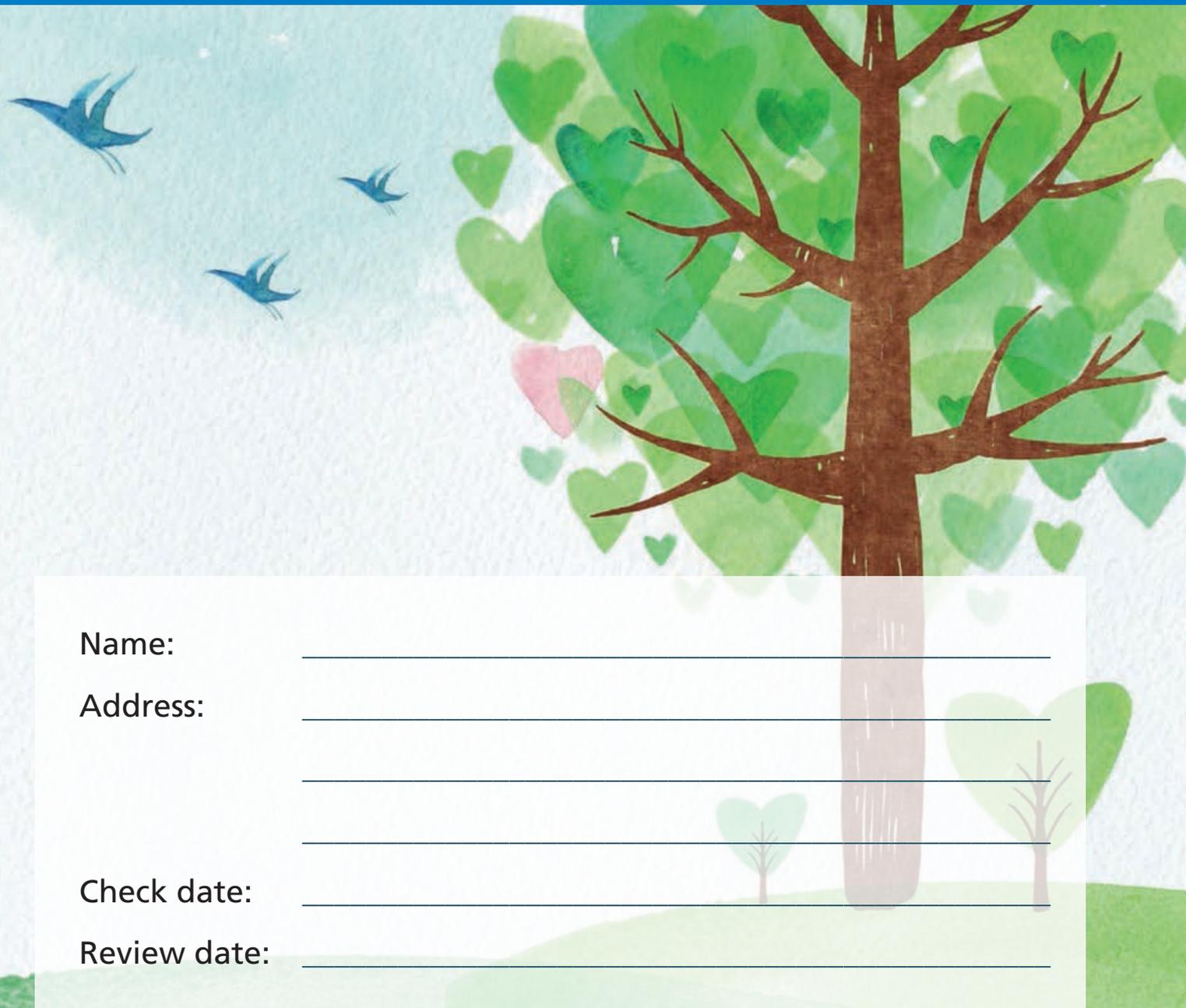


Your health and wellbeing check



Name: _____

Address: _____

Check date: _____

Review date: _____

Devon Carers Partnership





This booklet has been developed by:

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Special thanks is due to our Carer Ambassadors who have co-produced this booklet through workshops, individual and group feedback, and copy editing as the booklet has evolved.

Thanks also to all those Carers who have contributed to the development of this booklet through feedback and input since 2008.

The Carers Partnership is:

Devon County Council and NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group.

In everything we do we will take Carers into account.

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Introduction

Am I a carer?

A carer is anyone who looks after a family member, partner or friend that needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid.

People who look after others may only see themselves as a son, daughter, partner or friend, but in law they are recognised as carers. This means they can be entitled to help and support.

When we refer to carers in this document, we are only talking about adults who look after other adults. Support for young carers (up to age 18) and carers of children with additional needs is different. If this sounds like you, there is information on how to get help in part three of this booklet (p26).

We have listed the type of help and support carers give others in the checklist opposite. Look at this if you are unsure whether you are a carer.

What is this booklet for?

This booklet is a health and wellbeing check for **YOU as a carer**, and is yours to keep. It covers questions which we know are important for carers' wellbeing.

It can be difficult to take time and think about your own health when you are a carer, so this booklet will guide you through the process and give you prompts about where you might need to make changes or seek support.

This booklet is in three main parts:

A

is about **your health and wellbeing**, the way caring is impacting on you, and important aspects of life we call **outcomes**, such as being able to stay safe. *Page 8.*

B

is about **planning ahead** – thinking about how you want things to be and how to plan for them. *Page 22.*

C

is about having a healthy lifestyle, and lists **sources of information and help**. *Page 24.*

These are the kinds of things we mean by **caring**:

■ **Supporting with personal and health care**

- Skin care
- Foot care
- Supporting with and monitoring medication
- Home nursing, dressings, injections
- Monitoring and recognise changes in the health of the cared-for person(s)
- Monitoring and responding to alarms
- Supporting with end of life decisions
- Supporting with stoma care and/or dialysis

■ **Preparing meals, drinks and snacks**

- Supporting in eating and drinking, including managing non-oral feeding

■ **Supporting with household tasks**

■ **Ensuring safety and security**

- Dealing with slips trips and falls

■ **Giving emotional support**

■ **Supporting behaviour**

■ **Supporting communication**

■ **Supporting with escort or transport**

■ **Supporting family and personal relationships**

■ **Supporting access to work or education**

■ **Supporting access to health-related facilities and appointments**

■ **Supporting with recreation**

■ **Coordinating domiciliary care, professionals and care workers**

■ **Supporting with managing the cared-for person(s) direct payments**

- Supporting with finances and funding and legal matters e.g. power of attorney

Make a chart of your caring tasks. Ask Devon Carers for a format for this or make your own. This will help you plan and will help others if they have to step in for you in an emergency.



How do I use this booklet?

You can use this booklet however you find most helpful. It may be useful as a prompt to help you decide on things you want to change, or want friends or family to help with.

It might help you prepare for a conversation about what could help you as a carer, or if that's not enough, you may decide you would like a full Carer Health and Wellbeing Check with someone specially trained.

Where do I start?

The **carers' wheel** opposite has 11 areas of life for you to think about. You decide which aspects matter most to you. However, we would recommend spending some time on **section 1: Health and looking after myself**, as this is particularly important for carers.

A good starting point is to rate where you feel you are in each area of life **from**

1

(I am where I want to be) **to**

5

(I can't see where I want to be)

Each area of life links to a page or pages in this booklet with questions to help you.

You may find some questions are difficult to answer but they are worth thinking about, as they are about identifying realistic hopes and potential changes you can make to support you in your caring role.

If I am booked in for a Carer Health and Wellbeing Check, do I have to fill out this booklet first?

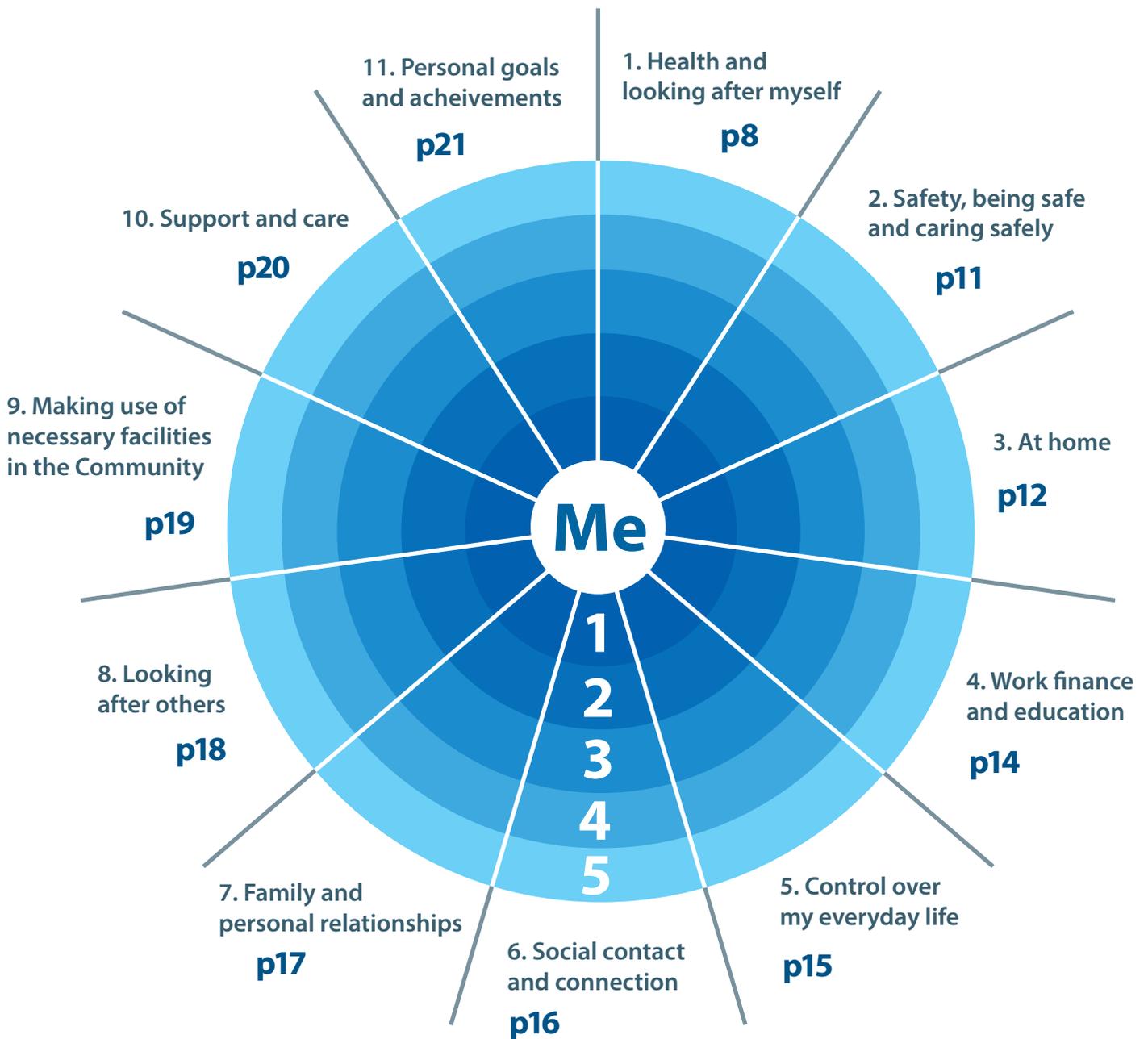
You do **NOT** have to fill out this booklet before having your Health and Wellbeing Check but if you have filled it out, it will help with the conversation.

This conversation is confidential and is with a trained person who has knowledge and skills to help you.

Don't delay your appointment if you haven't filled out the booklet because you will be covering some of the topics during the conversation. You won't be asked all the questions in this booklet, but you should raise anything you feel you need to talk about.

If you need help accessing services or information, or you need other advice or help, speak to **Devon Carers on 03456 434 435**. You can leave a message and ask them to call you back at a time that is best for you.

The Carers' Wheel



- 1** Where I want to be
- 2** Close to where I want to be
- 3** Working towards where I want to be
- 4** A long way off where I want to be
- 5** I can't see where I want to be

1. Health, and looking after myself

General health

- Is there anything about my own health that worries me?
- Is there any health-related advice I have received or am aware of that I haven't followed up?
- Can I think of times when I have followed up health-related advice and how I managed this?

Don't forget to jot down your thoughts at the end of each section



Emotional health

- During the last month have I often been bothered by feeling down, depressed, or hopeless? Yes No
- During the last month have I often been bothered by having little interest or pleasure in doing things? Yes No

If you answer **YES** to either of these questions you should talk to your GP.

Which of the following statements is closest to how you have been feeling, in the last two weeks?

I have felt cheerful and in good spirits

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> at no time | <input type="checkbox"/> some of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> less than half the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more than half the time | <input type="checkbox"/> most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> all the time |

I have felt calm and relaxed

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> at no time | <input type="checkbox"/> some of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> less than half the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more than half the time | <input type="checkbox"/> most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> all the time |

I woke up feeling fresh and rested

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> at no time | <input type="checkbox"/> some of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> less than half the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more than half the time | <input type="checkbox"/> most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> all the time |

My daily life has been filled with things that interest me

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> at no time | <input type="checkbox"/> some of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> less than half the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more than half the time | <input type="checkbox"/> most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> all the time |

I look after my own health and wellbeing

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> at no time | <input type="checkbox"/> some of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> less than half the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more than half the time | <input type="checkbox"/> most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> all the time |

Now give yourself a score out of 25 by adding up each of your answers.

0 = at no time
3 = most of the time

1 = some of the time
4 = more than half the time

2 = less than half the time
5 = all the time

My score
(out of 25)

If your score is 13 or less, or you have a score of 0 or 1 in any of your answers, you may be suffering from anxiety or a stress related condition, and you will need to talk with your GP. Take this booklet with you to help explain it.

Check ups

- **Have I been able to have the check-ups I need to keep in good health.**
For example: Dentist, Optician, Audiology (if there is a problem with hearing)?
- **Have there been times when I have kept up to date with check-ups, and how did I manage this?**

Vaccinations

Have I taken up my free flu vaccination?

Carers are entitled to a free annual flu vaccination at their GP Practice or some pharmacies. This is an important way to protect yourself and your loved one(s). If your GP Practice doesn't know you are a carer you might not get invited, so you would need to contact them.

Make a note to remind yourself in October



There may be other vaccinations and screening you should have. People who are at risk (e.g. pregnant women, people with impaired immune systems), people who are aged over 65 or over 70 may need pneumonia or shingles vaccinations. Talk to your GP Practice about this.

Screening

- **Have I missed any opportunities I have been offered for screening**
(examples of screening include bowel, cervical and breast cancer, aortic aneurysm)?
- **Have there been times when I have kept up to date with appointments and screenings, and how did I manage this?**

Healthy Lifestyle

Being a carer can make it difficult to maintain a healthy lifestyle but your health is just as important as the person you are caring for. Advice on alcohol, weight, quitting smoking, exercise and healthy eating can all be accessed online or by telephone from One Small Step (contact details in part 3).

One Small Step will give help and advice on a healthier lifestyle - p25



Use this space to make notes of any thoughts or feelings you might have, or of any actions you want to or will take



2. Safety, being safe and caring safely

- Do I feel safe caring?
- If I am worried about this, what would make me feel safer?
- Do I have worries for myself or the person(s) I care for using the bathroom, kitchen or toilet?
- Do I have any worries about moving or physically caring for the person(s) I care for, or using equipment?
Is there any pain, anxiety or risk associated with this?
- If I am worried about this, what would make me feel less worried?
- Would I benefit from advice, technology or equipment for this?
- Would I benefit from training on this?

If you are concerned about worrying behaviour from the person(s) you care for, you can contact Care Direct - page 27



The Independent Living Centre will be able to advise on this - page 29



Devon Carers will be able to help with this - page 28



3. At home

Getting around

- Do I have any worries about safely getting in and out and around my home including the stairs or steps?
- Do I have any worries like this about the person(s) I care for?
- Do I have any worries about trip hazards such as uneven flooring?

The Independent Living Centre has information on ramps and rails - page 29



Age UK has lots of useful information on falls prevention - page 31



Fire Safety

- Do I regularly use an open fire, gas fire, wood burner or candles?
- Do I have a working smoke alarm on each floor in the house?
- Does anyone smoke in the house?
- Do I have a Carbon Monoxide detector?

A free fire safety check is available from the Fire Service - page 29



Security

- Am I worried that my external doors are not secure?
- Can I identify a caller before I open my front door?
- Do I have a door chain?
- Do my ground floor windows have a key operated window lock?
- Am I concerned about cold callers, scams or unwanted calls?

Good advice on home security from Devon and Cornwall Police - page 29



Good advice is available from Citizens Advice - page 30



Home warmth and safety

- Do I have any problems keeping warm in winter?
- Do I feel the house is cold or draughty?
- Do I feel my accommodation is suitable for my needs?

Cosy Devon has advice and information on saving energy and costs - page 29



- **Do I have concerns about issues with my house or repairs that might be needed (e.g. electricity, water, heating)?**

For repairs to rented housing, the landlord is responsible.

For more advice on housing speak to your District Council - page 29.

Citizens Advice has good information on housing issues - page 30.



- **Am I worried about other environmental risks (e.g. disposal of rubbish, keeping my house and garden tidy and hygienic)?**
- **Does my caring role mean that managing ordinary domestic tasks is very difficult or risky?**

If you are undertaking more domestic tasks now because the person(s) you care for cannot, they may be entitled to disability benefits which could be used to employ someone or pay for equipment to make things easier.

If you find that the disability-related benefits of the person(s) you care for are taken up with other disability-related expenditure, it may help to hold onto proof of expenditure, e.g. invoices, bills and receipts, in case you need more support at a later date.

Trading Standards Buy with Confidence lists domestic help agencies across Devon - page 31.



4. Work, finance and education

- Am I able to take up or stay in work, or undertake education/training, if this is what I want to do?
- Have I had to reduce my hours in work, education or training, to care, or am I considering doing so?
- Am I able to manage my money?
- Do I, or the person(s) I care for, need a benefits check?
- Have I had advice on benefits for carers?

Your local Job Centre Plus can advise you on local job options – tell them you are a carer - page 29



The Money Advice Service provides free and impartial money advice - page 31.

The Devon County Council carers' web pages have advice on finance and work issues, see the resources section at the end of this booklet - page 28.

Devon Carers can put you in touch with good advice on 'what if' calculations on the financial implications of changing work commitments - page 28.

Carers UK has good information on financial aspects of caring - page 30.



5. Control over everyday life

- Do I have as much control over my everyday life as I want? Am I able to spend time doing things I enjoy or value?
- Have there been times when I have felt in control of my everyday life while I have been caring, and how did I manage this?
- Have there been times when I have been doing things I enjoy or value while I have been caring, and how did I manage this?

Talk to Devon Carers to access peer support and talk with other carers.

Talk to family and friends, perhaps it would be helpful to work through this booklet together.

A trusted neighbour might be able to lend a hand occasionally.



6. Social contact and connection

- Do I have as much social contact as I want with people I like?
- Do I feel isolated?
- Am I able to use the internet and social media e.g. Facebook and Twitter as much as I want?

Talk to Devon Carers about opportunities for connecting with other carers.

Be in touch with other carers online, through Devon Carers and Carers UK.



Devon Carers offers training on using these technologies for carers - page 28



7. Family and personal relationships

- Am I able to have the relationships I need and want with family members or other people?

You can use technology, e.g. email, Facebook or Skype to talk with family and friends at a distance.

There are opportunities for carers to learn to use technology through Devon Carers and Learndevon.co.uk - page 27.



8. Looking after others

- Am I able to care as I wish for any children or young people under 18 years for whom I have responsibility?
- Am I able to look after any other family members or any other people I need to?
- Have there been times when I have done this while I have been caring, and how did I manage this?

Devon Carers can help you think about your caring/life balance, and help you prepare a contingency plan in case of an emergency when you are not able to care - page 28.



9. Making use of necessary facilities in the community

Am I able to use facilities in the community as I wish/need to, such as:

- health related facilities, including the pharmacy
- recreational facilities or services,
- cultural or religious facilities or services?

Have there been times when I have been doing this while I have been caring, and how did I manage this?

There is no single answer to this for all carers, but you could think about:

- *Could I use technology, such as an alarm/answering service, to give me a little more time?*
- *Is there a local community service that could give me a little time to myself?*
- *What about the relationships the person(s) I care for already has/have?*
- *Could I use a delivery service for groceries or pharmacy to ease demands on my time?*

Devon Carers can help by talking through possibilities with you and advising you on more support if you need that - page 28.



10. Support and care

- How many hours care am I providing each week?
- Am I happy with the amount and types of care I am giving?
- Does anyone help me with caring or can anyone else help me with caring?
- Does anyone support me in other ways, e.g. time for a chat, help with children, time for a break?
- Is there anyone else who could or would do this?
- If there are care services coming in, am I happy with the control that I and the person(s) I care for have over this care and support?
- Have there been times when I and the person(s) I care for have felt in control, and how did we manage this?
- Have I been involved in planning the care of the person(s) I care for?
- Are there aspects of the condition of the person(s) I care for I would like to understand better, or to understand better how best to care for them?

Look at the caring checklist on page 5 – you may not realise all the care you are giving.



Devon Carers will help with information, advice and training in these things - page 28.



11. Personal goals and achievements

- Am I able to achieve the things that are important to me? Examples might include work, education or volunteering.
- Am I able to have enough time off to engage in social or leisure activities?
- Am I making use of the help available to me from family, friends, religious/cultural groups or other local organisations to plan to improve things that are not good at present?
- Have there been times when I have felt able to achieve things that are important to me while I have been caring, and how did I manage this?



My strengths

- What is good in my life now?
- Am I happy to continue in my caring role?
- Do I have care and support needs in my own right that I need help with?
- Thinking about my family, friends and community, what could help me move towards how I would like things to be?

Reaching my goals

- What are the things I most want to change or achieve?
- What am I going to do to achieve these goals?
- What do I want others to do to help me achieve these goals?

Be as honest, realistic and specific as you can. If achieving your goals seems difficult or too big, break it down into very small steps but give yourself a timescale for them. 'I am going to walk to the shops on Tuesday lunchtime' is the kind of step that is much more likely to happen than 'I am going to take more exercise.'



Planning ahead for caring

- Have I made a plan in the event that I suddenly cannot provide care? (a contingency plan)
- Have I thought ahead about the condition(s) of the person(s) I care for – are these going to change?
Am I prepared for that? Do I need a plan for that, particularly if a change might happen suddenly?
- Have I thought ahead about likely changes in my ability to care, for example through illness or getting older?
- Do I need to think about health, welfare and financial decisions if the person(s) I care for can no longer make them, for example care at the end of life decisions, mental capacity and power of attorney?

Speak to Devon Carers to make a plan that gives peace of mind.



Use this space to make notes of any thoughts or feelings you might have, or of any actions you want to or will take



Healthy living Information

Alcohol

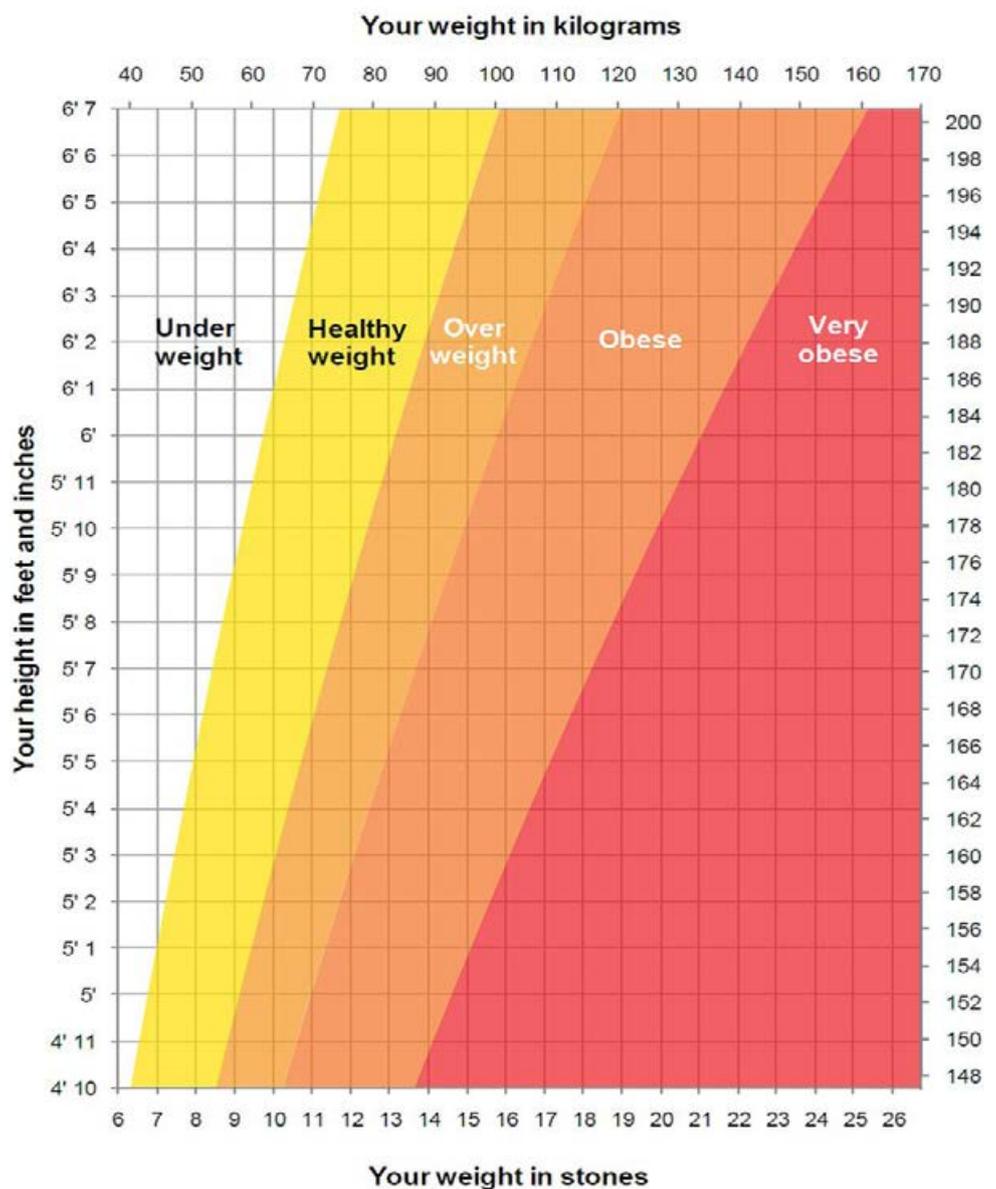
- If I drink alcohol, do I keep it to a low level, not regularly drinking more than 14 units a week?
(14 units is a bottle and a half of wine or five pints of beer or lager 5% abv)
- If I do drink this much, do I spread it evenly over three days or more?

If the answer to either question is **no**, you may want to think about reducing your alcohol intake, perhaps by having alcohol-free days.

Weight

- Am I a healthy weight?

Why not check on the chart



Smoking

- Am I a smoker?
- Do I want to give up?



If you want to quit, visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree talk to your GP, or contact One Small Step (details on p25)

Exercise

Am I getting enough exercise? The recommended amount of exercise is:

150 minutes of moderate activity
a week (walking counts)

PLUS

Muscle strengthening
exercises two days a week

Healthy eating

- Am I getting a balanced diet?
- Am I getting my five a day fruits and vegetables?
- Am I able to eat healthy, freshly cooked food?

For more support on any of these issues there is lots of information at:

www.onesmallstep.org.uk

Freephone: 0800 298 2654

01392 908 139 (Local rate)

Monday to Friday (9am-6.30pm).

Email: hello@onesmallstep.org.uk

onesmallstep 
to a healthier you

General sources of information and advice

For young carers

Please visit the Devon Carers website for information about support:

www.devoncarers.org.uk

Devon Carers Helpline: 03456 434 435

Email: youngcarers@devoncarers.org.uk

For parent carers of children with additional needs

The Single Point of Access - Integrated Children's Services

childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk

Telephone: 03300 245 321

Email: vcl.devonspa@nhs.net

1 Capital Court
Bittern Road
Sowton Industrila Estate
Exeter EX2 &FW



Devon County Council

Information is available on care and health, including a free online self-assessment giving links to information about support with the impact of disabilities on everyday life, and access to **Pinpoint Devon** - information and support services in your community.

devon.gov.uk/care-and-health

Customer Service Centre

Care Direct: 0345 155 1007 (or 0845 155 1007)

Disability Information Service: 0345 155 1005 (or 0845 155 1005)

Learn Devon: 0345 155 1014 (or 0845 155 1014)

Libraries: 0345 155 1001 (or 0845 155 1001)

General Enquiries: 0345 155 1015 (or 0845 155 1015)

Emergencies (out of hours): 0345 600 0388 (or 0845 600 0388)

Monday to Friday (8am to 8pm) and Saturdays (9am to 1pm).

Email: customer@devon.gov.uk

Check with your phone company whether 0345 or 0845 numbers are cheaper for you. Your telephone company is obliged to include calls you make to 0345 numbers in any free or inclusive minutes packages that you may have with them. Calls to 0345 numbers are also charged at the same rate as calls to standard numbers starting in 01 or 02.



British Sign Language users can contact us using an online interpreter who will relay your conversation with an appropriate member of Devon County Council staff, and then sign back to you their response to your questions. For more information:

devon.cc/bsl

Specific information resources for carers

Devon County Council

Including a free online up front guide to caring which provides personalised information tailored to your circumstances provided by Carers UK, benefits information, online training and the Jointly app.

devon.cc/carersupport

You will need to copy and paste the **Devon access code DGTL8827** (which is also on the webpage) for free access to the resources. Click where it says **log in or create a new account** and enter the code when prompted. No-one else will see your personal details and it is entirely confidential.

Devon carers

Devon Carers provides a wide range of information help and advice for carers, including:

- Training to help you care with confidence and look after yourself
- access to peer support
- help with contingency planning in case you are not available to care in an emergency and 1:1 support for help in solving more difficult problems.

devoncarers.org.uk

Telephone: 0345 643 4435

8am to 6pm weekdays and 9am to 1pm Saturdays.

There is also an answerphone if you are unable to call during opening hours.

Email: info@devoncarers.org.uk



Other local support

Find your district council

gov.uk/find-local-council

Find your local job centre

find-your-nearest-jobcentre.dwp.gov.uk

Cosy Devon

Save money, energy and make your home warmer for less for years to come.

cosydevon.com

Telephone: 0800 060 7567

Devon and Somerset Fire Service

The Fire Service offers free Home Safety Checks. A home safety visit is also available providing advice and fitting a free smoke detector if required.

dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 05 02 999

Devon and Cornwall Police

Information about staying safe from scams and fraud:

devon-cornwall.police.uk/advice/your-money/fraud

Non-emergency telephone: 101

Independent Living Centre

Information about equipment and aids. Buying guides and advice.

devon.gov.uk/ilc

Telephone: 01392 380181

Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm)

Email: ilc-exeter@devon.gov.uk

National resources

There are a wide range of national organisations who provide useful information.

The NHS

The NHS has information on health and care.
Search their website for **care and support guide**.

[nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

Carers UK

Carers UK provide information, support and advice to carers. The information and advice provided covers a range of subjects relating to caring including:

- Benefits and tax credits
- Carers employment rights
- Carers assessments and how to get support
- Services available to carers
- How to complain effectively and challenge decisions

[carersuk.org](https://www.carersuk.org)

Telephone: 0808 808 7777

Monday and Tuesday 10am to 4pm.

Response times can vary but will be within 10 working days.

Email: advice@carersuk.org

Information on financial support:

[carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support](https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support)

Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice have a wide range of information on legal and consumer rights, including cold calls, scams and unwanted telephone calls, housing issues etc.

[citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer)

Consumer helpline: 03454 04 05 06

Trading Standards

Contact the Trusted Trader scheme for help in finding local business and suppliers:

buywithconfidence.gov.uk

The Money Advice Service

Free impartial advice set up by the Government:

moneyadviceservice.org.uk

Age UK

A useful source of information for older people.

ageuk.org.uk

For falls prevention information search **falls** on their website.

Most caring organisations, such as the Alzheimers Disease Association, Parkinson's, Marie Curie, have websites and in some cases helplines with useful information about caring for people with particular conditions.



The easy way to find information and services to support you, your family or someone you care for.

- for help at home
- keeping healthy and staying active
- help getting out and about
- advice and advocacy
- money matters
- staying safe and more

pinpointdevon.co.uk

Your health and wellbeing check

Devon Carers Partnership

