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Information for people caring for a relative or friend who has ...

A LEARNING DISABILITY

Maidstone
& Malling

Maidstone
Carers
Project

Tel: 01622 685276

INTRODUCTION

If you are caring for a relative or friend it is important to know what help is available. It is not always easy to know where to go to find this information and as a carer, you will probably have little time and energy to seek it out.

The aim of this guide is to provide information which will act as a signpost to support and services in the Maidstone and Malling area for people who have a learning disability and their carers.

It has been compiled by Maidstone Carers Project with the valuable help of local carers who volunteered their time and experience.

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West Kent

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1. HELP IN YOUR HOME

The following community services may be able to support you and provide help at home to the person you care for.

The District Nurse – can be contacted via your **GP surgery**. They can give you advice, information and practical support to help with caring. They can refer you to the Rapid Response Team

The Rapid Response Team – provides the following services: visits between 6pm - 6am for people who need a nursing service during these hours. They can sometimes offer a night sitting service. Help at home to prevent admission to hospital for people who have an acute illness, also support on discharge from hospital. The service provides personal care and intensive therapy for a short period of time. To contact any of the above health/nursing services at weekends, Bank Holidays and out of hours **Tel: 01622 224117 / 24 hour line 07979 756600**

Care Agencies – range of services including:- shopping, cleaning, meals, help with getting up, washing, dressing and toilet needs. These services can form part of a care package arranged by Social Services, or can be purchased direct from the agency. **Please see 2. HAVING NEEDS ASSESSED BY SOCIAL SERVICES.** List available at www.vam-online.org.uk/carersproject.asp or **Tel: 01622 685276**

Crossroads Care West Kent – enables you to have a short break from your caring role by providing a trained carers support worker in the home. This is a free service to carers. Crossroads also accept Direct Payments [See Direct Payments in 2. HAVING NEEDS ASSESSED BY SOCIAL SERVICES] **Tel: 01622 817114**

V Team – practical, DIY and one-off gardening services for elderly, disabled and ill people on low income
Tel: 01622 677337.

Three Suttons Helpline – a voluntary good neighbour scheme in Sutton Valence, Chart Sutton, East Sutton, Langley and Kingswood. Help with transport, shopping, odd jobs, gardening and form filling.
Tel: 01622 843235/01622 842530/01622 842346

Lifeline – provides a portable alarm which can be worn and is linked to a 24 hour telephone Control Centre. If help is needed, for example, in the event of a fall or illness the control centre is alerted and they can contact services or a

relative. Maidstone **Tel: 01622 212600** or Tonbridge & Malling **Tel: 01732 781966**

Handyperson Service – provides a low cost, quality minor repairs service to home owners over 55 years or those who are disabled or vulnerable.
Tel: 01732 525520

Maidstone Borough Council – can arrange for your refuse bin/boxes to be collected from where they are kept if you have difficulty getting them on to the street because of illness or disability. To register **Tel: 01622 602162** for **Tonbridge & Malling Council Tel: 01732 876147**

Maidstone Trusted Trades Register – a register of local trades people who provide home maintenance services. Compiled from the recommendations of people who have used their services and supplied by voluntary and community groups, Parish Councils, Churches and Voluntary Action Maidstone volunteers. Contact Maidstone Carers Project for a copy **Tel: 01622 685276** or download www.vam-online.org.uk

2. HAVING NEEDS ASSESSED BY SOCIAL SERVICES

Social Services have a responsibility under the NHS and Community Care Act to assess the needs of anyone who may be entitled to receive services in order to support them living in the community. The **Kent Contact and Assessment Service [KCAS]** is the main access point for people wanting to contact Kent Adult Social Services about themselves or someone they care about.

KCAS can provide free

- Information, advice and guidance about services
- An assessment to find out if the person you care for is eligible for support from Social Services
- Equipment and minor adaptations such as raised toilet seats, grab rails and stair rails
- An Enablement Service. This is intensive short term support for up to 6 weeks. This may be to help regain confidence and skills following a fall or change in circumstances.

If only simple services are needed such as shopping or cleaning then KCAS will be able to provide information about how to contact appropriate providers. If following an assessment more complex needs are identified then a range of services may be offered which could include some or all of the following; help in

the home, day care and short breaks [respite care]. Contact with other sources of help can be made and any entitlement to benefits checked and applied for. A financial assessment of the person receiving services will be requested in order to work out how much, if anything they will be asked to contribute towards the cost of the services.

If you are caring on a regular basis it is important to know that you can also **ask for your own assessment under the Carers Act and the Carers and Disabled Children Act**. You can ask for this even if your relative or friend does not want their needs to be assessed. Social Services will then take into account **your needs** when deciding what help to offer the person you care for, or they may offer services directly to you. Carers are not charged for the services they need to support them in their caring role and a 'one off carers' payment' may be given.

People assessed as needing services or support [including carers] can choose to be given money to arrange this for themselves instead of receiving services arranged by their care manager. This is called a **Direct Payment**. To find out more contact the **Direct Payment Support Scheme Tel: 0845 365 0210**

Self Directed Support is the name given to the way social care is being redesigned so that people who get services can take greater control over them. Changes to the system will be explained by Social Services.

If the person you care for has already had an assessment but the situation has since changed and you need more help in order to cope, **ask for a reassessment**.

Even if you are unsure about whether or not Social Services will be able to help, please ask. If already receiving services from the Maidstone and Malling Learning Disability Team **Tel: 01732 525713** or **01732 525763**.

3. TAKING A BREAK **[sometimes called respite care]**

Sometimes you will need to take a break from your caring role, whether it is to go on holiday, catch up with friends and family or simply to have a rest! Having a change of scene and making contact with other people can be enjoyable for the person you care for too. Respite services may be provided in your home or elsewhere and can help you take a break ranging from a few hours to several weeks.

RESIDENTIAL BREAKS

The person you care for could have a short stay in a respite unit, residential home or nursing home.

- Social Services can help arrange this type of care see 2. **HAVING NEEDS ASSESSED BY SOCIAL SERVICES**. Following a financial assessment a contribution towards the cost of this service will be expected.

- It is possible to **make your own arrangements** directly with a residential or nursing home. You may choose to do this because you do not wish to involve Social Services or because Social Services have said the person you care for is not entitled to their help. To obtain the **Kent Care Directory of Homes Tel: 08458 247100** view on-line at www.kent.gov.uk or www.cqc.org.uk/registered-services-directory [Maidstone Carers Project can access the Kent Care Services Directory on-line for you]

RESPITE SERVICES IN YOUR HOME

Crossroads Care West Kent – see page 1 **Tel: 01622 817114**

Crossroads Palliative Care Service – provides additional support for carers of people who have a diagnosis of cancer or other life limiting illness, including the possibility of an overnight service. This is a flexible free service **Tel: 01622 817114**

If the person you care for receives services in the home arranged by **Social Services** it may be possible to increase their care package to help them remain at home while you are away for a short while. Discuss this with the assessment team.

4. HOLIDAYS

Tourism for all – Information about holidays and travel for people with special needs and or disabilities **Tel: 0845 124 9971** www.tourismforall.co.uk

Enable Holidays – provides package holidays for disabled people, their families and friends **Tel: 0871 222 4939** www.enableholidays.com

5. ACTIVITIES/CLUBS AND LEISURE

Kent Autistic Trust – provides day services for adults with autism **Tel: 01634 405168**

Adult Education – St Faith's Street Maidstone have a range of special classes to help develop skills and confidence **Tel: 0845 606 5606**

Quercus – is a mixed ability theatre company which meets weekly in Maidstone and holds regular workshops and performances. Contact Jenny or Conrad **Tel: 01622 814156**

Mencap – Senior Gateway is a weekly social club for people over 16 years
Tel: 01622 209669

Skillnet Group – support people with learning difficulties to gain skills in music production, song writing, live performance, DJing, filming, photography and graphic design. Nearest venues are Sittingbourne and Canterbury. Contact Louise **Tel: 07966 791595**

Maidstone District Partnership – bringing together all concerned with Learning Disability to have their say including people with learning disabilities, carers, professionals, friends and volunteers. The group meets regularly and feeds into the Kent Partnership Board. Contact Jenny **Tel: 01622 609284**

'No Limits 2' – night club for people over 18 who have a learning disability – meet 1st Tue of each month in Maidstone Contact Topaz Community
Tel: 01622 609284 or JJ's Tel: 01622 675123

Gems – night club [as above] also meet 3rd Tue of each month. Contact Topaz Community **Tel: 01622 609284**

Butterflies Social Club – weekly club every Wednesday evening in central Maidstone. Contact Topaz Community **Tel: 01622 609284**

Maidstone Topaz Community – a range of group activities is regularly held including bowling, cinema visits, photography walks, water safety, garden project, pub night and more. For more information contact Jenny **Tel: 01622 609284**

Pop-In – every Monday 1–4pm all welcome, different topics each week and skill sharing. For more information contact Jenny **Tel: 01622 609284**

Circle of Friends – for people with learning disabilities [Tonbridge & Malling area]. For more information contact Sophia or Trudy **Tel: 01732 875888**

Drumming Classes – [Bloco Fogo] weekly in Maidstone 7-9pm contact Matt Green **Tel: 07765 883977**

Maidstone Raiders – part of Maidstone United special needs and pan disability football teams. All adults and children welcome. Contact John **Tel: 01622 765755**

Kent Sports Development Unit – website has information about a wide range of disability sports www.kentsport.org/disability. Ask Maidstone Carers Project to help if you do not have internet access.

Leybourne Grange Riding Centre – riding for disabled people.
Tel: 01732 872844

Maidstone Swimming Club for the Disabled – weekly sessions of hydrophatic exercises and swimming **Tel: 01622 747819**

Maidstone Leisure Centre – Mote Park, Maidstone – Free swimming for people registered disabled and their carers. **Tel: 0845 155 2277**

Tonbridge & Malling Special Needs Club – a disability multi-sports club meets twice monthly at Larkfield Leisure Centre on Saturday evenings from 5-7pm. Entry for carer attending is free **Tel: 01622 719345**

Rough Guide to Accessible Britain – ideas on days out across the UK, featuring 100 accessible locations. The guide is £6.99 (inc. p & p) or free to Blue Badge Holders [£1.99 p & p] **Tel: 0800 953 7070**

Free cinema tickets for carers – people in receipt of Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance or who are registered blind can apply for a Cinema Exhibitors Card [for a small processing fee] valid for 3 years which entitles a carer to accompany them free of charge to films **Tel: 0845 123 1292**

Maidstone Reference Library – can tell you more about other special interest clubs and groups in the Maidstone area **Tel: 01622 752344**

Housebound Library Service – home delivery service for people unable to visit a library due to ill health or disability, or because they are a carer **Tel: 01622 752344**

See also Club Connect [MCCH] in next section

6. TRAINING/PAID WORK/VOLUNTARY WORK

SKILL: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities – provides information and advice on all aspects of further and higher education for students with disabilities **Tel: 0800 328 5050**

Disability Employment Advisor – training, help with access to work, including equipment, support workers and fares to work **Tel: 0845 604 3719**

Kent Supported Employment – free supported employment service specialising in assisting people with disabilities to find and be successful in employment **Tel: 01622 691640**

Club Connect [MCCH] – is designed to help individual members gain self worth, purpose and confidence within a range of opportunities from educational, employment, personal development and leisure activities
Tel: 01622 675123

Growing Concern – provides supported horticulture training and work experience for people with a learning disability. Full or part time placements in the Staplehurst area **Tel: 01580 893604**

Spadework – provides training for adults with learning disabilities in horticulture, woodwork, amenity gardening, catering, retailing and computing
Tel: 01732 870002 www.spadework.net

Volunteer Centre Maidstone – will be happy to discuss the range of opportunities available to volunteers **Tel: 01622 677337** www.vam-online.org.uk

Volunteer Centre Malling – **Tel: 01732 843346**

Gateway Volunteers – support and training to enable people to become volunteers at Maidstone Gateway to welcome the public and giving basic information. Contact Antony Wallis **Tel: 01622 677337**

7. HOUSING

Golding Homes Support Services [formally Maidstone Housing Trust] – provides the following range of services [not restricted to tenants of Golding Homes]; these services may be offered following an assessment of needs.

Sheltered Housing – offers housing related support for people with disabilities or who are over 55 and promotes independent living with the security of knowing help is at hand **Tel: 01622 212737**

Intensive Floating Support – Free housing related support to empower a person to live independently and to maintain their home environment **Tel: 01622 212738**

The Housing Group – a small group of parents interested in improving housing provision for people with learning disabilities **Tel: 01622 609284**

Kent Care Directory – lists a range of supported living providers.
Tel: 08458 247100

Maidstone Lifeline – provides a portable alarm which can be worn and is linked to a 24 hour telephone control centre. If help is needed e.g. in the event

of a fall or illness, the control centre is alerted and they can contact services or a relative **Tel: 01622 212742**

Invicta Telecare – for housing support and lifeline services in the Tonbridge & Malling area **Tel: 01732 781966**

In Touch Home Improvement Agency – Advice and financial assistance to help older, disabled or vulnerable people through all procedures involved in having renovation works or adaptations to their home, either through a grant or privately. [Owner occupiers and private tenants only.] Also a low cost **Handyperson Service** for owner occupiers or private tenants who are over 55 or who are disabled or vulnerable. Minor repairs [except electric, gas and jobs above gutter-height]. Also fitting of key safes for anyone who needs one (there is a charge for this service) **Tel: 01732 525520**

8. EQUIPMENT FOR LIVING AND CARING

If the person you care for finds some everyday activities difficult because of a disability there is a wide range of equipment that may help you both.

Occupational Therapists [OT's] - make an assessment of the difficulties and can advise you on the most appropriate equipment to help and how to use it. There are two different occupational therapy services [see below], ask your GP or district nurse which one you should contact.

Occupational Therapy Department, Maidstone Hospital [Healthcare – usually loan small personal pieces of equipment, help on discharge from hospital and with short-term needs. This is a free service.
Tel: 01622 729000 Ext 24301

Social Services Occupational Therapy Service – help with long term needs and make a full assessment including need for major alterations to the home, eg lifts, special showers, etc. They can advise on grant applications for major works [grants are means tested]
Tel: 01622 691640 [Maidstone] or 01732 525000 [Tonbridge & Malling]

Telecare – is a 24 hour remote monitoring service linked to a lifeline unit which improves safety in the home. A range of sensors can be used according to individual need eg a fall detector, temperature extremes sensor etc which detect problems and ensure prompt help is at hand. There are 3 ways to access Telecare:

- via an assessment by Kent Adult Social Services for those meeting the eligibility criteria **Tel: 01622 691640**
- via a Direct Payment [see Direct Payments on page 3]
- purchased privately – contact Invicta Telecare **Tel: 0845 601 8523**

The Wheelchair Service – Preston Hall Hospital **Tel: 01622 713018** provides suitable wheelchairs and maintenance or replacement of equipment as required. People who need a wheelchair long term [more than 6 months] or who are terminally ill are entitled to use this service. To get the service ask a professional such as a doctor, district nurse or therapist to make a referral.

British Red Cross – provides term loan of wheelchairs **Tel: 01622 758643**

Age Concern Maidstone – provides short term loan of wheelchairs
Tel: 01622 753618

Wheelchair Users' Group – provides useful information about all aspects of wheelchair use, also newsletter and fact sheets
Tel: 01303 226500

Home Equipment Loans [Helpstores] – provides equipment to people being nursed at home following discharge from hospital or being seen by a district nurse, GP or therapist. A wide range of equipment is available including beds, hoists, commodes, bedpans, sheepskins etc. There is no charge for this service **Referrals are made through a health professional.**

REMAP [Technical Equipment for Disabled People] – is a charity which provides custom designed aids for disabled people often helping with difficulties which cannot be solved by standard commercial equipment. This is a free service **Tel: 0845 130 0456**

Euro Mobility – Mid-Kent Shopping Centre Castle Road Allington, have equipment/aids to view **Tel: 01622 755744** .

4 Mobility – Medway Street Maidstone. Range of mobility and home health products [free parking on site] **Tel: 01622 754800**

Charterwood Mobility – Notcutts Garden Centre Maidstone. Wide range of mobility products
Tel: 0800 137759

County Lifestyles Mobility – 1 Harrow Cottage, Horseshoes Lane, Langley. Mobility vehicles and equipment. Home visits and advice to help save you money on equipment **Tel: 01622 863300**

BT Age & Disability Action Team – can help with telephones and adaptations for people who find it difficult to use an ordinary phone **Tel: 0800 919591**

VAT Exemption – gadgets and equipment designed solely for disabled people are zero rated from VAT. The supplier should have details but if not **Tel: 0845 302 0203** - free booklet 701/7 also available.

Hospital Communication Book – if the person you care for goes into hospital, ask staff for this book/folder, as it can be a useful aid to help the person you care for and the staff understand each other better.

9. COMPUTERS/TECHNOLOGY

Ability Net – is a national charity offering professional expertise in the use of computers for people with all kinds of disability **Tel: Freephone 0800 269545**
www.abilitynet.org.uk

COMPAID Trust – offers a range of services including assessment, advice and teaching. Also communication aid assessments for speech impaired adults.
Tel: 0845 241 2134

10. HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Patient Advice & Liaison Services [PALS] – provides information on health matters, treatments, support groups and services. PALS also help if you are having difficulties with health services. **Tel: 01622 224960** for Hospital Services **Tel: 0800 0850 850** for Community Services **Tel: 0800 587 6757** for Mental Health & Learning Disability Services.

PALS also help if you are having difficulties with health services.

Continence Advisory Service – anyone who would like to talk to a nurse about any type of urinary or bowel problems can contact this service. Clients can be seen in hospital, the continence clinic, their own home or in residential and nursing homes. There is no charge for this service. **Tel: 01622 795716**

Department of Nutrition or Dietetics – dieticians can help carers by giving general advice, advising on special diets [eg diabetes] and by supporting people who are being artificially fed. A GP referral will be required. There is no charge for this service.

Department of Foot Health – this service provides professional podiatry services for people with complex foot health needs. Service takes place in the Health Trust's Community Clinics. People who are unable to leave their home receive home visits. A Health or Social Service professional would need to ask for this service

Other Health Care Services:-

- District Nursing – see under
1. HELP IN YOUR HOME

- Occupational Therapy Services – see under
8. EQUIPMENT FOR LIVING AND CARING
- Wheelchair Service – see under
8. EQUIPMENT FOR LIVING AND CARING
- Home Equipment Loan – see under
8. EQUIPMENT FOR LIVING AND CARING
- Carers Moving & Handling Service – see under
18. SUPPORT FOR CARERS

11. EYESIGHT, HEARING AND TEETH

Kent Association for the Blind – offers a wide range of services for people who are visually impaired. Provides help and advice in all aspects of independent living including adaptations, aids, tapes, benefits, undertakes home assessments, low vision advice and mobility training. **Tel: 01622 691357**
www.kab.org.uk

Deaf Services – Social Services have specialist social work staff who can provide assessment, advice, information and support in relation to needs arising from deafness. Also assessment for, and provision of, equipment. **Tel: 01732 525393 Texphone: 01732 525394 Fax: 01732 525395**

Hi Kent – provides practical support and information for people who are deaf or partially hearing. Their Resource Centre in Brewer Street has a working display of helpful equipment. Volunteers can assist with cleaning and re-tubing of hearing aids. **Tel: 01622 691151** www.hikent.org.uk

Opticians – advice on opticians who will undertake home visits is available from Kent Primary Care Agency **Tel: 01622 655058**

Dentists – for details of dentists who provide a specialist service for people with special needs **Tel: 01622 717776 or 0800 085 0850**

Free Telephone Directory Service – for people with sight and other difficulties **Dial: 195**

Look Up – is an information service focusing on eye care for people with learning disabilities. Factsheets for carers, illustrated material and a ‘telling the optometrist about me’ form [so the optometrist knows how to communicate with a person] is available. Also a ‘feedback from my eye test’ form – so that information can be shared **Tel: 01372 755066** www.lookupinfo.org

12. GETTING OUT AND ABOUT

Free Travel passes - for people reaching the current women's pension age [60+ increasing to 65] and people with learning disabilities on all local buses throughout England between 9am-11pm weekdays [all day weekends].

Contact Maidstone Borough Council **Tel: 01622 602334**

www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk or Tonbridge & Malling Council **Tel: 01732 876322**

www.tmbc.gov.uk

Travel Voucher Scheme – Age Concern Maidstone provide vouchers for people who would qualify for the free bus pass but are unable to use buses due to severe mobility impairment. A limited amount of vouchers are allocated and exchanged as payment for taxi and community transport. **It is not possible** to have both a bus pass and travel vouchers **Tel: 01622 753618**

Disabled Persons Railcard – This is a national railcard that entitles a disabled person to travel at a reduced rate **Tel: 0845 605 0525**

South Eastern Trains– assisted travel arrangements for disabled people **Tel: 0800 783 4524 or 01732 770099**

National Key Scheme – for toilets for disabled people enables key holders to unlock all disabled toilets in the scheme. Keys cost £3.50 contact **RADAR Tel: 0207 250 3222** Also available from Age Concern Maidstone.

Changing Places [Maidstone Gateway] – fully accessible toilets for disabled people with complex and challenging needs. They include a hoist, height-adjustable changing bench and peninsula toilet for maximum access. Open weekdays 8.30-5.30 (Thu to 7pm and Sat 9-1pm). www.changing-places.org

Blue Badge Scheme – If the person you care for has serious mobility problems or is registered blind and has regular use of a car, they may be able to get a special permit for easier public parking (£2 charge).

Tel: 01622 605020 www.bluebadge.direct.gov.uk

Kent Karrier – a community bus for people within the Maidstone area who have difficulty using bus services [due to mobility problems or distance from a bus route in rural areas]. This service collects you from home for journeys to the town centre and hospital etc. It operates in different areas on different weekdays.

Dial-a-Ride – a door to door service in specially adapted vehicles for people who use a wheelchair. For journeys only within the Maidstone area. For both of these services there is a £5 per year membership fee and a subsidised charge for each journey. Carers/companions can travel with a member and only pay journey cost. **Tel: 01622 605349**

Compaid Trust run a similar service for the Tonbridge & Malling area
Tel: 0845 094 4629

Volunteer Transport Scheme – if you or the person you care for is unable to manage on a bus this service can provide a volunteer car driver who will pick you up from home and take you wherever you need to go. There is a mileage charge, the Scheme can tell you the current rate. **Tel: 01622 756662** between 9am-4pm

Volunteer Centre Malling – operate a volunteer transport scheme for people who live in the Malling & surrounding rural areas and are unable to access public transport **Tel: 01732 843346**

Hospital Transport – is for people medically unfit to travel to hospital by other means. Arrangements can only be made via the Primary Care Booking Service
Tel: 01622 791472

Hospital Fares – people on income support may get help with fares or other travel expenses and when attending hospital need to ask for a claim form at the administration office.

British Red Cross Society – transport and escort services – can provide an ambulance with two trained crew members for people needing this type of transport [eg if needing to lie down] £1.60 per mile over 50 miles plus a call-out charge of £160 **Tel: 01233 642064**

Shopmobility Scheme – [The Mall - Chequers Shopping Centre] hire of an electric scooter for use while shopping. £3 to hire and one-off registration fee. To register **Tel: 01622 678777**
Free loan of manual wheelchair whilst shopping available from The Mall Chequers Centre (pre-booking advised) **Tel: 01622 691130**

South East Driveability – practical demonstration of special car seat and hoist which aid easy access **Tel: 01622 795719**

Motability – is a scheme which enables people in receipt of higher mobility component of Disability Living Allowance [see 17. MONEY] to purchase or hire new or used cars (carer can be driver) or buy motorised wheelchairs or scooters **Tel: 0845 456 4566**

Mobilise – supports disabled drivers, passengers, Blue Badge holders, families and carers. Information and advice on all aspects of disability and transportation **Tel: 91227 832058 / 07860 591887**

Exemption from Road Tax – For cars which are solely for the use of disabled people who get the higher mobility component of Disability Living Allowance [not necessarily driven by them] **Tel: 08457 123456**

13. HELP IN AN EMERGENCY/OUT OF HOURS

Medical Help – If you are worried that the person you care for is seriously ill contact your GP surgery and a message will tell you what to do.

Call 999 for an ambulance – for a life-threatening problem like severe chest pain, suspected heart attack or stroke, serious injury, loss of consciousness, severe breathing difficulties, heavy bleeding, suspected broken bones, poisoning or drug overdose.

Falls – If the person you care for falls and is unable to get up or is in pain call for an ambulance. Ambulance staff will be able to assess for injury and safely move them. Do not be tempted to move them yourself as you could both get hurt.

District Nursing Service – if you need help or advice from your district nurse contact your GP Surgery.

NHS direct – is a telephone service staffed by nurses, giving confidential healthcare advice and information 24 hours a day **Tel: 0845 4647**

Chemists – to find out which chemist is open out of usual hours **Contact NHS Direct 0845 4647**

Social Services – for urgent advice that cannot wait until the next working day contact **Out of Hours Service Tel: 0845 7626777**

Denteline – if you require emergency out of hours dentistry or are not registered with a dentist **Tel: 01634 890300**

Gas smell or suspected leaks - **Tel: 0800 111 999**

Kent Fire & Rescue Service – offer home fire safety advice and if required installation of a free smoke alarm **Tel: 0800 923 7000**

Kent Search & Rescue – suggest when you change the clocks each year you also take a photo of the person you care for so that if they should wander off, a recent photograph makes it easier to find them and get them home safe. You can also complete a 'Life History Questionnaire' form to record information such as physical description, medical history and particularly information about

where the person is likely to wander to, so you can provide it to the Police in the event of an emergency **Tel: 01843 832 995** www.ksar.co.uk

Samaritans – provide a 24 hour listening service for anyone needing to talk to someone in confidence **Tel: 0845 790 9090**

Datalink Emergency Information Scheme – details of illnesses, allergies, medication and contact addresses are stored in a clearly labelled plastic container kept in the fridge. Identifying labels on the inside of your front door and outside of fridge alert Emergency Services that it is there. Available from Age Concern **Tel: 01622 753618**

Kent Carers Emergency Card Scheme –carers can register for a free card which, in the event of an emergency [e.g. sudden illness or accident] will alert others to their caring role. The card has a 24 hour call centre number to ring and an unique identification number which will enable the call centre to activate a pre-arranged care plan. To find out more or to register contact Maidstone Carers Project **Tel: 01622 685276** or www.kentcarersemergencycard.org.uk

14. SUPPORTED HOUSING/RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING HOME CARE

Sometimes even with help and support it is no longer possible to continue caring for someone at home. There may be a range of options available from supported housing in the community to 24 hr care in a residential or nursing home.

It is also a good idea to think about the long term needs of the person you care for and consider planning for the future.

Before making any big decisions it is important to have good information and an opportunity to talk about the options with a care manager. **See 2. HAVING NEEDS ASSESSED BY SOCIAL SERVICES**

Also see MCCH Outreach in the Community Service in Support for Carers Section [see page 20]

Social Services – will help fund the placement of anyone they assess as needing permanent residential or nursing home care if they have less than £23,000 assets. People who have more than £23,000 will be expected to fund themselves. Even so, it is still worth asking for an assessment as Social Services can advise what sort of care is the best option. If they decide long term care is needed they will help with funding when savings drop to £23,000. Social Services also provide information about registered homes in the area. www.kent.gov.uk or **Tel: 08458 247 100** for a Kent Care Directory

NHS – funded nursing care and NHS Continuing Care – if someone is assessed as needing care in a nursing home, the NHS will contribute towards the cost, up to a certain amount, depending on how much nursing care they need. People whose primary needs are assessed as being healthcare should be eligible for **NHS Continuing Care** – this means the NHS will fund their care costs. For a public information booklet **Tel: 0300 123 1002**

“The Complete Care Home Guide” – is a useful free booklet published by Counsel and Care. To get a copy Tel: 0207 241 8555 or can be downloaded from www.housingcare.org.uk

NHFA – free advice and information about how to manage your finances to meet care costs in the long term **Tel: 0800 998833**

The Care Quality Commission [CQC] – is responsible for the registration and inspection of residential care and nursing homes. Inspection reports are public documents and homes should be happy to show them to you. They can also be found at libraries and the CQC. The CQC will also investigate complaints and concerns about services from a care agency coming into your home **Tel: 03000 616161**

15. IF THINGS GO WRONG

If you have any problems with a service you receive or disagree with a decision that has been made by a professional, there are formal ways for you to try and get things changed.

Social Services – ask for an information leaflet about their complaints procedure. Contact customer care **Tel: 01732 525187**

The Patient Advice & Liaison Service [PALS] – will assist you if you are having difficulties with health services:

- Maidstone Hospital Services **Tel: 01622 224960**
- Community Services **Tel: 0800 085 0850**
- Mental Health & Learning Disability Services **Tel: 0800 587 6757**
- Ambulance Services **Tel: 01622 740348**

ICAS [Independent Complaints Advocacy Service] – provides support to people if they have a complaint regarding their National Health Service Treatment **Tel: 0845 600 8616** www.seap.org.uk/icas

Equality & Human Rights Commission – provides information about the right to equal treatment and what to do about discrimination on the grounds of disability, age, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation or race. Helpline
Tel: 0845 604 6610

Kent Health Watch - will help you find the right place to make comments or raise concerns about health and social care. It is run by KCC in partnership with the NHS and provides another route by which people can make their voice heard. The service operates 24hrs a day, seven days a week.
Tel: 08458 247103

Sometimes people with a learning disability experience bullying when out and about – this is sometimes called hate crime. **Maidstone District Partnership Group** are trying to do something about this **Tel: 01622 609284**

The Care Quality Commission [CQC] – see page 15 **Tel: 03000 616161**

If you want more information or help to make a complaint about the above or other services the following local organisations can help:-

Advocacy Partners – work with people with learning disabilities to support anyone who needs to get heard, understand their rights and to complain when things go wrong. Advocates help people speak up for themselves or will speak on someone's behalf **Tel: 0203 355 7141**

Maidstone Carers Project – 01622 685276
Citizen's Advice Malling – 01732 440488
Citizen's Advice Maidstone – 01622 752420 / 757882
www.adviceguide.org.uk

16. HELP AFTER A DEATH

“What to do after a death: a guide to what you must do and the help you can get” – is a free leaflet which explains all the practical and legal matters you will have to deal with. Available from your local Job Centre Plus **Tel: 0845 604 3719** or Kent County Council Registration Service **Tel: 0845 824 7400** [also sometimes available at the Post Office and Library]

‘Tell Us Once’ Service – when registering the death an appointment can be made where all information can be recorded to be passed on to all relevant departments and services on your behalf **Tel: 08458 247 400**

Carers UK – free booklets called ***“When a person dies”*** and ***“Life after caring”*** contain helpful advice and information **Tel: 0808 808 7777**

Maidstone CRUSE – offers a volunteer bereavement counselling service [available to anyone]. Supportive literature is also available **Tel: 01622 671011**

It may be distressing to continue receiving correspondence addressed to the person who has died. To prevent this **Tel: 0870 600 7222**

17. MONEY

The Welfare Benefits System – if you or the person you care for is on a low income there may be a range of benefits to help. These are called **means-tested benefits**. There are also **non-means-tested benefits** available for some people because of their care needs and for some carers.

Benefit Enquiry Line – information about & application forms for Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance & Carers Allowance for people with disabilities and their carers **Tel: 0800 882200**

Carers Credit – if you are of working age you can apply for a weekly Carer's Credit to protect your State Pension. You only need to be caring for 20 hours per week or more [including combined hours if you care for more than one person] **Tel: 0845 608 4321**

Help with Health Costs – people in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from health charges. People not on these benefits but on a low income may also get help. For a leaflet **Tel: 0845 850 1166**
Other benefits for people of working age **Tel: 0800 055 6688**

Some Carers & Disabled People – are entitled to a non-means tested reduction to their Council Tax – ring Maidstone Carers Project for more details **Tel: 01622 685276**

Kent Benefits Partnership – will check your entitlement for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit and will assist with claims **Tel: 0845 345 0310**

Carers UK– provide information about all the main benefits for carers and the people they look after and also have a helpline **Tel: 0808 808777**
www.carersuk.org.uk

If you are unsure whether to apply for any of these benefits or would like help to complete the forms you can get help from:-

Maidstone Carers Project – 01622 685276
Citizen's Advice Malling – 01732 440488
Citizen's Advice Maidstone – 01622 752420 / 757882

Maidstone Gateway - a one stop shop [next to The Mall Chequers Centre] for Maidstone Borough Council services as well as information and advice about housing, benefits, Kent Adult Social Services, blue badge and travel voucher applications, internet access etc. Open from 9-5 Mon-Fri.

Royal British Legion – offers advice and financial help to any member of the ex-service community who is in need [this includes dependants].

Tel: 01622 790566

Soldiers Sailors Airmen and Families Association [Forces Help] – helps on a confidential and practical basis, service and ex-service men and women and their dependants to confront problems and cope with hardship.

Tel: 01622 792929

Warm Front Grant – provides grants to make homes warmer, healthier to live in and more energy efficient. For householders on benefits because of disability or low income. **Tel: 0800 316 2814** www.warmfront.co.uk

Dealing with Someone Else's Money – if the person you care for is finding it difficult to look after their own finances there are several ways you may be able to help. 'Appointeeship' would enable you to manage their income from benefits

The Mental Capacity Act – protects the best interests of anyone lacking the mental capacity to make decisions. Useful information for carers about the Act is available **Tel: 0845 330 2900**

It is possible to plan in advance and '**Lasting Power of Attorney**' would enable you to act on behalf of the person you care for. There are 2 types, one for **Property & Affairs** for decisions about finance and one for **Personal Welfare** for decisions about health, treatment and care. It is also possible to make **Advance Decisions** sometimes called **Living Wills**. '**An introduction to the Mental Capacity Act**' covers the issues above. Contact MENCAP **Tel: 0207 696 6925** or download at www.mencap.org.uk

British Bankers Association – provide a leaflet explaining how you can open a bank account and manage money on behalf of someone who lacks capacity to make decisions **Tel: 0207 216 8800**

Community Legal Advice – gives details of local solicitors, advice agencies and information providers committed to providing a high standard of service **Tel: 0845 345 4345**

"Wills & Trusts: leaving money to someone with a learning disability" – is a helpful free booklet produced by MENCAP **Tel: 0207 696 6925** or download at www.mencap.org.uk

18. SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Maidstone Carers Project – provides information about local services and support for anyone caring for a family member or friend in the Maidstone & Malling area. Information about benefits and help to fill out forms. Carers groups offer mutual support and friendship. A regular Carers Forum enables carers to talk directly to service providers and planners. A free confidential listening ear. Free Carers Emergency Card. Free Caring with Confidence Courses for carers **Tel: 01622 685276** www.vam-online.org.uk/carersproject.asp

NHS West Kent – in partnership with **Maidstone Carers Project** is running a Pilot Project for 'Better Support for Carers in the NHS' [until March 2011]. Carer Support Workers will be working with the College Practice and Hospital sites. If you are a patient at College Practice or you or the person you care for is going into hospital **Tel: 01622 230729**

Carers Direct – NHS choices website www.nhs.uk/carersdirect provide information, advice and support for carers or call free from 8am-9pm Mon-Fri or 11am-4pm weekends **Tel: 0808 802 0202**

Work focused support for carers – a Jobcentre Plus voluntary scheme providing advice & support for carers preparing to work **Tel: 0845 604 3719**

Crossroads Care West Kent – enables you to have a short break from your caring role by providing a trained carers support worker in the home. This is a free service to carers **Tel: 01622 817114**

Crossroads Young Carers Project – provides support, advice, befriending for young carers. Also an evening break in a youth club, trips and holidays so that young carers can relax and have fun with others in similar situations. **Tel: 01622 817114**

Carers Christian Fellowship – offers regular newsletters and links to other carers, occasional fellowship days arranged. **Tel: 01793 887068**

MCCH – Outreach in the Community Service – provide an assessment service to individuals with a learning disability who live with their parents/carers and who have the potential to live a more independent life. Carers are also supported, receive regular feedback and can attend monthly support group meetings **Tel: 01622 722400**

Carers Moving & Handling Advice Service – give advice about how to move someone safely without hurting yourself or the person you are caring for. **Tel 01622 749885**

The Kiloran Trust – is a registered charity providing residential supportive 5 night breaks for carers in their West London House. For those on means-tested benefits Kiloran will try to get the cost of stay covered.

Tel: 0207 602 7404 www.kilorantrust.org.uk

Carers UK– raises awareness of carers needs at all levels of government and society. They provide a range of free information booklets and operate a carers helpline. **Carers-line Tel: 0808 808 7777** www.carersuk.org.uk

The Admiral Nursing Service – offers long-term practical and emotional support for carers of people with dementia. Admiral nurses have specialist knowledge of dementia **Tel: 01622 7725356**

Family Carer Network – a group for family carers of people with learning disabilities who meet at the same time as the Butterfly Club. Held on the last Wed of each month 7-9pm **Tel: 01622 609284**

19. SUPPORT NOT ALREADY MENTIONED

Disabled Persons Liaison Committee – a pressure group campaigning for improved access and mobility for all disabled people in the Maidstone area **Tel: 01622 661720**

SENSE [National Deaf/Blind and Rubella Association] – support group for carers **Tel: 01622 831345**

Learning Disability Helpline – information and advice on a wide range of issues for people with a learning disability and their parents and carers. **Tel: 0808 808 1111**

Kent Autistic Trust [family support] – a family support officer can provide information and support on diagnosis, education and behaviour management to families of children or adults **Tel: 01634 405168**

In Contact – confidential helpline for people with bladder or bowel problems. **Tel: 0845 345 0165**

Dial Kent – advice and information for disabled people and carers. **Tel: 01227 771155**

The Beacon Centre – provides help in the Shepway, Mangravet, Parkwood and Senacre areas. Services include; advice centre, computer skills centre & household store for people in need **Tel: 01622 661560**

Centre for Independent Living Kent [CILK]– a pan-disability charity run and managed by disabled people. They provide information on independent living and Direct Payments, support, advice and advocacy **Tel: 01622 355777**

Find a Voice – supports people with severe communication difficulties and carers. Information and advice about communication aids. Free resource library www.findavoice.org.uk

Kent Local Involvement Network [LINK] – independent network of individuals & community groups working together to influence and improve local health & social services **Tel: 07976 596709**

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation – information and support for parents and carers of people with severe learning disabilities with challenging behaviour. Family Support Line **Tel: 0845 602 7885**

Voice 4 Kent – is a campaigning ‘speaking Up’ organisation run by people with learning disabilities Contact Steve **Tel: 07903 534634** or Dawn **Tel: 0775 8660 186**

NB: Most conditions will have a national organisation which can provide useful information. If one is not mentioned in this booklet you may easily find out by searching on the internet. **Maidstone Carers Project** can do this for you **Tel: 01622 685276**

IF YOU REQUIRE FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Maidstone Carers Project – Tel: 01622 685276

20. USEFUL WEBSITES

www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

www.learningdisabilities.org.uk (General information)

www.mencap.org.uk (Mencap)

www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk (Maidstone Borough Council)

www.tmbc.gov.uk (Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council)

www.kent.gov.uk (Kent Care Homes)

www.carersuk.org.uk (General information)

www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org (for people with bladder or bowel problems)

www.kentsport.org/disability (Sports Activities)

www.kentcarersemergencycard.org.uk

www.cqc.org.uk (Care Quality Commission Inspection)

www.seap.org.uk/icas (Independent Complaints Advocacy Service)

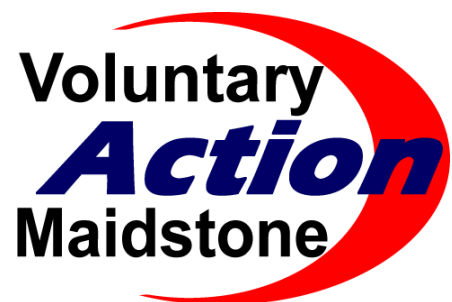
www.handsoffmyplan.co.uk (advice on person centred planning)

www.vam-online.org.uk/carersproject.asp (Maidstone Carers Project)

Other leaflets in this series

- Information for people caring for a friend or relative who is **over 65**
- Information for people caring for a friend or relative who is **under 65 and has an illness, physical disabilities or a sensory impairment**
- Information for parent-carers of **children with disabilities or special needs**
- Information for people caring for a friend or relative who **has a mental health problem**

Maidstone Carers Project
Maidstone Community Support Centre
39-48 Marsham Street
Maidstone Kent ME14 1HH
Tel: 01622 685276
e-mail: carers@vam-online.org.uk
www.vam-online.org.uk/carersproject.asp



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