



**NHS**

**Birmingham and Solihull  
Mental Health**  
NHS Foundation Trust

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## **Families and carers**



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## Involving and supporting you

Families and carers play a vital role in supporting people with mental health problems. We know this role can sometimes be difficult, demanding and lonely. As well as providing care and treatment for the people who use our services, we are also here to support you. If you have a problem, if something is worrying you, or if you are confused about how to get help, then please talk to us.

Our Trust actively seeks to engage families and carers in the services that we provide. We recognise the vital part you play in the recovery of the person you support. In addition, the Trust also works in partnership with local authorities, carers and third sector organisations to ensure our carers have access to broader support offered external to the Trust.

In order to improve our support for carers, the Trust has made a number of commitments in our Trust Carer Charter, that include:

- recognition of carers across all age ranges
- listening to and involving carers where possible in key decisions relating to the service users
- providing information in a variety of formats
- seeking feedback about your experiences
- signposting you to local carers groups and agencies.

## Are you a carer?

You are if you provide unpaid support to someone who needs extra help to manage. You may be caring for a person:

- with a mental illness
- with dementia
- with learning disabilities
- with a physical or long-term illness or condition, or
- anyone who is vulnerable and needs care and support.

It is sometimes difficult to identify with the term 'carer' because the person you are supporting may be your parent, your child, your partner, a relative or a friend. You may not have to carry out any physical tasks for them, such as personal care or lifting, but the support you give them can still be both emotionally and practically demanding.

If you are a young carer please take a look at the information on page 10 of this booklet.

## Carer's assessment

As family, friends or carers, you have a statutory right to an assessment of your own needs, even if the person you are caring for does not wish to engage with the services. This is not an assessment of your ability to care or of your financial status but whether you need any support to help you care for the person and maintain your own wellbeing.

A carer's assessment is available to families and carers who provide, or are intending to provide, regular and substantial care to a relative or friend. Under the Care Act 2014 you have a right to an assessment of your own needs.

During a carer's assessment you will have an opportunity to discuss the support available and agree a care plan for yourself that addresses your needs.

Our Trust teams are introducing a new *carer engagement tool* and you will be encouraged to take part in areas where this has commenced.

You can find out more about carer's assessments from:

### Birmingham

#### **Birmingham Carers Hub**

The city council have commissioned a range of services through the Birmingham Carers Hub who can provide advice, information and guidance to help you with your caring responsibilities.

Telephone: 0333 006 9711  
Email: [info@BirminghamCarersHub.org.uk](mailto:info@BirminghamCarersHub.org.uk)  
Website: [birminghamcarershub.org.uk](http://birminghamcarershub.org.uk)

The carers hub hold drop-in sessions around the city to help you access their services easily. Just call them to check days and times.

### **Birmingham City Council**

Contact the Adult and Communities Access Point

Telephone: 0121 303 1234

Email: [ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk)

Website: [mycareinbirmingham.org.uk](http://mycareinbirmingham.org.uk)

## **Solihull**

You can request a carer's assessment by contacting **Carers Trust Solihull**.

Telephone: 0121 788 1143

Email: [centre@solihullcarers.org](mailto:centre@solihullcarers.org)

Alternatively, you can choose to contact the **Adult Social Care Team** directly:

Telephone: 0121 704 8007

Email: [ccadults@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:ccadults@solihull.gov.uk)

If you would like an advocate to support you with a carer's assessment please ask the social care department.

## **Your GP**

It is important to let your GP know that you are a carer. They may offer you priority access to appointments. They will also know that you may need to access help for the person you care for. They can also help ensure that you are well enough to care, with health checks and inoculations.

## Advanced statement

An advanced statement is a document which service users can use to give instructions, and express their wishes to staff about their treatment and care. It is a way for service users to put on record when they are well, how they would like their care and treatment to be given if they ever lose capacity to make their own choices. Service users would be encouraged to share this with their carer. Please speak to the service user's clinical team if you would like further information about how the service user prepares an advanced statement.

## Planning for the future

Carers, families and friends of our service users often worry about how the people they support will manage when they can no longer support them. A booklet on planning for the future, including emergency planning, is available. It includes:

- how to start the planning process
- help with planning
- making financial plans
- emergency planning
- useful checklists.



For a free copy please call 0800 953 0045 and leave a message.

## Recovery College for All

The college offers a range of sessions open to service users, their carers and families. These sessions have been developed in collaboration with people who have been affected by mental health issues. Sessions include understanding conditions, learning about recovery and helping carers to cope in a crisis.

For a prospectus phone 0121 301 3992 or visit [www.bsmhft.nhs.uk/rcfa](http://www.bsmhft.nhs.uk/rcfa).

## Sources of help in a crisis

If the person you care for already uses mental health services and has a care plan, there may be a crisis plan in place for them. If so, keep a copy of the plan and important numbers. You may be able to contact the team directly or a duty worker.

### Other sources of help

- GP service for the person you care for.
- NHS 111 – Call 111 (Freephone) when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. A mental health nurse is available at this service for you to talk to.
- Samaritans – Freephone: 116 123. Open 24 hours.
- SANELINE – Telephone: 0300 304 7000. Open 4.30pm-10.30pm, every day.
- Accident and emergency departments can access specialist mental health staff.
- For the police or ambulance service dial 999.

If you are frightened for anyone's safety while caring for your loved one, this could be your own safety – that of your family and friends or your loved one themselves – the best thing is to call the police. The police will be able to diffuse a situation, give advice and help you access the right services quickly.

## Carer support organisations

Some carers find it helpful to talk to other people who are experiencing similar situations. We can put you in touch with local carers groups run by organisations who provide this kind of support. We can also put you in touch with the many helplines and mental health organisations who provide information and support for carers.

The Trust works in partnership with local organisations and groups in providing support for carers and families. Information included here is offered by larger, often national organisations, or smaller, localised groups.

# Home Group – Mental Health Carer Support Service (Birmingham)

The service offers information and advice to carers of adults with mental health needs, which may include support to access respite, housing and finance. Carers can be of any age including young carers. A support plan is always tailored to the needs of the carer. The cared for individual should be registered with a Birmingham GP.

There are the core service elements on offer to carers:

- Universal information – provision of high quality information for carers.
- One-to-one support.
- Peer support – enabling carers to develop self-sustaining peer groups within the community. Groups will work together to influence policy and services and provide a social and supportive network for carers.
- Family support workers.
- Monthly carers information pack.
- Young carers group.
- Male carers group.
- Walking, allotment and activities groups.

**To apply to the service or for more information you can contact them at:**

Telephone: 0300 304 5529

Advice line available from Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm (excluding bank holidays).

## Customer Relations

The Trust's Customer Relations service can always help, guide or direct you to other sources of information. We are also able to assist with any queries or concerns you may have relating to any aspect of our Trust's services. You can contact us on:

Freephone: 0800 953 0045

Available Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm (excluding bank holidays).

Email: [bsmhft.customerrelations@nhs.net](mailto:bsmhft.customerrelations@nhs.net)

Text: 07985 883 509

## Useful contacts

Customer Relations (Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm)	0800 953 0045	<a href="http://www.bsmhft.nhs.uk">www.bsmhft.nhs.uk</a>
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust	Main switchboard: 0121 301 0000	<a href="http://www.bsmhft.nhs.uk">www.bsmhft.nhs.uk</a>
NHS 111 – call in a crisis (24/7)	111	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a>
In an emergency telephone	999	

## Other local and national agencies

Admiral Nurse Advice Service (dementia)	National tel: 0800 888 6678 Local tel: 0121 301 5830	<a href="http://www.dementiauk.org">www.dementiauk.org</a>
Age UK	0121 437 0033	<a href="http://www.ageuk.org.uk">www.ageuk.org.uk</a>
Alzheimer's Society	0300 222 1122	<a href="http://www.alzheimers.org.uk">www.alzheimers.org.uk</a>
Birmingham Adult Social Care Access Point	0121 303 1234	<a href="http://www.mycareinbirmingham.org.uk">www.mycareinbirmingham.org.uk</a>



Birmingham Carers Hub	0333 006 9711	<a href="http://www.birminghamcarershub.org.uk">www.birminghamcarershub.org.uk</a>
Birmingham Community NHS Foundation Trust Carers Team	0121 466 4312, 0121 466 4131	<a href="http://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk">www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk</a>
Birmingham Relate Centre	0300 100 1234	<a href="http://www.relate.org.uk">www.relate.org.uk</a>
Carers UK	0808 808 7777	<a href="http://www.carersuk.org">www.carersuk.org</a>
DISC – Dementia Support	0121 553 6483	<a href="http://www.discbirmingham.org">www.discbirmingham.org</a>
Meriden Family Programme (family therapy)	0121 301 2888	<a href="http://www.meridenfamilyprogramme.com">www.meridenfamilyprogramme.com</a>
MIND Infoline	0300 123 3393	<a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a>
Rethink	0300 500 0927	<a href="http://www.rethink.org">www.rethink.org</a>
Home Group – Mental Health Carer Support Service	0300 304 5530	<a href="http://www.homegroup.org.uk/bmhcss">www.homegroup.org.uk/bmhcss</a>
The Carers Trust	0844 800 4361	<a href="http://www.carers.org">www.carers.org</a>

## Solihull agencies

Adult Social Care Solihull	0121 704 8007	<a href="http://www.solihull.gov.uk">www.solihull.gov.uk</a>
Carers Trust Solihull	0121 788 1143	<a href="http://www.solihullcarers.org">www.solihullcarers.org</a>

## Young carers

A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend who has a mental or physical illness, is disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol. This care might be occasional or very substantial, such as helping someone with their personal tasks every day.

Being a young carer can be hard. Your life as a young carer may mean having to sacrifice socialising, in order to fulfil your caring role. Your school work may get behind, or you may struggle to concentrate in lessons.

Things to remember:

- There are other people in the same situation as you.
- It's important to get some support for yourself.
- You don't need to feel guilty for wanting time to yourself, or to spend it with your friends.
- Don't keep your worries to yourself.
- Remember how important you are.

## Who can help you?

It will seem daunting to talk about this with a friend, teacher or someone outside of the family. This step could make life much easier for you though. There are lots of people who could offer you support and advice – teachers, tutors, student welfare, school nurses or counsellors, GPs, social workers, youth leaders and other people you trust. Please see the next page for some contacts:

Home Group (Stonham) Young Carers Service	0300 304 5530 MHCarerService@homegroup.org.uk www.homegroup.org.uk/bmhcss
Spurgeons Young Carers Birmingham Young Carers Unite St George's Community Hub Great Hampton Row Hockley Birmingham B19 3JG	0121 227 7000 birminghamyc@spurgeons.org www.spurgeonsyc.org
Release Young Carers Project Sutton Coldfield YMCA George Williams House Watson Close St Bernards Road Sutton Coldfield B72 1LE	0121 354 5614 info@releaseproject.co.uk www.releaseproject.co.uk
Birmingham Young Carers Hub	0333 006 9711 www.forwardcarers.org.uk
Solihull Carer's Centre Young Carers (aged 5-18 years) Young Adult Carers (aged 18-24 years)	0121 788 1143 centre@solihullcarers.org www.solihullcarers.org
Carers Trust	0844 800 4361 www.carers.org
Rethink Mental Illness Advice Service	0300 5000 927 advice@rethink.org www.rethink.org
Carers UK	0808 808 7777 advice@carersuk.org www.carersuk.org

If you have any queries regarding this leaflet then please call the service user, carer and public engagement lead at Trust headquarters on 0121 301 1111.

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We are a smokefree trust

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Website: **[www.bsmhft.nhs.uk](http://www.bsmhft.nhs.uk)**  
Main switchboard: **0121 301 0000**

