

The Carer



Issue 99 Autumn 2021

GWASANAETH CYNNAL GOFALWYR
CARERS OUTREACH SERVICE

While you may be busy doubting yourself, someone else is admiring your strength

The Communication Issue

Are you stressed out by trying to join a zoom call or figure out how to reply to a text message? Here is a quick and easy exercise you can do to calm frazzled nerves.



Five finger breathing

-  **Step 1:** Place the index finger of one hand on the outside of the little finger on your other hand. As you breathe in, trace up to the tip of your little finger, and as you breathe out, trace down the inside of it.
-  **Step 2:** Continue finger by finger until you've traced your entire hand.
-  **Step 3:** Reverse the process and trace from your thumb back to your little finger.



Turn the pages for carers' news and tips to help you get by in this brave new world.



**CARERS
TRUST**
WALES

Translated into Welsh by
Angharad Edwards



Update from Carers Outreach

A Warm Welcome to our new Chief Officer

Catrin Jones is our new Chief Officer. Catrin may be known to some of you as she has previously worked as a Carers Support Officer at Ysbyty Gwynedd and more recently as the Forward Thinking Forward Planning Officer for Anglesey.

Catrin said, "It is a pleasure to become Chief Officer of such a vital organisation. I will make it my priority to make sure that unpaid carers are heard and supported and do my best to build upon the good work of my predecessor."

Counselling for carers

We have been funded to provide up to 6 free sessions of counselling for carers.

Several carers have already taken up this offer and feedback is very positive. Contact us for more details.

Surviving the new normal

So much has changed since the start of the pandemic. Perhaps one of the biggest upheavals has been the changes in how we socialise and communicate.

Wearing masks in public places inhibits easy conversations. You can't see if someone is smiling and it is amazing how much we rely on seeing someone's face to help us understand their words.

A lot of activities have moved online which can lead to isolation, loneliness and mental health issues for some people.

Social distancing can be hard, particularly for people who struggle to use things like zoom and WhatsApp. This issue will showcase the help that is available with online issues.

We know that some of you are keen to start holding groups in person once more and we hope to be moving forward with this soon.

Please tell us what activities you would like. What about starting a carers' walking group in your area?

We will continue to hold some groups online via zoom. Would you like us to arrange specific group speakers, and/or training sessions via zoom? If we have enough interest, we could arrange online training on using the internet.

Remember, if you feel lonely or need to talk in person, you can phone us. Our friendly and experienced staff will welcome your call.

You can contact us on the details below; we look forward to hearing from you.

A carer's story

The daily challenges of being a Deaf carer

I care for my mum who has a long term condition; in addition to this, we are both profoundly deaf. Although this means that we have further obstacles to overcome in our daily life, it is also a good thing as we are on the same wavelength and have a shared bond.

At the onset of her illness we soon realised that our biggest hurdle centres on contact with the GP surgery. I have to either email the surgery, which is a lengthy process and no good in an emergency, or rely on friends to phone on our behalf. Although we are grateful for this help, and our friends have been amazing, this is not always ideal for Mum if she does not want certain information disclosed. If the situation is urgent it can be panic stations.

Although I am deaf I am Mum's main interpreter and communicator. She can't understand strangers at all. Even in family gatherings this has always been

my role. Mum can't cope with groups of people, preferring to communicate on a one to one basis.

In some ways the lockdown has been a blessing. It has enabled me to work at home where I can keep an eye on Mum. And I feel fortunate to have had that extra time with her.

My top tip for anyone who may be deaf is to have some kind of pager alert system. We use a simple door bell. Mum has the bell push and I have the vibrating receiver. If she gets into difficulty in another room, or is in pain during the night she can alert me.

We also have vibrating fire alarms and getting a tablet was a revelation. Mum loves to do the online grocery shop and I appreciate being able to facetime friends and have video meetings with professionals. We use Google Duo which is really good.

~ a Conwy carer

Taking the plunge and upgrading my phone

My children and grandchildren kept on at me to get a smart phone but for many years I was content with my trusty flip phone. I even felt that I was doing well to be able to text. Smartphones sounded too complicated to me. When the pandemic hit my son took matters into his own hands and 'upgraded' me. I now have the internet at home, a tablet which is really handy for online shopping and zoom calls, and I have a smartphone with apps such as What's app. This means I can send and receive photos and pictures for free using the wi-fi. I'm learning all the time and I love it. If I can do it you can too. Go on, take the plunge!



~ an Anglesey carer

Living life

Digital inclusion

Anglesey

Age Cymru Gwynedd a Mon, Medrwn Mon, and Anglesey Council are rolling out a new project called Anglesey Virtual Hubs with the aim of building digital confidence and reducing loneliness within our communities.

Identified individuals are provided with Samsung Galaxy Tablets for a period of three months, pre-loaded with 4G data – so there is no need to have an internet connection in the home. They are then paired with local trained volunteers who support them to build their skills and confidence.

For more information contact Sioned Young, Anglesey Community Hub Liaison and Support Officer.

☎ 01286 808735

✉ Sioned.young@acgm.co.uk

Gwynedd

Residents of Gwynedd can loan devices such as Samsung Tab A's and a small number of Alexas and Facebook Portals for a period of three months.

This scheme is open to people who are isolated from family, friends and essential services and/or people who could benefit from access to the internet for health assessments etc.

There is no cost to the participant to use the devices and they do not need to have an internet connection in their homes as they are pre-loaded with data.

For more information contact

✉ SionLlewelyn@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Conwy

The Community Wellbeing team are now offering digital support over the telephone for over 65s. They can help with video calling, how to set up and complete an online shop, and how to set up an email account.

For more information, or to access support contact the team on:

☎ 01492 577449

✉ stayingwell@conwy.gov.uk

📞 [Supporting you to get online \(conwy.gov.uk\)](http://Supporting you to get online (conwy.gov.uk))



Life tips



Yellow Card

The Yellow Card scheme is the UK system for collecting and monitoring information on safety concerns such as suspected side effects or adverse incidents involving medicines and medical devices.

The scheme relies on voluntary reporting of suspected side effects or medical device incidents to be reported by health professionals and the public, including patients, carers and parents. Reporting helps others.

Reports can be made for all medicines including **vaccines**, herbal medicines and homeopathic remedies, and all medical devices available on the UK market.

For more information visit:

 <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>



Same but Different

A sudden or unexpected diagnosis can be a huge shock for both the patient and the family. But what happens when after a lengthy process of tests and research the diagnosis is one that is not well known?

'Same but Different' has a Rare Navigator advocacy service that can help families to negotiate the new terrain they find themselves in. They welcome self-referrals from families as well as referrals from professionals.

For more information:

 enquiries@samebutdifferentcic.org.uk

 01352 75700.

 www.samebutdifferent.org.uk/support

NHS 111 Telephone Service roll out
North Wales residents can now dial 111 free to get non-urgent medical advice and access to out of hours services. Lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Advice is also available online

 www.111.wales.nhs.uk

People who are visually impaired or have communication difficulties can use the Recite me tab on the toolbar. Features include text to speech, reading aids and translation.



Support with your technology



Provides free IT support at home to people of any age, living with a disability or impairment. Volunteers can visit at home, or assist remotely. For more information contact the free helpline:

 0800 048 7642



Has free online courses for anyone to access to learn digital skills to stay safe and connected.

 <https://www.learnmyway.com/>

Contact Carers Outreach for information or support in your caring role



Solution slot

Q: In the last issue of *The Carer*, there was a QR code which would take people to an information board. How would this work for me?

A: If you have a smartphone or a tablet with a camera/scanner then QR codes could save you time and help you to access information easily. If you don't have a smartphone you can view our padlets on our website at www.carersoutreach.org.uk.

If you don't have access to the internet you are welcome to telephone Carers Outreach and our staff will be happy to print and post information out to you.

What is a QR Code?

Basically, a QR code works in the same way as a barcode at the supermarket. It is a machine-scannable image that can instantly be read using a Smartphone camera. Every QR code consists of a number of (usually) black squares and dots which represent certain pieces of information. When your Smartphone scans this code, it translates that

information and provides a link to a website.

To scan a QR code

Open the scanner on your smartphone. Hold your phone over the QR code so that it is in the centre of the box on your screen. You may hear a chime before a new screen appears telling you what has been found. Then there will be an option to click on a box to visit the website or in our case the padlet.

You may have noticed that QR codes have now appeared on your TV screen in those competitions where you can win large amounts of cash and/or a car.

Carers Outreach currently has 2 padlets. Planning for the Future for parent carers and General Information Resources.

The QR codes for our padlets



Ways to stay in touch



Phone our hubs

Gwynedd and Anglesey: 01248 370797

Conwy: 01492 533714



help@carersoutreach.org.uk



www.carersoutreach.org.uk



Join in our zoom groups
Contact us for a link to join



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