



For carers, By carers

Helping someone with dementia to live well

Caring for someone with dementia doesn't just mean looking after their physical wellbeing, it also means supporting them to live their life to the full. This won't always be easy but working with them to achieve this will benefit both of you.



What carers would like to share with you

- Encourage the person you care for to remain physically and mentally active, and support them to continue known activities and interests.
- Get out and about. Ask about entitlement to a blue badge, which allows you to park in more accessible spaces and closer to where you're going, and the National Entitlement Card for buses and trains.
- Photo albums and memories boxes on various subjects can stimulate conversation.
- Allow plenty of time for everyday activities such as dressing, eating etc.
- Sundowning is a term used for changes in behaviour that occur in the evening around dusk. Alzheimer Scotland's Dementia Helpline can offer tips to help manage sundowning.
- Putting important items in a secure place can make you more confident to allow rummaging in the house.
- When speaking it's important to face the person with dementia, speak clearly and use single sentences.
- Talk to your Pharmacist about ways you can help the person you care for to take any medication.

Did you know?

- Alzheimer Scotland has Dementia Resource Centres throughout Scotland, offering services and activities. Use the contact information overleaf to locate your nearest Centre.
- Some communities, venues, and services are 'dementia friendly'. An Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Advisor can tell you more about this.
- The person you care for may enjoy a playlist of meaningful music. 'Playlist for Life' will help you put together a music programme. Talking books are also useful.
- You can enable a continued active life with simple adaptations and aids suggested by an Occupational Therapist.
- Your local Council has an obligation to offer four options in how they provide care, known as Self-Directed Support. This means you have choices in the support you receive and how you get it.
- The Herbert Protocol scheme can help the police find the person you care for if they go missing. Ask an Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Advisor for more information.

"It's so important to support and encourage the person you care for to continue to be themselves and do what's important to them. That way you help ensure they are not defined by their situation, but that they continue to live their best life possible."

*"My husband always tells me,
'my life has changed but it's not over!'"*

Top Tips for Carers

- Put in place as soon as possible a Power of Attorney and Advance Statement that truly reflects the wishes of the person with dementia – it's key for future proofing.
- As a carer you have rights protected by legislation.
- If you provide regular care you are entitled to a Carer's Assessment which will enable Social Services to offer you advice and support.
- Don't become isolated. Engage with family, friends and neighbours. Explain the situation to help them understand your feelings.
- Keep handy a list of important phone numbers such as for the GP, Social Work and, of course, Alzheimer Scotland.
- Keep a diary of appointments where you record all the support and advice available, and any action taken.
- Technology and apps can help people with dementia to live well and safely and can provide peace of mind for carers.
- Remember that before you were a carer you were the person's family, friend, partner or neighbour – that will never change, even as your caring responsibilities increase.
- Your own health and wellbeing are VITAL. Try to make time for yourself. Continue with your hobbies and sports. Accept help.

Contact Alzheimer Scotland for more help and information

Further information

This is one of a series of 'For Carers, By Carers' leaflets:

- Going for a diagnosis
- Helping someone with dementia to live well
- Working with professionals and services
- Going into hospital
- Moving into a care home
- Looking after yourself
- When problems arise
- Grief and loss

Email activevoice@alzscot.org or

Visit www.alzscot.org/ndcan for copies.

Useful contacts

Alzheimer Scotland's
National Dementia
Advisor Service
0300 373 5774

Alzheimer Scotland's
24 hour Freephone
Dementia Helpline
0808 808 3000

www.alzscot.org



About NDCAN

We are a national, member led campaigning and awareness raising group of current and former dementia carers in Scotland. Formed in 2011, we exist to make the voices of dementia carers heard and to raise awareness of the issues impacting on carers. Find out more about NDCAN and how to join us at **www.alzscot.org/ndcan**

'For Carers, By Carers' were first created in 2016 by NDCAN members, with funding from The Life Changes Trust, to share their knowledge to help other carers. In 2024 members reviewed and updated them.

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