

NEWSLETTER  
NEWSLETTER  
NEWSLETTER  
NEWSLETTER  
NEWSLETTER

Gloucestershire

Carers **Hub**

# Summer Newsletter 2020



**STAY**

**SAFE**



“Refer Today,  
So You **Don’t**  
**Have to Worry**  
**Tomorrow”**



# To All of our Carers

We hope you are well and maintaining your wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic. Should you need any support, guidance or a listening ear, we are here for you during these challenging times.

Summer is on its way and at the Gloucestershire Carers Hub, we are looking at ideas for supporting and connecting our carers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. **Is there anything you would like to see happening? How can we actively support you?**

As the pandemic continues, we understand how difficult the current situation is on you as a carer. In this edition of the newsletter **we have highlighted some useful information to support you**, to help you access activities and to give you more ideas to help you maintain your wellbeing.

There are also a range of new services being introduced over the next few weeks or so, to help those in the county that have been, or are being affected by the Covid-19 outbreak.

One of the new services, is an online digital platform called 'Qwell'. **It provides access to self-care resources, information, peer support and access to trained counsellors.** It is open to anyone experiencing issues with their emotional wellbeing, such as stress or anxiety. To access the platform, please go to: [www.qwell.io](http://www.qwell.io). (Please note; to access the site you will need to create an account, which is anonymous).



Qwell compliments a range of existing mental health services available to support people in the county. For a full list of these local services, please visit:

[www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/covid-19-information-and-advice/advice-on-covid-19-looking-after-your-wellbeing/mental-health-services/](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/covid-19-information-and-advice/advice-on-covid-19-looking-after-your-wellbeing/mental-health-services/)



Here is the **Government response** and web pages for information at this time

## Government Covid-19 Guidance for those who provide unpaid care to friends or family.

The guidance is for anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who, due to a lifelong condition, illness, disability, serious injury, a mental health condition or an addiction and cannot cope without their support.

The Guidance is updated regularly and can be viewed at any time on the link below or if you would like a paper copy of the most recent guidance, please get in touch with us:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-unpaid-care/guidance-for-those-who-provide-unpaid-care-to-friends-or-family](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-unpaid-care/guidance-for-those-who-provide-unpaid-care-to-friends-or-family)

Unpaid carers are now on the Government Covid-19 testing list, if you are showing symptoms and wish to access testing facilities, book a test online at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

They do advise that everyone has an emergency plan. If you haven't talked to us about planning for emergencies and aren't registered with the Carers Emergency Scheme through the Gloucestershire Carers Hub and would like to do so, please contact us.

**Local help for you** - This is a fantastic local resource and its worth keeping in mind What can we do for you?

The Gloucestershire Carers Hub are here to support you with your caring role. Every day we

receive phone calls and emails from carers asking for support and advice on a variety of topics. These include understanding benefits, supporting your physical and emotional health, signposting you to services, and helping you to think about the future.

We help you to explore and consider your needs as a carer, and can work with you to identify what may help you in your role. We offer a range of training courses to help you with practical skills, and also activities and sessions that are designed to give you some time out and space just for you.

**We can also offer Carers Assessments if more help is needed.**

The Gloucestershire Carers Hub receive referrals from professionals across the county, who may already be working with you and when we receive these, we contact you within three working days.

If you need any support, information or advice or just would like someone to talk to, please pick up the phone and call us on 0300 111 9000 or email [carers@peopleplus.co.uk](mailto:carers@peopleplus.co.uk) We are here for you. If you know of someone who we could support then please share our details with them.

## Letter to identify you as a carer

We are aware of the struggles which some of you may be having, to access supermarkets and other services during the pandemic. To help, the Gloucestershire Carers Hub have developed a letter for you to take with you when you go out, to outline that you are an unpaid carer and you have someone who relies on you for support.

Some carers have found these useful to support them with access to supermarkets at earlier time slots.

**If you would like a letter sent to you, please call us on 0300 111 9000 or email [carers@peopleplus.co.uk](mailto:carers@peopleplus.co.uk)**

## Clap for you as carers

Not just for Keyworkers



Thursdays at 8pm many of us now do the Clap for Carers. This is for all carers – that includes you!

We don't just clap for Keyworkers, we are clapping for you and all of the 1 in 10 unpaid carers throughout Gloucestershire.

Day in, day out, you provide support to a family member, friend or neighbour who due to, ill physical or mental health or disability would not be able to manage by themselves. You continue to provide care so desperately needed at this unprecedented time.

**So, every week, everyone in the team continues to clap for you. You are doing a brilliant job!**

## My Carer Experience **DURING LOCKDOWN**

We thought it might be interesting to share some of your caring experiences especially during this period and we would like to make this a regular feature in our newsletters and welcome anyone who can give us a day in the life of their caring role. To be featured, please email to [carers@peopleplus.co.uk](mailto:carers@peopleplus.co.uk).

**Here is our first carer experience - A big thank you to Jenny for sharing her experience.**

My name is Jenny and I care for 4 disabled people. Their disabilities range from physical to dementia, and in this current situation (Covid-19), I must admit to finding it difficult to do my usual role as they do not all live with me and all are being shielded.

I have had to adapt the way I care for them, finding alternative care for two of them in order to keep them safe as I cannot look in on them the way I used to. However, **we have adapted, even my 86 year old father has learnt to use WhatsApp and Zoom** which means we can see and talk to each other every day. The people I can care for find it very difficult not being able to access day care or just a simple trip out for a coffee and boredom is often there.

I must admit, it has been difficult and challenging at times especially for such things as medical appointments but I, as I suspect we all can and do find ways of sorting/doing things as the need arises.

But if I have one piece of advice it's please ask for help. These are unprecedented times and even if it's only a chat, talk to someone. We are important and we need to look after ourselves as well as those we care for.



# How Technology Can Help you

One of our carers, supports her husband who is unable to do a lot of the things which he used to. She uses a variety of technology in the home to make her caring situation better for them both and still give her husband his independence.

**She uses smart devices, such as the Amazon Echo and Google Home, to control appliances such as lighting and heating.** She has both devices linked to the heating system and can check the temperature, using an app on her mobile phone, from anywhere in or out of the home and set it to ensure her husband is comfortable at any time of day.

The smart devices are also linked to the lights and with a simple request they can turn on the lights upstairs or downstairs in order to make moving around the home in the dark safer. She feels that it keeps her husband in touch with technology, as it has always been his passion and supports him when he is feeling unwell.

**She wouldn't be without it in the home now and finds that her husband can help her with compiling 'to do' lists and shopping lists, which gives him input into the daily running of the home.**

Her husband struggles to use a mobile phone because if he drops it, he is unable to get out of bed to retrieve it. To overcome this, he now has a smart watch which makes it easier for him when she is out, enabling him to speak to it and touch it to automatically call her. This new technology has had a really positive impact on their lives and allows him to remain independent, whilst

giving her the confidence to be able to leave him for short periods of time safely.

Technology can support within the home and there are many different options available to support you or to support those around you who may have a disability or are not able to carry out practical tasks anymore. If you would be interested in talking about technology options to support you, then please contact us.

**Here are two other digital options which may be of interest to you:-**

## Carers Digital

We have a digital platform that all of our registered carers can access. It includes online learning and a variety of publications which you can download or order to support you in your caring role.

You will also have access to information, support and guidance on lots of topics.

*jointly*

The jointly app is available for free for all of our registered carers. It is an app to support you with your caring role, and is especially useful if there are multiple people helping to support someone. If you look after someone and share the caring responsibility, this can be a great tool for you to access up to date information on the person that you care for.

It can act as a live record of what is happening

with your cared for, which anyone you chose to include on the app can have access to. This includes logging appointments, updating medical details and medication and providing up to date information. This is especially useful for those carers who rely on others, or who have lots of family members involved in the care.

**Get in touch with us if you are interested to learn more about these applications, and to get a code for free access.**

### Skills, Learning and Development Opportunities

**Our 'What's On' Training and Development offer has changed** from face to face to remote learning using a variety of technology in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.



We have Coffee Mornings on Zoom video chat and regular online webinars from individuals and companies offering information, training and support. Some of the training content is recorded, in order for this to be more accessible should you not be able to attend..

If you would like any technical support, then please get in contact with us and we can talk you through getting started, or send you a full guide to getting set up.



# Staying at home Looking after your mental health and wellbeing

Here are some tips on how to stay connected with people

### Keep in touch digitally or on the phone

- Make video calls to people or groups you would normally see in person
- You may want to make phone calls or send instant messages or texts to friends and family
- You could take part in a book club online or quiz with friends or family
- The Gloucestershire Carers Hub has also set up WhatsApp groups for individuals to gain support from other carers
- Listen to a chatty radio station or podcast if your home feels too quiet



### Keeping Active

**Try to build in some form of exercise into your daily routine**

- Complete seated exercises
- Sign up to the Sessional Yoga session with the Gloucestershire Carers Hub
- Dance to music
- Go up and down the stairs

BT and ITV have put together some tech tips to support you with connecting with friends and family using technology. To find them follow this link <https://www.bt.com/tech-tips>

We are running several sessions via webinars, Zoom and now using telephone dial in services. Please see the 'Whats On' guide enclosed for sessions happening in June 2020 that you may want to attend.

## Gloucestershire's community help hub

As further measures are put in place to delay the spread of Covid-19, local people continue to pull together to arrange help in their area for those who need it, but not everyone has existing connections within their communities.

In response, councils across the county have come together with the police and health partners to **create hubs to connect local people who need help, with individuals, groups and businesses who can provide the support they need.**

### The hub includes four forms:

- **'I can offer help'** – is for those who are able to support neighbours with tasks such as picking up prescriptions, shopping, dog walking and more
- **'I need help'** – can be used by individuals to ask for support
- **'My neighbour needs help'** – may be used by people to request help on behalf of a neighbour, relative or friend who cannot access the internet themselves
- **'My business can help'** – will allow local businesses who may have skills and resources others could benefit from, to offer their help

The information collected will be shared with the relevant local council who will connect people who can help each other, or if appropriate refer individuals to an existing service.

Residents are encouraged to share details of the community help hub on social media using the hashtag **#GlosCommunity**

The hub is accessible from every district council website, and from the county council's website at [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/helphub](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/helphub) You can also call them using **01452 583519**



# Carers Week 8th – 14th June 2020 – Making Caring Visible

Carers week takes place in June each year to highlight the challenges faced by unpaid carers and recognise the contributions they make to their communities and families alike.

It helps people to identify that they have caring responsibilities and as such, can call themselves an unpaid carer. This means that those individuals can access much needed information and support, and helps to raise awareness of what life is like for people with caring roles.

This year, many carers across our county are facing new challenges and as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, are taking on more caring responsibilities for relatives, friends or children. Individuals may be providing support to others whilst also juggling their daily lives, which adds additional strain to their own wellbeing.

**The theme of carers week this year is 'Making Caring Visible'. This year we believe more now than ever, that you as an unpaid carer should be recognised for the difficulties and challenges which you are facing on a daily basis.**

Carers Week 2020 will look a little different than we expected, but we will continue to run virtual activities which we would love you to be involved with. These will give you the chance to join up with other carers, to discuss your concerns, daily challenges and provide you with a safe space to talk with others who understand what you go through. They will also offer you the opportunity to take some time out for yourself in a way that suits you.

## Some of the events include:

- Telephone Coffee Mornings
- Zoom meetings
- Competition to win a prize
- Quiz activities



Alongside the activities we have planned, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, Gloucestershire Carers Hub and Gloucestershire Carers Partnership Board will be working together to make carers more visible within our county.

**There is a 'Carer Aware' campaign which is being launched in Carers Week to raise awareness of the role of carers, to ensure that you and others like you are recognised for the amazing support you give daily to your family, friends and community.**

Please follow us on our social media pages, on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to keep up to date on how we are supporting you during Carers Week.



## We are the team waiting for your call.... Our Triage team

A member of the Triage Team is usually the first person that you will speak to when contacting the Hub, either when registering or if you want information, advice, guidance and support.

We have eight team members, who all have a good knowledge of support that is available



for carers. They are also happy to offer a listening ear and support to those that need it. The usual hours to contact the team are from 9am – 5pm Mon – Fri, 8am – 8pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, throughout the Coronavirus pandemic we have all been working remotely to continue to support our carers.

**Carers can get in touch with us via phone, email or go to our web pages**  
<https://gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk/contact-us/.....>

Some carers refer themselves to us, but we also receive referrals from friends, family members and professionals such as GP's, nurses, social workers or other people that are involved in our carer's lives.

Every day is busy and always varied. Every carer we speak to has individual needs, and sometimes just need someone to talk to about their caring role. We spend time listening to our carers, to gain knowledge of their unique caring situation and support them where needed. This enables us to establish how we can best advise, signpost, support or help in any way we can.



## The Future

We speak to every carer about contingency planning and support carers to think about what would happen with their caring responsibilities and the person they care for should they be unable to care. This is even more important with the current Covid-19 pandemic and the Government guidelines for planning for an emergency.

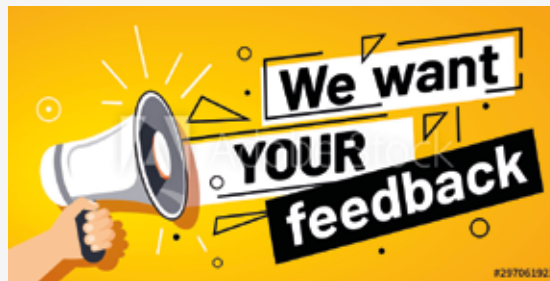
Part of this is offering registration onto the Carers Emergency Scheme which gives carers peace of mind, that there is a way for family or friends to be contacted to take over the caring role if something happened to them, or alternatives to be put in place if they have no one else they can ask to do this.

**If you need someone to talk to about your caring role, need individual guidance, or are interested in hearing more about or registering with the Carers Emergency Scheme, then please pick up the phone and call one of the team on 0300 111 9000.**

**We are here for you.**







## Feedback from one of our new sessions virtual sessions and craft packs

**One of our parent carers requested a craft pack during lockdown to complete with her daughter, who has additional needs.**

*"My daughter was having a bad morning this morning - struggling to cope with what is going on I think. So glad I saved the craft kit for such a moment! She loved making her unicorn and her mood lifted straight away. There was lots of foam clay left for her to play with! Thank you so much."*

Thank you for sharing your beautiful creation with us! We love to see how creative carers have been in this time and welcome stories or pictures of what you have been doing.

### Feedback from our Sessional Yoga Sessions

*"Thank you so much for connecting me with Jo and her Tuesday Seasonal Chair Yoga. It was the first time I had done chair yoga and I loved it. Even better, as being at home, it was nice to see other people and once the lesson starts it is only the teacher you can see, not the other participants. If you are self-conscious it doesn't matter if you have done it before or not, no one but Jo*

*can tell, it doesn't matter how good you are, how flexible you are or how confident you are or what your appearance is. The beauty of this class was that you just do as much or as little as you can or want to and you grow with it. Great stress buster and relaxation whilst feeling you have exercised. A little 'me' time. I'll be back next week."*

### Coffee mornings with a difference - Telephone Coffee Mornings

Gloucestershire Carers Hub are piloting a free to access telephone coffee morning for our carers. This is a great opportunity for carers who are feeling particularly isolated because they are not online, or do not enjoy video calls. No internet is required, and is held over the telephone with others. This will be an opportunity to have a friendly chat and get support and advice from other carers and will be hosted by a member of Gloucestershire Carers Hub staff. This will give our carers a chance to meet up, share and share ideas from anywhere.

**Please get in contact with any suggestions for activities or sessions in the next 'What's On' or to book onto June sessions.**

## Local partner updates

Gloucestershire Deaf Association (GDA)



**GDA is the only charity in Gloucestershire providing practical and emotional support to those living with deafness in the county.**

For over 100 years, GDA has been supporting people who have been born deaf and whose preferred first language is British Sign Language (BSL) and those who have become deaf, maybe through illness or age. All the services GDA provides aim to enable a person to live confidently with their deafness, to feel safe and to be part of the bigger conversation.

Deafness is often hidden. On a daily basis, people living with deafness will face battles with communication, access to information and a lack of deaf awareness within the wider society.

**All these factors can knock a person's confidence and put them at an increased risk of social isolation and with that, an associated risk of developing poor mental health.** It's been shown that deaf people are twice as likely to experience poor mental health compared to hearing people.

Across Gloucestershire, GDA offers regular hearing-aid maintenance clinics for people with NHS hearing aids to get their aids cleaned and re-tubed. They also offer employment support, lip-reading classes, the installation of specialist listening aid equipment such as vibrating smoke

alarms and flashing doorbells, as well as children and young people support, regular inclusive social activities and the provision of BSL interpreters for medical, educational and personal appointments.

During these uncertain and difficult times, while GDA is unable to carry on with regular face-to-face services, the team has been adapting it's support in order to continue, wherever possible, providing help remotely, so that they can continue to be there for the people who need them the most.

**If you are or you know someone who is living with deafness, please do get in touch with us at [www.gda.org.uk](http://www.gda.org.uk) to find out how GDA can offer support.**



## Interesting research for carers - Behind Closed Doors Report - Carers UK

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

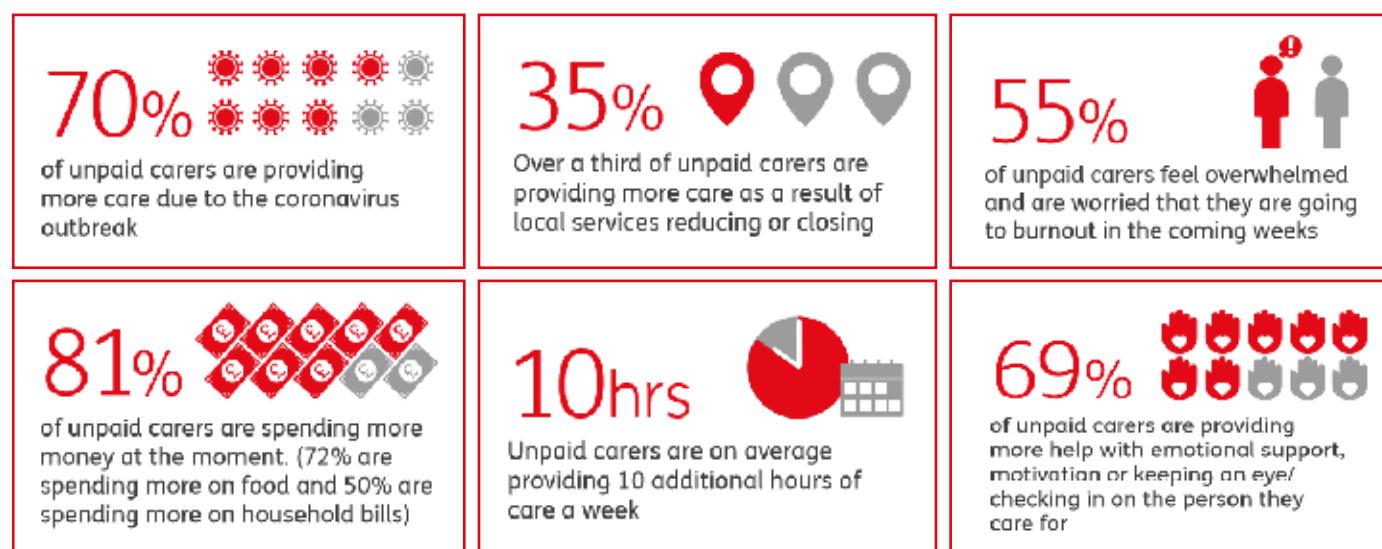


Carers UK carried out an online survey between 3rd April and 14th April 2020. A total of 5,047 carers and former carers responded to the survey.

**This included 4,830 current carers and 217 former carers.** Carers UK's survey into the experiences of over 5,000 current and former carers has found that the coronavirus crisis is having a profound impact on carers' lives.

Many of those who responded were providing very high levels of care, or juggling care in complex lives. They are those most in need. Not only are many providing more care than before, they are suffering financially and are worried about the future. We are actively looking into what we can do for our carers in Gloucestershire. Please get in touch with us to tell us your stories and give us any ideas or suggestions.

**To read the full report visit:**  
[https://www.carersuk.org/images/News\\_and\\_campaigns/Behind\\_Closed\\_Doors\\_2020/Caring\\_behind\\_closed\\_doors\\_April20\\_pages\\_web\\_final.pdf](https://www.carersuk.org/images/News_and_campaigns/Behind_Closed_Doors_2020/Caring_behind_closed_doors_April20_pages_web_final.pdf)







Bristol Mind have put together a series of free videos (between 10 and 15 mins long) from local trainers and experts with advice and support to help us all look after our wellbeing and mental health during the Coronavirus outbreak.

**You can find these videos on their YouTube channel (or search for 'Bristol Mind on You Tube to find it) which includes;**

- a series of videos on mindfulness
- tips on managing stress and anxiety during Covid-19
- tips for managers supporting staff remotely
- postnatal mental health during Covid-19
- CBT for isolation and loneliness
- self-harm and coronavirus
- supporting ourselves whilst working from home

We can of course help you if you have any questions or concerns – just call us.

### Hospital support to help you

#### My Health Passport

##### What is it?

My Health Passport is a new easy read 'grab sheet' that could accompany a person (any age, or disability) who requires reasonable adjustments to their health care when they go into hospital (or to any health appointment), whether the admission is an emergency admission or a planned admission. This is a patient held record and carers, family and patients should take the time when they are well to complete this in anticipation of going into hospital.

The purpose of the form is to provide specific and essential information to hospital staff with three types of information:

- **Essential (RED)**
- **Important (AMBER)**
- **Preferable (GREEN)**, in a format that is quick and easy for hospital staff to access.

This document can be used by the ambulance service, disability care provider homes, supported accommodation, acute and community hospitals and family carers.

This editable document is now available to download and edit

[https://g-care.glos.nhs.uk/uploads/files/My%20Health%20Passport%20-%20Editable%20version%20May%202020\(1\).pdf](https://g-care.glos.nhs.uk/uploads/files/My%20Health%20Passport%20-%20Editable%20version%20May%202020(1).pdf)

(Please note: you may need to click OK on the pop up message several times).

#### Hardcopies can be obtained from:

Strategic Health Facilitation Team, Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, **Freephone 0800 019 3346**

## In these challenging times let's be kind and maybe bake ... a recipe for you

### Traditional Scone Recipe

Whether you want to make a nice treat for a family member, friend, the person that you care for or you are looking for an activity to do with the kids, scones are a quick and easy treat. They can be served with clotted cream and jam (or alternatively, however you want to serve them).

### Ingredients

- 450g/1lb self-raising flour
- 2 level tsp baking powder
- 50g/1¾oz caster sugar
- 100g/3½oz butter, softened, cut into pieces
- 2 free-range eggs
- a little milk
- handful sultanas (optional)

### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 220C/200C Fan/Gas 7. Lightly grease two baking trays.
2. Put the flour, baking powder and sugar in a large bowl. Add the butter and rub in with your fingertips until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.
3. Crack the eggs into a measuring jug, then add enough milk to make the total liquid 300ml/10fl oz. Stir the egg and

milk into the flour – you may not need it all – and mix to a soft, sticky dough.

4. Turn out onto a lightly floured work surface, knead lightly and work in the sultanas, if using. Roll out to a rectangle about 2cm/¾in thick.
5. Cut into as many rounds as possible with a fluted 5cm/2in cutter and place them on the prepared baking trays. Brush the tops of the scones with a little extra milk, or any egg and milk left in the jug.
6. Bake for 12–15 minutes, or until the scones are well risen and a pale, golden-brown colour. Lift onto a wire rack to cool. Eat as fresh as possible.
7. To serve, split the scones and serve with strawberry jam on the plain scones along with a good dollop of clotted cream.

### Recipe Tips

Once the scones are cool, they can be frozen. To eat, defrost at room temperature and then reheat in a hot oven for 10 minutes. The scone dough should be slightly sticky to give the best results. Don't over handle the dough or it will be tough and don't be tempted to roll it out too thinly or you won't get good deep scones. For larger 5cm/2in scones, bake for 10-12 minutes.

We would love to see what you are cooking at the moment, especially if you have managed to be creative with limited ingredients. Please share any photos you have of any tips, meals or of your scones, and **we will share on social media and in our next newsletter! Send them in via email or social media.**



# We want to hear from you

To help us to help you, we are going to launch a quick survey on looking at the impact of the lockdown on our carers. We want to know your experiences of this time, and what has worked really well and what has been particularly difficult or challenging. The feedback we get from these questions will help us to understand how we can support you better in the future. It also helps us to raise awareness of what experiences you have as carers with other agencies and services to help them plan for the future.

1. **What do you want or need to return to doing, that you haven't been able to?**
2. **What are you doing differently that is working well, and you will continue with?**
3. **What will you be happy not to go back to?**
4. **Do you have any new ideas or suggestions that would work for the future?**

If you would prefer to complete the survey online, please use the link below  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RH5NPSJ>

Please email us at [carers@peopleplus.co.uk](mailto:carers@peopleplus.co.uk) with your responses or write to us at  
**Gloucestershire Carers Hub, Conway House, 31 Worcester Street, Gloucester, GL1 3AJ**

## A Special Thank you

We wanted to take the time to say **a huge thank you to you all for everything you do in your caring role and how you are supporting individuals in your lives and the community**. Even though it is even more difficult at the moment, you all do a fantastic job.

We have been delighted to receive the following poem which you may identify with.

### Caring

Endless lists of jobs to do,  
My eyes are feeling tired,  
This wasn't what I had in mind,  
When I pictured being retired!

Press 1 for this and 2 for that,  
Will someone just pick up the phone!!  
I feel like no one is helping me,  
I'm lost, frustrated and alone.

I cook, I clean, I give the meds,  
In fact I do jobs galore!  
But actually the hardest part,  
Is this feeling I should be doing more.

I cry at night and feel so sad,  
But I keep that locked inside,  
I have to be the strong one,  
And take each day in my stride.

Then I stumbled across this place,  
I never knew was there.  
The Carers Hub in Gloucestershire  
Support unpaid people who care.

I didn't know if I should ring,  
I thought that they might laugh,  
But I got straight through to Welcome Team,  
And was supported by fully trained staff.

I couldn't believe how much was on offer,  
Advice, breaks and even clubs!  
All these years I'd struggled,  
When I could have been registered with the Hub.

Even though times can be hard,  
Times can also be good,  
And in the end I will look back,  
I know I did all I could.

I've never seen myself as a Carer,  
I'm just doing what I can,  
But actually, when I sit down and think.  
**I remember that I am!**

**If you know anyone who would like support at this time, please let them know that we can support them as a carer.**