

Carer's book by Lyndie Dempsey

Introduction

Your loved one has become more frail, forgetful, has had a fall, or has been diagnosed with an illness or condition.

Your loved one cannot work, drive, cook, perform household chores, or enjoy their hobbies. It has become unsafe to leave your loved one on their own for any length of time.

NOW WHAT?

Who do I turn to?

Who do I ask?

How do I get a break?

Does my loved one need care?

How will I afford it?

Am I now a family carer?

What is a family carer?

“Family caregivers are relatives, friends, or neighbours who provide assistance related to an underlying physical or mental disability for at-home care delivery and assist in the activities of daily living, who are unpaid and have no formal training to provide those services.” Source: Wikipedia.

The Family Carer book is a comprehensive guide covering all areas and stages of caring for someone you love, providing a framework you can build upon.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my mum Irene Watson and friends Peter Layland, Danielle Graham, and Sharon Reily for their support and advice. Their insights and experiences have been invaluable in shaping this handbook. I also want to thank my late husband, Jim Dempsey; our shared journey inspired the writing of this book.

©Copyright 2025 Lyn.de Lyndie Dempsey. All rights reserved.

Disclaimer

The information provided in this book is for informational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. I am not a healthcare professional, and the content of this book should not be construed as medical advice. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this book. Reliance on any information provided in this book is solely at your own risk.



Created by Kylie Andreas
from Noun Project

My story

I want to explain why I decided to write this book. When my husband became ill, I didn't realise that I was becoming his carer. I thought I was doing my wifely duties. I want you to know that you're not alone in this journey.

In the beginning, it was very traumatic, emotional and overwhelming. Illness had turned our lives upside down, our dreams smashed. I had many enjoyable years as a professional carer. But this was definitely outside my experience or ability. I didn't know how to set anything up. As a professional carer, we are the last piece of a large jigsaw. I didn't realise at the start of the journey how many professionals would be involved in my husband's care and my mental health.

In each chapter, I start with a practical checklist. It will help you stay organised and track who to contact, what to do, what to order, and your appointments. Then I explain the professional roles, what they offer and what the jargon means in English. At the end of each chapter, I include a contact list with relevant professionals and associations you can add to.

**I hope I have made a confusing time clearer.
Now, I am a family carer. What now?**

My advice to you:

Always plan and implement strategies before challenges arise so then you don't feel overwhelmed during an emotional and difficult time. Being proactive allows you to navigate situations with confidence and ease. Additionally, it will enable you to spend quality time with your loved one, knowing that everything is organised.

An important conversation.

A good idea. While your loved one is of sound mind, have an open and honest conversation with their family and them about their dying wishes.



Created by Amethyst Studio
from Noun Project

Please look after yourself.

I heard a good story. The heart is incredibly selfish and keeps the most nutritious blood, then passes the remaining blood to the rest of the body. But if the heart fails, the rest of the body dies.

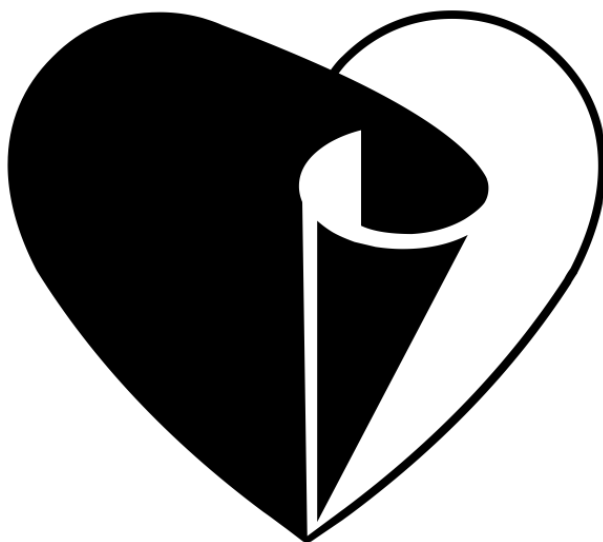
Please prioritise your mental and physical health, treat yourself regularly, maintain a social life, and utilise respite to recharge. If you are ill or feel under pressure, you can request respite and contact friends or Social Services to give you a break. Also, not everything needs to be perfect. Suppose a person misses one meal out of three for the day or misses receiving personal care for one day and will get individual care from someone else the next day. Don't worry. Your loved one will be okay. Please take care of yourself so then you can give your loved one your full attention, love, and care.

You are not alone

Contents

Introduction	2
Content	7
1. The Next Chapter	9
2. Personal Care	15
3. Hospital	25
4. Professional Carer	33
5. Health	43
6. Finances	51
7. Respite	61
8. Home Hints and Tips for Housework	67
9. Home	73
10. Socialising Outside the Home.	79
11. Travelling in the UK and Abroad.	91
12. From Recovery to Rest: Palliative, Hospice, and End-of-Life Care	101
Index	109
References	120

1. The Next Chapter



Created by N.K.Narasimhan
from Noun Project

Checklist

Checklist	✓	Checklist	✓
Contact Social Services		Contact Friends	
Organise adaptations to the home.		Contact Employer	
Order food shopping online and deliver		Contact Lawyer LPA	
Contact the Chemist to request medication to be delivered.		Permission to talk to the Utility companies on their behalf.	
Contact DVLA Older Driver		Priority Service Register	
Organise Trackers and Alarms		Contact Telephone Preference service	
Meals delivered		Local Care Agency	
Housekeeper			
Gardener			
Handyperson			
Maintenance Person			
Organise to pay the bills by direct debit.			

Changes in Your Loved One's Life Circumstances

You're doing an incredible job caring for your loved one.

Remember, you're not alone in this journey. It's essential to reach out and connect with others for support and guidance. Whether it's family, friends, or support groups, sharing your experiences and feelings can provide comfort and strength.

Letting others know what is happening not only keeps them informed but also opens the door for them to offer their assistance and encouragement. You can create a supportive network that uplifts and empowers you during this time. Remember, asking for help is okay, and some people genuinely care about you and your loved one.

Social Services (Adult Services)

Your first point of call.

The Social Worker's role is to find solutions to your problems. They will meet individuals and families to provide emotional and practical support, promoting you and your loved one's well-being, and developing and maintaining your loved one's independent skills. Social Workers can refer you to other Healthcare Professionals and inform you about what is available to make life easier.

Local care agency

You can search online for Domiciliary or Community care. They can help with light housework, personal care, company, and other tasks. read Chapter 4, Professional Carer.

Occupational Therapist.

You can contact Social Services or your GP for a referral to the OT (Occupational Therapist). The OT can visit and assess their needs, providing relevant household equipment, aids, and adaptations as needed.

Adaptations to the home

The renovations to adapt their home can be done in advance. Please consider your plans to future-proof their home.

Suggestions: Expand the width of the doors to accommodate wheelchairs, install a wet room and bedroom downstairs, remove the carpet, and provide ample space around the bed and toilet to utilise ceiling or mobile hoists. You can contact companies that specialise in making adaptations or extensions to homes to improve their quality of life.

Online food shopping and Meals delivered

It is much easier now to get meals and food delivered. The meals can have delivered daily or on a weekly basis.

read Chapter 2, Personal Care

Chemist

The chemist can organise for any medication to be delivered regularly. Also, the Chemist can put the medication into a Dosette box. read Chapter 5, Health.

DVLA.

If you are concerned about your loved one driving, you can contact the Older Drivers website. They can provide support and advice.

Tracker, alarms and CCTV cameras.

The trackers, alarms and cameras are available for when your loved one is left on their own for an extended time.

read Chapter 9. Home

Priority Service Register, energy companies

You can register your loved one with the register. The energy companies will provide extra support to older people, those who are very ill or disabled, and individuals who rely on power for medical equipment during power cuts.

Permission to talk to the Utility companies

Suppose your loved one has set up a Enduring Power of Attorney (LPA). You can talk on their behalf. If not, you will need permission from your loved one, verbally or in writing.

Enduring Power of Attorney (LPA)

While your loved one is of sound mind, they can make important decisions about their future care and finances.

Please read Chapter 12. From Recovery to Rest.

Direct Debit/Bank

It may be a good idea to discuss finances with your loved one. If your loved one can't physically go into the bank or can't use a computer to pay bills, the payments can be changed to direct debit. Your loved one can go to the bank or permit you to change it.

Telephone Preference Service: stop nuisance calls.

You will need to register your loved one's landline and mobile number with the Telephone Preference service, and your loved one will stop receiving nuisance calls.

Contact details for more information

Association	Contact details
Social Services	www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-health-services/local-authority-adult-social-care
Local Care Company	
Chemist	
DVLA	
Older Driver	www.olderdrivers.org.uk
Gardener	
Housekeeper	
Maintenance Person	
Alarm/Tracker/Camera	
Home Adaptations	
Lawyer	
Bank	
Utilities Company	
Energy companies' Priority Service Register	www.nationalgrid.co.uk
Telephone Preference Service	tpsonline.org.uk