****

 **Preparing for your Carers Assessment**

Being ready for your Carers Assessment is very important to ensure that you get the most out of it. It is easy to forget to tell the assessor something and this can lead to frustration when you don’t get the response or support that you thought you should.

This list has been developed by carers for carers to help you to prepare for the assessment. We hope it is helpful.

1. **Taking a companion or advocate:**

Have you considered asking someone, say, a member of the family, friend or other person with experience of an assessment, to accompany you to the meeting? This might be helpful for you, especially if they know your caring situation and might remember things you have forgotten.

1. **Administrative:**

Have you taken into account all the paperwork, phone calls, meetings and advocacy work that you do for and on behalf of the person you care for? Make sure you tell the assessor about this and how much time it can take.

1. **Medical:**

Prepare a list of the wide range of things under this heading - from medicines (collecting prescriptions and medications, understanding and administering them) to medical appointments (visits to GP surgeries, clinics, dentists and hospital appointments or visits from continence nurses, OTs, district nurses etc).

1. **Personal care:**

This varies widely, but should include jobs like toileting, bathing, dressing, feeding and a range of daily and nightly time-consuming tasks. Prepare a list in advance and remember to always detail a worse-case scenario if the person you care for fluctuates in their support needs.

1. **Financial:**

Take extra time on this to include all extra expenses for special clothing, furniture and equipment, and more importantly what you have had to give up e.g. full-time employment or having to reduce your working hours. Please flag any money issues.

1. **Transport:**

Arranging or providing transport and/or accompanying the person that you are caring for can be demanding, expensive and exhausting so consider all the extra work, time and expense involved in doing these tasks.

1. **Social life:**

There are two key areas to consider: detail the work involved in giving the person you are caring for a chance to get out and about, such as outings, clubs and other places, as well as the restrictions on your own social life and your need for regular breaks.

1. **Health:**

This is distinct and different from point three above. Consider and list special diets, exercise routines, physiotherapy and everything that you need to do for the person that you care for – and for yourself - to keep as fit and healthy as possible.

1. **General supervision:**

Work out roughly how much time you spend daily supervising the person you care for. Consider whether or not you can leave the person you are looking after unattended, either in the home or outside, at any time.

 **(10)**  **The psychological impact of caring:**

Caring can be both physically and mentally demanding. The all-consuming nature of caring can be a constant strain that affects everything else. Think about and note any mental stress on you and on the household, and its effect on family life and your quality of life.

**What other support do you receive?**

It will help the person carrying out the assessment if they can get a picture of a day or week in your life. This includes all the information above plus any services that you might receive.

It is sometimes difficult with the number of organisations and services that you have to deal with to remember who they are.

It would be useful to prepare a list in advance of any services that you have had contact with and any contact details or named staff members that you have regular contact with.

**Here to help**

Hillingdon Carers Partnership can provide you with support in many ways and help you to find it from elsewhere if needed. One phone call to them will prevent you having to make multiple calls to a range of organisations.

Call them on:

**01895 811206**