



The Princess Royal Trust
Coventry Carers' Centre

Introduction

Coventry Carers' Centre opened in July 1996, as the only 'one stop' centre for family carers – people who look after a relative, friend or neighbour who, due to ill health or disability, cannot manage without their help at home.

The Centre is one of over 144 Princess Royal Trust for Carers' Centres, and 85 Young Carers' Services in the country. The building is easily accessible (including offering a stairlift and accessible toilets) and is situated in the city centre.

The Centre is open to the public, on a drop-in basis, from **9.30am** until **4pm**, **Monday to Friday**. Between **9.30am** and **1pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday**, there is a Carer Support Worker available to give in depth advice and support. At other times, our Receptionist can give basic information, register new carers and issue Passport to Leisure and Learning.

Telephone support is available outside these hours. The **Carersline** number is **024 7663 3788**, and it is available between 8.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday, an answerphone operates outside these times.

Outreach drop-in services are available throughout the city – contact the Centre for details.

The Carers' Centre aims to identify family carers within the city, assess their needs and provide information and support to meet their current, and future, needs.

The information in this pack is intended for professionals who come into contact with carers in the course of their work, so that they are aware of Coventry Carers' Centre and the services offered. It is hoped that professionals will then make carers aware of the Carers' Centre and encourage them to use the services offered.



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Carers

According to the latest census figures, there are 30,047 family carers in Coventry, which is almost 10% of the population. Of these, 6,457 (21%) are caring for more than 50 hours per week, which may well have an impact on their own physical and mental health.

Carers can be any age or sex, come from all backgrounds and communities, and provide invaluable support to the people they care for.

It is widely recognized that carers have a range of needs because of their caring role, and these include:

- Recognition of their contribution
- Choice in how they care, and for how long
- Access to services which are culturally appropriate
- Information which is accessible
- Time off from caring, should they want it
- Practical help
- Emotional Support
- Alternatives to family care
- Training and Guidance
- A voice in the way services are planned and delivered



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The Centre

The Centre is situated at 3 City Arcade, in the city centre. It is open to the public on Monday to Friday, from 9.30am to 4.00pm. Between 9.30am and 1.00pm, on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, there are at least 2 Carer Support Workers available to deal with personal and telephone callers. Between 1pm and 4pm, and all day Tuesday, our Receptionist is available in the drop-in, to give basic information, register carers and issue Passport to Leisure. There is a Carer Support Worker available between 1pm and 4pm, to deal with telephone callers. Appointments can be made with specific workers outside these hours, and a limited number of home visits can be offered to those who are unable to come into the Centre.

The Centre also provides outreach drop-in services in other parts of the city, including Paradise Medical Centre and UHCW Walsgrave Hospital. Please contact the Centre for details of dates, times and locations.

The main telephone number is 024 7663 2972, the fax number is 024 7683 7082 and the email address is contactus@coventrycarers.org.uk. There is also a Carersline, 024 7663 3788, which is staffed between 8.30am and 4.30pm on weekdays, an answerphone operates outside these hours and whenever staff are unavailable. Messages are responded to promptly.

The Centre has a website www.coventrycarers.org.uk which has full details of all of the activities available for carers, as well as copies of our latest newsletters, links to other useful websites, and online referral facilities.

There is no formal referral process. Any professional who thinks that their client may benefit from the services offered by the Carers' Centre can telephone, access our website or drop in and talk to a member of staff. Clients can, however, only become registered with the Centre if they are a family carer, living in Coventry and have given their consent to being contacted by the Centre.

All new carers are given a Carer's Pack, which gives information about useful contacts and phone numbers within the community, and are invited to contact the Centre if they need further information or support. New carer's details are then, with their consent, entered onto the Centre's database, so that they can receive the Centre newsletter, and any targeted mailings. All information held on the database is completely confidential, and accessible only to a limited number of Centre staff.



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What the Centre offers

A wide range of **information** is held at the Centre, including:

- Local services – care agencies, residential homes.
- Services available through the Community Services Department & how to access these.
- Transport.
- Equipment – what is available and where to get it.
- Other support and/or advice agencies who may be able to help.
- Specific illnesses/disabilities/conditions and local or national organizations.
- Holidays for carers, with or without the person they care for.
- Training and leisure opportunities.
- Welfare Benefits – information about most relevant benefits and claim forms, but we can only help with completing forms for **Carers' Allowance**. For all other benefits, we will refer on to relevant agencies.

Services we offer include:

- Outreach – specific workers are employed to work with specific groups of family carers. We have 2 Asian outreach workers, a worker who support carers of people with mental ill health, a worker who supports BME carers of people with mental ill health, 2 workers who support young carers, a worker who supports carers around hospital discharge, a worker who supports carers of people who have a learning disability, a worker who supports BME carers of people who have a learning disability, a worker who supports carers of adults (aged 18 to 64) who have a physical or sensory impairment, a worker who is working with GP Practices to support carers and a worker who is developing an allotment project for carers. Some of these workers run support groups for carers, and we also have a General Carer Support Group, open to all carers.
- Social activities – such as theatre trips and outings, as well as a monthly Luncheon Club
- Access to the Local Pension Service, who can support people over 60 in claiming the benefits they are entitled to.
- Monthly surgery by a Community Care lawyer, by appointment only.
- Carers' Library – a range of books, videos, CDs, DVDs and tapes for free loan.
- Local newsletter.
- Walkers' Group.
- Access to training courses.
- Individual and group advocacy.
- Access to stress relieving therapies, hypnotherapy and counseling – through referral by Centre staff.
- Listening ear – an opportunity to offload.