

Be Prepared

How to create an emergency Plan



THINK



TALK



PLAN



**If someone relies on you
you can rely on us**

Thinking about what would be needed if you, the carer, became unwell is always important, but more so now. Planning now will support you the carer, the person you care for, and the NHS, to cope and feel better knowing you have done what you can to manage the situation. You may be a parent carer that needs to isolate, you may be looking after an elderly parent or a friend, whatever the situation this planning is as individual as you and is well worth the time for peace of mind.

1. What is a Be Prepared plan?

It's a plan that sets out the best way of supporting you and the person you care for in case of an emergency. It will contain the information that helps to stop an emergency turning into a crisis.

The need for emergency support may arise because you or another carer:

- suddenly becomes ill or has an accident.
- needs to go into hospital as an emergency or a planned short notice admission.
- must be elsewhere for some other reason.

Be Prepared plans are often seen as being for carers whose relative lives at home with them, but they can be equally useful if the person lives in their own home.

2. How is a Being Prepared Plan helpful?

An emergency often means that there's no time to stop and think about the best thing to do. Preparing beforehand when you have the time to think and talk with the person you care for, family, friends, and paid workers will reduce anxiety and stress for you and the person you care for if an emergency arises.

Creating a plan, means that decisions that need to be made are done so by people who know your relative well and who will be the best persons to do so. If you don't make a plan people who don't know you may make decisions about support and services available and may take your relative away from the people and places that are familiar: this can make someone feel lonely, become anxious, distressed or depressed.

Feel more in control, have a plan that you are all happy with – it will be helpful even if you never use it.

Getting Started

You can use our Be Prepared template to create your plan, it includes what we feel is the vital and practical information need. Or if you prefer you can create your own plan with the things that you feel are important.

It is important to create your plan at a time that you can think about the things that need to be done and talk to those who need to be involved.

Here are some suggestions of things to consider when you are getting started either using our template or on your own:

1. Think about who can help to create and be included in the plan.
2. What is important to and for the person you support to keep them safe and well in an emergency.
3. You may want to think about things you feel could go wrong.
4. What practical things can you do now to help.



Think about how you will make the plan? will you get people together – family, friends, neighbours – and share ideas. Or will you start by sitting down with the person you support and talking about your ideas together and then share the ideas with others. Consider what you feel will work for you and for them.



Where possible create the plan with the person who will need support in your absence and any family, friends and paid supporters who will be involved if an emergency happens.



If you are caring for more than one person, make a separate plan for each of them as they will certainly have different needs and different people involved in their lives.

Put a plan in place before an emergency happens.

3. Who can help?

You may know immediately who might help in an emergency. Or you may initially think you have no-one, but you will often find people who are willing to help by talking to people and telling them about the plan and what it is for. Ask people if they are willing to be part of the plan.

- ✓ Family members, for example grandchildren, siblings and in-laws of you or the person you support; they may live nearby or further afield.
- ✓ Friends including neighbours.
- ✓ Paid support workers, who provide necessary support to the person you look after (sometimes through a personal budget).
- ✓ Community organisations, this could be a faith group either or both of you belong to, a community centre or a club.

It may be easier to arrange support with your friends and family, people you and the person you support are more comfortable with. However, a paid support worker already involved in their life could be extremely helpful.

Let the person who needs the support lead as much as possible, choosing who they would like to plan with and have support from, will help the support go well.



Use the contact list at the end of our Be Prepared template to record details of anyone involved, give a copy to each person, and keep one with your plan.

4. How can they help?

The support needed will depend on the person you support and what they need support with. It may be practical things such as cooking a meal or arranging and driving the person to appointments that they need help with. Or if they need more support someone may be able to take them to stay for a while so that they can get help at certain times in the day. If someone can only give a small amount of help, picking up the phone to have a chat and provide reassurance is invaluable.

You could ask a neighbour to keep a spare front door key or keep the person company whilst waiting for other arrangements to be made.

The more people involved, the easier it will be.

Try to have a clear idea about what you would like to happen.

You may not have family or friends who can help:

- The local authority emergency service in your area may help. This will be someone coming into your home to assess the support needs of the person you care for and arrange necessary support at home or to provide a placement of alternative care while you are unable to. Details are on our template.

5. What is important to and for the person you support?

An emergency can be stressful, especially if the person who provides most of the day-to-day support is not around, perhaps because they have been rushed to hospital. Changes and disruptions to routines can cause worry and anxiety.

Essential information about the person, how they communicate, their health, medication, and any personal support they need along with information about their preferences and suggestions of how to help them cope if you are not there are a must to be included.

A few pieces of key information can prevent problems arising and help a person to feel less anxious. It is helpful to write down as much information as possible, particularly in the case of a person who has difficulties expressing what they want or need. It can provide essential information for someone less familiar with their needs and preferences.

Good day - bad day?

What makes a good day, or a bad day is a good way of thinking about this information and is focused on everyday life. Look at their daily routine and what works well /not well for them.

What is important to me: the things that the person you care for likes, things that are important in their life and help their day to go well for example:

- I like to start my day quietly.
- I speak to my friend Ben every Friday; he calls me, so I like my phone to be nearby.
- I enjoy a shower every day.
- I listen to music most days, it helps me relax.

What is important for me: the things that would keep me safe and well.

- I get anxious when my carer is not with me, and I don't know what's going on. Please explain to me what is happening.
- I need a reminder to take my medication.

Both can help you provide the information about what can make the difference between and good day and a bad day, what needs to be avoided, what can help.



Our Be Prepared template has places for you to record this information.

6. What could be an emergency that might arise?



You cannot plan for or predict an emergency, or when it might arise. However, there may be things that you think are more likely to happen because of your situation, your own health needs, or you may have other caring responsibilities, such as for an elderly parent.

- Think about situations that could arise.
- Write them down and discuss them with the people involved in your plan. Think about what would need to happen and use this to help create your plan.

7. What practical things can you do now to help?

- Let people know you are a carer: Register with your GP and talk to any professionals who support you and the person you care for to be sure they understand what you do as a carer.
- Apply for the Action for Carers Oxfordshire ID letter for carers from our website

- Message in a wallet. A scheme by Lyons where a carer can complete the information on a small fold away leaflet that fits in a purse or wallet giving vital information in the event of an emergency in the community. Call us and we can send one to you.
- Have a key safe installed at the house.
- Consider joining a Telecare scheme: when a call button is pressed following an accident or emergency care workers will come to the house (using an external key safe). There is a monthly charge for this service.
- Remember to show any keyholders how to get into your house. It's helpful to say who the key holders are in the contact information.
- On your phone contact list: type ICE and add phone numbers of people you would want to be contacted. You can put more than one number (ICE1, ICE2 etc.) Emergency services look for this.



If you need help or have any questions, please contact us one of our team will be happy to help.

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk

or call 01235 424 715