

www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk
carersinfo@carersoxfordshire.org.uk
01235 424715



BE  PREPARED

BE PREPARED

When emergencies happen, our lives are often put on hold while we recover or get things sorted out. But if you're a carer the person you look after will still need care and support even if you can't provide it. Have you thought about what would happen if you suddenly became ill or had an accident and were unable to care?

We recommend preparing beforehand, when you have the time to think about the best thing to do. Planning in advance will support you and the person you care for in an emergency. You will also feel better knowing you have done the best you can to manage the situation.



EMERGENCY PLAN

A key resource for being prepared is an Emergency Plan, which contains all the information about your caring role in one place. We have created a template for you to fill out and let others know how best to support you and the person you care for. It includes the contact details for yourself and the person you care for, emergency contacts, health conditions, legal requirements, medications, and medical equipment. You can download a copy from www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/be-prepared or contact us to request a printed copy.



TIPS FOR COMPLETING OUR EMERGENCY PLAN TEMPLATE

- If you care for more than one person make a separate plan for each of them, as they will have different needs and different people involved in their lives.
- Talk with the person you care for, family, friends, and paid workers and include them when creating the plan. Consider what will work for everyone involved.
- Plan for things more likely to happen because of your situation. What could be an emergency that might arise? There may be things that are more likely to happen because of your health needs, or you may have other caring responsibilities, such as for an elderly parent.
- Decide which family members, friends and neighbours could help in an emergency. Make sure decisions are done by the best people to do so. If you can't think of someone, try other people you know, such as paid support workers, or through groups and clubs you belong to. You will often find people willing to help if you explain what it is for. If you don't have an emergency contact, indicate on the form to call Oxfordshire County Council's Social & Health Care Team.
- Agree with your emergency contacts how they can help. It may be practical things such as cooking or driving to appointments. The person you care for may need to stay with someone for a while or have someone to keep them company whilst waiting for other arrangements.
- Ensure your emergency contacts are keyholders or have a key safe installed outside your house and show them how to get in. Tell them where you keep your emergency plans at home and give them a copy to help them understand what to do.
- Include vital and practical information about medical conditions, medications, medical equipment, and treatment in your cared for plan. Indicate if they need a reminder to take medication.
- Changes to routines can cause worry and anxiety. Include likes and dislikes for the person you care for. Look at their daily routine and what works well /not well for them. List things that are important in their life and help their day to go well for example listening to music to help relax. Include things to be avoided that make them anxious.



- Once your plan is complete, make copies and share them with people you trust, including your GP and emergency contacts. **We recommend keeping a copy at home where your emergency contacts and emergency services can easily find it.** You can also save a copy on your phone for when you are out and about. There is no need to send Carers Oxfordshire a copy.
- If your details change, don't forget to keep the plan updated.
- If you need help or have any questions, contact us and one of our team will be happy to help.

OTHER WAYS TO BE PREPARED

- Apply for a Carer ID at www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/carer-id and keep it with you when you are out.
- Register with your GP as a carer. Depending on the system used, this may show up when your medical records are accessed.
- Talk to any professionals who support you and the person you care for to be sure they understand what you do as a carer.
- Make it easy for emergency services to find who to contact on your phone. Name your emergency contacts ICE1, ICE2 etc.
- If there is a chance that the person you care for might need to go to the hospital with little warning, prepare a hospital emergency bag for them, and include their plan. You could also pack items for yourself if you need to accompany them.



USEFUL SERVICES

- Consider joining a **Telecare scheme** or getting a personal alarm.
- Energy companies have registers of customers who would be most at risk if their energy was cut off. This includes people with illnesses or disabilities, families with young children and older people. Ask your energy company to add you to their **Priority Services Register**. This may provide priority in an emergency (this could include providing alternative heating and cooking facilities in the event of supply disconnection). It can also help protect you from disconnection if you struggle to pay your energy bills.
- Shout is a free, confidential, 24/7 text support service for anyone in the UK who is struggling to cope. To start a conversation, text the word 'SHOUT' to 85258. Trained volunteers are there to listen at any time of day or night, and messages won't appear on your phone bill.
- If your life is at imminent risk, call the emergency services on 999.
- If you are ill or hurt and need help fast, but it is not a 999 emergency, call 111.