



Handy hints for carers

Advocacy

Sometimes, it can be a struggle accessing your rights and entitlements. You may need someone to speak up for you or represent your views. Embrace Wigan and Leigh has a dedicated Community Fieldworker whose role is to provide independent advice and advocacy to carers on all kinds of issues. They can help with phone calls, letter writing and may even be able to attend meetings with you to ensure that your voice is heard.

Embrace Wigan and Leigh 81 Ribble Road, Platt Bridge, Wigan WN12 5EG ☎
01942 513053 ✉ info@embracewiganandleigh.org.uk web link:
www.embracewiganandleigh.org.uk

Getting out and about

Do you enjoy a day out with the person that you care for but have difficulty finding suitable venues? The 'Rough Guide to Accessible Britain' contains details of over 175 of the UK's best attractions catering for disabled people. You can either place your order online at: www.accessibleguide.co.uk or call 0800 953 7070. The publication is available free of charge to Blue Badge holders.

Staying safe

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service provides free Home Fire Risk Assessments and free smoke alarms to all owner occupiers and tenants in the borough, regardless of their income or savings. To arrange an assessment, call the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service on: 0800 555 815 or visit the national Fire Gateway website www.fire.gov.uk and fill in the online home visit request. Age Concern Wigan Borough offers a similar service to people aged 50 or over which you can access by contacting 'Starting Point'.

Starting Point at Age Concern Wigan Borough Pennyhurst Mill, Haig Street, Wigan WN3 4AZ ☎ 01942 826079 ✉ enquiries@acwiganborough.org.uk web link: www.ageconcernwiganborough.org.uk

For the over 50s there is also a special 'Stop and Lock' scheme provided by Wigan Victim, Support and Witness Service. It includes free fitting of door chains, door viewers and window locks as well as advice on how to prevent distraction (bogus caller) burglary.

Victim Support and Witness Service Gerrard Winstanley House, Crawford Street, Wigan WN1 1NA ☎ 01942 322033 (Mon and Tues 9.00 – 5.00pm) ✉ caran.hill@victimsupport.org.uk web link: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Saving money

For many carers, the high cost of fuel bills is a particular problem. However, the Government, local councils and some utility companies provide grants and discounts that can help you save money and make your home more energy efficient. In a lot of cases, the existence of these schemes is not very well known. For example, few people realise that every household in the UK is entitled to at least 50 per cent off loft and cavity wall insulation while some groups, including the over 70s and those on certain benefits, can have the same work carried out totally free of charge. To find out if you qualify for any help contact the Energy Saving Trust on Freephone 0800 512012.

Good Trader Scheme

If you are looking for someone to do work around the house but are afraid of being ripped off, there is a scheme run by Wigan Council's Trading Standards department which should make things easier. The 'Good Trader Scheme' allows you to search (either online or over the telephone) for contractors who Trading Standards regard as fair and honest and who have had their work rated by ordinary members of the public.

Good Trader Scheme Wigan Council, Unity House, Westwood Park Drive, Wigan WN3 4HE ☎ 08454 040506 ✉ ts@wigan.gov.uk web link: www.wigan.gov.uk

Staying independent at home

Wigan Council provides a free assisted collection service for residents who have difficulty moving their black or green wheelie bins or their paper recycling sacks to the appropriate collection point. The council will also provide an extra bin if you, or the person that you care for, suffers from incontinence and needs to dispose of a lot of pads. To find out more, contact the Environmental Services Helpline.

Environmental Services Helpline Wigan Council, Civic Buildings, New Market Street, Wigan WN1 1RP ☎ 01942 404364 ✉ eshelpline@wigan.gov.uk web link: www.wigan.gov.uk

People aged over 50 who have recently come out of hospital, lost someone close to them or are experiencing other changes in their life can access a special 'Time Limited Contact Scheme' run by Wigan and Leigh Pensioners Link. The scheme provides a range of low-level support including home visits, regular telephone calls, help with shopping, information and advocacy, for a maximum of 6 weeks.

Wigan and Leigh Pensioners Link Resource Centre, 27 Charles Street, Leigh WN7 1DB ☎ 01942 261753 web link: www.pensionerslink.org.uk

Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT's Community Health Development Team are able to assess people in their own homes where there is concern about their health and / or well being. Members of the team can carry out basic health checks, provide support in accessing services and give focused advice on issues such as equipment and lifestyle. The service is free and people can refer themselves if they think that they would benefit. Like the Time Limited scheme described above, it is only available to those aged 50 and over.

Community Health Development Team

☎ 01942 481942

Dawn Patrol is a completely free service funded by the National Lottery and provided by the British Red Cross. It is aimed at keeping people aged over 60 independent and confident in their own homes by providing a telephone call each weekday morning to make sure they are safe and well. Currently, Dawn Patrol can only be accessed by older people living alone in post code areas WN1, WN2 and WN3 (although others may be accommodated if they would benefit from the service).

British Red Cross Dawn Patrol Unit 4A Springfield Court, Bolton BL3 2NT ☎ 01204 369628 ✉ dawnpatrolincc@redcross.org.uk

Medical matters

If you or the person that you care for uses needles to inject medication, you must dispose of these safely afterwards using a special container called a 'sharps bin'. Sharps bins are available on prescription from your GP or other health professional.

Chemicals released into soil or drinking water are believed to have a potentially harmful effect on health and on the environment. For this reason, you should return any unwanted medication to your community pharmacy rather than throwing it away or flushing it down the toilet or sink. Pharmacies in Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT can accept any unwanted medication for disposal, regardless of where you got it from.

The Carers Support Team, in partnership with Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust Phlebotomy Service, operates a 'priority blood card' scheme. This allows carers who attend the Phlebotomy clinic for regular blood tests to be seen more quickly and to receive more convenient appointment times so that they do not have to spend long periods away from the person that they care for. It doesn't cost anything to apply for the card, but you will need to be registered with the Carers Support Team.

The 'Message in a Bottle' scheme enables vulnerable people, especially those living alone, to be treated more quickly and effectively by the emergency services if they suffer an accident or sudden illness. The 'bottle' is actually a small plastic container in which essential medical information and important contact details can be kept until needed. You can pick up a bottle kit, free of charge, from your local chemist, health centre or doctor's surgery.