

Knowing what to ask for – hints and tips:

<p>Carer's Assessment – Contact your Carers Organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your assessment to make it very clear to statutory services as to what you are prepared to take on as a carer. • Make sure the assessment is completed away from the person you care for so you can be open and honest. • Make sure you get a copy of the assessment and a plan as to what help you can offer.
<p>Getting others involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make contact with your Carers Organisation. They are specialists and will offer lots of advice and support. Even if you feel you are managing. They have newsletters, trips and activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't take on the whole caring role. Where possible, ask family members and friends for help. • If you are caring at a distance and the person you care for tends to telephone you many times during the day, perhaps consider getting someone else to answer; this will reduce the dependency. • If visits are challenging, ask someone to come along for moral support. • When friends offer to help, don't assume they are just being polite. Take it! Examples could include them taking the person you care for out for a walk or play cards, in order for you to have some ME time.
<p>Looking after you</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set boundaries – say NO when you need to. • Use your coping strategies. • Make emergency plans for peace of mind. • Take a step back when you need to – calm yourself down and wait for a better opportunity to talk should there be any tension.
<p>Requests for services or complaints</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asking for a service, have some knowledge of how that service works. There is often an eligibility criteria so make sure you've seen it. Also many services are provided to avoid risk. So if you can demonstrate what the risks would be without their service, this may

	<p>help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With specific requests or complaints, its best to put them in writing. Keep a copy yourself and get proof of posting. • If using the telephone, keep records of when you rang, who you spoke to and some bullet points of the conversation. • If a decision is made to which you disagree with, you can always ask to see it in writing. With written reasons as to why the decision has been made.
<p>Using services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the person you care for refuses medical appointments or treatment it may be useful to attend yourself. Explain the current situation to the professional and also get help. • Don't turn any services down that are offered initially even if they seem inappropriate. Accept them and then perhaps tailor them to meet your needs once they are in place. • If you decline a service that's been offered, it's much more difficult to get it back later. It can be useful to have services involved so they are constantly seeing and reviewing the situation. • Use the knowledge, expertise and influence of professionals who are 'on your side'. A request for help coming from another professional can carry more weight. • If you are finding it hard to get on with a particular provider of care/service, you can always request a change in personnel.