



Information service for people living,
working or studying in Merton

**Merton Civic Centre, London Road
Morden SM4 5DX**
Telephone: 020 8545 4710
Textphone: 020 8545 4356
Fax: 020 8274 4932
E-Mail: info@care-connect.info

Carers Support Groups

The NHS Continuing Care Assessors for Merton residents are based at the Wilson Hospital, Cranmer Road, Mitcham – contact number 020 8687 4802.

***Alzheimer's Society – SW London**

241 Garratt Lane, London SW18 4DU

Telephone : 020 8877 0033

Email: swlondon@alzheimers.org.uk

Website: www.alzheimers.org.uk

- Offers information, advice, a visiting service and help-line. Answer phone available at all times.
- Most important of all – members provide tremendous mutual support and friendship.
- Areas covered: includes Merton & Wandsworth (Richmond ring Tel 020 8892 7799)

***Carers National Association (Carers UK)**

Ruth Pitter House, 20 – 25 Glasshouse Yard, London EC1A 4JT

Telephone Carers Line: 0808 808 7777 – between 10am and 12 noon and 2 and 4pm on Wednesday & Thursday

- The Carers Line can offer information and advice on topics such as:
 - Social Services assessment of carers' needs and help for the person they care for
 - State benefits carers may be able to claim
 - Arranging respite or residential care

***Carers Support Merton**

The Vestry Hall, London Road, Mitcham CR4 3UD

Telephone number: 020 8646 7515

At CSM, we provide services and support aiming to help all carers.

A carer is someone who looks after a family member, partner, friend or neighbour who due to illness, disability, frailty or addiction is unable to manage alone.

Carers provide unpaid care and support involving for example, personal care (washing, bathing, dressing, feeding) cooking, shopping, housework and giving emotional support.

Carers registering with the organisation will receive a Bi-monthly newsletter and access to our services, which include:

- Advocacy
- Benefits services
- Respite activities and therapies
- Peer support groups
- Counselling
- Information and advice on all aspects of caring responsibilities
- Forums, putting carers views across

For young carers we also have:

Merton Young Carers Project - This project allows young carers (from 5 -18) to access support in a variety of settings including schools, supporting their emotional, physical and educational well being.

***Disability Law Service**

39-45 Cavell Street, London E1 2BP

Telephone: 020 7791 9800

Provides expert legal advice and representation (e.g. in complaints, using the Ombudsman, tribunals and courts) to disabled people, their families and carers. Disabled people and their families, carers and advocates, are all welcome to get in touch with the help line for advice.

DLS prides itself on providing a quality service in areas of public and social welfare law, and hopes to demystify the legal system by giving concise and timely legal advice and information. From one to one consultations to full representation in the courts, DLS can work with individuals at any level of the legal system. The Disability Law Service (DLS) has provided high quality information and advice to disabled and deaf people for over 30 years. DLS is run by and for disabled people as an independent, national registered charity.

DLS only provides advice and information in these six areas of law: (1) Disability Discrimination - If you are disabled or have had a disability, the DDA makes it unlawful for you to be discriminated against: in employment; access to goods, facilities and services; the management, buying or renting of land or property; education. And there is additional legislation, apart from the DDA, that protects your rights of equal access to health and social care entitlements; (2) Consumer; (3) Community Care; (4) Further and Higher Education; (5) Employment; and (6) Welfare Benefits (Greater London Area). For these areas of law DLS also provides a casework service, and support at any level of the legal system. If you believe your legal problem fits our remit then please call our helpline staff. It is advisable to have read the online resources within our site www.dls.org.uk to make the most of your call.

***Fanon Resource Centre**

Suite 1, Justin Plaza, 341 London Road, Mitcham CR4 4BE

Telephone: 020 8255 4033

- A Mental Health Charity working with African, Caribbean and Asian people with severe and enduring mental health problems.
- Provides counselling, support and advice

Firststop – Advice Line is a free, professional, confidential and independent service (provided by Counsel & Care, Elderly Accommodation Counsel, Help the Aged and NHFA Ltd.). **The Advice Line** is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm - calls are free from BT telephones on 0800 377 7070.

FirstStop Advice provides information and advice about care, housing and financial options for older people and their carers. It is provided jointly by Counsel and Care, Elderly Accommodation Counsel, Help the Aged and **NHFA** Limited. Our aim is to expand the options and choices you might consider, and provide enough information about them to help you decide what is right for you.

***Headway – SW London Branch**

The Wolfson Rehabilitation Centre, Copse Hill, London SW20 0NQ

Telephone: 07722 861 642

E-mail: headwayswondon@gmail.com

Website: www.headway.org.uk

- The Group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm at the Wolfson Rehabilitation Centre. Various activities are arranged including specialist speakers, which have included the CAB on benefits, a Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapist on insight difficulties, etc.
- Headway is also introducing a pilot project to support Family Members, Friends and Carers of people with brain injuries. This will run between May and November this year, and is a bi-monthly support group. An afternoon session is held on Fridays at the Wolfson Rehabilitation Centre, and an evening session on Mondays at the Wimbledon Guild, Worple Road, Wimbledon. Email for further details.
- The group also organises outings from time to time and produces a monthly newsletter to keep everyone up to date with what is going on in the group. Membership fees are £10 per year. New members are always welcome but please phone before attending for the first time to make sure there are no changes to the venue or time of the meeting.

***Hospice Information Service**

34-44 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JG

Telephone: 0207 520 8222

Out of hours: 0845 46 47 (NHS direct)

E-mail: info@hospiceinformation.info

Website: www.helpforhospices.org.uk

Information about home nursing and respite care for people with a terminal illness. Offers a comprehensive enquiry service, website and statistical information. Publications include UK and International Directories, electronic news bulletins, quarterly magazine, listings of educational and job opportunities, and a range of practical advice and information leaflets and reports. A Membership service provides regular updating of information. The UK directory of Hospice and Palliative Care Services is available free of charge on receipt of a large (9"x11") envelope with £1.75 stamps.

***Merton MENCAP**

The Wilson Hospital, Cranmer Road, London CR4 4TP

Telephone : 020 8646 0965

- Telephone, referral or contact for a visit to discuss your needs. Adult projects coordinator 020 8687 4825; Kids first 020 8687 4644; Carers community advisers 020 8687 4657 and office manager 020 8687 4651.
- Works on behalf of people with learning disabilities and their families and carers to improve services and to change attitudes.
- Organises fund-raising and social events.
- Family Support Worker provides information, advice and support to families.

***Merton MIND**

The Vestry Hall, London Road, Mitcham CR4 3UD

Telephone : 020 8648 6565

- One to one and group counselling and support for Carers of people with dementia.
- Monthly groups at various locations throughout the borough.
- Individual sessions available in clients' homes or at office base.

***Merton Sickle Cell & Thalassaemia Group**

Room 10, The Vestry Hall, London Road, Mitcham CR4 3ND

Telephone : 020 8646 8778

- A support group for people who suffer from sickle cell disease, or have sickle cell trait, and their carers.
- Offers support and information and shares ideas.
- Drop in facility at Vestry Hall by appointment or referral
- Telephone enquiries Monday – Thursday 10am – 5pm.

***Multiple Sclerosis Society – Merton Branch**

20 Charnwood Avenue, Merton Park, London SW19 3EJ

Telephone: 020 8542 1712

E-mail: mertonms@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.mssociety.org.uk/merton

- The society offers help, advice and support to sufferers and their carers/families in the borough.
- It holds friendly monthly socials where members get together for a chat and raises funds locally to assist members in need. 2 groups, 1 open to all, 1 for young persons.

***The Princess Royal Trust for Carers (PRTC)**

Unit 14, Bourne Court, Southend Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 8HD

Telephone: 0844 800 4361

- The Princess Royal Trust for Carers' mission is to make a positive difference to the lives of carers.
- The Princess Royal Trust for Carers is the largest provider of comprehensive carers support services in the UK. Through its unique network of 144 independently managed Carers' Centres, 85 young carers' services and interactive websites, www.carers.org and www.youngcarers.net The Trust currently provides quality information, advice and support services to almost 354,000 carers, including over 20,000 young carers.

***The Relatives and Residents Association**

24 The Ivories, 6-18 Northampton Street, London N1 2HY

Telephone Advice Line: 020 7359 8136 from 9.30am to 4.30pm - Monday -Friday

- The Relatives & Residents Association exists for older people needing, or living in, residential care and the families and friends left behind.
- Relatives often need a listening ear to cope with feelings of guilt about their perceived inability to carry on caring. They may want to know how to get help in understanding the complex rules and regulations about paying for care or to complain about the quality of care their loved ones are receiving.
- R&RA helps in all these ways, quietly sympathetic, authoritative in its advice and always fiercely supportive of the frail vulnerable people it seeks to help.

***Rethink (Merton and Sutton Branch)**

Telephone: 020 8542 3657 or 020 8974 1171. Emergency Helpline: 0800 028 8000.

Website www.masrethink.org.uk

Provides information, support and advice to mentally ill people and their carers. Meets last Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm at the Wimbledon Guild, 30-32 Worple Road, Wimbledon.

***SCOPE RESPONSE**

PO Box 833, Milton Keynes MK12 5NY

Tel. 0808 800 3333 from 9am -7pm weekdays.

E-mail response@scope.org.uk

Website www.scope.org.uk

Scope Response is the first contact point for all enquiries about Scope, cerebral palsy and disability issues. Their Regional Response Teams work with people with cerebral palsy and families who may need a higher level of advice and support to identify their needs and to ensure that those needs are met. These teams also have local knowledge and information. There are Regional Response Workers covering London boroughs.

***SOUTH THAMES CROSSROADS**

(formerly Merton & Sutton Crossroads Caring for Carers Ltd)

The Vestry Hall, London Rd, Mitcham CR4 3UD

Telephone: 020 8648 9677

E-mail: admin@souththamescrossroads.org

Website: www.souththamescrossroads.org

Direct Service Charge - Supply well-trained, competent care support workers to take over for you and can offer blocks of time (usually 3 hours) for all night care service, mornings, afternoons or evenings with the same support worker each time. Services may be purchased directly at competitive rates. Services available - regular breaks during the day; evening breaks; all night care service; full weekend breaks; palliative care service; specialist children's service, physiotherapy exercises carried out; wheelchair users taken out.

Respite Care Service for people with mental health needs - provides a dedicated, high quality home-based respite service for carers and cared-for which is flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of carers and those they care for. There is no charge for referrals from Social Services within the London Borough of Merton. Children's clubs for those with additional needs on Saturdays and after school.

Mentoring Project for Carers and former carers who would like to obtain advice, support or access services e.g. carers assessment, benefits (carers allowance) obtaining equipment, arranging home visits by OTs, etc.

Crisis Care

If someone's usual care arrangements break down in an emergency situation for example their normal carer is taken ill.

Contact the Duty Social Worker who will if appropriate arrange for :

- a) the Crisis Care Scheme to provide cover
- b) temporary residential respite care

The duty social worker can be contacted via the main number at the respective office :

Older People – Gifford House ☎ 020 8545 4430/1

Mental Health and Substance Abuse – Safer Merton, 3rd floor Athena House, 86-88 London Road, Morden, SM4 5AZ. ☎ 020 8545 3661. Email: data@merton.gov.uk

Physical, Learning or Sensory Impairment – Russell Road ☎ 020 8545 4493/4

HIV/AIDS – Russell Road ☎ 020 8545 4547

Children and Families ☎ 020 8545 4232/4260/ 4227.

Children & Families affected by HIV/AIDS – ☎ 020 8545 4201

Out of office hours ring ☎ 020 8770 5000 – calls handled by **Sutton Social Services** and immediate arrangements made.

Respond

Respond provides a range of services to victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse who have learning disabilities, and training and support to those working with them.

☎ (Helpline) 0808 808 0700.

Respite Foster Care

Respite foster care is when a child spends short periods of time with a foster family on a regular basis (for example one weekend a month).

The parents of children with disabilities find this particularly valuable as it helps them to continue caring for their child at home by giving the whole family a well-earned break from full-time caring. It is also extremely beneficial to the child as it gives them the experience of an ongoing family environment, as an alternative to regular residential care.

Interview with a respite foster carer

Paulyn is a social work manager and a single mum. She has been a respite foster carer for four years.

What prompted you to become a respite foster carer?

I enjoy working with children. The team I manage cares for under-eight year olds either in need or with special needs. As a manager I missed the direct contact with children, and wanted to use my skills to help other parents.

How does it fit in with your family life?

Very well actually. I am a very organised person and have a good routine, which children like, as they know where they stand. I also have a large extended family and a good support network. A lot of my friends have children and my sister is a respite carer as well.

Have you cared for the same child all that time?

Yes, I have cared for my foster daughter since she was two, and she is now six. She has cerebral palsy and we have been through a lot together. Her health was particularly bad the first three years, but thankfully the past year has been better.

What are the benefits and rewards?

My foster daughter treats my home like her own. She is very comfortable with my son and the rest of my family, and that alone is reward enough.

What would you say to people considering becoming a respite carer?

You must love children, above anything else. Your own children must be comfortable with it as well. My son has a very good relationship with my foster daughter and misses her when she is not with us. Be prepared to bond with your foster child, as with respite care you have the opportunity to build a relationship that is a long-term commitment.

How did you find the process of becoming a respite carer?

Very hard - given my job I thought it would be a lot easier, but I was surprised at my reaction when asked personal questions. Saying that, the whole process was worth it and I have found it benefits both my personal and professional life. I now have more empathy with foster carers, which in turn makes me better at my job.

How to become a respite carer

- You don't need any qualifications
- You don't need to be married
- You don't need to own your own home, but need to have a spare room
- You will receive on going training, support and a generous allowance

A social worker will visit your home to assess your suitability for caring for a child with disabilities. The assessment process will include preparation training and checks to make sure you are fit, healthy and of good character. The assessment is presented to the Fostering Panel to consider your suitability. Once approved, you will be carefully matched with a child and supported whilst caring for him or her. Contact us to find out how you could make a difference to young lives forever.

Contact details

Duty Social Worker
The Fostering Team
Worsfold House, Church Road
Mitcham CR4 3FA
Freephone 0800 073 0874
Tel: 0208 545 4285
Fax: 0208 274 5989
Email: fostering@merton.gov.uk

We take care to update the information we provide regularly to try to ensure it is accurate. However, CareConnect cannot accept liability for any errors or omissions, nor can we be held responsible for the services provided by any of the agencies or bodies referred to.