

NEWSLETTER
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Gloucestershire

Carers **Hub**

Spring Newsletter 2020

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.



“Refer Today,
So You **Don’t**
Have to Worry
Tomorrow”



Coronavirus Update

At Gloucestershire Carers Hub we want you to know that we are here for you. As the situation with coronavirus evolves, it's important to know what support is available to you as a carer and those you look after. Our dedicated team are here to take your calls and try to support you in anyway we can, whether that's information, advice and guidance, help collecting essential food and medication, access to some funding for something that will make a difference to your caring role or online groups and forums, so you don't feel isolated. Whatever you need please pick up the phone and talk to us, so we can do our best to point you in the right direction during this extremely difficult time.

We want to share with you some frequently asked questions to help give you some guidance around Covid19.

What do I do if I or the person I look after has any symptoms?

If you are worried that you or someone you look after may be at risk, NHS 111 can offer direct guidance through their online coronavirus helpline <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>. Their website helps you decide the next steps and supports with a diagnosis however, if you don't have online access then please call 111 if your (or their) symptoms become severe, and let them know you are a carer.

Carers UK have also created a **Wellbeing Action Plan see page 5** with some tailored tips on keeping a positive frame of mind. Please go to their website for more information or call us and we can post this out to you.

Do I need to stay away from the person I care for?

The NHS has written to everyone considered to be at risk of severe illness if they were to catch the coronavirus. You may have received the letter yourself, either as someone in this 'high risk' group or as the named carer of someone else who is.

If a person you care for has received this letter, the instructions are very clear. They must stay at home at all times and avoid all face-to-face contact for at least 12 weeks, except from you as their carer and healthcare workers continuing to provide essential medical care.

However, if you start to display any of the symptoms of coronavirus, you must suspend your face-to-face visits. If this means that the person you care for will be even more vulnerable, for example because they will no longer receive the essential supplies that you bring them, the government has set up a dedicated helpline for vulnerable people seeking additional care.

If you have received an NHS letter or are caring for someone who has, you can register for further support here

www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable or call **0800 028 8327**, the government's new dedicated helpline.

Even if you are not showing symptoms, the government has advised people to stop non-essential contact with others and all unnecessary travel.

How do I protect someone I care for?

In the first instance, it is advisable to protect yourself and others by following the hygiene and infection control guidelines.

If you live with those you care for or if you think you've been in close contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, take extra precaution around social distancing and check if you have symptoms using the coronavirus helpline symptom checker. If you haven't already, start putting in place contingency measures to support the person you care for.

If you do not live with those you care for, we suggest you keep in regular contact over the phone, through email or through video calls.

Families may want to think about spending time together in a different way – for example, by setting up a group chat or playing online games together. If online communication isn't possible, never underestimate the value of a regular phone call to offer social contact and support.

If necessary, make plans for alternative face-to-face care for the person you care for, for example by calling on trusted neighbours, friends or family members.

What's the advice if I have care workers and other home help?

The NHS guidance is now very clear. Visits from people who provide essential support such as healthcare, personal support with daily needs or social care should continue. Carers, like yourself, and paid care workers must stay away if you/they have any of the symptoms of coronavirus.

Let friends and family know that they should only visit if providing essential care such as washing, administering medication, dressing and preparing meals.

All people coming into the home should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds on arrival and often during their visit. Talk to the person you care for about the hygiene and infection control measures they should expect someone coming into their home to follow. They should not be afraid to insist that these are followed.

If you have a care worker employed by an agency ask them what protective measures they are taking and how they plan to respond if any of their staff are affected. If the care worker shows symptoms of coronavirus, inform the agency. They will need to carry out a risk assessment and take steps to protect staff, their families and all clients from the virus. The agency should work with you to ensure that the person you care for is also safe

Protecting your Mental Wellbeing from Carers UK

Keeping calm and well: tips for you and those you care for

These tips are designed to help both you and those you care for look after yourselves and protect your mental wellbeing.

Ideas for your wellbeing action plan

1. Combat any rising anxiety levels by setting a strict time limit on how much you read about coronavirus on social media and in the news. Only follow the advice of trusted sources such as the gov.uk and NHS websites, and look out for their daily updates. You can also find guidance for carers on our webpage Coronavirus guidance.

2. Allocate a time slot in your day for an activity you enjoy – whether it's to read, write, paint, cook, do some gardening or knit. Encourage those you care for to make time for activities they enjoy doing, too.

3. Try to find moments for yourself – exercising mindfulness, even just by listening to

music, is a great way to find calmness and peace of mind. With help from online guidance, many people find seated exercises, yoga or dance helpful to charge up those endorphins too. Is there an exercise related video or app on your phone you can follow for tips? There are some good ideas for exercises you can do at home on the NHS website.

4. Finding a programme, routine or structure to follow can be a good way to keep your emotions in check and it may be helpful to devise a routine for the person you look after, if they need support to do so. Free online training courses are springing up – we have several bespoke ones for carers who want to review and reinvigorate their skills such as Learning for Living.

5. We know getting enough sleep can be challenging for many carers. Some people find meditation exercises before bed really help. Other tips include having a bath with lavender oil, drinking chamomile tea or reading another chapter of that novel you've been meaning to pick up again before going to bed (try to find ways to switch off - especially from online devices).

6. Keep in touch with friends, family and others by phone and online. It's reassuring to know at this time that it can be easy to communicate even from far away. Using the Jointly app is one example of how carers can do this. Talking and sharing your feelings with someone who understands can be a massive relief and release. If you're feeling really alone and very stressed, the Samaritans provide a 24-hour listening service: 116 123 and there are many other sources of support available. Never hesitate to pick up the phone or worry there is no one to support you – we are all in this together.

7. There are lots of supportive online groups and sources of help, including the Carers UK Forum, where you can connect with other carers facing the same challenges. There are also local voluntary groups that may be able to help in practical ways, for example with home deliveries. See <https://covidmutualaid.org/local-groups/>.

8. Keep in mind that there are sometimes those looking to exploit those in vulnerable circumstances. Most people offering support will be genuine, but beware of scammers masquerading as sources of support and trust your instincts.

9. Get some fresh air by opening your windows, walking round the garden or going for a walk or a jog (as long as you observe government guidance about going out and social distancing).

Carers We Are Here For You!



During these difficult times we want our Carers to know that we are here for you. Our doors may have had to be closed, but our service is still very much operational with new and exciting ways to offer you support.

Although our face to face assessments and groups have been paused, we are continuing to provide support to all our Carers via telephone support and assessments, online information, advice and guidance. Alongside this we are offering emotional wellbeing calls, WhatsApp Carer support groups and virtual tea and coffee mornings to keep Carers connected.

If you are interested in any of these or would like to speak with someone please contact us on

0300 111 9000

We also have new opening hours on Tuesday's and Thursday's and will now be opening at 8am until 8pm.

Monday – 9am – 5pm
Tuesday – 8am – 8pm
Wednesday – 9am – 5pm
Thursday – 8am – 8pm
Friday – 9am – 5pm

Email:
carers@peopleplus.co.uk

You can also follow us on Facebook & Twitter

Follow the link for information from Carers UK on looking after yourself.

www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/health/looking-after-your-health/coronavirus-covid-19

If you require medical advice call 111 and in an emergency call 999.

“ **What can Gloucestershire Carers Hub do for me?** ”

We are here to support you within your caring role. On a daily basis we receive phone calls, emails and have face to face contact with Carers asking for support and advice on a variety of topics. If you need any information, support or guidance during this difficult time please pick up the phone and speak to one of our team. We are here to support you.

We can ensure you get the right support you need at the right time and also further support should you require it. We also receive referrals from professionals across the county. We make sure that these are processed in a timely manner and also that you as the carer are contacted within three working days.

We can support you with understanding benefits, support your health and wellbeing, provide a statutory carers assessment and more. We carry out statutory carers assessments and offer a wide variety of training courses and sessions to suit your individual needs.

☎ 0300 111 9000

@ carers@peopleplus.co.uk

Our Online Learning Skills Provision



We have introduced a new Skills Academy, where you will see a range of courses on offer. Most courses are fully funded, however, some specific courses require a learner loan or have a cost implication for each individual. There are some really great opportunities if you want to develop your skills or expand your knowledge.

If you would like to browse the opportunities please visit the below link:

www.peopleplus.theskillsnetwork.com

The Gloucestershire Carers Hub Message during Covid-19

Carers and Partner Agencies

We understand that this is a worrying time for carers and, as such, are doing all we can to support our carers through this situation.

Most of our communication channels remain open, though for the safety of you and our staff, we are no longer providing face to face services. We are still available to offer support to you during our normal opening hours (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, but we will keep this under review and amend as appropriate) including information, advice and guidance over the phone and through our website, email and social media. Please keep checking our website and social media for up to date information.

The latest information from the government relevant for carers can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people

At times like this contingency planning is at the forefront of our mind. Therefore, if you would like to talk about what might happen if you or your cared for becomes ill, please do phone. Whilst we may not be able to process registrations for the Carers Emergency Scheme as normal, we will continue to start the registration process for any carer who wishes to do so.

We request that carers are mindful that the registration processes may take longer than usually expected. It is really helpful to talk through emergency planning, even if you do not formally wish to register with the Carers Emergency Scheme.

www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk/carers-emergency-scheme

We recognise that this is an increasingly isolating time for carers and we want to assure carers in Gloucestershire that we are here if you want to talk to someone. We will also be providing outreach calls to carers known to us, to offer emotional support, information, advice and guidance, as well as a conversation about contingency plans.

Something that may be of further interest is the Jointly App which is supported by Carers UK. More information about this app and how it can help can be found on page 7 of this newsletter.

If you have any questions or are aware of a Carer, please contact:

0300 111 9000 | carers@peopleplus.co.uk
www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk

If you are a young Carer, please contact:

01452 733060 | www.glosyoungcarers.org.uk

 twitter.com/@GCarersHub

 facebook.com/@Gloucestershirecarershub



E-learning With Proud to Care



On LearnPro Community you can access the following E-learning Modules in 'All Courses A-Z':

- Basic Mental Health Awareness
- Continence
- Dementia
- Equality & Diversity
- Food, Safety, Infection Control, Nutrition & Hydration
- Mental Capacity Act
- Suicide Prevention

- Understanding Autism (B)
- Autism & Communication
- Autism & Sensory Experience
- Autism, Stress & Anxiety
- Autism Supporting Families

These are free of charge for anyone living in the county.

www.community.learnprouk.com/lms/guest_level/RegistrationLocationAndRole.aspx?RegId=188

Staying Safe as a Carer



During this difficult time it is important to keep safe and **be aware of scams which are arising**. Please take guidance only from official sources.

If you are unsure of anything call us at the Hub.

Ten golden rules to prevent fraud

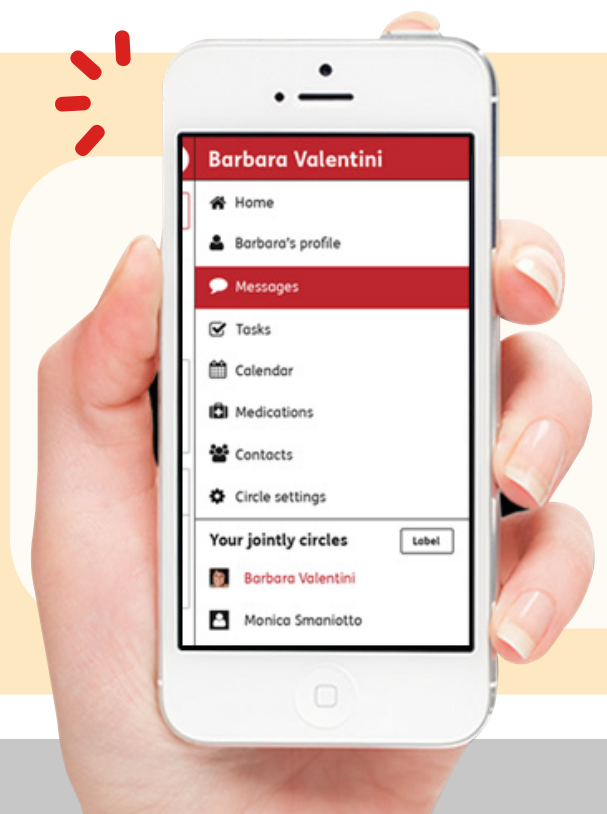
Remember these ten golden rules to help you prevent fraud and beat the scammers.

- 1 Be suspicious of all 'too good to be true' offers and deals.** There are no guaranteed get-rich-quick schemes.
- 2 Don't agree to offers or deals immediately.** Insist on time to get independent or legal advice before making a decision.
- 3 Don't hand over money or sign anything** until you've checked someone's credentials and their company details.
- 4 Never send money to anyone you don't know or trust**, whether in the UK or abroad, or use methods of payment you're not comfortable with.
- 5 Never give banking or personal details to anyone you don't know or trust.** This information is valuable so make sure you protect it.
- 6 Always log on to a website directly** rather than clicking on links in an email.
- 7 Don't just rely on glowing testimonials.** Find solid, independent evidence of a company's success.
- 8 Always get independent or legal advice** if an offer involves your money, time or commitment.
- 9 If you spot a scam or have been scammed, report it and get help.** Contact Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040** or at actionfraudalert.co.uk. Call us on **101** if you know the suspect or if they are still in the area. If you're deaf or hard of hearing, use our textphone service on **18001 101**.
- 10 Don't be embarrassed about reporting a scam.** Because the scammers are cunning and clever, there is no shame in being deceived. By reporting it, you'll make it more difficult for them to deceive others.



Agylia Care is an app available from the Play store or Apple App store that supports carers to learn things at the touch of a button. The app enables you to describe who you care for, what conditions they have and the type of support you need. This allows Agylia Care to update the recommended videos for you. The training is in the form of microteach videos where information is given to you in bite sized pieces. There are 70 videos on a variety of different topics which may be of interest to you.

To find out more, contact the Carers Hub.





Technology - It's positive impact on carers

One of our Carers cares for her husband who is unable to do a lot of the things he used to. Our Carer uses a variety of technology in the home to make her caring situation better for them both and still give her husband the independence he needs.

Our Carer uses smart devices such as Amazon Echo and Google Home to control appliances around the home including, amongst other things, lighting and heating. She has both devices linked to the heating system using nest and can check the temperature from anywhere in or out of the home and set it to ensure her husband is comfortable at any time during the day.

The smart devices are also linked to the lights, and with a simple request, can turn on the

lights upstairs or downstairs in order to make moving around the home in the dark safer. Our Carer feels that it keeps her husband in touch with technology, as it has always been his passion and also supports him when he is feeling unwell.

“
She wouldn't be without it in the home now, and finds that her husband can support her with compiling “to do” lists and shopping lists that enable him to still have input into the daily running of the home.”

Her husband struggles to use a mobile phone because if he drops it, he is unable to get out of bed to retrieve it. To overcome this, he now has a smart watch which makes it easier for him when she is out because he can speak to it and touch it, to automatically call her.

This new technology has had a really positive impact on their lives and ability to remain independent.

Technology can support within the home and there are so many different options available to support you in your own home and to support those around who may have a disability or are not able to carry out practical tasks anymore.

jointly

The jointly app is available for free for all of our registered carers. It is an app to support you within your caring role and can allow multiple individuals to log in and update information.

If you look after someone and share the caring responsibility, this can be a great tool for you to access up to date information on the person that you care for.

The app can act as a live record to show what is happening with your cared for including

logging appointments, updating medical details and medication. Should you choose, it can also provide up to date information for any other person you believe requires access.

You can gain free access by requesting the access code from the Gloucestershire Carers Hub by calling **0300 111 9000** or emailing carers@peopleplus.co.uk.



Staying Active

At this time, it is important maintain some form of physical exercise. We have included some exercises you could try.

We all know that some form of physical activity is good for us, but some exercises are not accessible for everyone due to the pressures of a caring role, having limited time or limited mobility. Chair-based activities could be the answer for doing some exercise without having to leave the home.

Even the smallest amount of activity can boost our wellbeing and help you to tone and strengthen muscles.

Please note:

If you have a health condition, then you may wish to check with your GP before you start completing exercise.

Six Rules of Chair-Based Exercise

- 1 Always use a strong chair.** Preferably, the strong chair that you use would have armrests and would not be too soft. When you sit in the chair to exercise, your thighs should be parallel with the floor.
- 2 Keep your arm and leg movements steady,** as this will help avoid muscle and joint strain. In the early stages, move your arms or legs one at a time. As you get more skillful, you can combine arm and leg movements in the same exercise. 10-12 repetitions per minute are normally enough.

- 3 Warm up and cool down.** When you start moving, the blood supply to the heart muscle needs a few minutes to reach optimal flow. Any combination of these exercises can be done gently to warm up or cool down, while you can do them more vigorously for the main part of your exercise session.
- 4 Don't exercise too hard.** Aim for moderate-intensity exercise, which means you are slightly breathless and perhaps warmer than usual.
- 5 Never hold your breath while exercising.** You'd be surprised just how often we forget to breathe when lifting our arms and legs or staying balanced.
- 6 Keep your arm exercise below head height.** This means the heart doesn't have to pump so hard against gravity and will help to reduce breathlessness.



Volunteer With Us!



We are currently recruiting volunteers for the following roles:

- **Training Support**
- **Triage Admin Support**

If you would be interested in volunteering for us, please contact the Gloucestershire Carers Hub by calling **0300 111 9000** or sending an email to **carers@peopleplus.co.uk** to request an application form.

Chest Stretch

Good for posture

- A Sit upright and away from the back of the chair. Pull your shoulders back and down. Extend your arms out to the side.
- B Gently push your chest forward and up until you feel a stretch across your chest. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds and repeat 5 times.

Upper-body twist

Develop and maintain flexibility in upper back

- A Sit upright with your feet flat on the floor, cross your arms and reach for your shoulders.
- B Without moving your hips, turn your upper body to the left as far as is comfortable. Hold for 5 seconds.
- C Repeat on the right side. Do 5 times on each side.

Hip marching

Strengthen hips and thighs, improve flexibility

- A Sit upright and do not lean on the back of the chair. Hold on to the sides of the chair.
- B Lift your left leg with your knee bent as far as is comfortable. Place your foot down with control.
- C Repeat with the opposite leg. Do 5 lifts with each leg.

Arm Raises

Build shoulder strength

- A Sit upright with your arms by your sides.
- B With palms forwards, raise both arms out and to the side, and up as far as is comfortable.

Arm Raises (continued)

- C Return to the starting position.
- D Keep your shoulders down and arms straight throughout. Breathe out as you raise your arms and breathe in as you lower them. Repeat 5 times.

Neck rotation

Improve neck mobility and flexibility

- A Sit upright with your shoulders down. Look straight ahead.
- B Slowly turn your head towards your left shoulder as far as is comfortable. Hold for 5 seconds and then return to the starting position.
- C Repeat on the right. 3 rotations on each side.

Neck stretch

Loosen tight neck muscles

- A Sitting upright, look straight ahead and hold your left shoulder down with your right hand.
- B Slowly tilt your head to the right while holding your shoulder down.
- C Repeat on the opposite side.

Ankle Stretch

Improve ankle flexibility, lower the risk of developing a blood clot

- A Sit upright, hold on to the side of the chair and straighten your left leg with your foot off the floor.
- B With your leg straight and raised, point your toes away from you.
- C Point your toes back towards you. Try 2 sets of 5 stretches with each foot.

Carers Digital Platform

We have a digital platform for all of our registered carers. It includes online learning and a variety of publications which you can download or order to support you in your caring role.



You will also have access to information, support and guidance on a variety of topics.

You can gain free access by requesting the access code from the Gloucestershire Carers Hub by calling **0300 111 9000** or emailing **carers@peopleplus.co.uk**

What's On



Skills Development and Training Opportunities

Free Virtual Coffee Mornings and Training Opportunities

Free Virtual Coffee Mornings and Training Programme April 2020

- To book your place please email carers@peopleplus.co.uk or call 0300 111 9000
- We have a timetable of various sessions happening over April 2020
- The coffee mornings and majority of the training require you to use 'Zoom' (<https://zoom.us/>) which can be downloaded on a tablet or smartphone from your app store (no account required) or used on a laptop. Please enter the meeting code to access.

We will send you the code for the session upon booking

8th April 2020

Webinar with The Girl with The Curly Hair Executive Function Webinar

10.30 – 11.30am

- Executive function is the set of mental skills that help people get things done.
- The skills include: working memory, organisation, planning, prioritising, starting and completing tasks, flexible thinking and impulse control.
- Executive function is often impaired in autistic people and has big consequences on all aspects of their life.
- 'Difficult' and 'challenging' behaviours can be caused by impaired executive function.
- Discover strategies to improve it and enjoy being more productive and more efficient

6th April 2020

Delivered by Gloucestershire Mindfulness Mindfulness via Zoom

10.00am

- An introduction to mindfulness techniques
- Strategies for reducing stress
- A chance to learn mindfulness techniques in your own home

6th April 2020

Delivered by Gloucestershire Carers Hub Virtual Parent Carer Coffee Morning Via Zoom

11.00am

- A Virtual Coffee Morning for Parent Carers to access
- Spend some time talking to other parent carers
- Share ideas and experiences with others

15th April 2020

Delivered by Gloucestershire Carers Hub Virtual Coffee Morning Via Zoom

11.00am

- A Virtual Coffee Morning for any Carers to access
- Spend some time talking to other carers
- Share ideas and experiences with others

16th April 2020

Delivered by Passion First Aid Falls First Aid via Zoom

10.00am

- Session focussing on how to cope with falls in the home
- Focus on manual handling and what to do and not to

16th April 2020

Delivered by Gloucestershire Carers Hub Virtual Coffee Morning Via Zoom

10.00am

- A Virtual Coffee Morning for any Carers to access
- Spend some time talking to other carers
- Share ideas and experiences with others

20th April 2020

Delivered by Gloucestershire Mindfulness Mindfulness via Zoom

10.00am

- An introduction to mindfulness techniques
- Strategies for reducing stress
- A chance to learn mindfulness techniques in your own home

22nd April 2020

Delivered by Gloucestershire Carers Hub
Virtual Coffee Break – via Zoom
3.00pm

- A Virtual Coffee Break for any Carers to access
- Spend some time talking to other carers
- Share ideas and experiences with others

23rd April 2020

Delivered by The Girl with the Curly Hair
Challenging Behaviour Webinar
10.00am – 1.00pm

- We look at the underlying reasons for these unusual behaviours exhibited by autistic children. Explore straightforward strategies that can be used to manage this behaviour.

24th April 2020

Delivered by Gloucestershire Mindfulness
Mindfulness via Zoom
10.00am

- An introduction to mindfulness techniques
- Strategies for reducing stress
- A chance to learn mindfulness techniques

27th April 2020

Delivered by Wendy Beresford
Introduction to Calming Techniques via Zoom
10.00am

- Find out how Positive Tapping (EFT) and other simple Emotional Wellness tools, help you to be able to calm your emotions or thoughts

28th April 2020

Delivered by Gloucestershire Carers Hub
Virtual Coffee Morning – Via Zoom
10.00am

- A Virtual Coffee Morning for any Carers to access
- Spend some time talking to other carers
- Share ideas and experiences with others

30th April 2020

Delivered by Crossroads Gloucestershire
Dementia Awareness – Via Zoom
10.00am

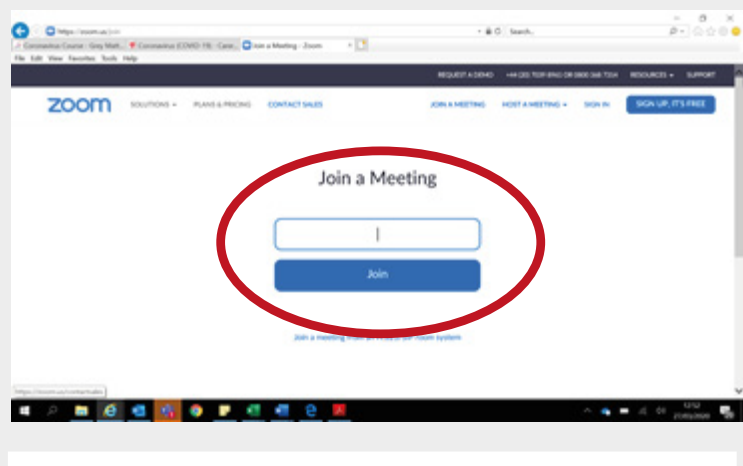
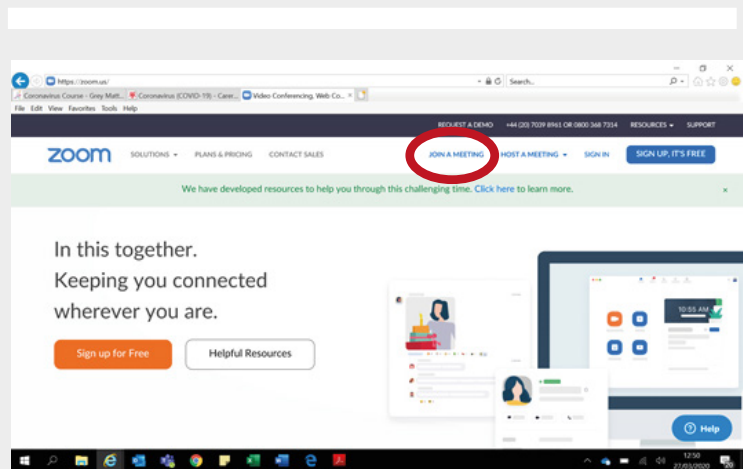
- An insight into dementia through a webinar

How to Join a Zoom Meeting

Visit www.zoom.us or download from the Appstore or Play Store on your phone

Click Join a Meeting (circled in Red)

Insert meeting ID (Issued on sign up)



Get Connected

Gloucestershire's councils and partners have created a community help hub to connect local people who need help, with others who can provide the support they need.

As further measures are put in place to delay the spread of Covid-19, local people have already started to pull together to arrange help in their area for those who need it, but not everyone has existing connections.

In response, the council's across the county have come together with the police and health partners to create the hub to connect local people who need help, with individuals, groups and businesses who can provide the support they need.

The hub includes four forms:

'I can offer help' – is for those who are able to support neighbours with tasks such as picking up prescriptions, shopping, dog walking and more

'I need help' – can be used by individuals to ask for support

'My neighbour needs help' – may be used by people to request help on behalf of a

neighbour, relative or friend who cannot access the internet themselves
'My business can help' – will allow local businesses who may have skills and resources others could benefit from, to offer their help

The information collected will be shared with the relevant local council who will connect people who can help each other, or if appropriate refer individuals to an existing service.

Residents are encouraged to share details of the community help hub on social media using the hashtag **#GlosCommunity**

The hub will be accessible from every district council website, and from the county council's website at

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/helphub>

Mark Hawthorne, leader of Gloucestershire County Council, said: "At times like these our communities really come together to help others and it's clear that there are many people who are keen to offer help where they can. Working together with our partners, we want to ensure that everyone is able to access the support they need and I'm confident that the community help hub will make this possible."

Thank you for your **feedback**

We would like to thank everyone who completed the survey which was included with the last newsletter.

If you are still completing your feedback, both developmental and positive, please make sure that you include your contact details.

We have received several forms from people who have requested support but we are unable to discuss this with them as their contact details were not included.

If you haven't had a chance to send your feedback to us yet, please do so when you have the time.

We would love to hear from you.

If you need support at anytime please contact us using the details below.

0300 111 9000
carers@peopleplus.co.uk
www.gloucestershircarershub.co.uk