



# Care Companion

DEVELOPED WITH CARERS FOR CARERS

A free online resource for those caring  
for their loved ones

To find out more, register at

[www.carecompanion.org.uk](http://www.carecompanion.org.uk)



## What is Care Companion?

The need for family care is increasing, particularly in the ageing population. Carers help maintain the independence and wellbeing of those who they care for. They help to reduce pressure on over-stretched NHS and social care services, but need to be adequately supported to do this.

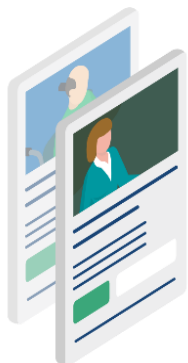
However, caring can be demanding, emotionally draining and isolating, and carers often feel that they do not have the skills or knowledge to give the care that is best for their loved ones.

- *About one in ten local residents are caring for family or friends who could not cope without their help*
- *Eight out of ten informal carers juggle a career with their responsibilities as a main carer*
- *Carers save the local economy over £1.1 billion annually.*

Care Companion has been developed with carers to address their needs for information and guidance. It is available in Coventry and Warwickshire as a free, simple to use online resource for those who care for their loved ones, particularly older people with long term conditions and frailty. It is personalised to individual's specific needs, and covers a vast range of information needs relevant to caring responsibilities.

## By carers, for carers

Informed by five years of in depth research led by Professor Jeremy Dale, Care Companion has been created through collaboration between a panel of carers and teams from Coventry and Warwickshire CCGs, local authorities, charities, and researchers at the Unit of Academic Primary Care, Warwick Medical School, together with an IT design company – Global Initiative.



Carers involved in developing Care Companion emphasised the importance of helping carers to look after themselves. This is sometimes overlooked, particularly in the face of demanding caring responsibilities. They are at risk of becoming isolated and exhausted. Care Companion helps carers remain effective by encouraging resilience to sustain their caring role for longer.

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## Care Companion has four key elements:

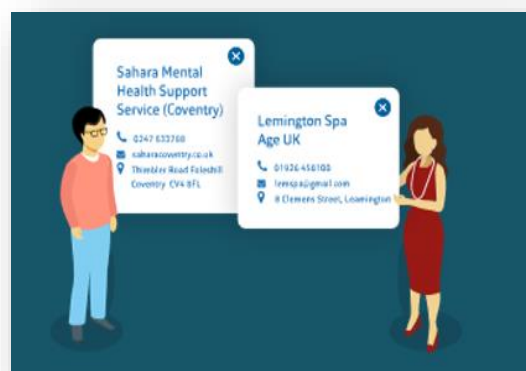


**Resources** – A library of resources filtered to the carer’s individual needs. This includes national and local information relevant to their cared for person’s conditions - such as dementia, stroke, COPD or cancer – together with general guidance and advice related to all aspects of being a carer, and sustaining oneself as a carer.

**Diary** – To keep track of events and appointments and record important items (such as deterioration in the cared for person’s condition), as well as a place to record thoughts and feelings in a confidential space.

**Mood Monitor** - A place for carers to keep track of their mood and the mood of the cared for person so that they can monitor their own wellbeing on a regular basis.

**Important contacts** – Pre-loaded with contact details for relevant local and national support, and a place in which personal contacts information can be added - one place to easily access information when needed.



## What next for Care Companion?

- ✓ Care Companion is a digital solution to increase support and advice for carers that is tailored to enabling them to access the best possible advice and support, 24/7
- ✓ Care Companion guides users to relevant information and support, helping them discover the resources that they need, when they need it
- ✓ It is freely available across Coventry & Warwickshire supported by local councils, CCGs and third sector
- ✓ Care Companion is designed to be scalable for widespread roll out. All that is required is uploading of local information about services and support groups that are available within each area. It provides a ready-to-go solution to how councils can make resources readily available to their carers
- ✓ It meets the requirements of the Carers Act 2014 and the new NICE guidance on Supporting Adult Carers
- ✓ Links into the single pool of data being created by the LGA Loneliness Project

## How can you access the Care Companion?

Care Companion can be accessed directly at [www.carecompanion.org.uk](http://www.carecompanion.org.uk). We are also happy to visit organisations to present Care Companion to health and social care providers, third sector organisations and other support services as well as directly to carer groups. For further information please email [carecompanion@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:carecompanion@warwick.ac.uk)



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