

## Key local carer organisations

### Brighton and Hove

#### The Carers Centre

Phone: 01273 746222

Email: [info@thecarerscentre.org](mailto:info@thecarerscentre.org)

Website: [www.thecarerscentre.org](http://www.thecarerscentre.org)

### East Sussex

#### Care for the Carers

Phone: 01323 738390

Email: [Info@cftc.org.uk](mailto:Info@cftc.org.uk)

Website: [www.cftc.org.uk](http://www.cftc.org.uk)

### West Sussex

#### Carers Support West Sussex

Phone: 0300 0288888

Email: [info@carerssupport.org.uk](mailto:info@carerssupport.org.uk)

Website: [www.carerssupport.org.uk](http://www.carerssupport.org.uk)

### Other useful contacts

#### Big White Wall

A safe online anonymous and supportive community for people who are experiencing common mental health issues. Free access for all UK Serving Personnel, Veterans and Family members.

Website: [www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)

### Combat Stress

UK veterans mental health charity that helps ex-service personnel suffering from psychological injuries and mental health problems.

Helpline: 0800 138 1619

Website: [www.combatstress.org.uk](http://www.combatstress.org.uk)

### Ripple Pond

Small, local self-help support groups for adult family members of any injured, wounded or sick serviceman or woman, past, present or reservist

Website: [www.theripplepond.org](http://www.theripplepond.org)

Email: [admin@theripplepond.org](mailto:admin@theripplepond.org)

### Royal British Legion

A leading Armed Forces charity providing practical, emotional and financial support for British Armed Forces past and present, and their families.

Helpline: 0808 8028080

Website: [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

Email: [info@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:info@britishlegion.org.uk)

### SSAFA

The UK's oldest Armed Forces charity. Provides lifelong support for the Armed Forces and their families.

Sussex Helpline: 0800 169 9060

Website: [www.ssafo.org.uk](http://www.ssafo.org.uk)

Email: [bsec@ssafasussex.org.uk](mailto:bsec@ssafasussex.org.uk)



## Supporting Carers



## Information for Carers, Families and Professionals

## What is the Sussex Armed Forces Network?

The Sussex Armed Forces Network (SAFN) is a multi-organisational group with leadership from the NHS and membership from across the MOD, Armed Forces, Reservists, Mental and Physical Health Clinicians, the Royal British Legion, SSAFA, Combat Stress and other interested charities and organisations (i.e. Police and Local Authorities).

Initiated in 2011 the Network's vision is to enable the community as a whole to provide excellent support to those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, whether as Regular or Reserve, and their families. We will do all we can to ensure that the Armed Forces community is treated fairly and not disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives. This includes offering injured service-men and women and bereaved families extra support where appropriate

### Armed Forces Champions

These are individuals who have taken on the role of champion for the Armed Forces Community within their organisation. There are over 140 trained Champions within Sussex and the training provided for these individuals helps them to:

- understand how to engage with the Armed Forces Community.
- understand how they can support their organisation to help this group.
- understand how they can gain support from other services/charities reinforcing the integration between communities.

For more information please visit our website: [www.sussexarmedforcesnetwork.nhs.uk](http://www.sussexarmedforcesnetwork.nhs.uk)

## Things you can do to help yourself as a carer

1. **Contact your local carers' organisation** (see back page). These are independent charities that offer dedicated support, advice and information to unpaid carers. They have a good understanding of the types of issues you're having to deal with.
2. **Tell your GP.** They should hold a register of carers and may be able to help by giving you health checks, flu jabs and priority appointments.
3. **Tell Social Services.** They can assess your needs and those of the person you care for and arrange appropriate support.
4. **Let people at work know.** Legislation means that employers need to consider a carer's request for flexible working.
5. **Claim your entitlements.** The benefits system is complex but there are organisations that can advise you on your entitlements.
6. **Include family and friends.** No-one should have to cope alone as a carer, support from family and friends can also help to give you a much-needed break.
7. **Look after yourself.** Caring can be exhausting and it is important to look after your own health and to make time for yourself.

*"My father was a veteran. He had dementia and I cared for him for many years. I had no idea at the time that there were organisations that could have supported both of us"*

## Are you a Carer?

If you provide unpaid help to a partner, family member or a friend because they have:

- A physical disability or illness
  - A mental health issue
  - Substance misuse issues
  - A learning disability
  - or because they are old and frail
- then you can be considered to be a CARER.

**You may not see yourself as a carer and think that you are just supporting your loved one as it's your duty.** However, carers have certain legal rights and it is important that Health and Social Care Services know that you have a caring role. Identifying as a carer can be the first step to getting you help and support.

**Getting the right guidance or support could make your caring role easier** and doesn't mean you aren't coping. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

**If you don't look after yourself your own health may suffer too**—80% of carers say that their own ill health affects their ability to care.

**It is also a fact that three out of five people are carers** at some point in their life so you are far from alone.

**If you look after someone, remember YOU matter too.**