



Who Cares?

**Supports & Services
for Carers in Laois and Offaly**

*“Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine”
“Under the shelter of each other, people survive”*



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Foreword

The purpose of this booklet is to support carers of people with cognitive impairment/dementia on their caring journey and signpost them to relevant supports and services that they may require at various times along the route. In writing this booklet, we are conscious of early onset of cognitive impairment/dementia and to that end we have tried to include supports that may be relevant to this age cohort. Carers come into contact with Primary Care, Mental Health, sometimes Older Person's Services along with the Section 38 and 39 Organisations, other Government Departments such as Social Welfare, Local Authorities as well as different community supports. We have also included a section on Mental Health Tips for Carers in the Appendices, but this is not to minimise carer stress in any way.

At a time of crisis it is very confusing trying to figure out the most appropriate place to seek support at that point in time. We hope this booklet will answer some of your questions, alleviate some of the stress involved and sign post you where to go for further information. This booklet is an on-going work in progress. To this end we would appreciate your feedback; there is a feedback survey at the end of this booklet. We want to continuously improve information for Carers.

This booklet was compiled during the Covid-19 lockdown. We made the decision early on when assembling the information, to base this document on services returning to normal post-Covid-19 so that the document would not be out of date by the time it is distributed. Therefore, if when you are reading this, Covid-19 is still an issue please clarify with the various organisations the supports that are in place.

We would like to thank the National Dementia Office, the NMPDU, HSE Mental Health Services, Laois and Offaly County Councils, and Laois and Offaly Age Friendly Alliances who funded the printing and distribution of this document. This information booklet will be available on HSE, Laois and Offaly County Council websites, for those who were unable to secure copies.

We would also like to acknowledge the support received in compiling this document; people who gave generously of their time and access to their resources to make this a collaborative project reflecting the level of support available in our local community:

- Alison Hackett and Beth Wogan, *Family Carers Ireland* (who provided the initial inspiration for this).
- David Murphy, *Laois County Council* and Bridie Costello Hynes, *Offaly County Council* and their colleagues in both of the County Councils.
- Josephine Rigney, *Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention - HSE Laois/Offaly*.
- Angela Delaney, *Clinical Nurse Specialist, Activation, Department of Psychiatry, HSE*.
- Yvonne Delaney, *Interim Director of Public Health Nursing, HSE*.
- Odette Harrington, *Snr. Social Worker, HSE* (our retired colleague).
- Thomas Byrne, *Citizens Information Portlaoise*.
- Margaret Maher, *Alzheimer's Society*.
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- Anna Maher, *Nursing Home Support Office, HSE*, for her suggestions.
- Sgt. Graham Kavanagh for his assistance.
- Our Primary Care Team Colleagues; Caroline Goode, *Occupational Therapist, HSE*, Mairead Carey, *Occupational Therapist Manager 111 Laois Offaly*, Tom O'Sullivan *Physiotherapist HSE*, Claire Donnelly, *Physiotherapy Manager HSE*, Mary Mc Keon, *Dietician HSE*, Grainne O'Brien, *Principal Social Worker HSE*, Elaine Coss, *Senior Psychologist* and also Jimmy Todd, *Community Development Officer HSE*, and the many community organisations who shared their resources for inclusion in the booklet.

We are very grateful to Carers who read the booklet, made suggestions, which were fundamental to the layout and content of this booklet and we hope that it meets their expectations.

To our own colleagues in Psychiatry of Later Life, (POLL) for their constructive feedback, selflessly co-writing the sections in relation to POLL, memory technology clinics, Speech and Language Therapy, construction of the diagrams and for their ongoing support, encouragement and many acts of kindness as we completed the booklet. To our Managers Helen Hanlon, *Principal Social Worker, Adult Mental Health Services* and Grace Srahan, *Asst. Director of Nursing, Psychiatry of Later Life* for their enthusiastic support and championing of this project.

Finally to Tina Kelly who helped with the initial formatting of this document and to Brian and the team in Print Plus, Tullamore for their endless patience in making this resource what it is.

So often the refrain is that there are no supports available after hours. It is striking the amount of help-lines that are available late into the evening such as the Alzheimer's Society, Family Carers Ireland, Citizen's Information, MABS, and also supports like Samaritans that are open 24/7. From working on this project, we have learned that there are so many organisations nationally and locally that want to help. All they are waiting for is your call. Even though the caring journey can at times be very isolating you are never on your own, there is always someone at the other end of a phone to support and offer advice. As you start or continue on this journey of caring, may we say "*go n-éirí on bóthar leat*" or "*may the road rise to meet you*".

- *Aine Davin, Social Work Team Leader & Edward Greene, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Psychiatry of Later Life, August 2021.*

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Primary Care Teams

Primary Care Teams include a range of services designed to keep people well in the community. Primary Care Teams offer support to all age groups from young babies, pre-natal care right through to the older population. Primary Care incorporates the promotion of health, screening and vaccination for disease, assessment, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. People can access Primary Teams through self-referral. Members of Primary Care Teams include GPs, Nurses, Home Care Assistants, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, Psychologists, Physiotherapists, Dieticians, and Speech and Language Therapists. Sláinte Care envisages the expansion and increasing role for Primary Care. GPs play a key role on Primary Care Teams; they are the first point of contact. Over 90% of mental health needs can be successfully treated in a Primary Care setting, while the remaining 10% are referred to secondary care (Community Mental Health Teams).

Public Health Nursing Service

The public health nursing team comprises of registered Public Health Nurses, (PHNs), Community Registered General Nurses (CRGNs) and in some teams, Health Care Assistants (HCAs). The above are core members of Primary Care Teams. They are based locally in Health Centres or Primary Care Centres. The community nursing service can provide support to any individual across the lifespan who has a nursing care need. Community nurses within the PHN team may also arrange onward supports following assessment, for example home supports to enhance personal care needs, tissue viability nurse specialist in the case of wound issues, continence advisors, clinical nurse specialists in palliative care, day care, respite and a number of other voluntary organisations. If you do not have the phone number for your local Public Health Nurse please contact the numbers below as appropriate for Laois/Offaly.

Health Centre, Arden Rd, Tullamore
Telephone: 057 935 9547/8

Health Centre, Dublin Rd, Portlaoise
Telephone: 057 862 1135

Psychology in Primary Care

Adult Primary Care Psychology Services offer a range of psychological supports to people over 18. They offer a range of psychological supports assessments and interventions depending on the needs of the client. Interventions can include group based services such as stress management or individual supports. Some examples of difficulties a psychologist can help with include:

- Depression
- Stress and tension
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Bereavement
- Coping with physical illness
- Relationship issues

Referral via GP or other members of the Primary Care Team.
There is no cost for counselling.

Tullamore Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore
Telephone: 057 931 9599

Child & Family Resource Centre, Dublin Rd., Portlaoise
Telephone: 057 869 2564

Occupational Therapy in Primary Care

Primary Care Occupational Therapists work as part of the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) to meet the health needs of individuals, families and the community. They work with individuals with disabilities, illness or injury to help them maintain or achieve independence in their daily living tasks by assessing and providing intervention in their home environment.

Role of the Primary Care Occupational Therapist:

- Functional assessments at home
- Recommendations re housing/environmental adaptations
- Advice re local authority grant system and completion of application support letters (excluding OT home adaptation reports)
- Advice and provision of specialist and adaptive/assistive equipment to optimise safety/independence*
- Wheelchair assessment and seating provision
- Advice for pressure relief relevant to seating

- Assessments for hoists and other manual handling equipment provision
- Carer advice and support
- Onward referral to Occupational Therapy Specialists as required
- Joint assessment with other MDT members as required
- Provide advice and information for private purchase**

**You must be a medical card holder or a Long Term Illness (LTI) card holder to avail of adaptive or assistive equipment*

***For non-medical card holders and for equipment which is not funded by HSE (Medical card/LTI holders)*

Individuals can self-refer to Occupational Therapy in Primary Care or can be referred by another member of the Primary Care Team. Please contact your local Health Centre/Primary Care Centre for further information.

Physiotherapy in Primary Care

Physiotherapy is a healthcare profession concerned with human function and movement, maximising potential, restoring well-being to people following injury, pain or disability. A Primary Care Physiotherapist is based in the community. You can access the physiotherapy service through a referral from a member of the Primary Care Team or your GP.

A Physiotherapist in Primary Care can help to:

- Assess, diagnose and treat conditions & illness that affect people of all ages
- Assist patient to prevent injury, for example as a result of a fall
- Promote healthier lifestyle for all including advice around appropriate levels of exercise and activity to prevent deconditioning and other symptoms of chronic disease
- Prescribe suitable walking aids and other equipment to promote safe mobility

Domiciliary Service

Requests for home visits are assessed with regard to necessity, i.e. can the patient receive physiotherapy in the clinic? The domiciliary service will address the need for developing home management programmes for clients, focusing on one or more of the following:

- To assess and develop a home management programme aimed at improving safety and function in the home
- To assess, provide and instruct on appropriate mobility aids and appliances
- To advise carers on appropriate handling management
- To monitor and review home management programme

Social Work in Primary Care

Social Workers are core team members of Primary Care Multidisciplinary Teams.

The Social Work Department in Primary Care is a consent led community based service and is an integral part of the multi-disciplinary team structure, providing psycho-social assessments of the needs of service users and their families. The Primary Care Social Work Service aims to provide a population health model enhancing the quality of life and well-being of the local population as part of community based multi-disciplinary teams.

The Primary Care Social Work Service provides through a person centred approach, short term episodic intervention to individuals, families, couples, groups and communities based on psycho-social assessments providing support and intervention on such issues as carer stress, advocacy, relationship issues, social isolation, self-neglect, addiction issues, long term care planning, provision of short term emotional and practical support and follow-on referrals to appropriate housing and homeless agencies to meet their needs.

Social Work in Primary Care has an open referral pathway, any individual, service or professional can refer. Please contact your local Health Centre/Primary Care Centre, GP or PHN for further information.

Speech and Language Therapy in Primary Care

Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) assess and manage patients who experience cognitive communication difficulties as a result of their diagnosis of cognitive impairment/dementia. During the assessment process, the patient may describe a number of difficulties often seen in the following areas:

- **Attention and Listening** e.g. concentrating during a conversation with one person may be achievable but it is more difficult in a group; losing train of thought during conversations
- **Understanding** e.g. you notice 'missing bits' of a conversation
- **Expressing/saying** what you want to say e.g. you may not be able to find the words you want to say when you want to say them (word finding difficulties)

Following assessment, SLTs provide strategies to support patients and their communication partners i.e. their family members and carers in conversation. SLTs will have identified the individual's strengths and weaknesses and aim to maximise on their strengths to maintain functional communication.

Communication partners such as carers have an important role in adopting strategies provided by the SLT to support the person living with dementia. Strategies may include the use of simple, familiar language, the provision of additional time, supporting them to find words and/or the provision of visual aids (pictures/photos) to support their understanding. Direct communication intervention may also take place with the patient depending on the nature of their presentation.

SLTs also assess and manage patients who experience eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties (dysphagia) as a result of their diagnosis of dementia. Following a thorough assessment, the SLT can make safe swallowing recommendations. They will also provide advice and support to carers with regards to the implementation of these recommendations. SLTs can also assist the patient and carer in future planning and the decision-making process regarding eating, drinking and swallowing skills.

People can self-refer to the Speech and Language Therapy, Primary Care Service or can be referred by another member of the Primary Care Team. Please contact your local Health Centre/Primary Care Centre, GP or PHN for further information.

Community Nutrition and Dietetic Services in Primary Care

Food and eating are an enjoyable and social part of our lives and mealtimes provide structure to our day. Many of our favourite experiences and memories involve preparing and sharing food with family and friends. This makes food, eating and mealtimes an important part of our everyday lives. Some people with dementia may experience problems with eating and drinking as the

dementia progresses. Difficulties with eating and drinking vary according to the type of dementia. Some people may reduce their intake of food and can lose weight. A Dietician is the medical professional that can provide advice on difficulties with eating and drinking. A Dietician is an expert on food and nutrition, and provides dietary information and support to all age groups based on scientific information for a range of health conditions including dementia.

A booklet written by Dieticians called '*Nutrition and Dementia, A Practical Guide When Caring for A Person with Dementia*' provides practical information and tips for anyone with dementia or caring for a person with dementia. It is available on the websites www.indi.ie and www.understandtogether.ie

The link to the booklet: https://www.indi.ie/images/Dementia_Booklet__.pdf

Advice is offered on how to prepare for mealtimes and provide the most suitable surroundings at mealtimes. The guide also discusses some of the eating and drinking difficulties a person with dementia may have and suggests possible solutions. Every person with dementia is different so it is important to remember that this guide provides general advice which may not be suitable for everyone. If you need further advice talk to your GP, Public Health Nurse or member of the primary care team for a referral to a dietician.

Counselling In Primary Care (CIPC)

Telephone: 057 937 0605

Time limited counselling for over 18s with a Full Medical Card on referral by GP or any member of the primary care team. Counselling is available at various venues throughout Midland counties.

Psychiatry of Later Life

Community Mental Health Team

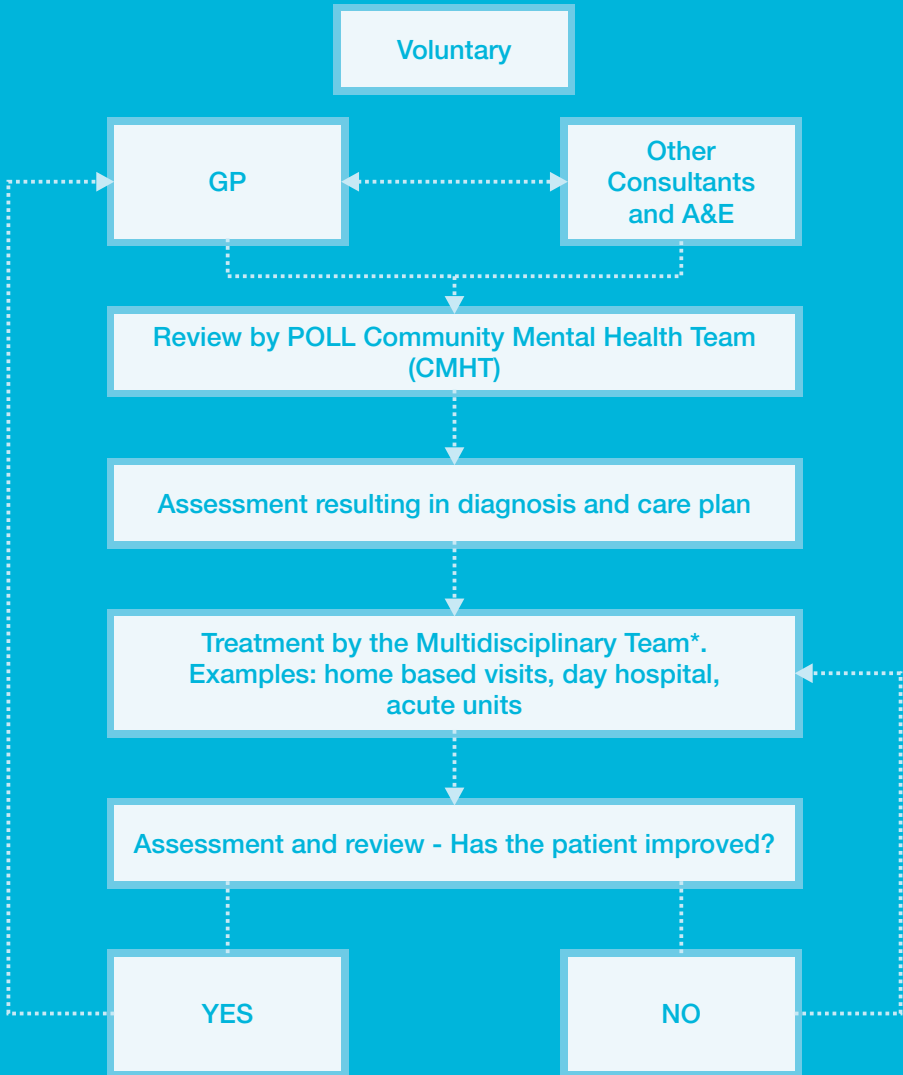
An Triu Aois, Block Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois
Telephone: 057 867 0245

Psychiatry of Later Life (POLL) is one of the Community Mental Health Teams in Laois/Offaly. POLL is a specialist service which provides a service to patients - over 65 years in relation to the presentation of psychological disturbance in the context of dementia who are living in Laois and Offaly. The team also supports people with anxiety, depression and other mental health issues. POLL is not the only Community Mental Health Team in Laois/Offaly that supports people with dementia; the other Community Mental Health Teams in Birr, Portlaoise and Tullamore also support people with dementia over 65 years who were already attending their service prior to a diagnosis, or individuals with dementia who are under 65 years.

- Referrals to Psychiatry of Later Life are accepted from GPs and Hospital Consultants with the patient's consent.
- The Psychiatry of Later Life Team consists of two Consultants, Non Consultant Hospital Doctors (NCHD's), Assistant Director of Nursing, Advance Nurse Practitioner, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Occupational Therapist, Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapists, Social Workers and Administration staff. The team also has access to a Cognitive Behaviour Therapist. See diagrams 1 to 6 which illustrate the work of the various team members. Referrals to Social Workers, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapists, Psychologists and the Cognitive Behaviour Therapists on the Mental Health Teams come from within the team. If you are already attending Psychiatry of Later Life and wish to access these supports please discuss with your Consultant Psychiatrist or Clinical Nurse Specialist.

Pathway Through the Mental Health System

02



*Treatment by Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) - A multidisciplinary team is a group of health care professionals from different disciplines (e.g. Psychiatry, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy and Social Work) who work together to meet the needs of the patient.

Figure 1 Psychiatry of Later Life - Laois/Offaly Clinical Nurse Specialist



Figure 2

Psychiatry of Later Life- Laois/Offaly Information on the Advanced Nurse Practitioner

02

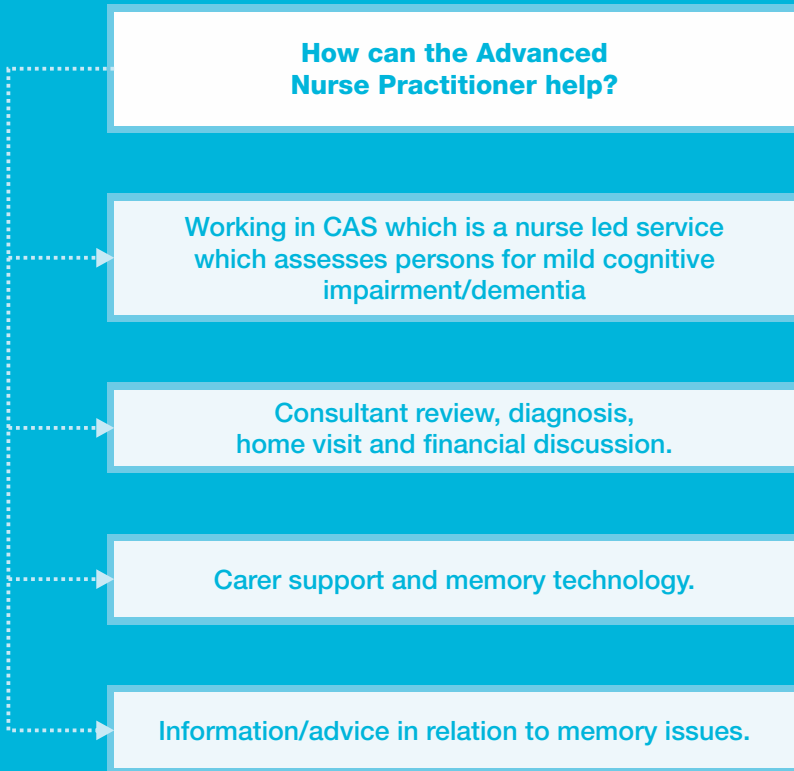


Figure 3

Psychiatry of Later Life- Laois/Offaly Psychology Services

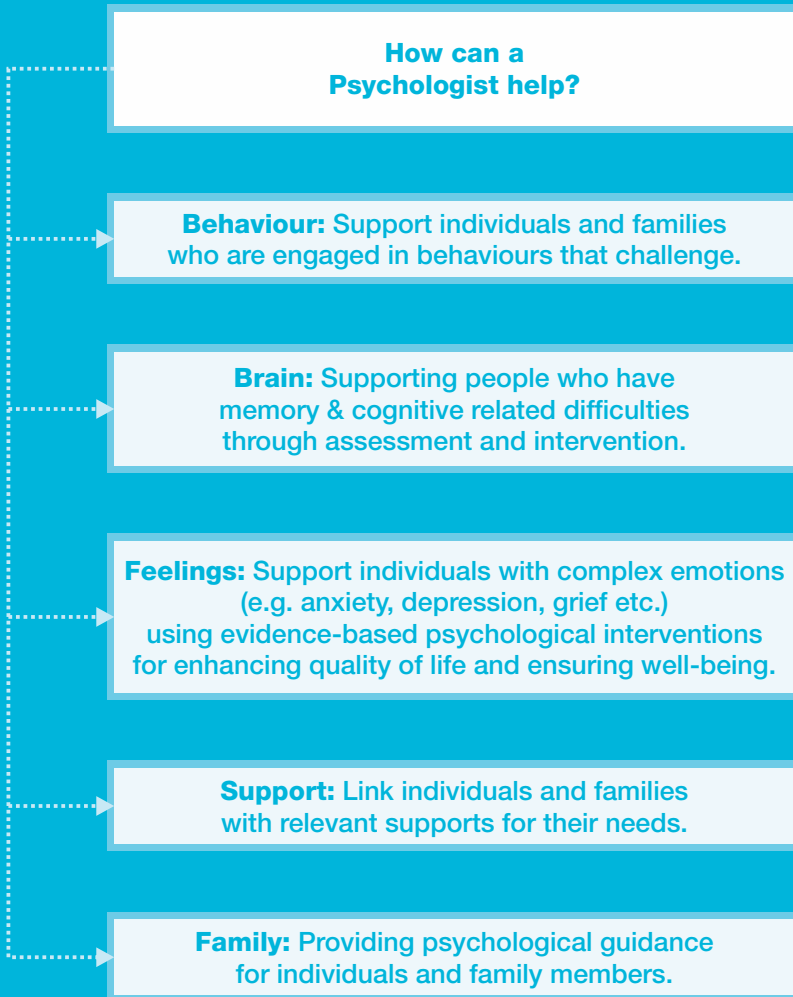


Figure 4

Psychiatry of Later Life - Laois/Offaly Information on Occupational Therapy

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Figure 5 Psychiatry of Later Life - Laois/Offaly Information Leaflet about our Social Work service



Figure 6

Psychiatry of Later Life- Laois/Offaly Information on Speech and Language Therapy



Day Hospital

This is based in Psychiatry of Later Life, Block Road, Portlaoise and offers short term intervention to people to prevent hospital admission and to support hospital discharge from the Department of Psychiatry, Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise.

Carer Support/Information Group

These sessions are nursing led and are available to any family member's, carers involved in the POLL/Cognitive Assessment Service (CAS). They run 4-6 weekly in the Poll Day Hospital on the Block Road, Portlaoise on a weekday afternoon. During Covid-19 they are held virtually over Webex Platform. There is input on the sessions from the wider multidisciplinary team as appropriate. The groups provide support and information/education on issues pertaining to dementia. If you would like to participate in these sessions please speak to your clinical nurse specialist or a member of the multi disciplinary team for a referral. Your participation is most welcome.

Cognitive Assessment Service (CAS)

CAS operates within the Psychiatry of Later Life Service assessing persons from 18 years and upwards. The primary aim is to improve the practice in the early identification, assessment and treatment of mild cognitive impairment and dementia. The early diagnosis of dementia enables a person and their families to be more pro-active in planning their future care options.

Once a diagnosis is made, treatment can be initiated and advice given as needed. The CAS service is a nurse led clinic which is supported by the multi-disciplinary team. Referrals come from GPs, Physicians and Consultant Psychiatrists.

Memory Technology Resource Room (MTRR)

There is a MTRR available for clients who are attending Psychiatry of Later Life in the building on the Block Road, Portlaoise. Memory Technology Resource Rooms (MTRRs) are for people who would like to know more about products and devices which can help manage memory difficulties. For those who are not currently attending Psychiatry of Later Life, they can access the MMTR room in Portarlington (057) 868 4202. On page 41 of this booklet there is more information in relation to MMTRs and also details of the national link.



Older Persons Services

HSE Respite Care

If a person has been assessed by the Public Health Nurse as being in need of respite, then the individual is entitled to thirty days respite (in total) in a HSE facility, during a rolling twelve month period.

If this period is exceeded, the individual or family will be charged a maximum of €25.58 per day with a maximum of €179 per week. The cost of respite is not covered by either medical card or private health insurance. Respite can only be accessed through the Public Health Nurse.

Laois

- Abbeyleix Community Nursing Unit
- Mountmellick (St. Vincent's)
Closed to admissions at present

Offaly

- Riada House, Tullamore
- Ofalia House, Edenderry
- Community Nursing Unit, Birr

HSE Home Support Services

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/home-support-services/>

Members of the public would have been more familiar with this as the Home Help service or Home Care Package Scheme. The application form and information booklet for the Home Support Service is available for download from the HSE website listed above. PHNs will carry out a care needs assessment as part of the process. The Home Support Service provides support for everyday tasks including:

- assistance with getting in and out of bed
- dressing and undressing
- help with personal care such as showering and shaving

This is a free service and you do not need a medical card to apply. The supports will be provided by the HSE or by an external provider, approved by the HSE.

The Home Support Scheme is available to people aged 65 or over who may need support to continue living at home. Sometimes exceptions can be made for people under 65, e.g. people with early onset dementia or a disability.

HSE Day Care

All day care services can be accessed through your local PHN.

Laois

- Portlaoise
- Edenderry
- Mountmellick

Offaly

- Tullamore
- Abbeyleix
- Birr

There may also be other local day care services in your area which your local PHN may be aware of.

Long Term Care Facilities/ Nursing Homes

HSE Nursing Homes Support Office, Bury Quay, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Phone: 057 932 7834 / 057 932 7821 / 057 932 7830

<https://www2.hse.ie/services/fair-deal-scheme/about-the-fair-deal-scheme.html>

04

Fair Deal Process

The funding for access to all nursing homes, both public and private is through the Fair Deal/Nursing Home Support Scheme. This is an overview of the scheme, however it is strongly recommended that you seek more detailed information and clarification in relation to your own personal circumstances from the Fair Deal website or talk to staff in the Nursing Home Support Office, contact details above.

The application for the scheme is based on:

- An application form
- A care needs assessment generally completed by the Public Health Nurse which assesses whether a person needs long term care
- A financial assessment which determines the contribution of the person who is planning on availing of nursing home care towards the cost of same. The HSE will pay the balance of the cost of care if the assessed contribution is less than the nursing home fees. For example if the cost of the nursing home is €800 and your contribution is €300 the state will pay the balance of €500. This payment by the state is called state support.

In relation to the financial assessment, a person's income and assets such as savings and property will be taken into account to calculate their weekly contribution towards the cost of their care. For a single person this is normally 80% of weekly income and 7.5% of cash and fixed assets, less a €36,000 disregard. For a couple it is 40% of income and 3.75 % of cash and fixed assets, less a €72,000 disregard.

The contribution based on the private residence is only included in the assessment for the first three years.

The information above is illustrated in some financial assessment examples taken from the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Information Booklet pages 9-11 which works through the calculation process, see appendix 3 page 79 and 80. As the examples are not exhaustive we strongly suggest liaison with the Nursing Home Support Office in Tullamore, phone numbers for which are listed above.

04

Ancillary State Support (Nursing Home Loan)

This could apply where someone e.g. a home owner needs assistance paying the part of the weekly charge generated by their property or assets, they can apply for a loan from the HSE who will then pay the share of the person's contribution. The loan is generally paid back from the person's estate after their death.

Tax Refund

Depending on who pays the contribution there may be an entitlement to a tax refund. For further information in relation to claiming tax relief on nursing home fees please refer to the Inland Revenue Website.

<https://www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions/health-and-age/health-expenses/nursing-home-and-additional-nursing-care-expenses.aspx>

Other costs

When choosing a nursing home it is important to ask the nursing home whether there are any other costs associated with being a resident of that nursing home. Some private nursing homes are charging weekly social charges which are not covered by Fair Deal and must be met from the residents own finances. These social charges can vary between nursing homes. Additional other costs in nursing homes could also include chiropody and hairdressing which again will have to be met from the residents own finances.

HSE Community Long Term Care/Residential Facilities

Waiting lists in place for all units

Laois

- Community Nursing Unit, Abbeyleix (closed to new admissions)
Telephone: 057 873 1204
- (St. Vincent's) Community Nursing Unit, Mountmellick
Telephone: 057 864 4783
*Includes St. Martha's Dementia Specific Residential Care Ward
- 2 beds are for assessment/respice*
- St. Brigid's Hospital, Shaen, Portlaoise
Telephone: 057 864 6717

Offaly

- Community Nursing Unit, Birr 057 912 0819
- Riada House, Tullamore 057 935 9985
- Ofalia House, Nursing Home, Edenderry 046 973 1285

Private Nursing Homes in Laois

- Ballard Lodge, Portlaoise 057 866 1299
- Kilminchy Lodge Nursing Home, Portlaoise 057 866 3600
- Droimnin Nursing Home, Stradbally 057 864 1002

Private Nursing Homes in Offaly

- Ferbane Nursing Home 090 645 4742
- Ealga Lodge Nursing Home, Shinrone 0505 47969
- Eliza Lodge Nursing Home, Banagher 057 915 2922
- Esker Rí Nursing Home, Clara 057 933 0030
- Carthage Nursing Home, Mucklagh 057 935 2863
- Oakdale Nursing Home, Portarlinton 057 864 5282



National Support Organisations Available Nationally/Locally

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland

Monday to Friday 10am-5pm, Saturday 10am-4pm

Phone: 1800 341 341

Email: helpline@alzheimer.ie

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is the leading dementia specific service provider in Ireland.

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland works across the country in the heart of local communities providing dementia specific services and supports and advocating for the rights and needs of all people living with dementia and their carers.

A national non-profit organisation, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland advocates, empowers and champions the rights of people living with dementia and their communities to quality support and services.

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland also operates the Alzheimer National Helpline offering information and support to anyone affected by dementia on 1800 341 341.

Co. Offaly Services

- Co. Offaly Home Care Service
Mobile: 087 715 1323 Email: claire.kennedy@alzheimer.ie
- Birr Day Care Service
Mobile: 087 715 1323 Email: claire.kennedy@alzheimer.ie
Old Day Care Centre, John's Terrace, Birr, Co. Offaly

Co. Laois Services

- Laois Home Support Service. Contact: Ann Munnelly
Mobile: 086 837 2168 Email: amunnelly@alzheimer.ie
Community Building, An Garran, Kiln Lane, Mountrath, Co. Laois. R32 X8H0
- Co. Laois Day Care Service. Contact: Moira Knowles
Mobile: 086 466 8515 Email: moira.knowles@alzheimer.ie
Community Building, An Garran, Kiln Lane, Mountrath, Co. Laois. R32 X8H0
- Laois Carers Support Group. Contact: Anne Munnelly
Mobile: 086 837 2168 Email: amunnelly@alzheimer.ie
Community Building, An Garran, Kiln Lane, Mountrath, Co. Laois. R32 X8H0
- Laois Social Club on Tour (held at different locations across County Laois. Contact Ann Munnelly for the exact location). Contact: Anne Munnelly
Mobile: 086 837 2168 Email: amunnelly@alzheimer.ie

Online Family Carer Training

- Alzheimer Society Ireland offer online training to family carers looking after a loved one with dementia. Family carers can either be the primary carers for the person with dementia or those indirectly involved in caring
Telephone: 1800 341 341 Email: familycarertraining@alzheimer.ie

Alzheimer Society, Dementia Advisor (Laois/Offaly)

- Contact: Ashleigh Ryan
Mobile: 087 321 0642 Email: ashleigh.ryan@alzheimer.ie

Dementia Advisors work with people with dementia, their families and carers to provide a highly responsive and individualised information and signposting service.

The Dementia Advisor will work with you to:

- Provide information and advice throughout your journey with dementia,
- Help connect you with dementia supports and services,
- Help connect you with local groups and services and,
- Help your community to be more dementia friendly.

Alone

National Support Line open from 8am to 8pm seven days a week

Telephone: (0818) 222 024 Email: hello@alone.ie

www.alone.ie

Alone is a national organisation that strives to enable older people to age at home safely and securely for as long as they wish. They work with older people, including those who are lonely, isolated, frail or ill, homeless living in poverty, or are facing other difficulties. They provide an integrated system of Support Coordination, Practical Supports, Befriending, a variety of phone services, Social Prescribing, Housing with Support and Assistive Technology.

They use support plans, provide a point of contact for access to health, social care, housing, transport and other arising needs using technology and other services and activities to improve physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. They have nearly 3,000 volunteers throughout the country who conduct and provide practical supports to older people, visits and phone calls linking older people into social activity and being a companion.

Family Carers Ireland

Support Centre: Market Square, Tullamore, Co Offaly.

Telephone: 057 932 2920 National Freephone Careline 1800 24 07 27

www.familycarers.ie

Family Carers Ireland (FCI) is the national charity supporting 500,000+ family carers across the country who care for loved ones such as children or adults with a physical or intellectual disabilities, frail older people, those with palliative care needs or those suffering from chronic/mental illnesses or addiction.

They also advocate at national level on behalf of family carers and carers can access a vast range of information and services through www.familycarers.ie. This ranges from information on your rights and entitlements, access to e-learning modules, counselling, on the ground support, free emergency care scheme, young carer support, membership and so much more.

Locally, Family Carers Ireland offers:

- **Respite**

A respite service, so family carers can get a planned break for a period of time. Please note the service can be dependent on whether there is a worker available in the area.

- **Family Support Service**

FCI provides direct family carer support in both Laois and Offaly. For further information in relation to carer support, services available, and information in relation to rights and entitlements, please contact Beth Wogan, Family Support Manager at 057 932 2920.

- **Advice**

Knowledge is power and at FCI, they are focused on supporting the family carer. Please contact them if you have any queries as no one should have to care alone.

- **National Crisis Fund**

Family Carers Ireland have access to a national crisis fund for carers needing support. For further information please contact Beth Wogan, Family Support Manager at 057 932 2920.

Other Community Supports

Meals on Wheels

These services can be accessed through your local Public Health Nurse or by contacting any of the local groups. Dinner is delivered by local services to the homes of older people. Cost varies. Not available in all areas. For a full list of local meals and wheels services in Laois and Offaly please see Appendix 2 on pages 77-78

LStep

Telephone: 057 868 2779

Email: stepp@laoispartnership.ie

LStep was set up in 2008 by Laois Partnership and Portlaoise Community Action Project. LStep offers older people living in Laois a subsidised service which can include garden maintenance, cleaning gutters, fit grab rails, internal/external painting and general repair work. LStep facilitates grant applications for people over 65 years for the installation of personal alarms. There is a charge for work carried out but the aim of the service is to keep it as affordable as possible.

North Offaly Community Development Network

Telephone: 057 936 2755

www.northoffalydevelopment.com

North Offaly Community Development Network provide a Home Visiting Service, a meals on wheels service, and a Home and Garden Maintenance Service. They can assist older people with the upkeep of their home and garden at reasonable rates as well as provide services include mowing lawns, clipping hedges, clearing paths/drives, cleaning gutters, security improvements, painting, decorating and basic repairs. As part of that service they install personal alarms, smoke alarms, and other safety devices.

West & South Offaly Home Fix

Telephone: 057 915 2667 / 089 496 9010

They provide a minor house repairs service, Seniors Alert, Scheme and a Friendly call service in West and South Offaly. The minor home repairs service includes, installing security locks and chains, domestic smoke alarms, installing hand and grab rails, garden maintenance and many more. West and South Offaly Home Fix are registered for the Senior Alerts Scheme which provides eligible with a free personal monitored alarm for one year. They also offer a call service whereby older people receive a regular call from a member of staff.

Offaly Local Development Committee (OLDC)

Telephone: 057 915 1622

www.offalyldc.ie

This is a partnership of agencies and groups representing the community, state and private sectors. It is funded by a number of government departments and agencies to deliver a wide variety of programmes and support to individuals, communities and businesses in Offaly. For further information please refer to their website.

Age Action's Care and Repair

Age Action National Line 0818 911 109 | Age Action Dublin 01 475 6989

www.ageaction.ie

Age Action's Care and Repair does small DIY jobs, free of charge, for older people to help them maintain their homes and their independence

Age Action's Care and Repair prioritises carrying out jobs in the homes of older people who are being discharged or who are about to be discharged or have recently been discharged from hospital. If someone is coming out of hospital, no matter where they live, Age Action's Care and Repair will support them to make sure that their home is safe.

Care and Repair can remove trip hazards, install handrails, replace toilet seats or move a bed downstairs to make sure the home is ready for their return. If you require work done in your home after a stay in hospital Age Action's Care and Repair can help.

Memory Technology Resource Rooms

Memory Technology Room, Primary Care Centre, Portarlington.

Telephone: 057 868 4200

<https://www.understandtogether.ie/training-resources/ /helpful-resources/memory-assistive-technologies/>

There are currently twenty seven Memory Technology Resource Rooms in Ireland. Memory Technology Resource Rooms are for people who would like to know more about products and devices which can help manage memory difficulties.

When you visit a Memory Technology Resource Room, you will be greeted by a healthcare professional who will discuss with you any difficulties you are having that assistive technology might be able to help you with. You will then have an opportunity to see and try out different devices and strategies to promote independence, safety, and quality of life. These rooms are for people who would like to know more about products and devices which can help assist memory difficulties.

Examples of Assistive Technologies include

- Memory aids; e.g. medication reminders and voice recorders to record your own reminder messages
- Orientation aids; e.g. electronic clocks that can help a person keep track of time/day/month
- Safety devices; e.g. night lights with sensors that will automatically turn on as you pass them and personal alarms
- Communication aids; e.g. easy to use landline and mobile phone
- Other devices; e.g. easy to use TV remote controls and talking photo albums

There is a Memory Technology Room available in Psychiatry of Later Life, An Triú Aois on the Block Road, Portlaoise for those attending this service. For anyone not attending this service there is a Memory Technology Room in Portarlington. It is also possible to access a Memory Technology Room outside your own county. For further information in relation to Memory Technology Rooms and videos demonstrating some of the items that may be available, please see the website referred to above.



Housing

Laois

- **Laois County Council.** Telephone: 057 866 4000
www.laois.ie/departments/housing

Social Housing for people capable of living independently. In order to qualify the applicant must be on the Laois County Council housing list.

- **Sue Ryder Homes** in Ireland provide sheltered housing for the elderly and those who have found themselves in difficult circumstances in society. Sue Ryder accept people on the Housing Assistance Payment. Sue Ryder have two centres in Laois, which can be contacted directly.

Kilminchy, Portlaoise. Telephone: 057 866 8854
www.sueryderfoundation.ie/kilminchy.html

Ballyroan. Telephone: 057 873 1071
www.sueryderfoundation.ie/ballyroan.html

Offaly

- **Offaly County Council.** Telephone: 057 934 6800
www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Housing/

Social Housing for people capable of living independently. In order to qualify the applicant must be on the Offaly County Council housing list.

- **Mid Offaly Housing Association.** Independent living for older people
Ard Aoibhinn, Mount Bolus. Telephone: 087 207 3226
- **Rights for the Elderly Voluntary Housing Association** - with 16 houses for Older people at Tihilly, Clontarf Road. Tullamore.
Telephone: 086 850 3287 Email: sec@rightsfortheelderlyvha.ie
- **Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs)** also provide various types of housing in Laois and Offaly. Housing provided by AHBs is allocated to those who are on the housing list and they have housing schemes for older people and people with a disability.

Housing Assistance Payment

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/renting_a_home/housing_assistance_payment.html

The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is a type of social housing support for people who have been assessed as having a long-term housing need. The assessment of housing need is completed by the Local Authority and is based on the information provided in the Local Authority Housing application form. The scheme is administered by the Local Authorities who pay the landlords. The accommodation rent must be within the limits as per that local authority area. Tenants pay a weekly HAP rent contribution to their local authority based on income and ability to pay.

Threshold - The National Housing Charity

Monday to Friday 9am to 9pm.

National Free phone number: 1800 454 454

www.threshold.ie

Threshold provides a comprehensive advice and advocacy service to tenants. They provide support and housing advice to people who are at risk of homelessness. Threshold works with landlords to resolve landlord-tenant problems. They have a Tenancy Protection Service (T.P.S.) which works with people who are in private rented accommodation experiencing difficulties e.g. rent arrears, facing rent increases, threatened with eviction etc. They can advocate on behalf of tenants and also assist with terminating a tenancy.

Housing Grants

www.laois.ie/departments/housing/house-improvements-and-repairs

www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Housing/Grants-Available

Laois County Council (057 866 4000) and

Offaly County Council (057 934 6800) provide assistance through:

Mobility Aids Grant

The Mobility Aids Housing Grant is means tested. To qualify gross household income must not exceed €30,000. The grant is available to cover a basic

suite of works to address mobility problems, primarily, but not exclusively, associated with ageing.

- The grant can be paid to people in owner - occupied housing
- Houses being purchased from a local authority under the Tenant Purchase Scheme
- Private rented accommodation (the duration of the tenancy can affect grant approval)
- Accommodation provided under the voluntary housing Capital Assistance and Rental Subsidy Schemes
- Accommodation occupied by people living in communal residences

The amount of the grant awarded varies from county to county - as does the waiting list. The maximum amount allocated is €6,000. The GP will be requested to confirm the degree of the applicant's mobility. The works grant aided under the scheme include:

- Access ramps
- Grab rails
- Level access showers
- Stair-lifts
- Other minor works deemed necessary to facilitate the mobility needs of a member of a household

More information in relation to the qualifying criteria and means test etc. is on the relevant council website.

Housing Aid for Older People

The Scheme is means tested and available to assist older people living in poor housing conditions to have necessary repairs or improvements carried out. It is aimed at people who are 66 years of age and older, but exceptions can be made in cases of genuine hardship for people under 66. The amount of the grant awarded varies from county to county - as does the waiting list. The types of works grant aided under the scheme include:

- structural repairs or improvements
- re-wiring
- repairs/replacement of windows and doors
- Provision of heating, water and sanitary services

Housing Adaptation Grant for Older People, and People with a Disability

The grant is available to assist in the carrying out of works that are reasonably necessary for the purposes of making a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability (physical, sensory, intellectual disability or a mental health difficulty) who is a member of the household. The level of grant aid available is based on gross household income and is between 30% and 95% of the works. Type of works allowable under the scheme include:

- Access ramps
- Stair-Lifts
- Downstairs toilet facilities
- Accessible showers
- Adaptations to facilitate wheelchair access
- Extensions

The grant can be paid to people

- In owner - occupied housing
- Houses that have been purchased under the Local Authority Tenant Purchase Scheme.
- Private rented accommodation (the duration of the tenancy can affect grant approval)
- Accommodation provided under the voluntary housing Capital Assistance and Rental Subsidy Schemes
- Accommodation occupied by people living in communal residences

The Mobility Aids Grant and the Housing Adaptation Grant for people with a disability does not cover the VAT cost of the work. VAT can be reclaimed from Revenue after the work has been paid for (see www.revenue.ie for more information on VAT).

For further information in relation to these schemes please contact the Housing Sections at:

Laois County Council

Telephone: 057 866 4000

Email: housing@laoiscoco.ie

Write to: Laois County Council, Áras An Chontae, James Fintan Lawlor Avenue, Kyleiprone, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, R32 EHP9.

Offaly County Council

Telephone: 057 935 7409

Email: HousingAidGrants@offalycoco.ie

Write to: Housing Section, Offaly County Council, Áras an Chontae,
Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, R35 F893.

A Useful Link

Age Friendly Homes is very helpful to anyone needing/considering home adaptations and is available to the general public

www.agefriendlyhomes.ie

Other Schemes

Warmer Homes Scheme

Lo-Call 1850 927 000

www.seai.ie/grants/home-energy-grants/free-upgrades-for-eligible-homes

The service involves the installation of standard energy efficiency measures appropriate to the eligible household subject to SEAI survey, budget allocation and available capacity. The service is provided at no cost to the household and the measures that may be available under this scheme are: attic insulation, draught proofing, lagging jackets, low energy light bulbs, cavity wall insulation and energy advice. This scheme is available to homes which meet the following criteria: owner occupied, non-local authority homes, constructed before 2002 and the owner is in receipt of the fuel allowance (means tested social welfare scheme). Waiting lists for this can be up to twenty four months.

Better Energy Homes Scheme

Lo-Call 1850 927 000

Email: info@betterenergyhomes.ie

www.seai.ie

The Better Energy Homes Scheme provides grants to homeowners of houses built before 2006 to improve energy efficiency in their homes. This scheme is different to the Warmer Homes Scheme as it provides grants to improve energy efficiency. Grants are available for the following:

- Roof insulation
- Wall insulation - for example, cavity wall, internal dry lining or external insulation.
- Heating controls upgrade
- Installation of a high-efficiency boiler (more than 90% efficiency) including a heating controls upgrade
- A Building Energy Rating (BER) after the energy-saving work is carried out (you must get this BER to qualify for the grant)
- Solar heating

Once approved, the works must be carried out within eight months.

In theory it would be possible to apply for both grants, but in practice as there is a waiting list of twenty four months for the Warmer Homes Scheme, and once approved for Better Energy Home Scheme the work has to be done within eight months, this may not be practical.

Advocacy/Education

Age Action

Telephone: 01 475 6989

www.ageaction.ie

This is a national charity that advocates and campaigns on behalf of older people. Education and resources, information, reference library and resources published on their website. Courses organised e.g. one to one courses for older people to become computer literate and keep in contact with family members.

Age Friendly Ireland

Telephone: 01 222 6256

www.agefriendlyireland.ie

They have a very useful website with information on many topics of interest to older people, ranging from what is available locally in their area to advocacy on behalf of older people at a national level.

Age and Opportunity Ireland

Telephone: 01 805 7709

www.ageandopportunity.ie

Is a national not for profit organisation that promotes opportunities for greater participation by older people in society through partnerships and collaborative programmes. It encourages greater participation in the arts by older people, including those in care settings. Some of the activities include the Bealtine Festival, and creative exchanges. For further information please see their website.

DSiDC

www.dementia.ie

Dementia Services Information and Development Centre works alongside health and social care professionals, people with dementia and their care partners, community organisations, private and public care providers. They have three core professional services, education, information and research.

Understand Together Website

www.understandtogether.ie

Understand Together is a public support and information campaign. It is aimed at inspiring people from all sections of society with the 500,000 Irish people whose families have been affected by dementia to help create an Ireland that embraces and includes people living with dementia, and which displays solidarity with them and their loved ones. They also have a training and resource section on their website which provides online training for people with dementia, carers, families and volunteers. For further information please refer to: www.understandtogether.ie/training-resources/dementia-training-and-education/people-with-dementia-families-and-volunteers/

Engaging Dementia Website

www.engagingengagingdementia.ie

Engaging Dementia is a registered charity that provides training and resources for those who care for people with dementia in residential care, day centres, hospitals or the family home. Their training services are primarily for the staff in nursing homes, day centres and hospitals. Their resources are suitable for both formal and informal carers. They are involved in a range of community-based initiatives focused on supporting communication and engagement for people with dementia.

Office of the Ombudsman

Telephone: 01 639 5600

www.ombudsman.ie

This service examines complaints from people who feel that they have been unfairly treated by a public service provider in Ireland, which include government departments, local authorities, the HSE, and Nursing Homes. Before you contact the Ombudsman you should first try and resolve your complaint with the relevant service provider. You can complain to the Ombudsman online at www.ombudsman.ie or in writing to 6 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2. You can also contact the office at the above number for further information.

Patient Advocacy Service

Telephone: 0818 293 003

www.patientadvocacyservice.ie

This is an independent free and confidential service that can support and empower you to make a complaint about the care you have received in a Public Acute Hospital. For further information please see their website.

Solicitors for the Elderly

www.solicitorsfortheelderly.ie

This is an independent national association of solicitors and barristers concerned with improving availability and delivery of specialist and legal advice to older and vulnerable people. For further information see their website.

Think Ahead

Telephone: 01 679 3188

www.hospicefoundation.ie/i-need-help/i-want-to-plan-ahead/think-ahead

This is an Irish Hospice Website which provides information and guidance in relation to Health Care planning and thinking ahead. For further information please see their website.

MABS - Money Advice and Budgeting Service

Unit 23 A Bridge Shopping Centre, Tullamore.

Telephone: 0761 072 710 Email: offaly@mabs.ie

www.mabs.ie

Railway Mews, Railway St., Portlaoise.

Tel: 0761 072 620 Email: portlaoise@mabs.ie

www.mabs.ie

MABS is the state Money Advice and Budgeting Service which is free, confidential, independent and guides people to deal with debt. There is also a Helpline (0761 072 000) Monday to Friday 9 am to 8 pm. Abhaile is their new service which assists home owners to seek a resolution to home mortgage arrears.

Citizen's Information Service

www.citizensinformation.ie

Tullamore Centre - Bridge Centre, Tullamore.
Telephone: 076 1076 290 Email: tullamore@citinfo.ie

Birr Centre - Courtyard Office Centre, Emmet Street, Birr.
Telephone: 076 1076 260 Email: birr@citinfo.ie

Edenderry Centre - St. Mary's Street, Edenderry.
Telephone: 076 1076 280 Email: edenderry@citinfo.ie

Portlaoise Centre - Kellyville House (above SuperValu), Portlaoise.
Telephone: 076 1075 590 Email: portlaoise@citinfo.ie

National helpline: 0761 074 000
Monday to Friday from 9am to 8 pm.

Citizen's Information is a national organisation that provides comprehensive information on many subjects in Health, Social Welfare, Revenue, Education, and many more topics that are too extensive to mention. If you have any question in relation to any issue, check out the National Citizen's Information Website which will offer guidance. Citizen's Information operate offices throughout Laois/Offaly. Citizen's Information offer an advocacy service in relation to social welfare appeals, for example if you feel you are wrongly refused a social welfare payment and wish to appeal it is worthwhile contacting them for guidance. Citizen's Information workers in local offices will also assist individuals complete application forms. Depending on the issue for which you are contacting Citizen's Information, there may be access to expert legal advice from a solicitor or financial advice from an accountant.

Legal Aid

Portlaoise: 057 866 1366 Tullamore: 057 935 1177
www.legalaidboard.ie

- Provides legal aid and legal advice in civil cases (non-criminal cases to people who meet the qualifying criteria)
- Provides a family mediation service
- Assists in the operation of the Abhaile Scheme (which assists people in home mortgage arrears).

National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities

Telephone: 0761 073 000

www.advocacy.ie

This service provides a free and independent representative advocacy services to adults with disabilities across Ireland. A disability can include a cognitive impairment or a mental health issue. This is a free, confidential and independent service. Once a referral is made an advocate can meet with the person, seek their views and advocate on their behalf. An individual can self-refer or be referred by someone else. Further information is available on their website or by contacting the above number.

Sage Advocacy Service

24 Ormond Quay, Dublin. Telephone: 01 536 7330

Email: info@sageadvocacy.ie

www.sageadvocacy.ie

Sage is a charity which provides an independent support and advocacy service for older persons, vulnerable adults and healthcare patients. They have regional advocates who can meet with the individual, seek their views and advocate on their behalf. Information in relation to legal rights etc. is also available on their website or by emailing info@sageadvocacy.ie

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Older Persons Service

Telephone: 01 691 4632

Email: safeguarding.cho8@hse.ie

If you have safeguarding concerns in relation to a vulnerable adult, please contact the Safeguarding Service CHO8 to discuss your concerns.







Entitlements for Carers

Carers Allowance

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/social_welfare_payments/carers/carers_allowance.html

Carers Allowance is a means-tested payment for carers on low incomes who are caring for a person who needs support because of age, disability, or illness (including mental illness), and is so incapacitated as to require full time care and attention. To qualify you must be either living with the person, or providing full time care and attention to the person needing the care, must be 18 or over, and not engaged in employment, self employment, training, education or courses outside the home for more than 18.5 hours per week.

Carers Allowance is a taxable source of income and should be advised to your local tax office. Rate varies depending on age and circumstances of applicant. The payment of Carers Allowance is made up of a personal rate for the carer and extra amounts for any child dependents. The current 2021 rate for a carer aged under 66 years caring for one person, is €219 with increases for dependent children, if you are under 66 years and caring for two people the basic rate rises to €328.50. For a carer over 66 years caring for one person the rate is €257. If you are in receipt of another social welfare payment, i.e. a pension and you are providing someone with full time care and attention you may qualify for a reduced rate of Carers Allowance.

There could be a delay processing the application for Carers Allowance, in the interim it may be possible to apply for Supplementary Allowance. If you qualify for Carers Allowance you qualify for a medical card in your own right and may also qualify for free household benefits (if you are living with the person you are caring for) and a free travel pass. Carers Allowance will be paid for 12 weeks after the death of the person being cared for.

Carers Benefit

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/social_welfare_payments/carers/carers_benefit.html

Carers Benefit is a payment made to insured carers who leave their work to care for a person who requires full time care and attention. It is possible to claim Carers Benefit for a total of 104 weeks for each person being cared for. It may be claimed in a single continuous period or in a number of separate periods. PRSI contributions determine eligibility. It is not means tested but is a taxable source of income, €220 per week payment, there is an additional increase for dependent children. A carer in receipt of Carers Benefit is entitled to apply for a GP visit card.

An individual in receipt of Carers Benefit, depending on their financial circumstances may be entitled to apply for a medical card.

Carers Leave

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/employment/employment_rights_and_conditions/leave_and_holidays/carers_leave_from_employment.html

Carers leave allows employees to leave work temporarily for up to 104 weeks to provide full time care and attention to a person who needs it. To obtain carers leave, the carer must have worked for their employer for 12 months without a break in their employment. Carers leave is unpaid but your post will be kept open for you for when you return. The Carer can apply for Carers Benefit if they have enough PRSI contributions. If they do not qualify for Carers Benefit, they can apply for Carers Allowance. For further information see citizen's information website.

Respite Care Grant aka Carer's Support Grant

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/social_welfare_payments/carers/respice_care_grant.html

The Carer's Support Grant (Respite Care Grant) is an annual payment for full-time carers who look after certain people that are in need of full-time care and attention. The grant can be used in whatever way the carer's wishes, e.g. payment for respite care. The payment is made regardless of the carer's means but is also subject to the condition that the applicant cannot be working outside of their caring duties for any more than 18.5 hours per week.

The payment is issued every June (usually the first Thursday) to carers in receipt of Carers Allowance and Carers Benefit, and certain other carers subject to certain qualifying criteria. For carers not in receipt of the above mentioned payments please complete the application form for the Carer's Support Grant. The grant amounts to €1,850 and may be subject to tax depending on circumstances.

Fuel Allowance

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/social_welfare_payments/extra_social_welfare_benefits/fuel_allowance.html

Some carers depending on their own personal circumstances may be able to claim the Fuel Allowance. This is a means tested payment under the National Fuel Scheme to help with the cost of heating the home. Only one Fuel Allowance is paid to a household. To claim the Fuel Allowance, a person needs to be in receipt of a qualifying social welfare payment. Carers Allowance is not one of the qualifying payments. For the list of qualifying social welfare payments please see the website above. The Fuel Allowance payment amounts to €28 per week. The fuel season runs for 28 weeks from September/October.

Living Alone Increase

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/social_welfare_payments/extra_social_welfare_benefits/living_alone_allowance.html

If you are 66 years or over and live alone, you will qualify for this payment of €19 per week if you are in receipt of the State Contributory Pension or the State Non-Contributory Pension. For further information please the Citizen's Information website referred to above.

Household Benefits Package

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/social_welfare_payments/extra_social_welfare_benefits/household_benefits_package.html

Carers who are in receipt of Carers Allowance and living with the person they are caring for can claim the Household Benefits Package. Only one person in the household can claim this. Also in some situations where carers are not living with the person they are caring for, they may because of their own personal circumstances have an entitlement to claim for the Household Benefits Package. For further information please see the Citizen's Information website referred to above.

Free Travel

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/social_welfare_payments/extra_social_welfare_benefits/free_travel.html

Everyone aged 66 years and over, is entitled to the Free Travel Scheme. There are three categories of free travel. Under FT-P, the holder is personally entitled to free travel. If FT+S is written on the Public Services Card, spouse, civil partner or cohabitant can join the holder for free when they are travelling, (they cannot travel for free alone). If FT+C is written on the Public Services Card, a companion (over 16) can travel with the holder for free (because they are unable to travel alone for medical reasons). Further information is also available on the Citizen's Information Website referred to above.

09

Department of Social Protection

Assistance with financial supports, once off emergency assistance through Community Welfare Officers. Clinics held in different areas throughout Laois/Offaly. For further contact:

Laois: 057 867 8010

Offaly: 057 931 8500

Specific Tax Credits and Allowances

Homemakers Scheme (PRSI)

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/social_welfare/irish_social_welfare_system/social_insurance_prsi/homemakers_scheme.html

The Homemakers scheme makes it easier for a home maker to apply for the State Pension (Contributory). A homemaker is a man or woman who provides full time care for a child or for an ill or disabled person aged 12 years or over. To apply the carer should register before the end of the contribution year in which the carer first becomes a home maker. A carer who is in receipt of Carers Allowance or Carers Benefit does not need to register. Further information please see The Citizen's Information website referred to above.

Home Carer Tax Credit

www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions/health-and-age/home-carer-credit/index.aspx

This is a tax credit given to married couples or civil partners who are jointly assessed for tax where one person works in the home caring for a dependant person. Tax liability is calculated based on income, a tax credit is deducted from this to determine the actual amount that to be paid. For further information please refer to the revenue website referred to above.

Tax Allowance to employ a carer

www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions/health-and-age/employing-a-carer/index.aspx

Tax relief can be claimed for the costs of employing a carer. They can be directly employed or employed through an agency. Tax relief cannot be claimed for employing a carer who is a housekeeper only. The deduction is allowed on the individual's marginal rate of income tax. This can be claimed as a health expense.

Dependent Relative Tax Credit

www.revenue.ie/en/personal-tax-credits-reliefs-and-exemptions/health-and-age/dependent-relative-tax-credit/index.aspx

You can claim Dependent Relative Tax Credit if you care for someone at your own expense:

- A relative, including a relative of your spouse or civil partner, who is unable to maintain themselves as a result of old age or ill-health
- Your widowed parent, or your spouse or civil partner's widowed parent, irrespective of the state of their health.
- For further information please see the website referred to above.

Tax Relief for Drivers and Passengers with Disabilities

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/travel_and_recreation/transport_and_disability/tax_relief_for_disabled_drivers_and_disabled_passengers.html

This scheme provides a range of tax reliefs linked to the buying and use of a specially constructed or adapted vehicle by drivers and passengers with a disability. The following can be claimed under the scheme.

- Remission or repayment of Vehicle Registration Tax (V.R.T.)
- Repayment of Value Added Tax on the purchase of the Vehicle
- Repayment of Value Added Tax on the adaption of the Vehicle.

To qualify for the scheme the person with the disability must have a valid Primary Medical Certificate. This certificate confirms that a person is severely and permanently disabled. For further information in relation to the qualifying criteria please refer to the Citizen's Information referred to above

Disabled Parking Permit Scheme

www.iwa.ie/services/motoring/disabled-parking-permits

A parking permit issued in the name of the applicant who has limited mobility. It gives the applicant access to a disabled parking bay.

For information in relation to social welfare entitlements, pensions, medical cards, treatment abroad etc. please refer to the Citizen's Information Website or contact your local Citizen's Information Office.

Legal Arrangements

When illness enters people's lives it can be very challenging to try and think about practical arrangements for the future. Upon receiving a diagnosis of dementia, it would be important to start thinking about managing finances and possible legal arrangements. For complex legal arrangements and if there are assets involved it would be important to seek professional advice from a solicitor.

If a person is not capable of managing their affairs there are different legal arrangements that can be put in place to have a trusted person to do these things on their behalf.

With the exception of Wards of Court, all these arrangements are made while a person has mental capacity to make them. Some arrangements are only effective while an individual continues to have capacity, while an enduring power of attorney is put in place for dealing with situations that may arise when a person no longer has capacity to manage their affairs. Ward of Court is a procedure that is commenced when a person no longer has the mental capacity to manage their affairs.

Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015

This was signed into law on 30th December 2015 but has not yet been fully commenced. When it is commenced it will provide for new legal arrangements by which people will be assisted to make decisions about their welfare, belongings and affairs. This assistance and support is required where the person lacks, or may lack the capacity to make a decision without assistance.

The new arrangements include Assisted Decision-Making and Co-Decision-Making and sets out a process to appoint a Decision-Making Representative for an individual, as well as new arrangements for Wards of Court and for the making an Enduring Power of Attorney.

Agency Arrangements

An individual can appoint another person to represent them in dealing with third parties, this is known as an agency arrangement. A typical example would be a pensioner nominating another person to collect their social welfare payments etc. from the post office. An agency arrangement can only be made by a person who is mentally able to do so and is only valid for the period of time while the person remains mentally competent.

Agency arrangements for social welfare payments:

www.gov.ie/en/servies/451fd7-authority-to-appoint-an-agent

The Department of Social Protection has the power under legislation to make payments to a third party acting on behalf of the social welfare recipient. The legal status of this is different to a general agency relationship as it can continue if the person becomes mentally incapable. If an agent is appointed to collect your money it is still your money and there is a legal obligation on the agent to use it on your behalf and for your benefit. The Department of Social Protection can end the arrangement at any time if it is not working satisfactorily.

There are three types of social welfare agency arrangements:

Temporary agent arrangements

This is where someone is asked to become your agent for a short period of time. This can be put in place by completing an Appointment of a Temporary Agent Form. The (TA1) form is available in every post office.

Nominating an agent to collect your payment: If a person is unable to collect a payment at the post office, due to illness or mobility issues, another person can be nominated to do this by completing Authority to Appoint an Agent Form which is available on the above website.

If a person is not able to manage their financial affairs: An agent may be appointed to collect their payment and act on their behalf. A medical practitioner must certify that a person does not have capacity to manage their affairs. There is information relating to this on the Authority to Appoint an Agent Form which is available on the website listed above. The agent nominated is often a family member, a care representative, a nursing home, long stay facility, or a hospital. Appointed agents have a legal obligation to use the money for the benefit of the person to whom it belongs. For further information please see the website referred to above.

Power of Attorney

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/death/before_a_death/power_of_attorney.html

A power of attorney is a document in which the donor authorises another person (attorney) to act for them in certain circumstances in accordance with the terms set out in the document. It can be specific (limited to a specific purpose) or general (allowing the attorney to do almost everything that the donor could do).

There are two kinds of power of attorney:

- (a) Power of attorney which gives a specific or general power, and ends as soon as the person becomes incapacitated
- (b) Enduring power of attorney which takes effect on the incapacity of the donor.

For further information about power of attorney and the establishment of same, please see Citizen's Information Website or speak to a solicitor.

Trusts

Property, including cash assets, may be held in trust on behalf of another person or to a person to achieve a particular purpose. A trust comes into existence when an individual (the trustee) holds property of another (the settlor) for the benefit of named people. The beneficiaries may be the settlor or may be other persons. By creating a trust, a person can ensure that if they become mentally incompetent their affairs will be managed in a certain manner. The trust continues to be administered by the trustee for a person's benefit without requiring Ward of Court.

Trusts are legally complex and have tax implications. Therefore it is vital to seek legal and tax advice.

Wards of Court

When a person becomes unable to manage his or her assets because of mental incapacity, an application can be made to the courts for them to become a Ward of Court. If the courts decide that a person cannot manage their affairs because of mental incapacity a Committee is appointed to control the assets on the Wards behalf.

It is as important for the carer, as the person who is being cared for to think about putting their legal affairs in order, and to consider such things as Enduring Power of Attorney and making a will. Not having proper arrangements in place could have an impact on the person for whom they are caring.

Social and Leisure Activities

Age Friendly Alliances

Telephone: 057 866 4127 Email: agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie

Age Friendly Coordinator: Bridie Costello Hynes

Directing and linking people with appropriate services

Mobile: 087 119 8591 Email: bcostellohynes@offalycoco.ie

twitter.com/AgeOffaly

Age Friendly Technical Advisor: Noelle McGinley

For: Built Environment & Housing Technical Enquiries

Mobile: 086 786 9670 Email: nmcginley@offalycoco.ie

Laois and Offaly Age Friendly Programmes are services co-ordinated by both their respective Councils.

The publication of the Offaly Age Friendly Strategy 2018-2021, and the Laois Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2021, led to the establishment of multi-agency Age Friendly Alliances in both counties. These are key developments which support the objective of creating an inclusive and equitable society in which older people across Laois and Offaly could live full, active, valued and healthy lives.

The Alliances meet regularly and are responsible for the roll out of the Strategy. They work collaboratively to progress the strategic actions which were derived from the consultations carried out across Laois and Offaly with older people. The membership of the Alliances includes the HSE, IFA, Offaly Local Development Company, Local Enterprise Offices, An Garda Síochána, Laois and Offaly Libraries, LOETB, Local Link and the Department of Social Protection.

Offaly County Council also provide a number of supports in-house.

offaly.ie | facebook.com/offalycoco | twitter.com/offalycoco

Senior Citizen Clubs

There are many social/friendship clubs and groups in County Laois and Offaly, example Senior Citizens Groups, Social Services Groups, Art Groups, Flower and Garden Clubs, Vintage Clubs, Women's Groups, Knitting, Sewing Clubs, Dancing Groups, Whist & Bridge Card Clubs, Choirs, etc. which organise get-togethers, Bingo, Outings and Christmas Parties. Contact details for many of these groups can be found in local papers, parish newsletters, notice boards of shops etc.

Active Retirement Ireland

Telephone: 01 873 3836

www.activeirl.ie

Active Retirement Associations in Counties Laois and Offaly are all affiliated to Active Retirement Network Ireland. They were established to enable retired people and anybody over 55 years to enjoy a full and active life. At local level, Active Retirement Associations arrange social events, educational options and activities which encourage and support retired people to remain healthy and active. For more information visit their website referred to above.

Green Gyms

Green Gyms aim to provide an outdoor fitness experience that is accessible and enjoyable to all. They are outdoor community gyms that resemble gym equipment found in an indoor gym. Outdoor gyms are located near areas of interest such as parks, Leisure Centres and playgrounds and are completely free to use.

Sports Partnerships

The role of the Sports Partnerships is to lead, coordinate, support, inform and deliver on a range of sports and physical activities for people in their communities. For information on all their upcoming activities and their resources please visit their website resources. Many of the resources for their programmes are available for downloading.

Laois Sports Partnership

Email: cmyers@laoissports.ie

www.laoissports.ie

Offaly Sports Partnership

www.offalysports.ie/news

Jean Brady (Sports Inclusion Development Officer)

Telephone: 086 791 2508

Denise Coghill (Community Sports Development Officer)

Telephone: 086 791 2513

Providing physical activities to support the wellbeing of Older People

Telephone: 057 935 7462 Email: sports@offalycoco.ie

Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB)

Portlaoise: 057 862 1352

Tullamore: 057 934 9400

www.loetb.ie

The Laois & Offaly Education & Training Board provides a range of adult further education and training programmes. Laois & Offaly LOETB'S Adult Guidance & Information Service can provide information on education and training options available to you, both within and through other education and training providers.

Garden Trails

www.laois.ie/departments/tourism/garden-trails

www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Heritage/Heritage-Gardens-and-Parks

Both Laois and Offaly have Garden Trails, offering access to publicly and privately owned gardens open at different times during the year for people to visit. For further information please visit their websites for more information.

Libraries

The main county libraries are:

Portlaoise: 057 862 2333

Tullamore: 057 934 6832

www.laois.ie/departments/libraries

www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Libraries

email: library@laoiscoco.ie

Libraries in both Laois and Offaly have many amazing services and resources available for older people. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic when libraries are closed, the library online services are always available. The library provides all users with a wide range of free online services including e-books and audio books, digital magazines, online newspapers, online learning with over 500 courses to choose from. Please see:

www.laois.ie/departments/libraries/online-resources

www.offaly.ie/eng/Services/Libraries

There are video guides on how to access the services and get you started to your new online experience!

On a social level libraries provide free knitting clubs, book clubs, adult colouring and mindfulness sessions, Irish conversation classes, book launches and also local history and heritage talks. Computer classes are available in some libraries.

Age Friendly Digital Ambassadors provide one-to-one online sessions which enable users to become proficient in using online library services. They offer a range of tailored events for older people such as the Bealtaine Festival and Positive Ageing Week celebrations.

In libraries in Offaly, Six Magic Tables (Tovertafels) are available for public use within libraries throughout the county. These fun care technologies connect older people who have dementia with each other and with their surroundings. Interactive games stimulate both physical and cognitive activity and encourage social interaction.

Laois County Library Service is delighted to launch the Laois County Library Service - Age Friendly Activity Booklet. The 64 page booklet is a compendium of good wishes from prominent people in the county along with information on supports and services, puzzles, quizzes, word searches, poems, some tasty recipes, seniors guide, a step-by-step guide to a zoom meeting and lots more. This booklet has been distributed to persons cocooning through their delivery services and to nursing units, nursing homes and Sue Ryder Centres in Laois.

If you haven't used your library in a while, contact your local branch by phone or email to update your membership. You can join online and enjoy free access to library collections and supports:

www.librariesireland.ie/join-your-library

www.laois.ie/departments/libraries/online-resources

Local Transport Links

locallinklaoisoffaly.ie/timetable/

This is a Transport service serving both Laois and Offaly in terms of rural transport. It is a key local transport resource for many older people and can facilitate attendance at medical appointments in Portlaoise and Tullamore. It is a door to door service. The drivers have all received training on dementia awareness

TFI Local Link Laois Offaly provides a combination of scheduled Public Transport services and door-to-door services in the Laois and Offaly area. Door to door services should be pre-booked with the TFI Local Link Laois Offaly office. Timetables can be found on the above website.

Men's Sheds

Telephone: 01 891 6150 | www.menssheds.ie

All Sheds are independent and self-autonomous and the range of activities differ from shed to shed. Most sheds engage in activities such as wood work, gardening, community work and carpentry. They are places where men can find meaning and purpose. For further information you can contact their national number or their website.

Further information in relation to support groups and activities locally can be found in local papers, parish newsletters and on shop notice boards.



Security and Safety

Please dial 999 or 112 in the case of an emergency.

Many towns across Laois and Offaly have Garda Stations that are operated part time. Garda Stations that are open all the time include:

Portlaoise: 057 867 4100 | Tullamore: 057 932 7600 | Birr: 057 916 9710

Crime Prevention Officer

Crime Prevention Officers (CPOs) are trained to encourage, promote and advise on crime prevention to both the private and business community. There are dedicated crime prevention officers within each Garda Division. They monitor crime types in their division, assist in planning, and in implementing crime reduction strategies in their division, and they educate and advise members of the public in relation to crime prevention and reduction. They conduct security reviews and audits (including CPTED surveys) of private and public premises and lands.

Fraud Prevention - *Advice from an Garda Síochána in relation to Automated Phone Calls concerning PPS numbers is the following and should be noted.*

Gardaí receive reports regularly relating to automated scam phone calls. The recipient is called and advised via a recorded message that An Garda Síochána is investigating them in relation to suspicious activity linked to their PPS number. In order to rectify the situation the recipient is then asked to press a number to speak to someone further in relation to the matter.

These scam calls are mainly coming from numbers that appear to be Irish mobile or landline numbers.

On receipt of these communications, the advice of An Garda Síochána is as follows:

Do not engage with the caller.

Do not return the call.

Do not follow the automated instructions - Do not press 1, etc.

Never disclose personal or financial information.

Hang up and block the number if possible.

Whilst the scammers may change their stories and methods their goal is always the same, to access peoples sensitive information and get their hands on their money.

If you believe that you have fallen victim to a scam contact your financial institution and report the matter to the local Gardaí. Information on frauds at www.fraudsmart.ie, information is also available at www.garda.ie/en/crime/cyber-crime/i-ve-been-caught-out-by-an-online-scam-what-should-i-do.html

For further details please contact the Garda Stations listed above or your local Garda Station.

Community Gardaí

The role of the local Community Garda is to liaise with the local community, organisations and services. Their role is to get to know the community by giving talks, organising activities and linking with service providers. For further information in relation to your local community Garda please contact any of the stations listed above.

Seniors Alert Scheme

The Seniors Alert Scheme was established to encourage community support for vulnerable older people. It provides funding for a monitored alarm connected to a contact centre to enable older persons to live securely in their own homes. This is the pendant that many older people wear on their wrist or around their neck. The scheme is run by Pobal, a not for profit organisation that works on behalf of the government. It is for people over 65 years who have limited means, living alone, or living with another older person, or caring for someone else in your household. The alarm monitoring system is free for the first year following installation after which the person becomes liable for the monitoring fee. Charges vary by service provider and the type of alarm and service provided.

The grant assistance is made available through community, voluntary and not for profit organisations that are registered with Pobal, such as LStep, North Offaly Local Development and West and South Offaly Home Fix. Another organisation, Task Community Care provides a similar service. Area rep: Bernadette Dunne 087 963 0484.

Bogus Caller Cards

The cards were launched following an increase in the number of bogus callers and tradesmen calling to vulnerable people. Householders can ask any traders or workmen calling to homes requesting to carry out work to supply their details on the card. If there is any doubt as to the legitimacy of the person, house holders can contact the Garda stations listed above. Genuine callers will supply their details. Do not let anyone into your house unless you are 100% satisfied as their legitimacy.

Bogus Callers

Garda Síochána crime prevention suggests we should all advise elderly vulnerable people against answering the door to bogus callers. These callers may call to the door offering a service such as power washing, painting, garden maintenance or other services. Anyone who lives alone should fit a chain lock to their door and only open the door to people who are known to them. Contact Gardaí if you have any suspicion in relation to a caller in your area and provide as much detail as possible, e.g. registration number of the car, direction of travel and description of caller.

'Message in a Bottle' Initiative

Laois: Telephone: 057 866 4107 Email: agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie
Age Friendly Programme Manager. Telephone: 057 934 6800
Email: agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie

Offaly: Offaly County Council Community Section. Telephone: 057 934 600
Sgt. Willie Kirwin, Tullamore Garda Station. Telephone: 057 932 7600

The 'Message in a Bottle' Initiative is free to all who need it and is aimed at older adults whose medical details are written on a page, placed inside the plastic bottle and kept in the fridge where the emergency services will find it. It will save the emergency services valuable time identifying if someone is in difficulty and will quickly provide his or her emergency contacts. All First Responders i.e. the emergency services, HSE ambulance teams, Fire Brigade, and the Gardaí support the initiative. If called to an emergency, upon seeing the stickers, they will immediately collect the vital information from the fridge.

Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert

Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert are crime prevention programmes aimed at getting local communities working in partnership with the Gardaí to become actively involved in observing and reporting suspicious activities. They will be in a position to advise you on home safety and work with the Gardaí on Text Alert notices and other security initiatives. Contact your local Garda Station or the stations listed above who will advise you about your nearest Neighbourhood Watch (Towns) or Community Alert (Rural Areas).

Carers Emergency Card

www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/3/carerssupport/

Carers might consider carrying the Carers Emergency Card, see appendix 12. In the event of a carer being in an accident or becoming ill, the details on the card can be used to ensure that the person being cared for is looked after.



Appendices

Appendix 1 - References

Nursing Homes Support Scheme Information Booklet; Version 03/17
Department of Health.

Appendix 2 - Meals on Wheels Services Laois/Offaly

Laois	Contact Name	Contact Number	Catchment Area
St Fiaccs, Graiguecullen	Joan Doogue	059 914 3892	
Portarlinton Social Services	Ann Dunne	087 411 6101	Portarlinton Area
Borris In Ossory	Noreen Hanrahan or Sr Regina Delaney	087 411 6101 086 633 5897	Borris in Ossory areas within 2-mile radius
Abbeyleix	Ann Phelan	087 752 8034	
Rathdowney Social Services	Agnes Finane	087 7672056	
Stradbally Social Services	Tom Handy	086 108 8284	Stradbally Area

Offaly	Contact Name	Contact Number	Catchment Area
North Offaly Community Development Network CLG	Fergus McDonald	057 936 2755	Serving North Offaly area
Kilcormac Meals on Wheels (KDA)	Linda Kelly	057 913 5445	Kilcormac and Surrounding rural areas
BLC Developments (Ballycumber)	Keith Simpson or Ronnie O'Connor	085 285 6959 / 057 933 6889 085 257 6110	Ballycumber area
Ballycommon Telework and Training Centre	Manager	057 935 3177	Ballycommon and surrounding rural areas
Tullamore Meals on Wheels	Tadhg O'Brien	057 934 1377	Tullamore Area
Shannonbridge/ Clonmacnoise Meals on Wheels	Liz Duffy	087 241 0587	Shannonbridge/ Clonmacnoise area

Offaly Healthy Homes Project

Telephone: 057 915 1622 or 087 979 9663

This is a new initiative by the Offaly Local Development Company in conjunction with the KDA in Kilcormac, Shinrone Development Association and other community peers. It provides affordable meals to meet the needs and wants of the community. The aim is to support and preserve independent living in the community on a Monday, Wednesday or a Friday to people in Banagher, Lismagh, Ferbane, Cloghan, Birr, Carrig, Crinkill, Shinrone, Dunkerin and Moneygall surrounding area.

Appendix 3 - Calculations for Financial Assessment for Fair Deal

Some examples of financial assessments for Fair Deal taken from the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Information Booklet pg 9-11.

Applicant A has no property, assets or savings. Only income in this case is the €240.30 per week pension. The financial assessment in this case is as follows:

Applicant A

Income	€240.30 per week
Savings	Nil
No House	
<i>Calculation - Contribution to Care</i>	
Weekly contribution based on 80% of income	€192.24
Assessed weekly contribution towards cost of care	€192.24

Applicant B

Income	€240.30 per week
Savings	Nil
Principal Residence (Person's Home)	€200,000
<i>Calculation - Contribution to Care</i>	
Weekly contribution based on 80% of income	€192.24
Weekly contribution based on 7.5% of assets (Less 36,000 asset disregard)	€236.54
Assessed weekly contribution towards cost of care	€428.78

In this case, the person has no savings but has a property worth €200,000. The calculation is reached in the following way. €200,000 - €36,000 (€36,000 disregard) = €164,000. 7.5% of that is €12,300 divided by 52 (52 weeks in the year) is **€236.54**

As the applicant has no savings, he/she may decide to avail of the nursing home loan to pay for that part of their weekly contribution based on the asset (€236.54) which without the loan is €428.48 per week. By availing of the loan, the applicant will pay €192.94 per week to the nursing home, with a nursing home loan of €236.54 being paid to the HSE.

After a three year period, this person will pay the same amount as Applicant A as the assessed contribution based on the value of the house no longer applies.

Applicant C (single)

Income	€400 per week
Savings	€100,000
Principal Residence	€200,000
<i>Calculation - contribution to care</i>	
Weekly contribution based on 80% of income	€320.00
Weekly contribution based on 7.5 % cash assets (less 36,000 disregard)	€92.31
Weekly contribution based on 7.5% residence	€288.46
Assessed weekly contribution	€700.77

The figure in this case is arrived at in the following way. 80% of income is **€320.00**. The contribution in relation to the savings is €100,000 - €36,000 is €64,000. 7.5% of €64,000 is €4800 which is divided by 52 (52 weeks in the year) is **€92.31**. Similarly the figure in relation to the contribution based on the value of the residence is arrived in the following way. The principal residence is valued at €200,000. 7.5% of which is €15000. That figure again is divided by 52 (52 weeks in the year) is **€288.46**.

Applicant C has €100,000 in savings. The weekly amount attributed to the principal residence is €288.46. In this example the person may not decide to apply for the nursing home loan given that he/she appears to have money to meet their weekly contribution of €700.77. However a person can apply for the loan at any stage if they wish.

Applicant D (member of a couple)

Combined income	€800 per week
Combined savings	€100,000
Principal Residence	€200,000

Calculation - Contribution to Care:

Weekly contribution based on 40%
(80% divided by 2) of income €32,000

Weekly contribution based on 7.5% divided by 2
(3.75%) of Cash assets (less 72,000) asset disregard €20.19

Weekly contribution based on 7.5%
(3.75%) principal residence €144.23

Assessed weekly contribution towards the cost of care €484.42

This couple have combined savings of €100,000. The weekly amount attributed to the principal residence is **€144.23**. Applicant C may not wish to apply for a nursing home loan given that it appears that sufficient money may be available to meet the weekly contribution of **€484.42**

As stated previously, it is important to reiterate in all the examples above that the part of the contribution that is based on the private residence is only included in the assessed weekly contribution for the first three years.

As suggested earlier as no two persons circumstances are the same, we would strongly recommend contacting the HSE Nursing Home Supports Office for further information and advice.

HSE Nursing Homes Support Office - Bury Quay, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
Telephone: 057 932 7834 / 057 932 7821 / 057 932 7830

Appendix 4 - Emergency Numbers

Emergency: Telephone 999 or 112

- MIDOC: Urgent Family Doctor Out-of-Hours Service:
LoCall: 1850-302-702
Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday, 6.00pm - 8.00am
Weekends/Public Holidays: 8.00am - 8.00am.
- Department of Psychiatry, Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise
Telephone: 057 869 6396
Inpatient treatment as required. Overseen by Consultant Psychiatrist, Psychiatry of Later Life service, Laois/Offaly.
- Garda Station or 999 in an emergency.

HSE Services

HOSPITALS

- Midland Regional Hospital Tullamore.
Telephone: 057 932 1501
- Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise.
Telephone: 057 862 1364
- Department of Psychiatry at Midland Regional Hospital Portlaoise.
Telephone: 057 869 6396 (Assessment Unit)

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH TEAMS

- Community Mental Health Centre, Bannon Centre, MRH Tullamore.
Telephone: 057 931 5900
- Community Mental Health Centre, Wilmer Rd., Birr.
Telephone: 057 912 0576
- Community Mental Health Centre, Bridge Street, Portlaoise.
Telephone: 057 862 2925

PSYCHIATRY OF LATER LIFE

An Triu Aois, Block Rd., Portlaoise.
Telephone: 057 867 0245

Appendix 5 - Mental Health Tips

Some Basic Tips for Mental Health Well-Being

(Taken from a resource called 40 Tips for Mental Health Well-Being and Prosperity available in the Activation Room, Department of Psychiatry, Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise).

1. Look After your basic needs first

Eat and sleep well. Before trying any of the complex demands of day to day life it is important that we start with full energy levels. Feelings of tiredness and hunger can make problems seem much worse, so it is really important to ensure that you get the sleep you need and eat well. The human brain is a muscle which uses 20% of the body's energy to function. For information in relation to what constitutes a healthy balanced diet check out safefood.net

2. Listen to your body and use your breathing

Take time each day to pay attention to your body and what it is telling you. Try to recognise when your body and mind are stressed. Can you feel stress or tension building up? Sore Head? Headache? Don't ignore these signals. Try to alleviate them before they build up. If you are feeling stressed and anxious, take a few deep breaths and concentrate on letting go of all your worries. Stop, Pause, take a breath; note your thoughts and feelings. Pull back! Perspective! What is the bigger picture? Is there another way of looking at this? Activate your senses, what are the things you can see, things you can hear, things you can touch (touch them!), things you can smell and take a deep breath!!!

3. Happiness happens without money

A person's happiness is not related to their financial wealth. Research has shown that people believe that money is important to be happy. Even if you would be happy to get some money, we can achieve happiness without it too.

4. Laugh and remember the laughs

Even forced laughter in a laboratory setting can bring a positive mood. Laughter has been shown to have a beneficial effect on our coping skills. Remembering shared laughter makes us evaluate relationships more positively. Don't be afraid to laugh and remember the laughs we shared.

5. Try to find something to be grateful for

Taking time to be thankful and say thanks to other people improves your mood. This is however not the same as ignoring problems or denying anger. Look for what is positive or beautiful right now.

6. Get Active

While physical activity (that suits you and your level of ability) is good for your body, exercise is also good for the mind. Regular exercise gives you energy, improves mood, sleep, relieve stress, anxiety and depression and can also be great fun.

7. Drink alcohol responsibly and in moderation

The Department of Health advises that men should not drink more than 17 units a week, and women should not drink more than 11 units per week. Alcohol is a depressant which can affect mood and ability to cope. If you are concerned about your or someone else's drinking check out the HSE website or Al Anon, the number for which is in the Directory later on in this booklet.

8. Engage in Meaningful and creative activities

Get involved in meaningful, creative work. Find something that challenges your creativity and makes you feel productive whether you do or do not get paid for it. Perhaps consider something like gardening, writing, drawing, baking, singing, playing a musical instrument. For instance is there a choir locally that you could join.

9. Do what you love

Getting good at something does not often come easy. People who appear successful or gifted often get there because of hard work, you know the saying "99% perspiration and 1% inspiration". Practice makes perfect. If you like something you are more likely to work hard at it or become good at it. Find something you would like. A woman called Grandma Moses started painting in her 80's and became a very successful artist. It is never too late to start something you love!!

10. See fun as a priority and not as in indulgence

Make some leisure time a priority. Do things because it feels good to do them, maybe make time for a 10 minute mocha, cappuccino, hot chocolate or coffee break at some point in the day, listen to your favourite music and sing along.

11. Lose Yourself

Learn an activity that helps you lose track of time. Choose something that makes you feel fuller as a person doing it, and gives you a sense of calm. Such activities could be reading, repetitive prayer or meditation if practised for at least 20 minutes daily. There are many brief guided meditations on you tube which can be of assistance.

12. Don't let a little anxiety stand in your way

While there are certainly fear-inducing situations or activities that should be avoided, often people avoid doing things that they want to do or that are good for them because of shyness or nerves. Doing the things that we are a little anxious about, can help them become less daunting. Avoiding activities or situations that are fear inducing results in increased anxiety about the situation.

13. Set yourself realistic goals

Break big tasks into smaller steps. This will make them appear more manageable. It's easier to see progress and completion of the smaller tasks will give a sense of achievement, confidence and motivation to continue.

14. Exercise your brain

The human brain is a wonderful organ. It contains 100 billion neurons, weighs only 3lbs and uses 20% of the body's energy to function. Learning new things and a continuous curiosity keeps your brain working, generating new brain cells and new neural connections in the brain. It keeps the brain fit and can assist cognitive decline. Perhaps also consider doing crosswords, other word puzzles or Sudoku.

15. Remember to remember

People often realise too late that they have forgotten to do something that they meant to do. You can increase your chances of remembering what to do by thinking of where and when you are going to do it, i.e. picturing yourself doing, "when I have finished washing up I will sit down on the couch and phone x".

16. Choose an activity, join a group and get involved

These groups offer opportunities to meet people with common interests. Sometimes parish news letters can be a useful guide to groups and activities in your local area.

17. Be hopeful

Being hopeful means believing that you can set (realistic) goals for the future and that you have the ability to successfully work towards them. Hope sustains us, even when things are not going so well. Nothing lasts and remembering that things change can get us through the tough times.

18. Work on developing different ways to cope

People who actively develop different ways to cope with different things are happier. Talk to a friend, maybe meditate or exercise.

19. Write things down

Keeping a diary, or simply writing down a thought can help cope with problems and sometimes can help towards identifying possible solutions. Writing things down and describing it, helps to formulate the situation, organise your thoughts, remove yourself emotionally from the situation and look at the situation as an outsider. Daily journaling is an effective tool for mental health well-being.

20. Ask for Support

The longer you leave a problem, the worse it may become or appear to become. Don't be afraid to ask for help from a family member, friend or a professional. This will strengthen your ability to cope. It is important to know that you are not alone. When a family member becomes unwell, it can be an anxious time for all the family. Everyone will respond and react differently. Accept what support is available and consider using a rota. If you need professional assistance or support do not hesitate to phone any of services or supports listed in this document.

21. Getting together can be supportive

Simply having someone who you can be yourself with can be a major factor against depression. That's why catching up with a friend for that cup of coffee is really important. Men, traditionally have difficulty seeking support, will naturally support each other if they are brought together on a regular basis. That is why Men's Sheds have been so successful. There is a link for Men's Sheds in the Leisure section in this document, which will advise whether there is a Men's Shed available in your area.

22. Focus on things you can control

When a person is not doing well as they would like, avoid focussing on the stable uncontrollable things (the past,) as this can lead to feelings of hopelessness. Instead focus on what can be changed, the things that are unstable and controllable. This can encourage feelings of hope.

23. Think about how you label events

Is a puncture in your tyre really a disaster? Or is it a nuisance, an inconvenience and annoying. How you think and talk about events, could really influence your mood and its intensity.

24. Do something!

Mood and Activity! If you are feeling down or blue. Try and DO. Do not rely on your mood or feelings to dictate your activities, or wait until you feel like it. DO!

25. Be Flexible in your thinking

Avoid “all or nothing”, “black or white” and absolutist thinking. Avoid using words like “should”, “ought”, “must”, and “can’t”. Using rigid language means that you end up living by fixed rules. This can lead to increased stress, anxiety and depression. Try using different words like “it would be helpful.”

26. Is it possible to identify some of the carer stresses and put a plan in place?

For some carers one of the stresses can be meal preparation. Is a possible solution to stock the freezer with frozen foods? Depending on the source of the stresses are there practical solutions that can make life easier?

Appendix 6 - Counselling Supports

(Taken from the Personal and Community Information and Support Directory that was compiled by the Midlands Resource Office for Suicide Prevention)

Adult Counselling Services (057) 869 2516. Helpline: 1800 234 113

The Arches, 21 Church St., Tullamore. This is a HSE service which caters for individuals who have experienced childhood abuse in an institution, education or family setting. The service can be accessed by contacting the above phone number. There is no fee for counselling.

Community Alcohol & Drug Services: 057 869 2516. (CADS) Dublin Rd., Portlaoise. The service can be accessed via GP or by contacting them directly.

Appendix 7 - Counselling Services

Local Counselling Services

- **Accessible Counselling Tullamore (ACT).** Telephone: 057 935 2789. Millennium House, Main St., Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
- **Private counselling services.** See www.iacp.ie or www.psychologysociety.ie for a list of accredited counsellors.

National Counselling Services

- **24/7 Suicide Helpline** - Freephone: 1800 247 247.
(Pieta) Text 'HELP' to 51444 for one-to-one text support.
Support and help to people bereaved through suicide. Professional counselling available at various locations throughout Ireland.
- **Connect (National Adult Counselling Service).** Freephone: 1800 477 477 (Wed-Sun, 6pm-10 pm). Email: www.connectcounselling.ie
- **Samaritans** - Freephone: 116 123 www.samaritans.ie
Email: jo@samaritans.ie. Midland Offices: Athlone, Telephone: 090 647 3133
Newbridge, Telephone: 045 435299. Listening Service/Emotional Support available 24hrs a day, 7 days a week. It is a free non judgemental support.
- **MyMind** - www.mymind.org - Provides a range of community mental health services which includes an 'e-psychology' service.
- **Pieta** - Helpline: 1800 247 247 - www.pieta.ie
Midlands Centre: Sean Costello St., Athlone, Telephone: 090 642 4111 (Monday - Saturday). Other Centres: Lucan, Co. Dublin, Telephone: 01 601 0000. Tallaght, Finglas, Ballyfermot and Limerick/Roscrea 061 484 444, Roscrea 0505 22568, Email: mary@pieta.ie. Therapy enquiries: 0818 111 126. Provides a range of counselling services for people who are suicidal, engage in self-harm or who are bereaved by suicide.
- **Turn2me.ie**
Turn2Me provides moderated peer support forums, online support groups, access to Thought Catcher - a mood measuring tool - and one to one online counselling. Free online counselling: Book: www.turn2me.ie

Appendix 8 - Support Organisations

(Taken from the Personal and Community Information and Support Directory that was compiled by the Midlands Resource Office for Suicide Prevention)

- **Aware** - Helpline: 1800 80 48 48 - Email Support: supportmail@aware.ie.
Online Support Groups: Held regularly - see website: www.aware.ie; Local Support Groups: Tullamore - Riada House Day Care Centre, 7.30pm every Monday (except Bank Holidays) Mullingar - 1428 Club.
- **Alcoholics Anonymous** - Telephone: 01 453 8998.
Alateen/AI-Anon: Tel: 01 873 2699. Support Groups for those with an alcohol dependency.
- **Gam-Anon** - Telephone: 01 872 1133. Email: info@gamblersanonymous.ie
Support group for families/relatives of those with addiction issues.
- **Grow** - Regional Office, Patrick St., Tullamore. Telephone: 057 935 1124.
Info Line: 1890 474 474. www.grow.ie
Local Support Groups. Details contact: 057 935 1124. Self-Help groups for sufferers of mental illness, anxiety, depression and phobias.
- **One-in-Four** - Telephone: 01 662 4070 - www.oneinfour.org
Support and resources for people who have experienced sexual abuse and/or sexual violence.
- **One Family** - Telephone: 01 662 9212 - LoCall Helpline: 1890 66 22 12
www.onefamily.ie Support email: support@onefamily.ie
Support and information for One Parent families.
- **Mental Health Ireland** - www.mentalhealthireland.ie
Information and Mental Health Advice.
Telephone: 086 835 3387 - Regional Development Officer.
- **Shine** - Supporting people affected by mental health.
Telephone: 086 8525 281 Email support service: phil@shine.ie;
Regional email: midlands@shine.ie. / info@shine.ie; Website: www.shine.ie

Appendix 9 - Bereavement Supports

- **Anam Cara Parental & Sibling Bereavement Support** - www.anamcara.ie
Telephone: 01 404 5378; Mobile: 085 288 8888. (Satellite support groups throughout the country). An all-Ireland organisation founded by bereaved parents to ensure families have access to information and support.
- **Cuisle Centre, Portlaoise** - Telephone: 057 868 1492.
Bereavement Counselling for those affected by cancer. No charge for counselling but attendees can make a donation if they so wish.
- **Dochas Offaly Cancer Centre, Tullamore** - Telephone: 057 932 8658. (10am-2pm). Teach Dochas, Offaly St., Tullamore. Telephone: 057 932 8268. Birr Outreach Service: Telephone: 087 277 7728. Drop in centre, workshops, information, support counselling and bereavement counselling.
- **HSE / Pieta Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service (Midlands)**
Liaison Officer: Telephone: 086 418 0088 Email: bernie.carroll@pieta.ie
Providing support, information and practical help to individuals and families following a suicide death.
- **National Free Phone Bereavement Service** - Telephone: 1800 80 70 77
10am-1pm Monday to Friday. Launched by the Irish Hospice Foundation and HSE, to support individuals bereaved during the Covid pandemic.
- **Bereavement Support Services Laois/Offaly** - Telephone: 057 937 0605
Anyone can self refer, provide they have been bereaved in the last few months. It is not dependent on having a medical card. Depending on need they can be offered immediate counselling or put on a waiting list for counselling.
- **Midlands Living Links** - Contact Co-Ordinator: Telephone: 086 160 0641.
Trained Support Workers provide a listening and support service to those bereaved by suicide
- **Portlaoise Parish Bereavement Support**
Telephone: 057 862 1142 / 087 987 8300
- **Tullamore Parish Bereavement Support** - Telephone: 057 932 6604
One-to-one and Group Support for those who are experiencing the loss of a loved one
- **Websites for information and support** - www.suicidesupportinformation.ie

Appendix 10 - Other Services/Supports

- **Accord** - Information and Support, Marriage & Relationship Counselling, fees based on ability to pay. Parish Centre, Tullamore, Telephone: 057 934 1831; Parish Centre, Portlaoise, Telephone: 057 866 1581. www.accord.ie
- **Domestic Violence Support Service** - Free and Confidential, information and support service.
Offaly HelpLine, Telephone: 057 935 1886; Office Line: 057 935 1796
Email: info@odvss.ie; www.odvss.ie
Laois, Telephone: 057 867 1100 Email: mary@laoisdomesticabuseservice.ie
www.laoisdomesticabuseservice.ie
- **Family Resource Centres** - Locations:
Tullamore, Arden View, Telephone: 057 932 0598
Clara, River Street, Co. Offaly, Telephone: 057 933 1928
Portlaoise, Harpers Lane, Co. Laois, Telephone: 057 868 6151
Mountmellick Youth and Family Resource Centre (MDA Mountmellick),
Telephone: 057 862 4601.
- **Laois Traveller Action Group**
Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Telephone: 057 868 2210 - www.ltag.ie
- **Laois Partnership Company** - Telephone: 057 866 1900
www.laoispartnership.ie
- **Male Advice Line** - Telephone: 1800 816 588
Advice & Support for Male Victims of Domestic Abuse
- **MEND (Men Ending Domestic Violence)**
Confidential Line: 051 876 8866. Laois/Offaly, Telephone: 087 716 8674.
- **Merchants Quay Ireland - Midlands Project** - Telephone: 086 793 4920
Outreach Worker: Laois, Telephone: 087 292 5727. Offaly, Telephone: 087 914 8782. Family support, Rehabilitation & Aftercare Services, Harm Reduction and Outreach Services, Drop in Projects.
- **Midlands SIMON Community** - Regional Office, Telephone: 090 644 4641
Athlone, Telephone: 090 645 0280. Tullamore, Telephone: 087 635 9760.
Emergency Accommodation.

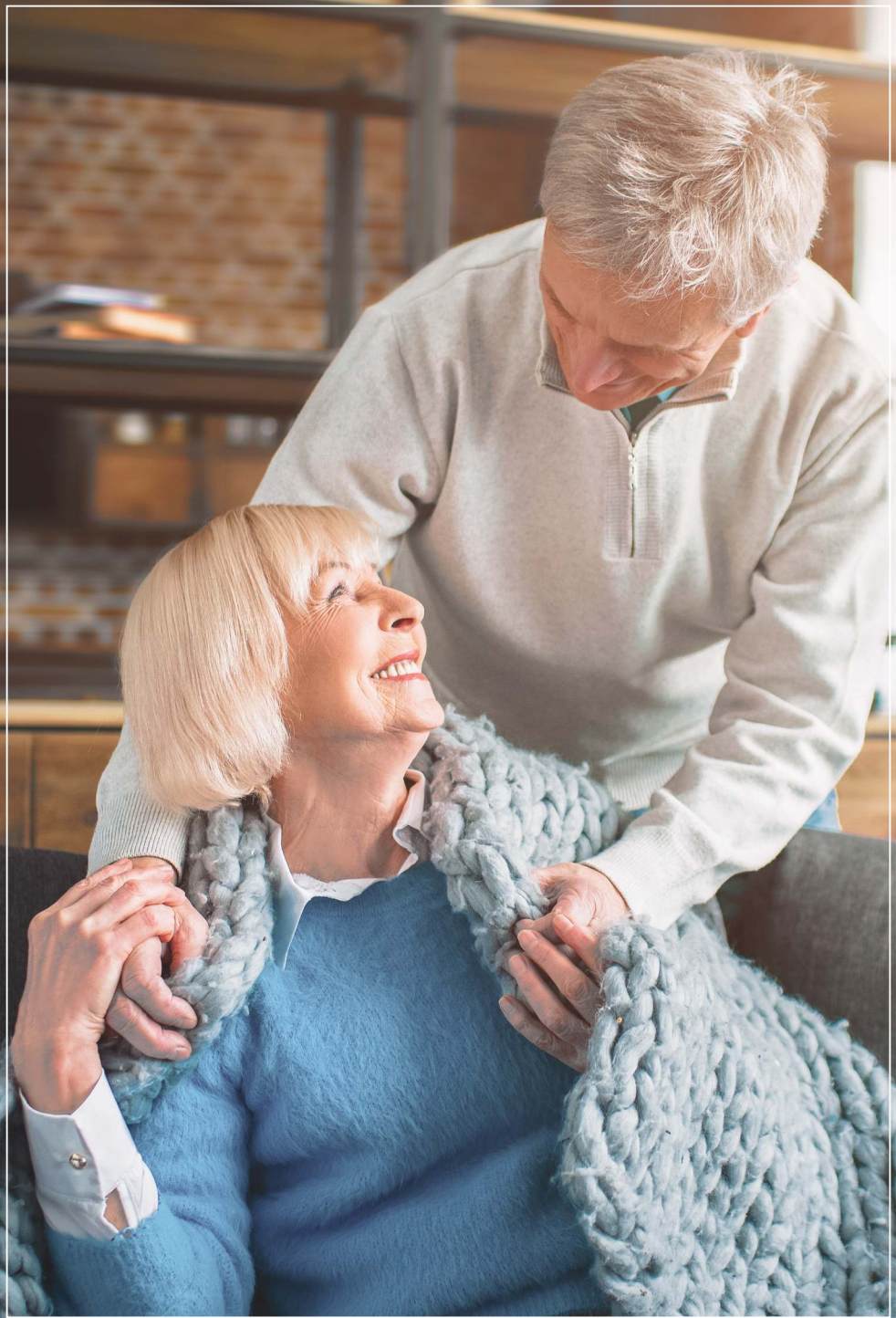
- **Men Power - Expanding Horizons (Offaly)** - Telephone: 087 602 8801
offalyldc.ie Email: cbrickland@offalyldc.ie - 12 week training programme for men in distress/affected by employment related issues.
- **Offaly Social Prescribing Project** - Telephone: 087 747 0562.
Co-Ordinator: Amanda Caulfield, O.L.D.C., Main Street, Tullamore.
Email: acaulfield@offalyldc.ie
Help to link with services within your community.
- **Offaly Traveller Movement** - Telephone: 087 986 6805 / 057 935 2438
Email: mentalhealth@otm.ie
“Travelling to Wellbeing is a culturally appropriate mental health service for Travellers in Offaly, providing individual and group support”.

Appendix 11 - Helpline Numbers

(Taken from the Personal and Community Information and Support Directory that was compiled by the Midlands Resource Office for Suicide Prevention with some additions from Psychiatry of Later Life.)

Adult Counselling Service	Telephone: 1800 234 113
AnyMan (Support Service for Men)	Telephone: 01 554 3811 Email: crisis@anyman.ie
AWARE	Telephone: 1890 80 48 48
Irish Cancer Society Helpline	Telephone: 1800 200 700
Family Carers Ireland Helpline	Telephone: 1800 240 724
Chime (National Charity for Deafness and Hearing loss)	Telephone: 057 935 1606 Text: 086 143 6476
Crime Victims Helpline	Telephone: 116 006 Text: 085 133 7711
24/7 Suicide Helpline (Pieta)	Telephone: 1800 247 247
Midlands Centre	Telephone: 090 642 411
Domestic Violence	Telephone: 1800 444 944
HSE Information Helpline	Telephone: 1850 241 850

HSE Suicide Prevention Helpline (6pm-10pm)	Telephone: 1800 742 745
HSE Drugs Helpline (Drug & Alcohol Information and support)	Telephone: 1800 459 459
M.A.B.S. Helpline	Telephone: 0761 072 000
MALE Advice Line	Telephone: 1800 816 588
MEN (Men Ending Domestic Violence) Laois/Offaly	Telephone: 051 878 866 Telephone: 087 716 8674
MOVE (Men Overcoming Violence)	Telephone: 085 874 8108
Missing Persons Helpline	Telephone: 1890 442 552
Narcotics Anonymous (24 hr helpline)	Telephone: 01 830 0944 Telephone: 086 862 9308
National Council for the Blind of Ireland Portlaoise Tullamore	Telephone: 057 866 0191 Telephone: 090 647 3575
Relationships Ireland	Telephone: 1890 380 380
Samaritans	Telephone: 116 123
Senior Helpline	Telephone: 1850 80 4591
Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline	Telephone: 1800 341 900
Irish Wheelchair Association Portlaoise Tullamore	Telephone: 057 869 4030 Telephone: 057 935 0065





Keep this card with you at all times
when you are out of the house.

Carer's Emergency Card

I am the Carer

First name only:

Telephone:

and I care for

First name only:

Telephone:

who cannot manage without help.

In the event of my accident or illness, then please
call either of the two contacts below, who will know
what to do. Thank you.

Contact 1

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Contact 2

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Appendix 13 - Feedback Questionnaire

We want to improve this resource for carers. We really want your feedback. We would appreciate it if you could take some time to complete this and return it to us.

Who gave you this resource?

.....

What three things in this resource pack did you find most useful?

.....

.....

.....

What three things were the least useful?

.....

.....

.....

How can this resource be improved?

.....

.....

Are there any other services that could or should be included or are there any contact details that need to be updated?

.....

Would you recommend it? Yes No

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this. We would appreciate it if you could return it by post or email to the following:

Aine Davin, Social Work Team Leader, Psychiatry of Later Life, Block Road, Portlaoise, or email: aine.davin@hse.ie





