



WELLELDER

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A community trust providing specialist counselling for older people from Wellington through to Kāpiti

Being a Carer

Caring for someone else – a partner, child, family member, or friend – can be a difficult and isolating experience. For many older people it is one of the unintentional changes in life that can have a profound effect on lifestyle and wellbeing as our expectations of what we hoped to be doing with our time are challenged.

Being a carer will bring both rewards and challenges, and it is important that we recognise both, and set up some ways to manage our particular circumstances.

Your health and wellbeing, as the carer, is essential if you are to do the best you can for the person you care for.

Care giving is not easy

It can be a roller coaster of emotions as you both seek to understand and learn about what is happening for both of you. Often it is physically demanding and stressful, as you manage changes and frailties, and balance them with the demands of everyday living and relationships.

Managing medical appointments, and learning a huge amount, often very quickly, about the condition that affects the person, can be a convoluted process, which may create uncertainties and anxiety as you negotiate the maze of diagnosis and care options.

Changing roles in your relationship, and taking on responsibility for day to day decisions such as more household tasks, finances and personal care, can be a continual challenge as conditions change.

Seek out the rewards

Consciously prioritising what is important to each of you – and keeping this in front of the way you live and decisions you make, will help to ensure you find your own way through these times.



WellElder provides low cost counselling for older people

In 2017 we held 989 individual counselling sessions and ran 36 group sessions for 290 clients.

- *We rely on a DHB contract to help fund our counselling services.*
- *We ask clients to contribute towards the cost of counselling as they can, from \$10.*
- *Donations and additional funding are necessary to cover the full cost.*

Seek out help

Finding information about the condition and options is always important. Going to appointments together, taking notes at the time and then deliberately making time to talk about what you understand, will assist you to prepare and plan for what you need to do.

As well as medical support and information, a needs assessment process is available through your GP to assess what home help and support you may be eligible for.

Be clear with family and friends about what help you would really like; they are often very willing to assist, and what you need may be very different from what they had thought.

You are not alone – there are other people who have been through this before and are in similar circumstances, and you may be able to access some support and networks and through local community based organisations such as Alzheimer’s Wellington, Parkinson’s Society, and societies for many conditions such as Muscular Sclerosis, Motor Neuron and Arthritis. The Internet is wonderful to help in finding these organisations.

Think about what is most important to do next, for yourself and the person you care for, and prioritise your time and energy accordingly.

Pace yourself - take things day by day

Caring for someone is more of a marathon than a sprint – so look for support that is available, and use it day by day.

Check out how your friend or family member is doing, and find ways to ensure they are able to be as independent as possible.

Think carefully about what is most important to do next or today – both for yourself and the person you care for, and prioritise your time and energy accordingly.

Remember your own needs

Your own safety and wellbeing is important - make your self-care a priority.

Daily attention to ensuring you get rest and sleep, eat well and experience things that give you joy –music, walking, seeing friends, or being creative – are continually important.

Organise time out and plan for breaks and holidays, possibly together, to have a change of scene and chance to recharge.

There are great resources available. Carers NZ at www.carers.net.nz has support, resources and networks that you may find useful, including a great guide for carers that can be ordered or downloaded.

Counselling can provide time and support to figure out how best to manage – at WellElder we frequently counsel people who are carers for older people – whatever age the carers may be.

We can be contacted on 04 380 2440 on Tuesdays – Thursdays, or at www.wellelder.nz



Become part of the WellElder community in Wellington....

Signup for information and invitations to events to support WellElder

Name: _____ Email: _____

Donate to us at 94 Riddiford Street Newtown, or by direct debit to bank account 06-0574-0223422-00 (ANZ Kilbirnie)

We are a registered charity (CC31682) – Your donations are tax deductible