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Factsheet G11A – Backing You Up: Adult Care Services (ACS) and Mental Health Services In Case of Emergency Plan

Why make a Carer's In Case of Emergency Plan? (also known as a Contingency Plan)

If you look after a relative or friend who is ill, frail or disabled, you may worry about what would happen if you were unable to care for them. How would they cope if you were suddenly taken ill, caught in traffic or even in an accident yourself? Who could be called on to help out – even on a temporary basis?

Adult Care Services (ACS) in Hertfordshire has recognised that this is an issue for many carers and so, usually as part of a Carer's Assessment, can help you draw up an **In Case of Emergency Plan** to give reassurance that back up would be there for you and the person you care for in an emergency.

To receive this service you have to be caring for an adult. If the person you care for lives outside of Hertfordshire you need to contact the local authority where they live to organise an emergency plan.

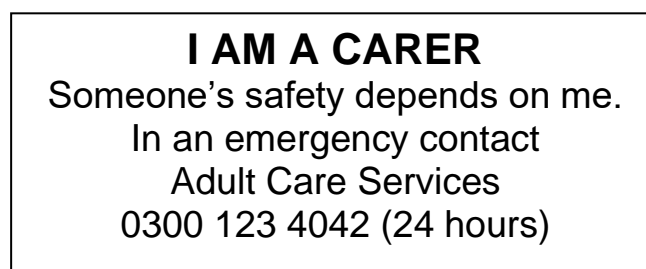
What can the plan do?

The Adult Care Services (ACS) In Case of Emergency Plan will outline cover arrangements needed, if, at short notice, you are unable to provide care. It will be held on their electronic care records so that it can be accessed by ACS staff 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The plan could include:

- The support available from relatives, friends and neighbours.
- Formal services that ACS would need to organise.
- A mixture of the two – some formal services to supplement support from family and friends.

Any friends or relatives who agree to be part of the plan will need to give written consent to their details being held on ACS records. Once this has been arranged and the full plan registered with ACS you will be provided with a 'Carer's Card' to carry in your purse or wallet. It looks something like this:



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An ID number on the reverse of the card will link with your In Case of Emergency Plan logged on the ACS system and enable it to be put into action in providing short term emergency care cover as agreed with you. This also gives time for a fuller assessment of the situation to be made if it seems that continuing help will be needed.

The system is not active until you have received your Carer's Card and ACS do ask that you take responsibility to let them know of any changes to the contact details you have provided. It is not currently possible to update a plan online, but you can contact Adult Care Services on 0300 123 4042 and ask for your plan to be updated.

How can I arrange to make a plan?

Call Adult Care Services at Hertfordshire County Council on 0300 123 4042 and ask for someone to talk to you about creating a Carers In Case of Emergency Plan. You can request a plan through the Hertfordshire County Council website - www.hertfordshire.gov.uk – in the Adult Social Services area. The direct link is www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/carers/how-to-get-help.aspx#carersemergencyplan

If you prefer, phone *Carers in Hertfordshire* and we will contact ACS for you.

If you wish you can arrange an In Case of Emergency Plan as part of a Carer's Assessment (see Factsheet G3). A Carer's Assessment is an opportunity for you to discuss your caring situation in some detail with a social worker and explore what support and services are available to help. However, you do not need to take up other services to have your In Case of Emergency Plan registered with ACS. You can find out more about having a Carer's Assessment from Hertfordshire County Council at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/adult-social-services/factsheets/carers-assessment-what-you-need-to-know-a5.pdf

If you are caring for someone with a mental health problem in Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, (HPFT) offer a Carer's Contingency Plan or Back Up Plan. Further information is available on page 5 of HPFT's Carer Handbook - www.hpft.nhs.uk/media/2368/carers-handbook-march-2018.pdf.

Not eligible for ACS or HPFT help or don't want to involve them?

Carers in Hertfordshire can help you draw up your own plan with the help of friends and relatives who would be willing to help out.

Other useful emergency contacts and information:

Out of hours health and community service help and advice in Hertfordshire can be contacted on the following numbers:

Adult Care Services	0300 123 4042
Mental Health Services	01438 843322
Children Schools and Families	0300 123 4043
GP out of hours service	111 or contact own GP where you will be re-directed to the out of hours service.

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The Message in a Bottle scheme by the Lions Club can also be useful in an emergency. A bottle is available from your GP surgery, pharmacy, health centre or local Lions Club. You put vital personal and medical information inside it and keep it in the fridge. Emergency services will know there is a bottle by two labels. One fixed to the inside of the front door and the other to the door of the fridge. For more information you can visit <https://lionsclubs.co/Public/message-in-a-bottle/> or call 0121 441 4544.

Herts Careline: Community and Telecare services can be installed in the homes of vulnerable people. An emergency button is supplied to be worn on a pendant around the neck or on a wristband so that the person you care for can alert an operator at the other end to a problem situation at home. There is usually a small weekly charge for this service. More information is available from Hertfordshire County Council - <https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/Services/7781>.

Visit www.care-line.co.uk to apply for an alarm online, request an application pack or learn more, or call 0300 999 2 999.

Adult Care Services can arrange for a key safe to be installed at the home of the person you care for. This is a secure way of storing a key, accessed by a pin code, so that trusted people who have been given the code can enter without the person having to come to the door to let them in.

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