

# Informal Carers Toolkit

Part of the Informal Carers Well-being Enhanced Project



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A series of four  
modules designed to  
support people in  
their role as Carers



# Overview



THESE MODULES WERE DEVELOPED BASED ON THE INPUT OF PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE AND BACKGROUND RESEARCH.



YOU CAN WORK THROUGH THESE MODULES IN ANY ORDER.



THEY ARE DESIGNED TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY AREAS YOU MAY NEED SUPPORT, SOME IDEAS ON WHERE TO GET SUPPORT AND SOME EXAMPLES OF WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR SELF

# How to use this toolkit

Click on this  
symbol at the  
bottom of each  
page to return  
to the contents  
page



Work through in  
any order you  
like

Use the links to  
navigate.

Each section  
has a video  
summarising the  
content – the  
link will take you  
to a you tube  
channel

Some of the  
material you  
can download,  
like checklists,  
and  
questionnaires

# Contents



## **Module 1**

Information on caretaking and common caretaker roles. Common questions and answers.



## Module 2

Carers Legal & Financial Rights and resources.



## Module 3

Skills and competences development for informal carers. Communication skills and managing relationships



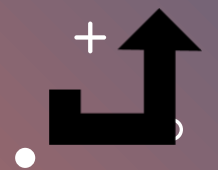
## Module 4

Well-being and coping as an informal carer. Building support and accessing help



# Module 1

Information on caretaking  
and common caretaker  
roles Common  
questions and answers



# Module 1

- Who is an informal carer?
- What do carers do everyday?
- What challenges do they face?
- Quick tips to manage stress and care tasks



# Module 1: Learning Outcomes

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

1

Identify what informal caregiving involves.

2

Recognise common challenges and responsibilities.

3

Apply practical solutions and tools in daily care.



# Who is an Informal Caregiver?

An informal carer is someone who:

- Provides unpaid care to a family member, partner or friend with a long-term illness, disability, mental health condition or age-related need.
- Supports them with health, mobility or daily needs (physical, emotional or practical support).



<b>Feature</b>	<b>Formal Care</b>	<b>Informal Care</b>
<b>Provider</b>	Trainer professionals	Family members, friends or neighbours
<b>Payment</b>	Paid services	Unpaid services
<b>Setting</b>	Structured setting (nursing home, assisted living facility, home health agency)	Home Based or community-based
<b>Regulation</b>	Regulated by government agencies or professional organisations	Unregulated
<b>Focus</b>	Specific tasks and services	Personalised care and support
<b>Flexibility</b>	Schedules and services may be more rigid	Schedules and services may be more flexible
<b>Emotional Connection</b>	May have less emotional connection with the recipient	May have a strong emotional connection with the recipient



# Core Responsibilities- *Every carer's role is different – but all are essential*

## Routine activities of daily living (ADLs)

- Physical care: e.g., bathing, eating, bathroom

## Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)





- Transportation, Finances, Housework, Shopping

## Companionship and emotional support

- Comfort and company, coping with stress/depression

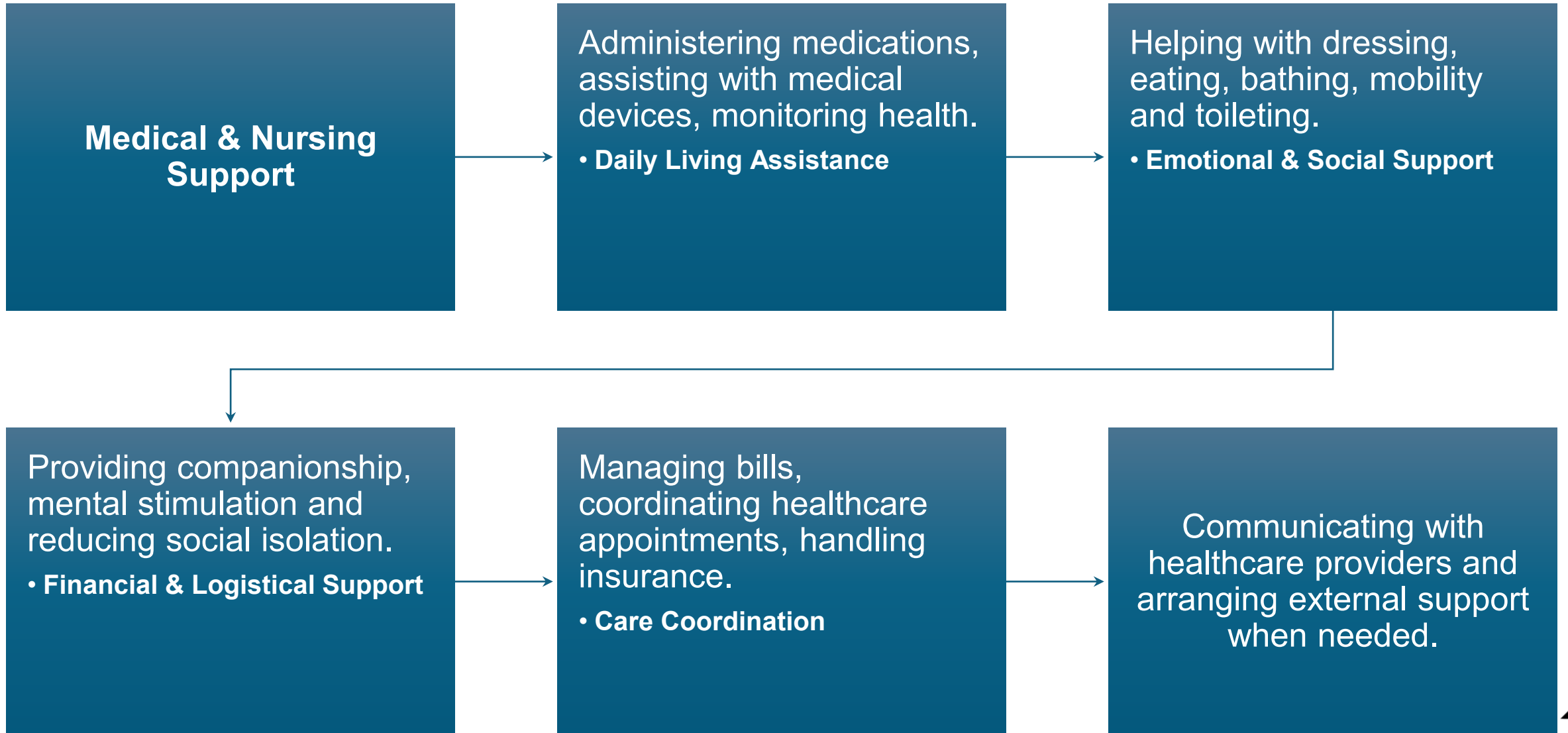
## Medical and Nursing

- Administering medication, wound care, medical device care

-  Emotional support and companionship
-  Personal care (e.g. bathing, dressing, feeding)
-  Domestic tasks (e.g. cooking, cleaning, shopping)
-  Health and medication management



# Roles of Informal Carers



# The needs of care recipients

## Physical Needs

- Assistance with daily living activities (ADLs) such as mobility and hygiene.
- Adapting home environments for safety and accessibility.

## Emotional & Psychological Needs

- Support for anxiety, depression or cognitive decline.
- Encouraging engagement in social activities.

## Social Needs

- Maintaining relationships, preventing isolation.
- Connecting with community resources and support groups.



# Key Challenges for Informal Carers

Feeling emotionally drained or burned out (e.g. constant tiredness, sleep trouble, ignoring your own needs, avoiding social contact).

Balancing care with work/ family

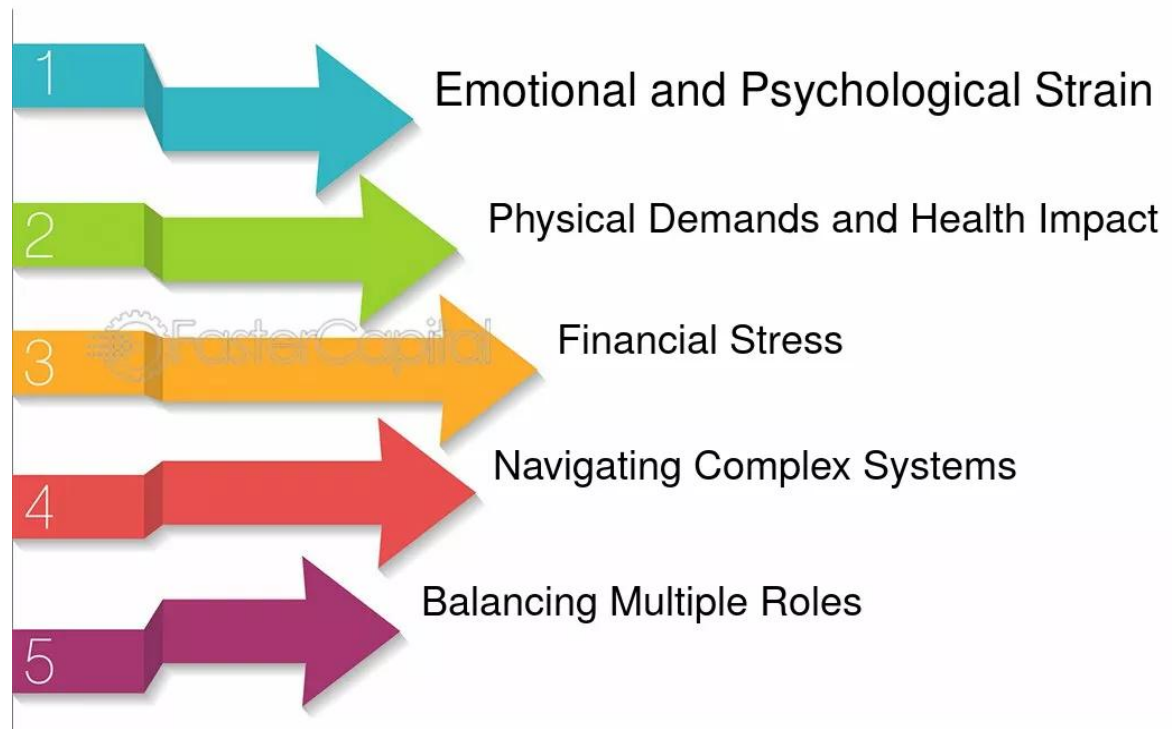
Financial pressure

Physical fatigue or injury

No time for self-care

Limited access to professional support or guidance

## The Challenges Faced by Caregivers



# Effective Strategies



KEEP A WEEKLY  
CARE ROUTINE



SHARE  
RESPONSIBILITIES  
WHEN POSSIBLE



USE A CARE  
PLAN/CHECKLIST  
Download [HERE](#)



REACH OUT TO  
SUPPORT  
GROUPS OR  
PROFESSIONALS



USE LOCAL  
SERVICES



# A day in the life of a carer



WATCH THE SHORT VIDEO OF CARER  
AND THE QUESTIONS THEY HAVE AS  
THEY GO THROUGH THEIR DAY



[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/-O-LPMY8N8M](https://youtu.be/-O-LPMY8N8M)






## Reflective Questions

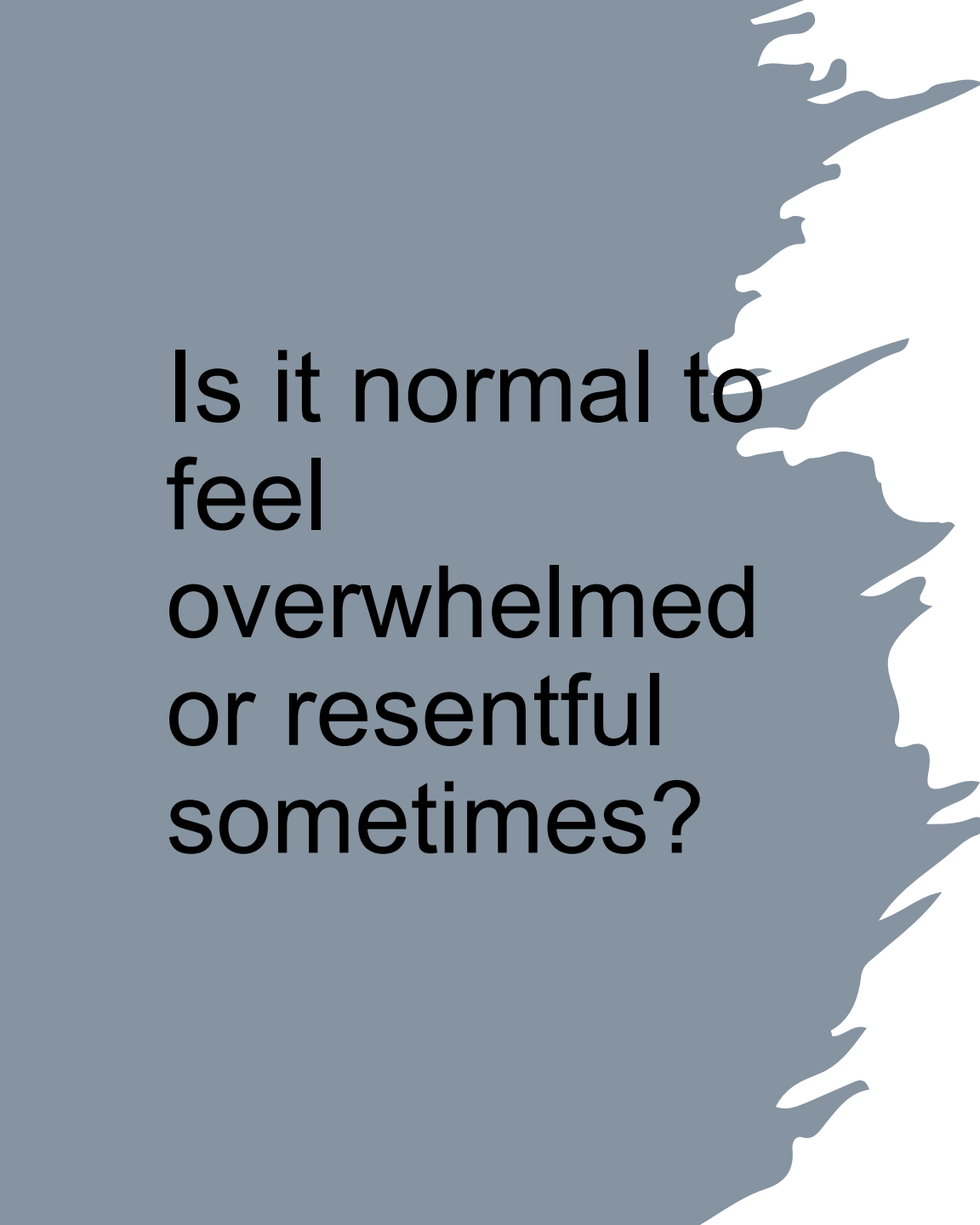
- A) Which caregiving tasks do I find most challenging?
- B) Am I maintaining my own health and well-being?
- C) What supports (formal or informal) could I reach out to this week?





Common concerns  
and misconceptions  
about informal  
caregiving






Is it normal to  
feel  
overwhelmed  
or resentful  
sometimes?

Yes. These feelings are  
common and valid. Support  
groups and respite care can  
help






Do I need  
special training  
to  
be a carer?

Not necessarily. Many  
resources and online trainings  
are available to support you in  
learning on the go.

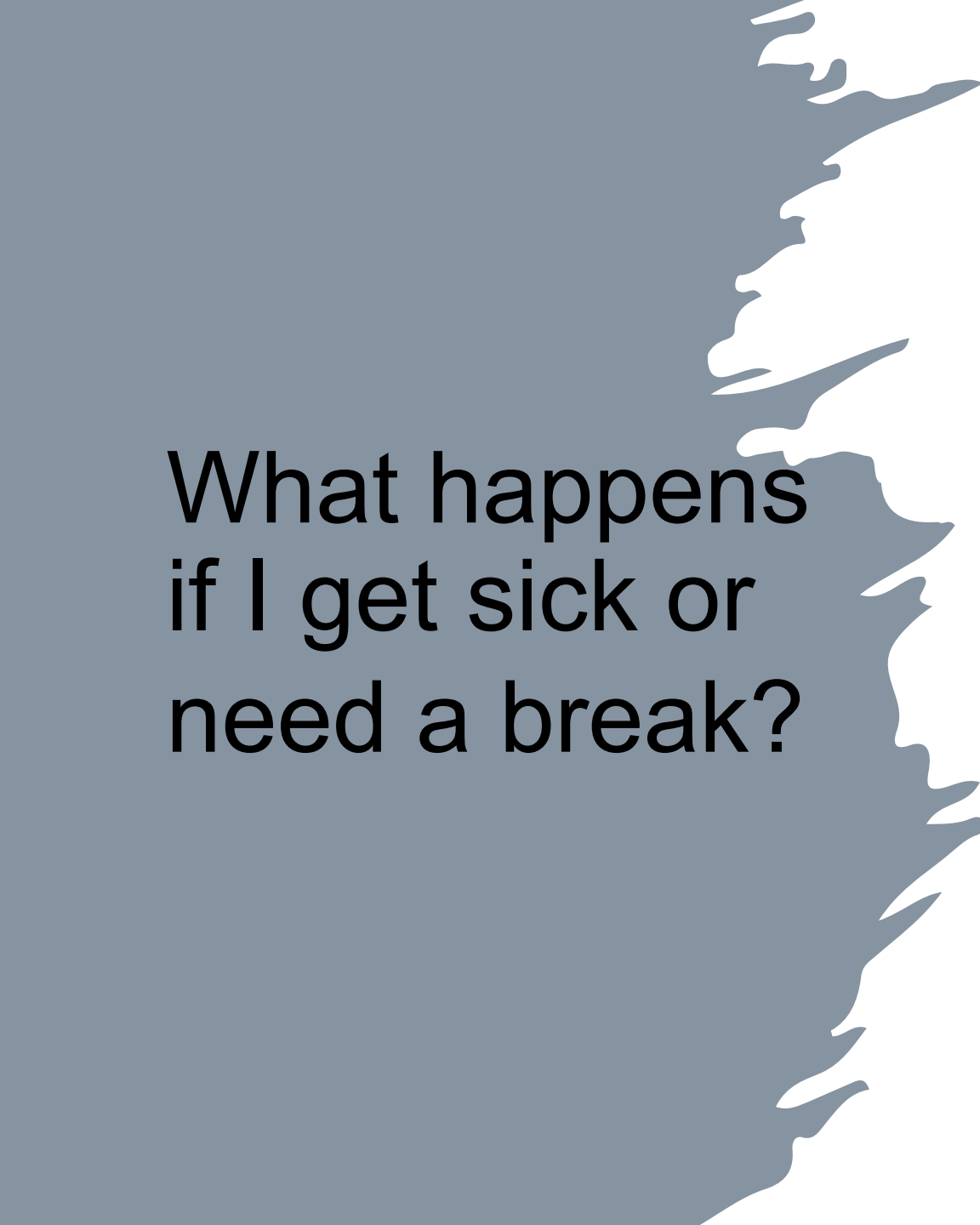




Can I get  
financial  
support  
as a carer?

In many European countries, carers may be eligible for allowances or benefits. Check with local social services or health authorities.






What happens  
if I get sick or  
need a break?

It's important to have a backup  
care plan. Reach out to local  
respite services or family  
members.





How do I make sure  
I'm doing everything  
“right”?

There's no perfect way to care. Use checklists, care plans, and seek feedback from health professionals when needed.





# Module 2 Carers Legal & Financial Rights



Watch a short video summarising legal rights and financial support in your country and where to access support. Click on the country

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[Greece](#)

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[Republic of Ireland](#)

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[Germany](#)

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[Cyprus](#)

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[Italy](#)

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[Portugal](#)





# Module 3 Skills and competences development for informal carers



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  - Watch a short video introducing this section of the module

**Watch HERE**

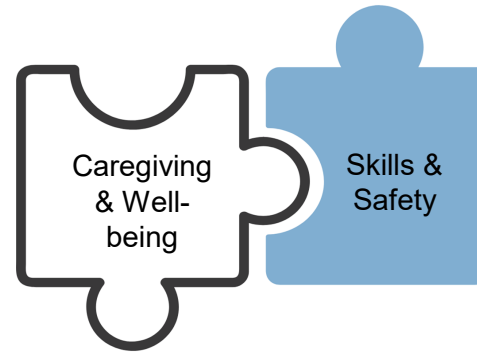


## **Welcome to the first part of Module 3: Skills and competency development for informal carers**

In this module, we will focus on the essential skills and competencies that make everyday caregiving safer, more efficient, and healthier for both the carer and the person being cared for.

We will also reflect on your personal skill gaps and how to address them.





## Content chapter 3.1.

- Core Competencies of Informal Carers
- Caregiving Techniques & Collection of Tutorials
- Practical Tools for Everyday Tasks
- Medication Management Tips
- Self-Assessment Tool & Health Professional Checklist
- ICWE Video: “What to do in challenging caregiving situations?”



# Expected Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1

Identify the key caregiving skills needed in your daily life.

2

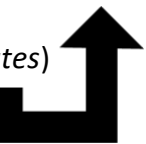
Recognise areas where you may need more training or support.

3

Know about applying safe and effective caregiving techniques in practice.



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# Core Competencies of Informal Carers

Caring for another person is a very complex task - Informal carers develop important skills on various levels. [Click on the topic to learn more.](#)

Communication and listening skills

Empathy and patience

*Which skills could you improve?*

Problem-solving and decision-making abilities

Stress management and resilience



# Caregiving Techniques

Improving practical caregiving skills helps to avoid accidents and injuries.

Find more information about the following themes. [Click on the images to learn more.](#)

- Patients lifts
- Transferring techniques & devices
- Positioning techniques
- Use of assistive tools (see next slides)

## Lifting & Transferring



- Caring for hair
- Nail/Foot care
- Skin care
- Bathing/Showering
- Genital care
- Dental care

## Hygiene



- Long-handled sponges
- Reaching tools
- Adaptive cutlery
- Dressing sticks & sock aids
- Button hooks or elastic shoelaces
- Speech-generating devices

## Adaptive Equipment



- Canes
- Walkers
- Manual or electric wheelchairs
- Electric mobility scooters

## Mobility



- Ramps
- Non-slip mats
- Motion-activated lights or night lights
- Special handrails & grab bars
- Raised toilet seats & shower chairs

## Home Modifications



- How to administer oral and topical medication
- Monitor medication schedules
- Emergency response

## Medication





## Some important tips!

- *Diabetes & Nail Care:* Individuals with diabetes need special assistance for nail care.
- *Hygiene & Safety:* Avoid using electric razors near water and follow a top-to-bottom washing order, cleaning the genital area last.
- *Skin Care:* Prevent skin cracking and infections by drying all areas completely. Pay extra attention to areas where skin surfaces meet (under breasts, between toes and thighs).
- *Safe Transfers:* Know your limitations and save your back. If you feel a strain, get help; don't do it alone. This is for your safety and for the safety of the person you are trying to move. Use multiple caregivers if needed to transfer a person. Use non-slip mats, grab bars, and shower chairs where needed.
- *Supervision:* Never leave an individual unattended in the shower or tub.
- *Water Temperature:* Always test the temperature with your elbow or a bath thermometer before bathing someone. It should be warm, not hot (ideally between 37-38°C).
- *Privacy:* Always explain each step before doing it and gain consent, especially for intimate care.



# Practical Tools

There exists numerous tools that can help you with everyday caregiving tasks.

Check them out and click on the image/topic to access the tutorials!





# Medication Management Tips


- Get trained and keep your skills updated. Always ask health professionals, when you are not sure about a certain medication, dose, or administration method.
- Store medicines safely. Check storage regularly, especially for those with cognitive decline.
- Oral meds are common but can be affected by food or other meds. Know which medication needs to be taken with or without food.
- Always double-check before giving meds. Read labels carefully.
- Confirm expiry date, dose, method, and time (via apps, alarms or medication charts).



# Medication Management Tips

Watch for side effects or swallowing difficulties. If possible, keep the person in an upright position for up to 30 minutes after taking oral medication to reduce the risk of choking or aspiration. If the person is bedbound, adjust their position to ensure they are as upright as possible. Stay with them until the medication is fully swallowed.

Topical Meds are used for skin issues like dryness, infections, or itching. Ointments hydrate more while creams/lotions are easy to apply. Foams, gels, or powders are good for hairy or dry areas. Choose the right form of topical meds. Depends on area, effect, and ease of use. Ointments are stronger; lotions help cool or dry skin.



Maintain **detailed records of medication administration**, daily routines, and health changes to ensure safe and organised care! Include needs, consent, contacts, medication routines, and review dates.



# TOPICAL MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

## Supplies



Topical medication



Put on Gloves



Gauze



Sterile saline to clean site

## Procedure

Verify medication.

Expose application site  
assess skin.

If necessary, clean  
the site using soap  
and water.

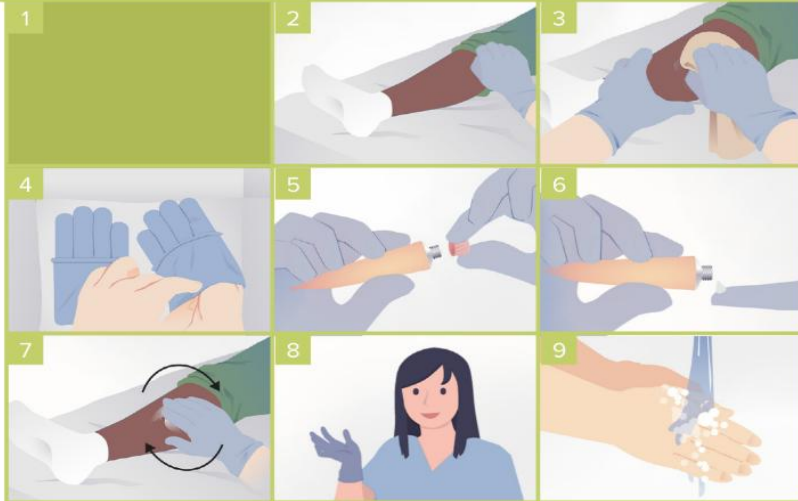
Perform hand hygiene,  
reapply gloves.

Open the topical  
medication.

Apply medication  
to gloved hand or  
directly to site.

Use smooth, gentle  
strokes to evenly  
apply medication  
to affected area.

Remove gloves,  
perform hand hygiene



Do not apply medication to skin that is not intact unless ordered to do so.

Be aware that lotions and creams may interact with medications.

If skin is dry or flaky, clean the area first and apply medication while skin is damp.

Do not vigorously rub medication into skin.

Remember that mucus membranes will absorb medications more rapidly than skin.

Routinely assess the application site.

Date (yyyy/mm/dd)	Time	Discipline	Notes
2020/10/02	2pm	Nursing	Client described feeling a "sharp pain" over their heart, does not radiate, — and rated a <del>7</del> 8/10. Pain began about 30 minutes ago and thinks they are having a "heart attack." —
			Reported no history of heart disease or hypertension.
			Martin MacDonald



# Supportive Technology & First Aid Kit

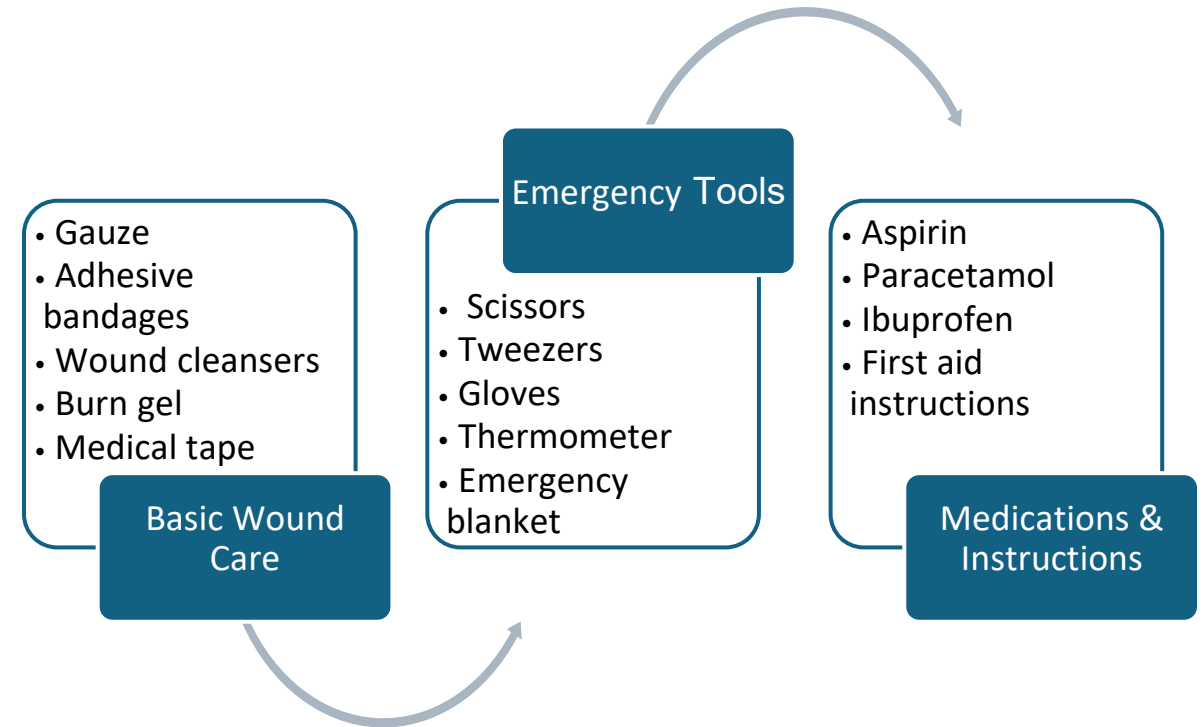
**Medication & Safety Management:** Smart pill dispensers, medication tracking apps, emergency response systems (necklace or bracelet), and smart sensors for monitoring.

**Daily Assistance:** Voice-activated devices, smart home automation, communication aids, and meal delivery services.

**Health Monitoring & Therapy:** Smartwatches, fitness trackers, VR therapy, and remote cameras for well-being and rehabilitation.



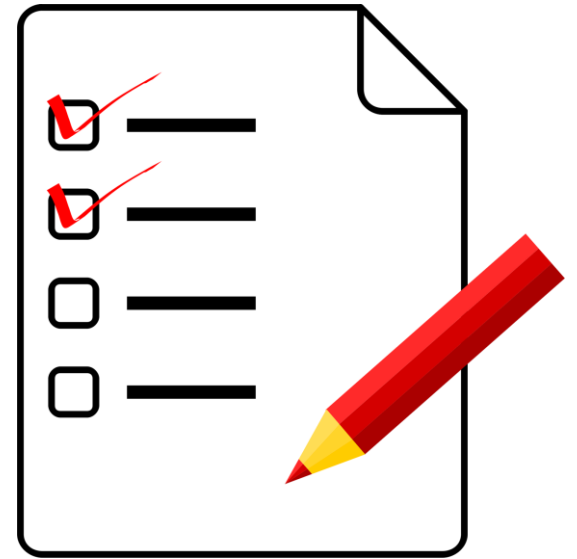
# What should be in my First Aid Kit? should be in my First Aid Kit?



# Self-Assessment Tool: Skill Gap Questionnaire

Take time to reflect on your current skills. Use our quick self-assessment tool to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Knowing your needs will help you plan for further training or support. You can also take the filled-out form with you to your next appointment with a health or care professional. The tool is on the next slide or you can download it by clicking on the

DOWNLOAD NOW



# Self-Assessment Tool: Identifying Your Caregiving Skills

Instructions: Reflect on your current caregiving skills. For each area, mark how confident you feel. After completing, you can see where you might like to learn more or seek support.

Reflection Questions:

- Where do I feel most confident?

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- Are there other areas which I want to improve or seek training / information?

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Caregiving Skill Area	I feel confident	I feel I need more knowledge/practice
Assisting with daily activities (e.g., bathing, dressing, feeding)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moving or transferring safely (e.g., wheelchair, bed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing medication (understanding, scheduling, storing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognising health warning signs or emergencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicating with healthcare professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keeping organised records (appointments, medication, routines)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Handling emotional situations and stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding legal rights and support options for carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting the emotional well-being of the person I care for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-care and knowing when to ask for help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Challenging Caregiving Situations

## Medication confusion

- Your loved one becomes confused or anxious every time you try to give them their medication. You feel unsure how to help them stay calm and take it safely.

## Medical Emergency

- A fall just happened. You feel panic rising – you're not sure what to do, or what to say.

## Resistance to Daily Care

- You're trying to encourage the care recipient to shower or eat, but they're refusing.

## Use of Mobility Aids

- You're trying to help with a walker or wheelchair, but you're unsure of the technique. You feel awkward and a bit embarrassed.

## Talking About Death

- Your family member wants to talk about death. You're uncomfortable, don't know what to say, and prefer to change the topic.

## Feelings of Exhaustion

- You feel exhausted, emotionally unstable and alone. But you feel guilty asking for help – like you should be able to handle the situation.

## Lack of Appreciation

- No matter what you do, it feels like your efforts go unnoticed. You feel invisible and unappreciated.

## Moving into Residential Care

- You're discussing care homes. You disagree with a family member on whether moving the family member into a care facility.



Video  
“What to  
do in  
challenging  
caregiving  
situations?”

<https://youtu.be/AMtYpb-pMkg>





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## Prepare for the next Health-Care Appointment

Prepare for your next medical visit with a health and care professional writing down all questions before the appointment. Keeping a health diary for the person cared for is essential to be sure to receive all appropriate answers. Don't be afraid to ask if you don't understand a certain aspect. Ask for simple explanations if needed.

For more information on **communication** skills, see the next toolkit chapter!



# Health and Care Professional Checklist: Key Questions to Ask-

you can download the questions as a checklist [HERE](#)

## **Before the visit:**

Prepare a short summary of current health status and questions you might have.

Bring an up-to-date list of all medications (prescription, supplements etc.).

## **During the visit - Key Questions:**

What is the diagnosis, and what does it mean in simple terms?

What are the main treatment options? What are the benefits and risks of each?

What medications are needed? What side effects should I watch for?

Are there lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, routines) that can help?

What signs or symptoms should I look out for at home?

When should I schedule the next visit or check-up?

Are there any specialists or services (therapy, home care) you recommend?

information or leaflets about the condition?

## **For children or young people:**

Are the treatments adjusted for age/weight? Is there educational support I should be aware of? How do I handle emotional or behavioral changes?

## **For older people:**

Are falls or memory issues a concern? What can I do to prevent them?

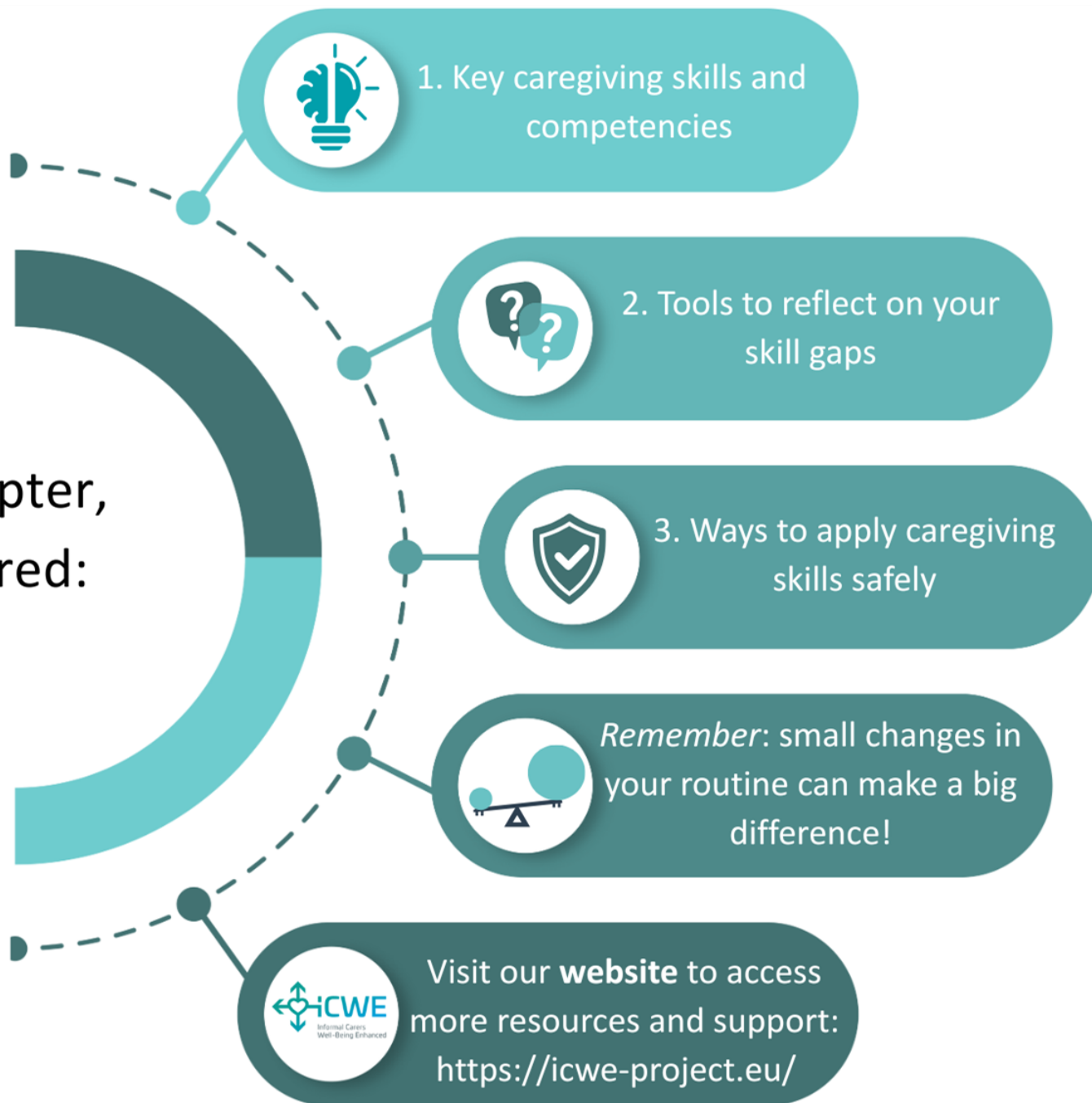
Is the medication list safe and appropriate for older age?

## **General follow-up questions:**

Who can I contact if I have questions after the visit? Are there support groups or caregiver resources you recommend?



In this chapter,  
we explored:



**Which skill will you begin practising today?**

By working together, we make caring safer, healthier, and more rewarding.

In the upcoming chapters, explore the power of communication and how caring for your own mental health is just as important!



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# Communication and Relationship Building



# Introduction

**Welcome** to the section on “Communication and Relationship Building”

This module explores how **caregivers** can communicate better with **care recipients**, **families**, and **healthcare professionals**.

You'll also learn how to handle **conflicts**, respect **cultural differences**, and apply **effective** communication skills in daily caregiving.



# Verbal & nonverbal Communication

Verbal: spoken words, tone, and clarity

Nonverbal: gestures, facial expressions, eye contact

Both matter—nonverbal often speaks louder.

Stay aware of body language and tone, especially in emotional moments.



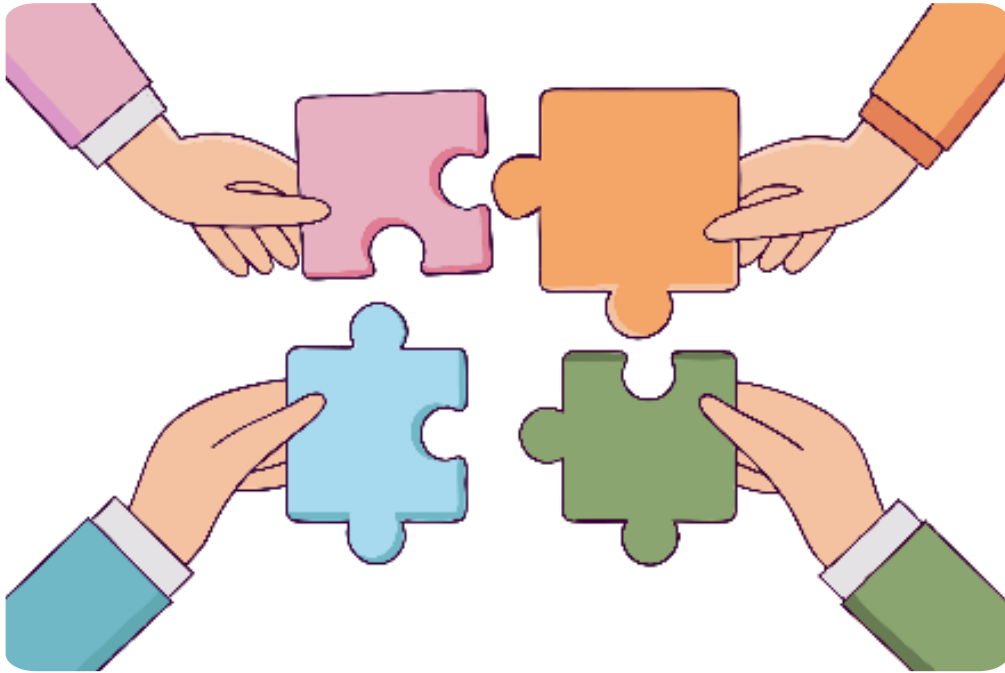
# Active Listening & Empathy

Active listening includes:

- Giving full attention
  - Avoiding interruptions
  - Reflecting feelings
  - Asking questions to clarify
- Show empathy through understanding, not just advice.



# Tips for listening actively



1. Maintain eye contact
2. Use affirming gestures or words
3. Don't rush to respond
4. Summarize what the person said
5. Acknowledge their feelings sincerely



# Building Trust & Relationships

Be reliable and  
consistent

Get to know  
care recipients

Be clear and  
respectful in  
communication

Respect  
privacy and  
cultural habits

Involve family  
when  
appropriate



# Managing conflict respectfully



Stay calm during disagreements



Listen without interrupting



Use "I" statements, not blame



Look for solutions, not wins



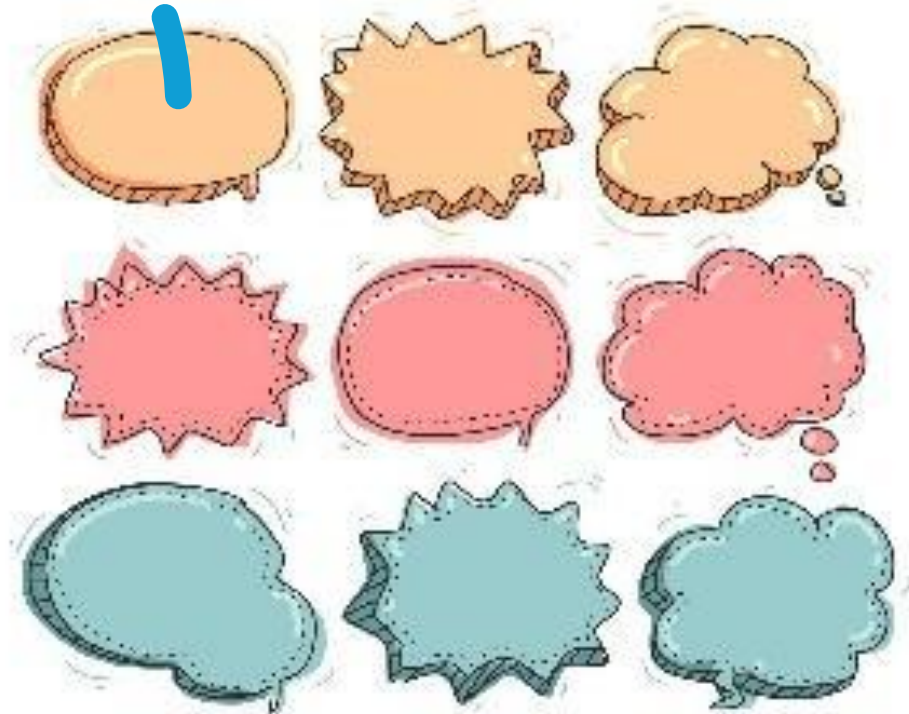
Take breaks if needed



# Conflict Scenarios in Care

- Misunderstandings with family
- Differences in care expectations
- Cultural misunderstandings

Tip: Focus on finding common ground and mutual respect.



# Supporting Young carers

Young carers face school, stress, and caregiving.  
Support them by:

Listening to  
their  
concerns

Offering  
peer  
networks

Giving age-  
appropriate  
tasks and  
info



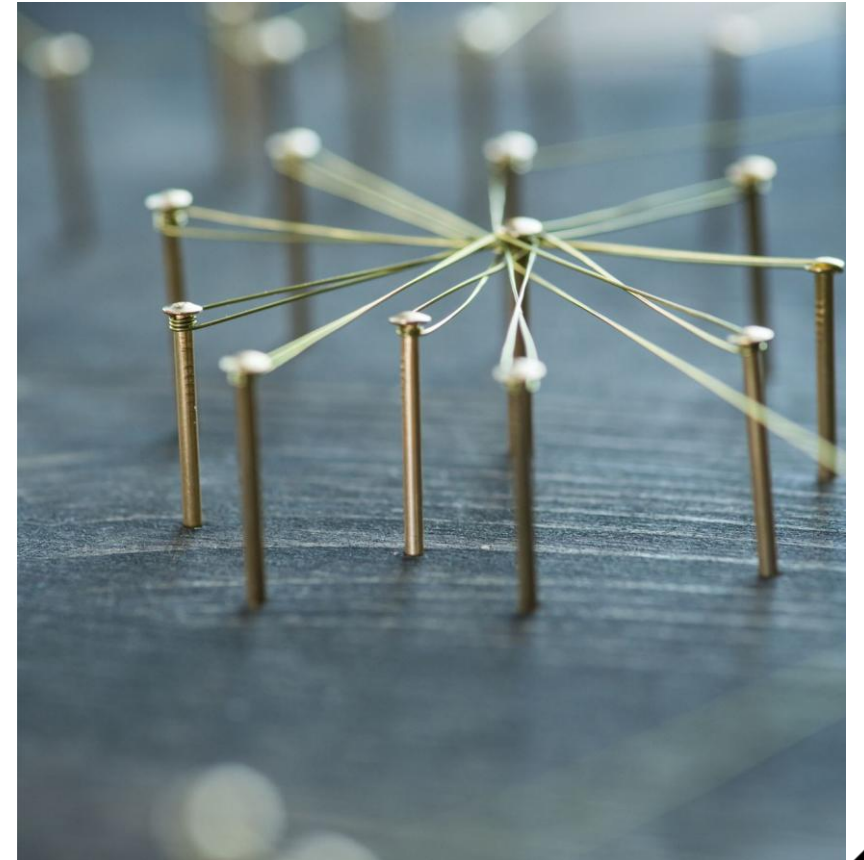
# The Four Ears Model

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The 4 Ears Model of

Communication, developed by Friedemann Schulz von Thun helps in understanding how messages can be interpreted differently based on different factors helping to reduce misunderstandings in communication.

Watch a video about the model [HERE](#)



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# Module 4

## Well-being and coping as an informal carer



# Managing stress and anxiety

How negativity feeds anxiety and depression

Ways to reduce anxiety

Visualisations to help anxiety

Listen to a carer describing her experience of managing stress [HERE](#)



# How well are you doing?



Sometimes we need to be honest with ourselves around how well we're managing.



Download this questionnaire to help reflect on how confident you are in managing right now. After you have finished add up all the scorers. The higher the score the more confident you are. If you have low confidence in some areas, use this toolkit for ideas.



**HOW CONFIDENT AM I? [DOWNLOAD HERE](#)**



## The Mind-Body Connection

The impact of thoughts and emotions on physical health

There is a significant relationship between our thoughts, emotions, and both our emotional and physical well-being. We can employ the mind's power to manage the impact of daily life.

Many have experienced hunger triggered by smelling freshly baked bread or fish and chips while walking down a high street, despite not feeling hungry moments earlier. This demonstrates how merely imagining an event can elicit a physical response from our bodies.

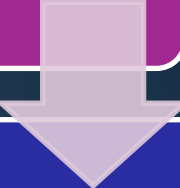
Two effective techniques leveraging the mind's power are visualisation and distraction.

Consider when it might be useful to employ the mind's power in managing your feelings of stress and anxiety daily:


**To aid in sleep**  
Reduce anxiety  
To help relaxation



The power of the mind can also act counterproductively, particularly when experiencing emotional pain or distress. The mind tends to fixate on such discomforts, leading to repetitive thinking that continuously circles back to the source of distress, making it seem inescapable.




There is a way to counter this repetitive thinking: the human mind's remarkable ability to solve complex problems and process vast amounts of information simultaneously cannot extend to focusing entirely on more than one thing at once—a limitation you can use to your advantage.



You can shift focus alternately between thoughts or hold onto one thought exclusively.



The crucial rule is that whatever you focus on will amplify in your mind. Focusing on pain, sadness, or breathlessness intensifies the symptom. Deciding to focus elsewhere lessens the symptom's impact. This principle applies equally to thoughts and feelings—the more they are dwelled upon, the stronger they become.





Reflect on instances where you have dwelled on a emotion. What did you observe?



Often, feelings intensify, leading to heightened pain or emotion, difficulty concentrating, or increased tension.



Can you modify your environment to minimise opportunities to dwell on difficult emotions?



Next, we will explore two techniques that can assist in such situations: **distraction and visualisation**. Both require time and practice to master, so committing to beginning these practices increases the likelihood of their success



# Visualisation

This technique uses mental imagery created or chosen beforehand to help manage emotions. Like distraction, visualisation can be employed in various ways.

One may envision a static image, such as a flower or scenic view, and recall this image whenever confronted with painful thoughts or feelings. Alternatively, visualising oneself successfully completing a task can be useful in achieving goals.

When using both distraction and visualisation, consciously recognize that these techniques leverage the mind's power by redirecting attention from the troubling symptom or situation.

Individuals trying these methods often find them surprisingly effective and swift.



Cognitive distraction involves deliberately focusing thoughts on something different from the troubling symptom. Various objects serve as distractions.

Examples include Naming garden flowers  
Listing acquaintances in a particular location  
Naming favorite bands/singers  
Listing European capital cities

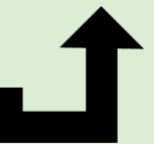


# Distraction



# Relaxation- Guided Imagery

Relaxation can make a real difference to feelings of anxiety, stress, fatigue and symptoms in general. Feeling less anxious can reduce the symptoms we experience. Persistent stress is a major cause of fatigue. Even if we don't feel anxious or stressed, using relaxation has been shown to improve our feeling of well-being and can help with getting to sleep. This sort of relaxation is different from watching TV or reading and is a deeper form of relaxation. Relaxation can help us become more accepting of our symptoms and see them as just another sensation we feel. What relaxation techniques have you found useful? Think about setting a relaxation goal – aim for maybe 4 times a week



# Simple relaxation exercise

- There is a simple relaxation exercise which we can do, which also improves body awareness. Some people find this quite difficult to start with, it is something that needs practice.
- Relaxation and breathing help to reduce anxiety and produce good chemicals that make us feel calm. You need to allow at least 20 minutes for this exercise. Make sure you are in a comfortable place and you won't be disturbed for the next 20 minutes or so. You can either lie down with your knees raised and just touching and arms beside you, or sitting in a chair with both feet on the floor in front of you and allow your arms to rest by your sides or have your hands gently supported in your lap. You may find it easier if you lower your eyelids



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# Relaxation

Click [HERE](#) to listen  
to the video of the  
relaxation exercise



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# Mindfulness

These techniques are all part of being more mindful. Overtime we can become more aware of our thoughts, feelings and emotions. We can begin to see them as being a part of us but not the whole part - we can learn not to be overwhelmed but recognise them for what they are - passing emotions. This is called mindfulness.

Becoming aware of what triggers emotions, simple techniques to interrupt stress and anxiety overwhelming us is a key tool in managing our wellness.

Like anything it takes time and practice. There are a lots of free resources available - explore what works for you and make it part of your wellness toolkit





**Case Study: Sayani-** Sayani experiences sleeping difficulties due to anxiety.

I care for my mother and worry about not doing enough for her.

I Initially considered sleeping tablets then a hospital colleague recommended mind exercises to prevent dwelling on concerns.

At night, if troubling thoughts arise, I redirect my focus to pleasant memories, such as beautiful holiday spots. Counting exercises have also helped me forget what bothers me while trying to sleep. Recently, my sleep has improved, and I plan to continue these exercises nightly."

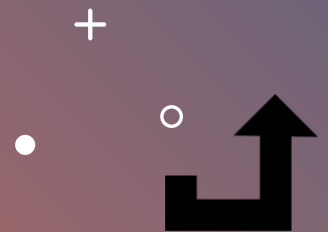
- Could you attempt one of these techniques to assist you?





# Building a Support Network and Accessing Help

Watch a short video [HERE](#)



# Informal carers: short documentary

Watch the video to  
know more about  
institutional implications  
of care workers being  
unpaid:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fy069J14sRA>



# Building a support network and accessing help

- This section explores how to recognise when support is needed and how to access it. Often, informal carers continue to take on responsibilities despite signs of emotional or physical exhaustion. A lot of them aren't aware of the support options available in their community.
- The section is designed to help carers identify key indicators of stress and isolation and give them practical tools to ask for help, find the right kind of support and start building a network that can support them in their role.




# Learning Outcomes

• At the end of this module, caregivers will be able to understand the emotional and physical signs that indicate the need for external support.

- They will learn to recognise the different types of help available, from professional services to peer support groups.
- The module also encourages carers to reflect on their own limitations and helps them take the first steps in creating a personal support network.
- It aims to break down emotional barriers, such as shame, fear or guilt, which prevent many people from asking for help.





# When Is it time to ask for help?

- Knowing when to ask for help is crucial for a sustainable caregiving experience.

Caregivers often ignore or suppress warning signs, believing that needing help is a personal failure.

- However, persistent exhaustion, recurring feelings of resentment, social isolation and deteriorating personal health are all indicators that support is needed. If the quality of care provided begins to suffer or if the caregiver's well-being is compromised, seeking help becomes not only appropriate but urgent.

- **Asking for help** should be considered an act of responsibility towards both the caregiver and the person being cared for.



# How can I manage challenging behavior?

Watch the video to discover more

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R97cuD97oXA&list=PLr50Bh2p\\_bxcHA-2hBgTwB0RI1btYdcTA&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R97cuD97oXA&list=PLr50Bh2p_bxcHA-2hBgTwB0RI1btYdcTA&index=2)





# What kind of support exists?

- There are **different types of support available** to meet different needs.

- **Professional help** can come from doctors, social workers or psychologists, who can provide clinical advice or put carers in touch with local services.

- **Community-based support** includes local organisations, associations specialising in specific conditions and mutual support groups where carers can share experiences and advice.

- **Online platforms**, helplines and national toll-free numbers offer immediate support and can direct caregivers to the nearest available resources. Religious communities, neighbours and extended family members can also be a valuable part of the support network.

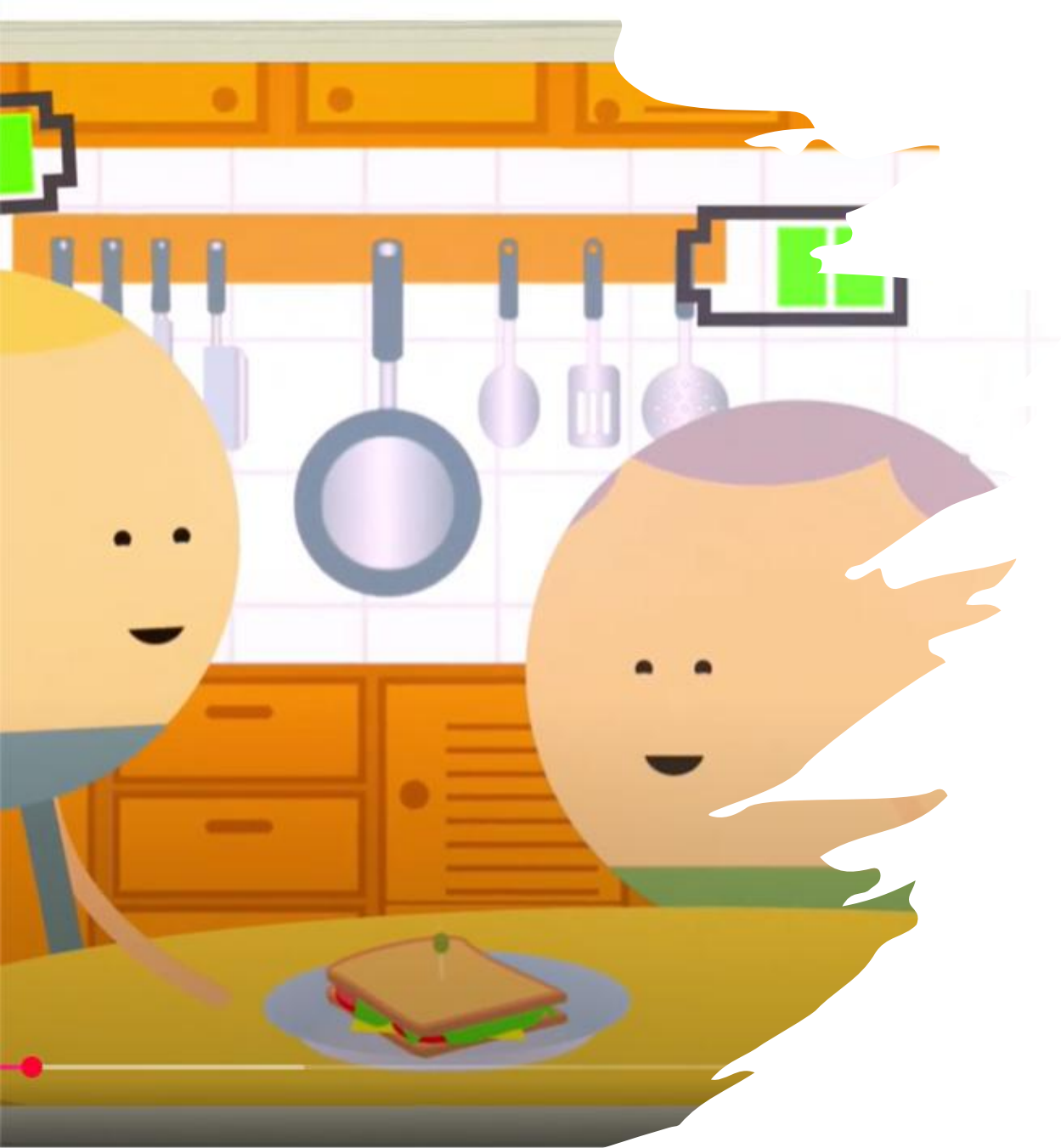
- Caregivers should not feel limited to one type of help. Often, combining multiple types of support creates the strongest foundation.



# How can we support carers?

Watch this video in order to have more information!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pag7JZ8Z6Mw&list=PLr50Bh2p\\_bxcHA-2hBgTwB0RI1btYdcTA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pag7JZ8Z6Mw&list=PLr50Bh2p_bxcHA-2hBgTwB0RI1btYdcTA)



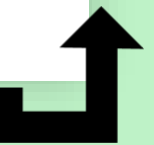
# Why caregivers delay seeking support

Research shows that most caregivers wait until they are in crisis before seeking help. This delay is often due to **emotional barriers** such as guilt, shame or the belief that they should be able to cope on their own.

Other caregivers **are simply unaware** of the support available or fear being judged or misunderstood.

However, those who ask for help earlier tend to suffer **less from burnout**, maintain healthier relationships and provide better care in the long run. Learning to identify internal resistance is the first step to overcoming it.

Caregivers **need to learn to normalise asking for help** and understand that their well-being is essential for effective care.



# Additional resources

- Here you can find short videos presenting personal stories of informal caregivers from different European countries, highlighting all the daily challenges they face and the strategies they adopt to deal with them:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCck5P\\_hIW\\_Ncn40xV5N9zPCA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCck5P_hIW_Ncn40xV5N9zPCA)
- Recorded conference sessions covering key topics for caregivers such as emotional support, European policies and innovations in healthcare:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\\_NtVVwgu\\_mc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_NtVVwgu_mc)
- A platform offering videos and practical resources to assist caregivers in their daily home care activities: [https://www.age-platform.eu/web-nurses-to-support-informal-carers-in-hungary/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.age-platform.eu/web-nurses-to-support-informal-carers-in-hungary/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



iserundschmidt GmbH is a company specializing in research on science and knowledge communication in Germany. For over 25 years the agency has provided strategic consultancy, developed independent campaigns and productions.



**European Health Futures Forum**

The future of health and healthcare now

The EHFF, European Health Futures Forum, was established in 2013 as an NGO dedicated to supporting actions that lead to the improvement of the health of European citizens. Initially established in the UK as a non-profit organisation, it established itself in Ireland in 2017 and is now a registered Charity.

RightChallenge is an NGO that aims to promote education and vocational training as a tool for social inclusion. We believe that education should focus on the development of all people - regardless of social status, age or gender - to prepare them to participate in all dimensions of society.



**édpa** social cooperative activities for vulnerable groups

K.S.D.E.O. "EDRA" is a non-profit organization, active since 2001 to promote mental health and protect the rights of vulnerable groups. EDRA provides mental health services and raises public awareness in matters concerning mental health, supports the child and the family to cope with learning difficulties, intervenes therapeutically in the field of special education and Intellectual disability, develops national and European initiatives for socially vulnerable groups, provides lifelong training programs for all population groups.



**CARDET**

CARDET (Centre for Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental, research and development organization based in Cyprus. It is one of the leading research and development centres in the Euro-Mediterranean region, with global expertise in project design and implementation, capacity building, and e-learning.



Partnership of policy specialists, whose founding members have over a decade of concrete experience in the sustainability sector. Exeo Lab is a young, multi-purpose and flexible company that envisions a sustainability-oriented society.

[Read about the project and the partners at About – Informal Carers Well-Being Enhanced \(ICWE\)](#)

This resource was developed by

