

# CROSSROADS CARE SURREY GUILDFORD & WAVERLEY



Charity Number 1125048

## ***What does a Crossroads Scheme do?***

Crossroads offers practical support to '**Carers**' - those people looking after a dependent relative or friend living at home. Trained Carer Support Workers take over the **carer's** role to give the **Carer** a short break as and when it is most needed.

Crossroads Schemes cover every age group and every form of disability. The service is provided free of charge for 3 hours per week for adults or 3 hours per month for children but donations are welcomed.

## ***Who is a 'Carer'?***

A Carer can be defined as the person who is taking primary responsibility in the home for the care of a person who needs almost continuous care because of a mental or physical illness or because they are frail and mentally infirm through ageing. They are unpaid for this role they undertake. The **Carer's** life is restricted by the need to be on call for most of the day and night because the person they look after cannot be safely left alone for long periods. A **Carer** is often under a lot of physical and emotional strain through the demanding work of caring for someone heavily dependent upon them. They might be trying to hold down a paid job as well, and have other family commitments. **Carers** are often elderly people themselves, looking after a spouse. They can also be, for example, young parents of a child with a learning disability, a middle aged daughter looking after an ageing parent, a child looking after a parent, or a young person caring for a partner injured through accident or with multiple sclerosis or other disabling conditions.

## ***Who are the Carer Support Workers?***

Carer Support Workers are locally recruited people who work for Crossroads Care Surrey – Guildford & Waverley. They are paid on an hourly basis. Some of them will have worked as care assistants or nurses; all receive training on joining Crossroads and regular on-going training sessions are arranged. The most important aspect of training is that given by the **Carer** who is being helped, so that the Carer Support Worker knows the needs of the individual she/he is helping and can follow as closely as possible the routine of the main **Carer**.

## ***What do Carer Support Workers Do?***

Carer Support Workers go into people's homes in order to relieve the main **Carer**. In taking over from the **Carer** they do the work that the **Carer** would normally be doing. This includes all areas of care of the person with disabilities as well as the domestic duties that the **Carer** would normally be doing, such as preparing simple meals. The main **Carer** is then free to have time for herself/himself.

## ***How much help can Crossroads give?***

Crossroads can offer regular weekly support for adult carers or monthly support for parent carers or an occasional break. The relief care is offered at the time best suited to the family and can be during the day or in the evening, or at weekends. The **Carer** can stay at home and be relieved from responsibility (have a quiet family meal or pursue a hobby without interruption) whilst the person they normally care for is taken out by the Carer Support Worker. Or the **Carer** can go shopping, have their hair done or visit friends, something that has been missing during their caring responsibilities.

Crossroads is not a crisis intervention service nor is it a 'sitting service'. The aim is to offer regular help to prevent a breakdown in the health of the **Carer** occurring. Crossroads tries to offer crisis/emergency help to those families already known to the Scheme such as hospital appointments for the carer.

Crossroads works closely with local authority, health service and voluntary organisations. It adds to the services that already exist but do not replace them. Carer Support Workers cannot take over duties which are normally done by other workers visiting that family, such as district nurses or home care workers.

## ***Referrals***

Referrals can be made by anyone, including **Carers** themselves. Referrals are made to the Co-ordinator of the Scheme by telephone or in writing. Each family referred is visited by the co-ordinator and the needs of the family are assessed. Each family is matched with a suitable Carer Support Worker, who as far as possible, becomes the regular Carer Support Worker for that family.

