

Video series: Key messages to support carers through difficult times

Prompts for each question have been provided to help bring about ideas you may wish to consider in your responses.

Initial questions for video 1 – Impacts of COVID-19

1. How has COVID-19 impacted your experiences of providing care and support?

Prompts:

- What does time for 'you' look like in the COVID-19 lockdown?
- How do you carve out a space for yourself in this environment?
- How might your boundaries be changing in this environment?
- How are you dealing with heightened emotions e.g. anxiety and uncertainty?
- How are you reframing the narrative around COVID-19 e.g. physical not social distancing?

2. How are you finding support during these times?

Prompts:

- Can you tell us about the supports available to you?
- What have you done in situations where support isn't available?

3. How do you look after yourself? (socially, emotionally, physically). What is working for you during these times?

Further questions for video series

1. How do you deal with the isolation of caring?

Prompts:

- How do you deal with that isolation in times of adversity?
- What has worked for you in overcoming isolation?

2. What works for you in having your needs noticed and met?

- How can your voice be heard?
- Ways in which you can make your voice heard?
- What method/technique/resource has helped your voice to be heard:
 - When advocating for your person?
 - When advocating for yourself?

3. Where do you go to find support, and what can you tell me about what support is available?

Prompts:

- What have you done in situations where support isn't available?
- When you don't have any support? When you don't know how to find it?
- When the supports you have used you can no longer access?

4. How do you give yourself permission to do what you need to do to be the best carer you can be?

Prompts:

- How do you carve out space for 'you'?
 - What does that look like? Even for 10 minutes (or less) a day.
 - How do you get creative? E.g. a designated spot in the house and when you're in that space, that is a space and time for you.
- How do you give yourself permission to choose boundaries? (emotional, physical)
- What do boundaries look like to you? (emotional, physical)
- How do you practice being gentle and kind to yourself?
 - Giving yourself permission
 - Reframing your attitude
 - Not judging your emotions
 - Realistic expectations for yourself
 - Boosting morale and confidence
 - You don't have to be strong all the time, you can show your emotions too.

5. How do you look after yourself? (socially, emotionally, physically). What works for you?

Prompts:

- Is there something you can immerse yourself in that is just for 'you'?
- What is your go-to to release emotions?
- Examples that don't necessarily cost money or extra time e.g. is it tea? Is it cuddles?
- Moments of self-acknowledgement and mindfulness e.g. while you boil the kettle, when you get out of the shower
- How do you make these sustainable?

6. What are your messages of support to other carers so they realise they're not alone?

Prompts:

- ASK – acknowledgement, standing firm, kindness, compassion, caring
- You didn't cause it, you can't cure it
- You have people you can ASK for help
- Connectedness is more important now than ever