



**Creu Cymru oed gyfeillgar  
Creating an age friendly Wales**

## **Care Home Welcome Pack**

**August 2021**

## Welcome

Since March 2020, continuous and often stressful pressures on care homes, their staff and time have been highlighted and heightened by COVID19. Understandable anxieties, including the footfall from outside agencies and families and how to protect both residents and staff, have been a continual worry.

Maintaining and enabling contact between care home residents and their relatives and friends is vital for their wellbeing. The pandemic has focused attention on human engagement as a truly essential aspect of good care and wellbeing, sadly missing during the first national lockdown and onwards. Families, residents, staff and managers have struggled to cope with the emotional strain of separation and anxiety that has inevitably resulted.

With 1,077 care homes in Wales, a national approach was needed to help establish a safe volunteering framework for care homes that is supported by all stakeholders, delivers consistent high quality and records the positive impact on residents, relatives, staff and the volunteers themselves.

Its time-consuming and practically challenging for care homes to organise visits in a fair and effective way. Having available staff to manage socially-distanced family visiting or to support residents to connect via the telephone and the internet can be a challenge when care home staff have so many – and increased priorities and responsibilities.

This 2021 pilot project, a partnership between Age Cymru and WCVA, care homes and volunteers, funded by Welsh Government has been the result.

It's hoped that care homes like yours in the pilot supporting and being supported by volunteers, can also be sustained in the longer term beyond COVID, for everyone's mutual benefit by

- invigorating relationships between care home management and staff and families
- helping to promote a culture of greater openness
- bringing new and different skills to complement those provided by the paid workforce
- providing career-related experience and personal fulfilment to volunteers.

We thank you for joining us and welcome you warmly – without you this Age Cymru Pilot Project couldn't happen and your home has a vital role to play. You're providing a real opportunity to make a positive difference to the people who live, work in and visit your care home. We look forward to gathering your feedback, which is an essential part of the initiative.

If you require any further information, please contact:

Zoe Newland, Volunteer Support Officer [Carehomevolunteer@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:Carehomevolunteer@agecymru.org.uk)

Suzy Webster, Care Home Network Manager [Suzy.webster@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:Suzy.webster@agecymru.org.uk)

Sarah Reed, Dementia Specialist [Sarah.reed@manyhappyreturns.org](mailto:Sarah.reed@manyhappyreturns.org)

## Pilot project locations and participating care homes

<b>Location</b>	<b>Care Home</b>
Aberdare	<b>Ysguborwen Care Home</b> Ysguborwen Aberdare RCT CF44 0AX
Anglesey	<b>Glan Rhos Nursing Home</b> Glan Rhos Brynsiencyn Llanfairpwllgwyngyll Isle of Anglesey LL61 6TZ
Cardiff	<b>Llys Cyncoed</b> 127 Cyncoed Road Cardiff CF23 6AF
Cardiff	<b>Ty Coch</b> 105 Station Road Llanishen Cardiff CF14 5UW
Neath	<b>Plas Bryn Rhosyn Care Home</b> Heol Illtyd Neath Neath Port Talbot SA10 7SE
Newport	<b>Capel Grange Care Home</b> Capel Crescent Newport Gwent NP20 2FG
Powys	<b>St. Nicholas House Ltd Care Home</b> Church Stoke Montgomery Powys

	SY15 6AF
Port Talbot	<b>Llys y Seren</b> Moor Road Aberavon Port Talbot SA12 7BJ
Port Talbot	<b>Ty Nant</b> Tynant Lane Cymmer Port Talbot SA13 3NR

### **The role of volunteers and what they will be doing:**

- Meeting and greeting family and other visitors – as a representative of the home and its staff
- Hospitality, welcome and hosting
- Guiding visitors to cloakroom, toilet and refreshment facilities, where appropriate
- Wearing simple safety PPE. (Training for this and relevant safeguarding should be provided by you)
- Assisting with LFTs for visitors, where applicable
- Checking LFT results on NHS phone Apps, where applicable
- Filling in details of visiting guests for the Track and Trace log, where applicable
  
- Knowing where the garden, pod and/or visiting room is/are and how to get to it/them
- Guiding families through the home to the garden, pod or room
- Developing relationships with regular visitors
- Logging information for the care home (family visitor names and addresses, resident's room number, time of visiting and activity, if any)
- Completing a simple record for each visit for reference
- Ending visits – thanks and farewell.

## **The profile for the volunteers who we have identified and sought**

Volunteers will be personable, friendly, well organised, responsible and capable of representing a favourable welcome for your care home that they can feel proud of.

The project offers them opportunities to gain a greater understanding of how care homes work and insights into some of the stresses that families and friends cope with. It's hoped that they will contribute to the life of the home, acquiring and learning new social and communication skills, while developing their empathic skills, for mutual benefit.

## **Establishing a routine for visits**

Volunteers have been asked to

1. Make a schedule and try to take responsibility for keeping themselves well-organised
2. Make sure they know their way around the home – visiting room/s, pod/s garden etc and cloakrooms / toilets / refreshments (where relevant) etc
3. Ensure that they are fluent in all the necessary information visitors might require
4. Be aware of any parking issues
5. Take ownership. We would like them to greet visitors warmly as though they are their own guests. As many of the visitors will be regular, volunteers are encouraged to take interest in their lives, in order to develop relationships with them
6. Where applicable, ensure that they take any information provided from the LFTs correctly
7. Fill in any necessary paperwork neatly so that others can use it if necessary
8. Be aware of and sensitive to other things that might be going on at the home
9. Remember that when wearing a mask, it helps to smile broadly and speak slowly and clearly
10. End visits by asking the visitors about their visit, thank them for coping with any COVID related issues and wish them well until the next time.

## **What the volunteers will need**

Broadly speaking, volunteers will become a regular, extended part of your team. It's important that your staff at the home know about the care home's involvement in the pilot project, to ensure that they're able to welcome the volunteers and understand their part in it.

Volunteers may need a little understanding!

Many of them will know little or nothing about care homes or the way they work. They may have had little or no contact with anyone living with dementia. They may have had limited or no knowledge or experience of older people and their needs. The volunteers have been alerted to the fact that they may find some experiences distressing. Your role

in re-assuring them is vital if we're to maintain their interest, commitment, and resilience.

On a practical level, the volunteer will need

1. a tour of the public-facing areas of your home. They need to become familiar with and know their way around the home – visiting room/s, pod/s garden as well as cloakrooms / toilets / refreshments etc, so that they can show visitors around with confidence
2. Somewhere safe to leave their bags and coats
3. Knowledge of any procedures (e.g safety and fire drill procedures etc) and any necessary paperwork you need them to complete. We expect them to take responsibility for keeping themselves well-organised
4. To be informed of all the necessary information visitors might require, including any parking or other logistical issues
5. Where applicable, training in correct LFT taking / administering / recording
6. To learn and understand the necessary paperwork they should complete, where applicable. They are expected to fill in any forms neatly and legibly so that others can use them if necessary
7. To be made aware of any other things that might be going on at the home that might impact their visit
8. Your and your staff's good role-modelling of thoughtful communication while wearing a mask. We have provided guidance on this and they are encouraged to smile broadly, make eye contact and to speak slowly and clearly when with anyone
9. To be able to take some ownership of their activities. As many visitors will be regular, volunteers have been encouraged to take interest in them in order to develop relationships with them.

## What to provide for the volunteers

Recommended PPE items	Explanation
<b>Disposable Gloves*</b> 	Required if for other reasons set out in standard infection prevention and control precautions (e.g. contact with residents' blood or other bodily fluids)
<b>Disposable plastic apron*</b> 	*Required if for other reasons set out in standard infection prevention and control precautions (e.g. contact with residents' blood or other bodily fluids)
<b>Fluid-repellent surgical mask (FRSM) Type IIR</b> 	<p>The mask is worn to protect you, the care worker, and can be used while caring for a number of different residents. You should not touch your face mask unless it is to put it on or remove it. It must be disposed of when leaving the care home setting</p> <p>FRSM can be used continuously while providing care, until you take a break from duties (e.g. to drink, eat, for your break time or end of shift)</p> <p>If you are providing homecare visits (or visiting different people living in an extra care scheme) you should remove and dispose of your mask after visiting each individual</p> <p>You should remove and dispose of your mask if it becomes damaged, soiled, damp or uncomfortable to use. You need to use a new mask when you re-start your duties after a break.</p>
<b>Eye protection</b> 	Not required

# Training and supervision provision to demonstrate donning and doffing PPE

All volunteers have been given this diagram but may need additional help.



## How will visits be logged?

	Date	Resident's room number	Relationship	Time of visit	Duration
Visitor 1					
Visitor 2					
Visitor 3					
Visitor 4					
Visitor 5					

- Volunteers are asked to log the time they spend at the care home and complete a record of sessions they attend to be kept on file.
- Once the volunteers have been introduced to you and are ready to start, Zoe will enrol them to time credits so they can earn rewards for volunteering.

## Check-ins with the project leads

We'll check in with the volunteers and you on a regular basis to learn about the progress of the initiative and its impact on the home, staff, visitors and the residents. This will be your opportunity to feedback to us and discuss your experiences. Your feedback is a vital tool to move this project forward.

## Communicating with volunteers

We're committed to the success of this project and have spent considerable time recruiting volunteers, so we're keen to retain their engagement and enthusiasm for as long as possible! It's partly an organisational issue and partly the support we give to them.

We hope to help manage any aspects of volunteers' experiences that might negatively impact them. We'll be monitoring the project through feedback sessions from you and them. If a volunteer does choose to leave, we will do our best to make changes to address and eliminate any reasons that are within our control.

We recognise the possibility that during this time of COVID, volunteers may stay in their roles for shorter periods of time than in the past. We want to celebrate whatever time/talents they provide and hope you will be able to do the same. We hope you will agree that happy volunteers are happy customers, who may provide referrals to others looking for volunteer involvement – or care homes for loved ones!

## **At the beginning...**

- Create a quality volunteer experience
- Greet new volunteers and make sure they feel welcome
- Be prepared for them when they arrive
- Respect them and recognise their commitment
- Provide training and opportunities for them to learn
- Provide organisational support
- Develop a “true believer” in the cause
- **Ensure the volunteer ‘gets more than they give’.**

## **Six ways to keep volunteers engaged and motivated**

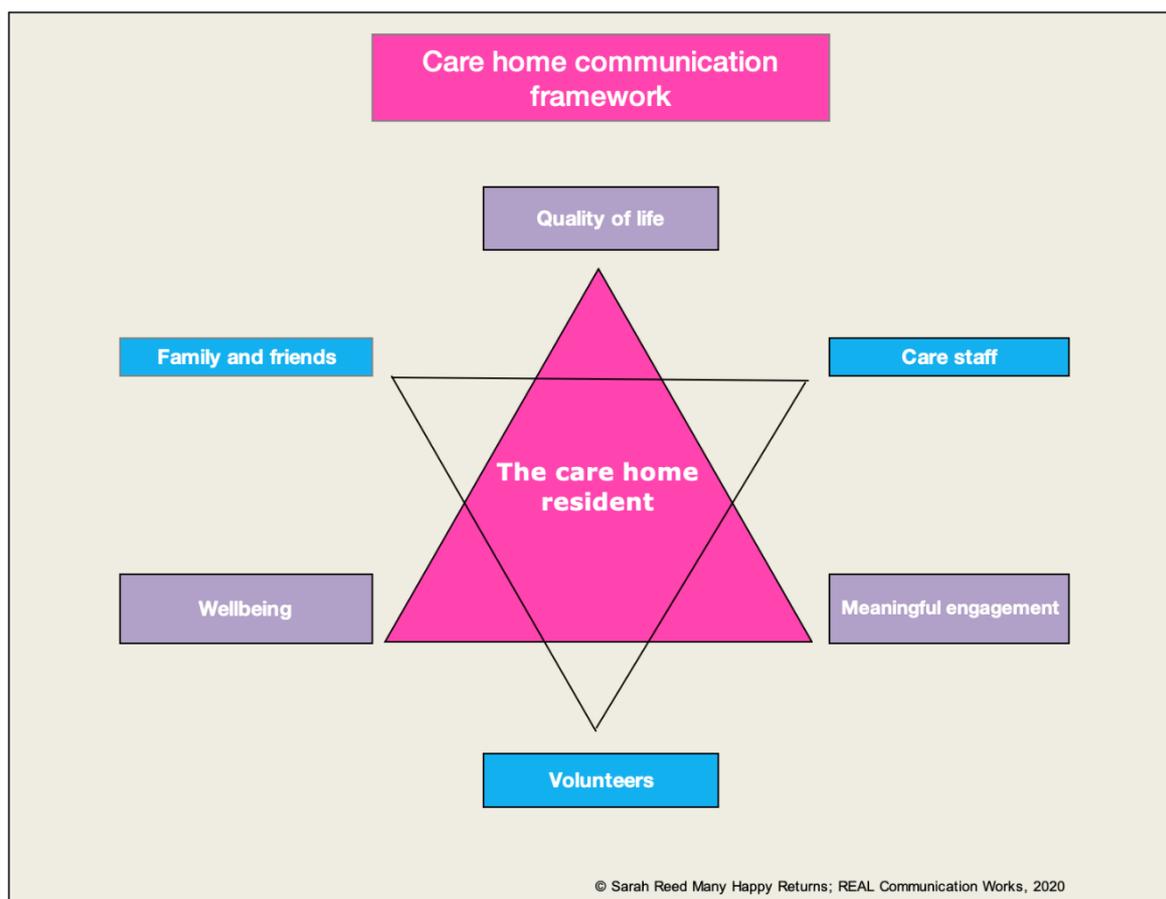
1. Make they feel needed and appreciated
2. Ensure that what they are expected to do is achievable
3. Stay connected – communication channels need to work both ways
4. Communicate your expectations
5. Celebrate their success
6. **Make it enjoyable!**

## **Short-term engagement is different from long-term loyalty**

In order to gain commitment, we have to deliver all the necessary steps to ensure the person has a good match of skills and attitude, expectation and good induction. To move this to a longer-term engagement requires additional support. Recent research suggests these four top retention strategies:

1. Create a quality volunteer experience
2. Develop “true believers” in the cause
3. Provide organisational support
4. **Ensure the volunteer “gets more than they give”**

## Communication for volunteers with residents and families



A care home 'team' can be likened to a six-point star, representing everyone who is part of it. Being the most important, residents are at the centre of everything, surrounded by their needs (quality of life, wellbeing, and meaningful engagement), and those who contribute to that lived experience: staff, families, and friends – and now, volunteers.

During the pilot, volunteers are likely to encounter people living with dementia. In the induction and guidance, we have highlighted that dementia is a complex health problem – that a person with dementia may display a number of symptoms that have affected their memory, perception, behaviour, language and personality.

We have stressed the importance of relationships in the wellbeing of *any* person and those living with dementia – as well as those caring for them and their families. Volunteers have received preliminary guidance on connecting and communicating well with a person with dementia, including sensory approaches.

However, some volunteers will have little or no experience of the relationships between care staff and residents, nor the sometimes-complex relationships with families. It is likely that few will have ever been inside a care home and none will have been into one during COVID. We want them to really enjoy their time with you and it is important to

recognise that they may find certain aspects of their volunteering experiences unnerving or troubling.

We know well how dementia can affect a person's behaviour, but volunteers, especially those who are younger, might be less aware of it and how it impacts a person. Being sensitive to this intergenerational issue and providing reassurance can only help the success of the project.

Acknowledging the person's reactions, giving them time to process their experience and being sensitive to them can only help to make this project a success.

## **Age Cymru - Ambition**

The agenda for Age Cymru is broad, but to ensure we maximise the impact of our efforts we will be focussed. We have identified four goals to encompass the change we will drive to create an age friendly Wales.

### **1. Rights and participation**

In an age friendly Wales, we have the information and support we need to feel empowered to exercise our rights and to participate in all areas of society.

### **2. Community**

We have meaningful and purposeful relationships; the transport we need to get out and about and we can live without environmental or social barriers preventing our inclusion.

### **3. Well-being**

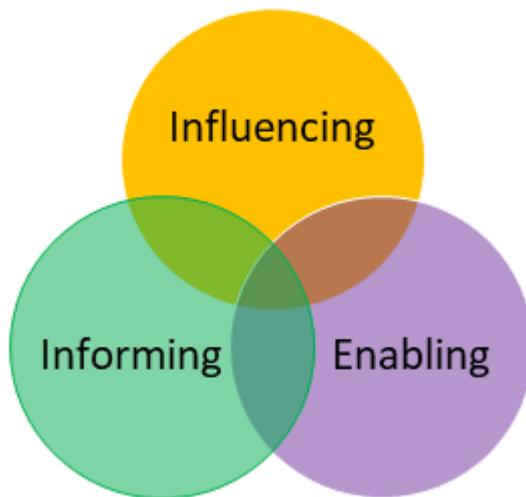
We have access to the care and support we need to for our wellbeing and to age as actively as we are able.

### **4. Financial inclusion**

We have enough money to meet our needs and have a good quality of life.

Our strategy is to create the conditions where older people are able to live well by

- Influencing – campaigning for the changes that are needed to improve the lives of older people.
- Informing- strengthening our role as the place to go for people who need help as we provide accurate, trusted information and advice.
- Enabling - creating the conditions for sustainable services, whether that is through working with our local partners to develop national approaches for service delivery, like I&A or raising funds for projects to be delivered.



To underpin our organisation and ensure we remain fit for purpose, we will also

- Engage older people in their diversity to ensure we respond to the range of needs, wishes and experiences.
- Develop volunteering opportunities to provide opportunities for older people to participate and to help us deliver our ambition.
- Generate income to support us achieve our aspiration for an age friendly Wales.