

# Family Carer Online Support Project - July 2022



## Links

### Group Link URL

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FamilyCarerOnlineSupportGroupIreland/>

### Video explaining how to join Facebook and join the group

<https://youtu.be/9Trsk6mF4Ko>

### Promotional video

<https://youtu.be/mEAg-xJQRAY>

## Safeguarding

1. Consult team
2. PM/Phone call/Zoom to family carer
3. Consult local Mental Health Service
4. Contact Gardai

## Objectives

Mitigate the possible negative impact of family caring, reducing the risk of:

- Isolation
- Anxiety
- Reduced quality of life & wellbeing

This is achieved through a professionally moderated online platform, using peer support and a variety of online activities.

## Application

Inclusion / Participation criteria:

- Must be willing to use Facebook
- Live in the ROI & aged 18+
- Provide unpaid care to family / friend or neighbour
- Agree to rules of group (NB - respect privacy of caree)

## Participant Recruitment (Family Carers)

- Facebook
- 95 NGO member orgs of Care Alliance
- Word of mouth (v. important)

## Application Process

1. Apply to join the group through Facebook (private group)
2. Answer 3 screening questions ( per inclusion criteria above )
3. Application considered by CAI staff / volunteers
4. Request approved or refused - If questions are not answered in full, applicant is private messaged, asking to resubmit the request to join and answer all questions

## Members of Group

(3,555 > 95% active)

## Volunteers and Moderators

- Private FB online 'Mods/Vols' group
- Peer support for volunteers
- Monthly zoom meeting for volunteers
- Discuss practice issues/dilemmas
- Discuss group posts/engagement
- Information/policy updates
- Moderation training

## Activities

- **Posting messages (Core Activity) c 4 p/d:**
  - Comments / discussion (c 141 per day, c 346 reactions) – anonymous posts facilitated, NB / GDPR
  - Peer support – 'I am not alone'
  - Information
  - Dilemmas
  - Top Tips
  - Positivity Posts
  - Cooking Posts
- **Pinned posts / threads:**
  - Remembrance
  - Petitions
  - Research
  - Humorous

## 1-2-1 Input/Casework core activity c125 clients:

- PM's / phone calls / e-mails - variable levels of engagement
- Refer to carer support orgs / SW Mental Health Services

## Educative Inputs

- Video pre-records
- 'Subject matter Expert'
- Live Q&A's

## Zoom Quizzes

- Monthly-Informal/Fun

## Book Club

- Bi-monthly
- Distribute Books
- Break Out Rooms

- Weekly Online Drop In
- Art Classes
- Informal Competitions
- Regular Books/Gifts/Care Packages
- Gardening Club - 'Carers In Bloom'
- Chair Yoga
- 'Crafty Carers' Group

## Resourcing

- Volunteers (14) & Staff (1)
- Current and former family carers (11)
- Health and Social Care professionals (8) (Some identify in more than one group)
- 7 day and on-call rota

## Roles Of Staff / Volunteers:

- Screen membership applications
- Share informational documents within group
- Approve / reject suggested posts
- Welcome new members
- Monitor / moderate posts / comments
- Communicate / reiterate / values
- Share other NGO's relevant posts
- Consider new activities
- Protocols - regularly updated document
- Ensure sustainability / finances

## Engagement Data

- June 30th 2021 to June 29th 2022
- 1,492 posts
- 51,334 comments
- 126,329 reactions
- No complaints
- 1000's of positive comments and feedback

## Feedback / Efficacy

- Extensive positive qualitative feedback
- 97% member retention over 12 months
- Key impacts / processes emerging - peer support - possible improvement in QOL / anxiety / isolation
- Long-term efficacy / meaning University of Limerick PhD
- Consultation via School of SW, Indiana University (Dr D. Wilkerson)

## Reflections

- Volunteer strength
- Tight moderation
- Peer support
- Evolution of group purpose - A very social Social Media
- Other NGO's responses emerging
- Managing risks of GDPR breaches
- Project evolving post Covid19