

# HELP



**LA TROBE**  
UNIVERSITY

HEALTHY  
END OF  
LIFE  
PROJECT



My Collaborative Care Plan





During extended periods of illness or caring, many of us refuse offers of help even when we need it. Even though illness can make us feel like retreating, it's important to stay connected.

Our social supports and communities shine at times when we can accept help. Most people want to help, but don't know how.

That's when you need a plan for **Collaborative Care**.

Your Collaborative Care Plan can help you to put things in place to make the most of all the personal and social networks available to you. Some of these you may not even realise are there.

With a **Collaborative Care Plan**, your family, friends and neighbours will know how they can help. It makes it easier for people to support you when they have a clear idea of what you need and when you need it. And importantly, what you don't need!

You might find it helpful to draw upon a close friend or relative who understands your support needs and can help you to put the Plan in place.





## The Collaborate for Care Plan involves 3 Steps:

### 1 What's needed?

- a. Support with care and day-to-day living
- b. What's important when I'm sick

### 2 Who can help?

Making a list of all the available support on offer - including the people, services and resources around you.

### 3 Your Collaborative Care Plan

Put a Plan in place for what, who and when.

#### Gaps in care?

Think about the community supports, services and local groups who can help. If you're unsure, you can ask a friend, neighbour, the council, community hub, neighbourhood house, community health service or your hobby group.





*'Sometimes our friends and neighbours don't know we need support unless we ask for it.'*

## Staying social

Keep connections with who and what is important to you. You could even expand your networks by contacting your local Neighbourhood House and Council to find out about activities and groups.

**Make a note of how often you prefer these things to occur: weekly, fortnightly, monthly.**

- Contact with friends and social networks
- Contact with family
- Visits from your support worker
- Planned activities and hobbies
- Phone / video calls
- Visit your Neighbourhood House

Details:

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*'It never occurred to me to ask them ... though if one of them asked for my support, I'd do it in a heartbeat, I'd do anything to help them.'*

## Personal and/or Family Needs

### Assistance so you can keep on top of your personal and/or family needs

- Personal appointments (hair, podiatry, optometrist)
- Personal errands
- Shopping needs
- Getting enough sleep
- Health and medical appointments
- Spiritual / faith needs
- Work or volunteer commitments
- Kids pickups / care

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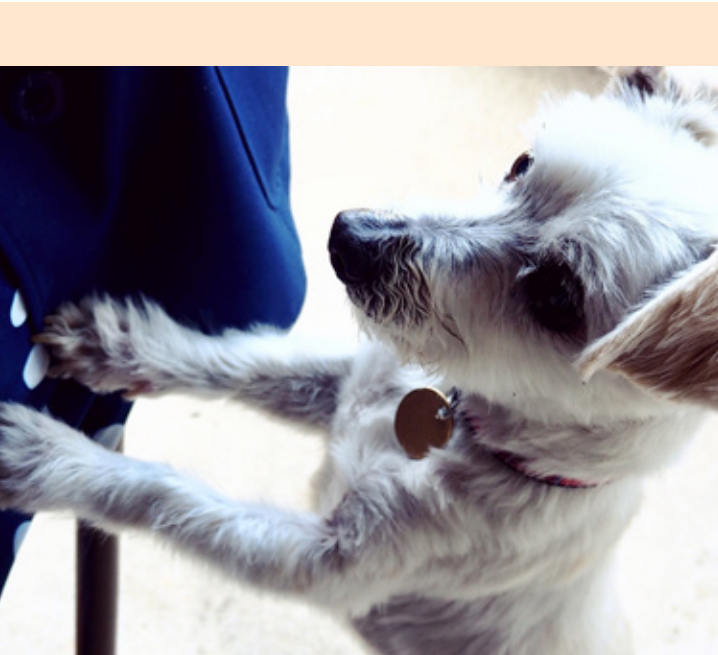
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*'Unlocking your own support networks might also help a friend or neighbour to unlock theirs.'*

## Fun activities and events that lift your spirits!

These are an essential part of life and are especially important when you are experiencing illness or caring for someone.

**These are the things, big or small, that help you to feel good and give you the break you need, so that you can 'keep going'.**

- Going to the movies
- Meditation / yoga classes
- Family or social visits
- Your hobbies
- Friends visit with food & drinks
- Coffee with a friend
- Gathering at your house
- Getting out of the house
- Walk in the garden
- Time with pets

Details:

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**STEP 1****What's needed?****What's important when I'm sick**

**When we are sick, our worlds can feel small, but we still have important things to contribute.**

There might be particular things you want to share, say or do. Our surroundings can become even more important to us.

One way we can express needs is by listing some things we'd like to do or experience. Be specific. Don't assume people know.

Fill this out yourself or together with the people who care for you.

If you're caring for a person who is unable to communicate, draw on your memories and shared stories. Ask yourself, what makes the person smile, feel joyful or at peace?

**I would like to:****Say, Do & Contribute**

*(unfinished business, planning meeting, visits to places, messages to people, activities, write letters, write down my story [biography])*

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**See**

*(people, view, garden, flowers, familiar things, favourite items, shows, faith leader, art, GP, palliative care service, pets)*

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**Hear**

*(music, family talking, friends laughing, children playing, silence, prayer, household noises)*

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*‘Smell is a potent wizard that transports you across thousands of miles and all the years you have lived.’*

– Helen Keller



## Feel

*(warm, comfortable, clean, free from pain, the touch of loved ones, massage, at peace, comfort of my bed, home comforts, animal companions)*

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## Taste

*(favourite foods, tastes and beverages)*

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## Smell

*(perfume, essential oils, hot chips, baking, fresh air, forest, the garden, the ocean)*

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## STEP 2

### Who can help?

In this step, you can make a list of the connections that make up your personal networks.

These could include family, relatives, friends, neighbours, colleagues, social groups, your GP, community nurse, support worker, community and faith groups – include anyone you think could offer support.

Even if you are not sure of your supports, this list helps to work out who you are connected with. It's useful to consider all possibilities.

It may be that your care needs will change during different stages. Make this list to get you started. You can keep coming back to it as your needs evolve.

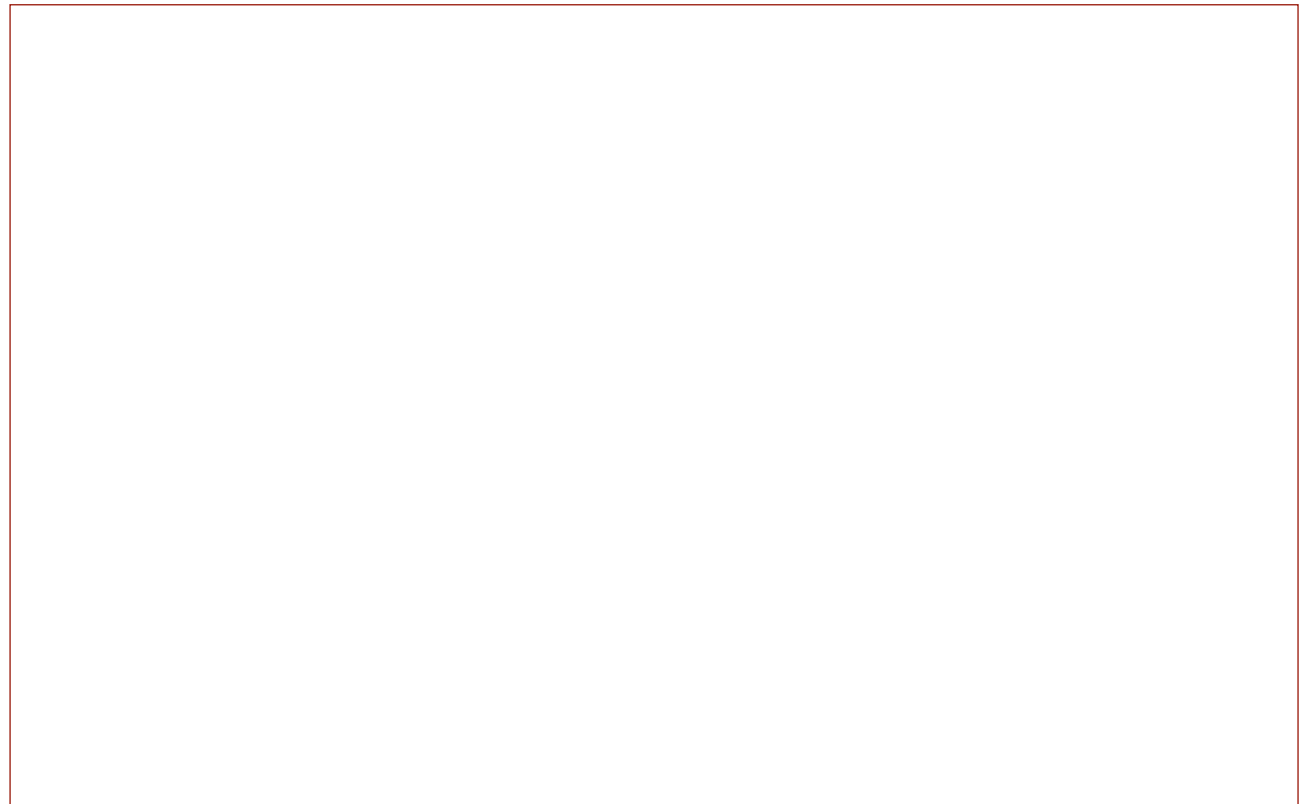
To work out the different types of support available, ask yourself this question:

*“Who would I be comfortable with seeing me in my pyjamas?”*

- Prof. Debbie Horsfall, Western Sydney University

Thinking in this way might help to decide what kinds of support you may be comfortable with asking of different people. It might also be helpful to think of the roles people could take, in your inner and outer support networks.

**Draw or list your connections here.** If you like to think in pictures, you may find it useful to draw your networks like a spider web, with yourself at the centre.



**STEP 3****Your Collaborative Care Plan**

In this Step, your responses from Steps 1 and 2 come together, to start shaping your Collaborative Care Plan.

This step will set down a basis for your Plan, which can be adjusted as your support needs evolve.

*Remember, life rarely stays the same, so the most useful plans are flexible and open to change.*

As your Collaborative Care Plan takes shape, you may find that while some needs can be met, others may be beyond the scope of your networks.

**Some strategies for filling in gaps are an important part of your plan:**

- Review your network for further options
- Start to make connections with community support and services
- Neighbourhood centres, local service groups and community hubs keep directories of services that can offer assistance.

Now that you've got a Plan, you can decide what you need and where you might find support, on your own terms.

Remember that your networks represent connections with people who are willing to support you, in the same way as you would do for them.

By setting down the basis for your Plan, you have a starting point that can easily be adjusted as your support needs evolve.





**STEP 3****Write up a schedule**

Remember, your support needs are likely to change over time, so allow for flexibility.

**Steps**

- Draw up your weekly or monthly schedule, including details for when you need assistance with particular tasks
- Match up people from your social networks with tasks, and schedule them in for specific times
- Fill in the gaps. Explore community organisations, clubs and support groups and discover other forms of support
- These might include special wishes and contributions, or unique experiences such as art, music, hobbies. Be open to considering new things!

**Sample weekly HELP schedule**

Day of the Week	Activities	Who / Contacts	Frequency
Monday	Dog walking	Bruce/Mobile number	Weekly 5pm
	Shopping	John	Weekly 11am
Tuesday			
Wednesday	Peace Day/Quiet Day	Beth	Coffee/gardening club
Thursday	Mowing		Fortnightly
Friday	Cleaning – vacuum, mop & bathrooms	Faye & Kate	Weekly (Sam & Alice will alternate weekly)
Saturday	Take kids to netball	Mary	Weekly 9am
Sunday	Peace Day	Respite session	
Monthly jobs	Fire wood/weeding/day out respite	Libby	Once a month

**My Collaborative Care Plan**

<b>Day of the Week</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Who / Contacts</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monthly jobs			
Occasional jobs			





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### **Public Health Palliative Care Unit, La Trobe University**

**Address:** Kingsbury Dr., Bundoora, Victoria, 3086, Australia

**Mail:** HS2, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, 3086, Australia

**Email:** [help@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:help@latrobe.edu.au)

**Web:** [www.latrobe.edu.au/pcu](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/pcu)

**ABN:** 64 804 735 113

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