

Be Kind To Yourself

Convalescing at home following a stay in hospital has now become the accepted practice in communities throughout Wales; this can be a difficult time for you and your loved ones.

Although returning home is usually a relief, you are often overloaded with information when all you want to do is to get back to your 'old routines'. It can be difficult to cope for the first few days and many people feel lost and alone after the security of the ward setting.

Most individuals assume that everything will be 'as it was before' when they first return home. They forget that they have been unwell, and that recovery takes time. This can lead to frustration and feelings of anxiety, both with the individual and their families. These feelings are very normal.

When you are in hospital the routine of the ward becomes 'normal'. Often you are left to sit in your night clothes, and the ward staff provides you with meals and drinks throughout the day.



"It has been a struggle since I came home" Mrs P.

How to be kinder to yourself - It takes time to recover following an illness and returning to your normal routine often involves you taking your prescribed medication and following the advice from various Health Professionals.

You may be advised:-

- To pace yourself - doing little and often is much better for you than trying to complete an activity in 'one go'.
- To move around - this will help to keep your circulation healthy and your joints supple.
- To take regular 'rests' between activities.

- To be kind to yourself!



"Dad needed all sorts of help at home" Mr D's son

Following the advice given can help people towards a speedy recovery.

Adjusting to change - 'Things' at home may be different on your return and you may have equipment in place to help you as you convalesce. You may need to have your bed located on the ground floor of your home, until adaptations can be completed. These changes can be unsettling for you and your loved ones; however they are often short term.

You may initially need to have carers calling during the day to support you with day to day living. These carers will enable and encourage you to return to a good routine by suggesting ways for you to do more for yourself when:-

- getting up in the morning
- getting washed and dressed
- getting around your home
- getting ready for bed at night time

The carers may also support you to prepare a hot drink and meal.



"It has taken me time to accept the help, I'm so grateful" Mrs L

Remember even if you need ongoing support from the carers in your own home, do as much as you can for yourself,

"If you don't use it, you lose it!"

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"It has taken time, but I'm getting there" Mr W

Some helpful numbers:-

Age Cymru Swansea Bay	01792 648866 enquiries@agecymruswanseabay.org.uk	Can offer/provide Benefits advice, Advocacy service, Handyman service, domestic cleaning, shopping, Befriending etc
British Red Cross (Swansea)	01792 772146	Can provide assistance with collecting prescriptions and shopping, offering companionship, rebuilding confidence, Home from Hospital Scheme. Advice regarding Benefits, Grants and Equipment loan etc
Citizens Advice Bureau	08444 772020	Advice and Advocacy, benefits etc
Swansea Care & Repair	01792 798599 enquiries@swansecareandrepair.co.uk	Can offer/provide help and advice regarding major/minor adaptations and grants etc
Swansea Carers' Centre	01792 653344 admin@swansecarerscentre.org.uk	Support and advice for Carers
NHS Direct	0845 46 47 www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/	Medical advice
Poppy Calls	08000 320306	Offers Handyman service for those who have served in the Forces



"We didn't know who to ask for help, or what was available" Mr & Mrs C.

This information is also available in Welsh and in alternative formats, such as large print, on audio CD, in Braille, or electronically. Please ask.

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