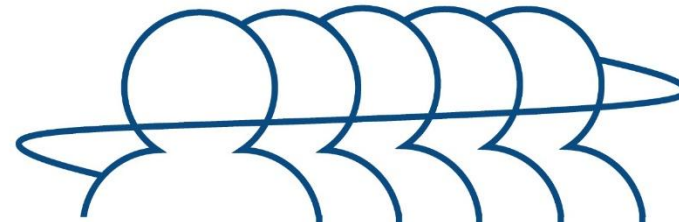


HSC Northern Health
and Social Care Trust

carer
hub

028 2766 1210



connect

information

signposting

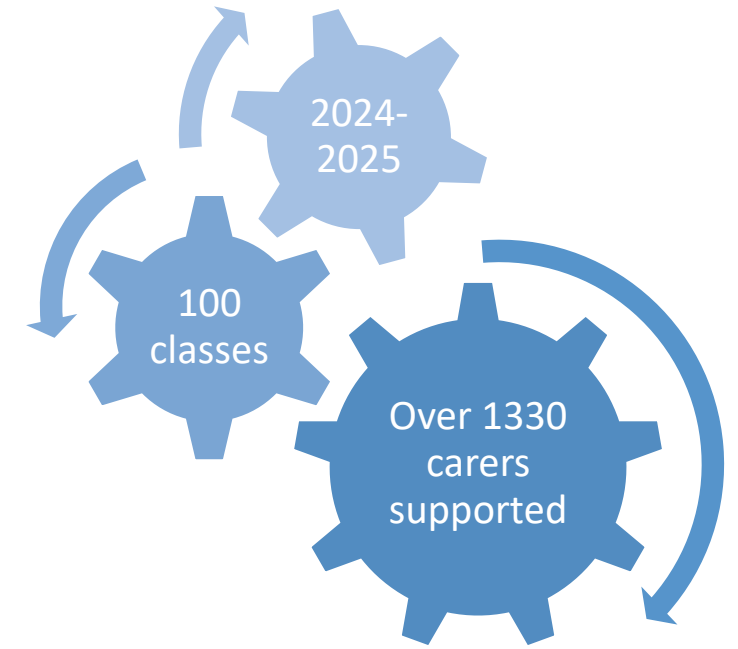
peer support

support programme

Carer Support Programme April 2026 to March 2027

Welcome

We are happy to share with you our co-produced Carer Support Programme from April 2026 through to March 2027 with some events being co-facilitated or led by carers. Our classes and activities are aligned with the themes of the 'Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing' – connect, take notice, keep learning, be active and give. Research suggests that by regularly practising these 5 steps, we can contribute to improving our personal wellbeing.



Will I or won't I give the Carer Hub a go?

“What’s stopping you coming along to a Carers Hub event? I know it isn’t always easy to get away from your caring role, maybe you don’t think it’s for you. But you might be surprised at what the Carer Hub has to offer you. I know for me it has been a source of time out and relaxation with a good dose of laughter too.

I can honestly say over the last few years I knew that I needed a break from being the ‘Carer’ and time out for myself for my own wellbeing and mental health. I knew that taking part in the Carer Hub events would again give me this and that has been the case” - Helen, carer

Carer Connectors

Unsure about coming out to an event or class on our programme? Our staff will be there along with our Carer Connectors. Our Carer Connectors are carers who have lived experience, are here to provide peer support and will play a vital role in creating a welcoming and friendly atmosphere at each of our Carer Connections and other carer events across the Trust. With experience of caring themselves, they will help you feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. It is important to us that our support is carer led and co-facilitated by carers reminding anyone attending that you are not alone in your caring journey.

This year our programme also includes some carers craft classes hosted by some of our Carer Connectors. These classes are designed to give carers an opportunity to come together, reignite their interests and share their skills and hobbies.

Our Carer Connectors will be identifiable by wearing a lanyard and they will make themselves known and welcome you to any group.

“After joining the Carer Hub: I realised it was a lifeline I never knew I needed. Where I felt listened to, supported and signposted to REAL help”. – Theresa, carer



Booking Process



If you are currently caring and would like to book onto any of the carer support classes, check each activity for the booking process. The preferred method of contact is email.

In the event that we need to reschedule any of the planned classes we will contact you via email

- Booking for all classes or events is essential for us to make arrangements.
- Some classes will have limited availability. If we are oversubscribed, places will be allocated by random selection. You will receive email confirmation to let you know if you have been allocated a place.
- Be mindful some dates are subject to change in the event of a weather warning or staff commitments.

Your details and information will be held confidentially and in compliance with Data Protection legislation.



Books and Banter



Our carer book club 'Books and Banter' meets online on a Friday from 10am to 12noon every six weeks. If you want to try new books, enjoy good conversation and have fun you should sign up.

Books can be downloaded from Libraries NI 'Libby app' or requested from your local branch. You can also use audiobooks if you prefer.

If you are interested joining please contact our facilitator, Dr Shelley Tracey directly on by email: shelleyztracey@gmail.com

The Book Club meets on Zoom and the Link will be emailed before each date to those registered.

One of our Carer members told us:

*“We read all sorts of books and you find yourself reading a book you might never have read – Reading the book becomes a shared experience **good conversation and good company**”*



We enjoy a mix of classic and modern titles. Over the following months we will be reading:

DATES

BOOK/AUTHOR

Friday 8 May 26

The Phone Box at the edge of the World,
Author - Laura Imai Messina

Friday 19 June 26

Leonard and Hungry Paul,
Author - Ronan Hession

Friday 25 Sept 26

The Names, Author - Florence Knapp

Friday 6 Nov 26

The Penguin Lessons,
Author -Tom Michell

Friday 18 Dec 26

The List of Suspicious Things,
Author - Jennie Godfrey

Friday 29 Jan 27

Tom Lake, Author - Ann Patchett

Friday 12 Mar 27

The Coast Road, Author - Alan Murrin

Carer Connections



Our Carer Connections are an opportunity for you to take some time out, meet other carers and get support in a relaxed venue. Our Carer Connections are held across four areas of the Trust, **Bushmills**, **Ballymena**, **Ballyclare** and **Maghera** and will take place every six weeks.

Carer Connectors will be at each venue and you can use this time together to enjoy peer support over a tea or coffee and a scone or traybake and you can stay as long as your time allows. Support looks different to everyone, while a cuppa is always part of the conversation, Carer Connections are much more than that, come along and build connections.

One of our Carers told us

“The Carers Connections is a super way to meet up with other Carers. Held in lovely locations, you can enjoy a cuppa and a scone or bun, and just relax for an hour. Or two!!

Everyone is so friendly and welcoming, you don't feel like a stranger. There's always plenty of chat and laughter.

I'd encourage anyone who is thinking about it to come along. You won't regret it”



Each Carer Connection will be advertised prior to event –if you plan to attend please book your place when advertised via new booking link that will be provided

Carer Connections



Mid Ulster Garden Centre, Maghera

Tuesday 21 April 2026 at 10am

Tuesday 8 September 2026 at 10am

Thursday 22 October 2026 at 10am

Wednesday 2 December 2026 at 10am

Tuesday 12 January 2027 at 10am

Thursday 25 February 2027 at 10am

Creative Gardens, Logwood, Ballyclare

Thursday 23 April 2026 at 10.30am

Thursday 3 September 2026 at 10.30am

Tuesday 13 October 2026 at 10.30am

Monday 23 November 2026 at 10.30am

Thursday 7 January 2027 at 10.30am

Tuesday 16 February 2027 at 10.30am

Creative Gardens, Ballymena

Thursday 7 May 2026 at 10am

Monday 14 September 2026 at 10am

Monday 26 October 2026 at 10am

Tuesday 15 December 2026 at 10am

Thursday 28 January 2027 at 10am

Tuesday 9 March 2027 at 10am

Creative Gardens Bushmills

Thursday 14 May 2026 at 10am

Wednesday 30 September 2026 at 10am

Thursday 12 November 2026 at 10am

Monday 21 December 2026 at 10am

Tuesday 2 February 2027 at 10am

Tuesday 16 March 2027 at 10am

Plant Power



Peer support is a vital part of the work in the Carer Hub. We have many carers with lots of skills and many more with forgotten skills, hobbies and interests. We love it when the carer support programme is carer led and co-delivered.

Plant Power our May event, has a growing theme where you can learn something new or reawaken an old interest. Join other carers for a cuppa as they share their knowledge of gardening and flower themed crafts, there will be plenty of activities on the day giving everyone the opportunity to make and take something home. You are welcome to bring along plants/ seeds for a plant swap.

Date: Tuesday 5 May 2026
Time: 10am – 12 noon
Venue: Main Hall, Ballykeel Community Centre
20 Crebilly Rd
Ballymena
BT42 4DN

If you would like to book a place at this event please email:-
carer.hub@northerntrust.hscni.net



**EVERY PLANT HAS THEIR OWN
REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER
TO GROW...**



AND SO DO PEOPLE.

Online Information Session

The Centre for Independent Living are hosting an online session for carers on the support available.

Wednesday 13 May at 10.30am via Microsoft Teams

Join using the link below

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/3710382434440?p=HByJ6XcD1rWRdGWUd8>

Meeting ID: 371 038 243 444 0

Take5
steps to wellbeing



www.makinglifebettertogether.com



Introductory Session for Carers



Join us for an introduction to the Centre for Independent Living NI (CILNI) and the support available to carers and families.

We'll provide a clear overview of Self-Directed Support and Direct Payments, and how they can offer greater choice, control and independence in managing care and support.



And how we'll be there, every step of the way, to guide and support you.

Wednesday, May 13th • 10:30am
Online (via Microsoft Teams)

Visit: www.cilni.org
to find out more



Online Resilience Programme



The Action Mental Health Resilience programme consists of six sessions, each focused on a different topic designed to support participants in building on, and keeping up resilience levels. It covers matters such as:

- Stress management
- Confidence and Self-Esteem
- Communication
- Emotional regulation

There is space for individuals to share and compare notes at their own pace with no pressure to participate if not comfortable. The content is based on a variety of positive psychology concepts and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. This Online programme will be delivered via Zoom, on the dates below from 10.30am to 12 noon each week.

Week 1 – Monday 13th April 2026

Week 2 – Monday 20th April 2026

Week 3 - Monday 27th April 2026

Week 4 – Monday 11th May 2026

Week 5 - Monday 18th May 2026

Week 6 – Monday 25th May 2026

If you are interested in attending please book directly with Francesca at Action Mental Health by email: fverzelli@amh.org.uk



Carer Walking Group

Our carer walking group is carer led and will meet every six weeks. Our Carer Connectors will welcome you and meet you at the Courtyard at Antrim Castle Gardens at 10am, the walk sets off at 10.15am sharp.

Each walk will be advertised prior to event – if you plan to attend please book via new booking link that will be provided



We follow the route into Antrim Castle Gardens.

Dates as follows:

Wednesday 15 April 2026
Wednesday 27 May 2026
Wednesday 16 Sep 2026
Wednesday 28 Oct 2026
Wednesday 09 Dec 2026
Wednesday 20 Jan 2027
Wednesday 03 Mar 2027

Weather Permitting

Our Carer Connectors are walk leader trained, if you would like to receive walk leader training please let us know.

One of our carers told us:

“The Carer Walking Group for me is somewhere I can go for a bit of exercise, meet with other carers whose caring responsibilities may be totally different to mine, but it also means we can talk to each other, share our worries or frustrations with someone who understands what we deal with everyday.”

It's a time for just us, the carers. We are a varied bunch, old and young, male and female, very fit and quite unfit. You can keep your own pace, it's not a race and we know that every carer is welcome”.



Carers Week 8 – 12 June 2026



Event	Date	Time	Venue
Healthy Finances and Support Come and enjoy Morning Tea and hear from 'Make the Call'	Monday 8 June	10.30am – 12.30pm	Bayview Hotel, Portballintrae
Information Fair	Tuesday 9 June	10.30 – 1pm	The Marian Hall, New Row, Kilrea
Mindfulness Workshop Veronica Ellis, Mindfulness Connected Learning	Tuesday 9 June	2pm – 3.30pm	Please register using the link below: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/P8zWYqSBmfoV_xY9SaWA A link for the online workshop will then be forwarded to you in the following few days
Craft - Fused Glass Candle Holder Delivered by Natasha Duddy	Wednesday 10 June	10am – 12 noon	Ballyclare Town Hall
Breathe Laugh Relax The Sunshine Project	Thursday 11 June	10.30am – 12.30pm	The Hub, Draperstown
Healthy Breakfast Health Check Come along for a healthy breakfast and a wellness check. Find out about Take 5 to age well and chat to a nurse.	Friday 12 June	10am – 12.15pm	Leighinmohr Hotel, Ballymena

Booking is essential for Carers Week

If you would like to book a place on any of these events please email: carer.hub@northerntrust.hscni.net



Carer Information Fair

Causeway GP Federation are hosting an information fair during Carers Week.

Tuesday 9 June from 10.30am in The Marian Hall, Kilrea

If you want information on what's available across the local area for family carers come along.

No need to book



CARERS Information Fair

TUESDAY 9TH JUNE 2026
10:30 AM – 13:00 PM

THE MARIAN HALL
NEW ROW, KILREA
BT51 5QL

EVERYONE WELCOME

- ✓ Free to attend
- ✓ No need to book
- ✓ Complimentary Tea & Coffee
- ✓ Light Refreshments
- ✓ Lucky Draw & Prizes

Further details call **07500075419**

Event includes Information Stands from relevant Community, Voluntary & Statutory Organisations, who can offer advice & support to carers

We're supporting Carers Week!



www.makinglifebettertogether.com



Carers Rights Day 2026



Over the last year we have been engaging with carers and staff to develop our new Carer Strategy for the next five years. Public consultation on the Strategy is running 27 February to 22 May 2026 with all responses being considered after the closing date to shape the final Strategy.

SAVE THE DATE



Join us as we plan to launch our new

Carer Strategy 2026 – 2031

on

Thursday 19 November 2026

in

Tullyglass Hotel, Ballymena

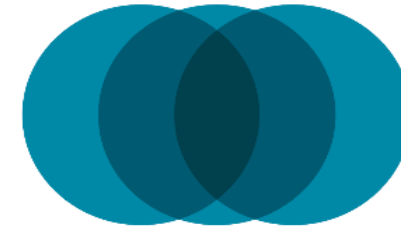
Special Guests on the day

light refreshments included

“Behind every patient or service user is often a dedicated carer providing unwavering support. Through my involvement in Carer Forums within the Trust, I am encouraged that staff recognise that supporting carers is fundamental to delivering high-quality, compassionate care. This consultation is an important opportunity for unpaid carers to ensure that the proposed strategy reflects our voices and our needs.” - Sam Bell MBE, Carer

“This draft Strategy is a step in the right direction by the Trust to address locally, many of the suggestions made by carers living in our Trust area. We are experts in our own caring roles and our experiences should be regarded as central to shaping services that are effective and responsive for both carers and our loved ones”. - Virginia Maxwell, Carer

Online Self-compassion, Gratitude, Building Resilience Workshop



Veronica Ellis
Mindfulness
Connected
Learning

During this 2 hour online workshop we'll create a soft space to explore how gratitude and self-compassion can become your greatest strengths.

This is a fully experiential session where we will move beyond theory, using guided mindfulness and heart-centred meditations, reflection and discussion to help you reconnect, relax, and build resilience:

Friday 9 October 2026 from 10am to 12 noon

Please contact Veronica to register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/mHwuQA0zQFC2Hlqupxx8wA>



Christmas Connections



Christmas Craft

Carer Connectors Helen and Theresa will facilitate a morning of Christmas Craft.

Thursday 26th November at 10.30am
Glarryford Young Farmers Hall
20 Station Rd, Ballymena BT44 9RA

If you would like to book a place at this event please email:-
carer.hub@northerntrust.hscni.net

Country Cakes

Join us for a special Carer Connections to be held on **Thursday 10th December 2026 at 10.30am in Country Cakes, Antrim.**

This is a private venue and very popular, therefore you must book if you plan to attend and detail any dietary requirements

If you would like to book a place at this event please email:-
carer.hub@northerntrust.hscni.net



Carer Journaling



Journals can be places for recording our experiences, practising writing skills, for reflection, finding out more about ourselves or expressing ourselves, for collecting positive memories, and for developing wellbeing.

Carer Journaling six week course will help you identify your own journaling goals. The journaling sessions will be relaxed, interactive and confidential. Prompts will include inspiring quotes, poems, pictures, music and short videos. This course is suitable for anyone interested in journaling for wellbeing. All are welcome.

For more information and to book your place email: shelleyztracey@gmail.com
Journaling sessions will be held online in 2027 on **Mondays** from **10.30am to 12.30pm** as follows:

25 January, 2027

1, 8, 15 and 22 February, 2027

22 March, 2027



One of our carers who completed the last course said:

“The Journaling class was a very important part of my life. I know everyone will think, it's so hard, I can't do that, I will not know anyone.

There are many different parts to the journaling course, poems, and writing if you want to. You can create a journal of thoughts, feelings, just words, pictures or drawings – the choice is yours - No one has to know what you write - the only way is to try it and see.

No one will judge anything you say or do.”

Compassionate Reset



Take5
steps to wellbeing



www.makinglifebettertogether.com

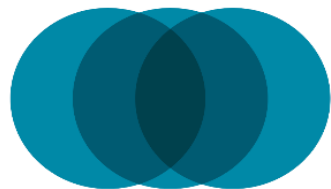
The **COMPASSIONATE RESET** is a mindfulness-based programme focusing on self-care. We are told about the importance of self-care but what is it? And how can we make it part of our lives? This six week online evening programme will resource you to do just that.

What to expect

- Facilitator sharing on the session topic
- Practical ways to integrate what you have learned into everyday life
- Short meditations, mindfulness activities, videos
- Reflections
- Discussions
- Resources to use at home

The aim of this programme is to find ways to care for yourself that are realistic, enjoyable and meaningful. Running over the course of six weeks, from 7pm to 9pm - you will have the opportunity to experiment with these practices and to create your own realistic self-care plan. You will have access to recordings and brief summaries of the practices after each session.

Please contact Veronica to register:- mindfulnessconnect@gmail.com



Veronica Ellis
**Mindfulness
Connected
Learning**

One carer who completed the course last year said: *“I am definitely making more time for me and more considered everyday life choices. Mindfulness has infiltrated my day!”*

Dates: Each Monday 7pm to 9pm

Week 1 Monday 11th January 2027

Week 2 – Monday 18th January 2027

Week 3 – Monday 25th January 2027

Week 4 – Monday 1st February 2027

Week 5 – Monday 8th February 2027

Week 6 – Monday 15th February 2027



Barnardo's Young Carer Service



A young carer is a person up to 18 years old who looks after a family member who needs a lot of care because of illness or a disability.

Barnardo's delivers the NI Regional Young Carers Service in Northern Trust area.

Criteria: aged 8 to 18 and negatively impacted physically, socially, educationally or emotionally



If you know of a young carer who meets this criteria you can self-refer using the link below

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/services/young-carers-service-northern-area-14855>

Useful Contacts

	Email address /Telephone numbers
Antrim and Newtownabbey Council	Email: info@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk Telephone: 0300 123 4568
Age NI	Age NI Advice Service 0808 808 7575 Free to call 9am – 5pm (Mon - Fri)
Carers NI	Email: info@carersni.org Telephone: 02890 439 843
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council	Email: info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk Telephone: 028 7034 7034
Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network	E-mail: info@cwsan.org Telephone: 028 8773 8845 (Stewartstown) Telephone: 028 7930 1606 (Magherafelt) Telephone: 079 1737 2983 (Mobile)
Mid and East Antrim Agewell Partnership (MEAAP)	Email: info@meaap.co.uk Telephone: 028 2565 8604
Mid-Ulster Agewell Partnership	Email: marie.devlin@agewellpartnership.org Telephone: 028 7963 2170

The **Farm Families Health Checks Programme** is making a significant impact across NI.

The Programme has been screening the physical and mental health and well-being of farmers and their families since 2012 by attending Marts, Community Events and selected Agri-food Businesses.

This unique and detailed service has and will continue to have life changing impacts for rural dwellers.

A client who attended a local livestock mart and was diagnosed with high blood pressure said:

"I didn't know my blood pressure was high. It was good this was picked up early before I developed further complications."

It is a NI wide initiative **jointly funded** by **DAERA** and the **Public Health Agency**.

For further information

If you have any questions about the service that the Farm Families Health Checks Programme provides or would like to book the Mobile Unit to attend a Rural Event please contact:

Programme Support Officer



Telephone:
028 2563 5573



Email:
farm.families6@northerntrust.hscni.net

Farm Families Health Checks




FREE HEALTH ASSESSMENTS AND ADVICE

Tailored especially for you



The Farm Families Health Checks Programme is a one-stop mobile facility offering free health assessments and advice tailored specifically for you.



Each health check is completed quickly and efficiently, offering a good indicator of your health, including risk of **heart disease**, early detection of **diabetes** and **emotional health** and **wellbeing**.

When you have completed your written consent form, the following tests will be completed:



After your health check we can signpost you to various support services that are relevant to your needs and locally available to you.

You will also have the opportunity to discuss health issues with the Nurse. Depending on your lifestyle, you will receive advice tailored for you on smoking, healthy eating, keeping active, alcohol consumption and how to spot the early signs of cancer.

What happens next?

When your health assessment is complete you will receive a copy of your results and with your consent we will send a copy to your GP.

We will NOT send any of your information to any third parties without your prior consent.





RURAL MELODY
LADIES CHOIR

Venue:
Moneymore Recreation Centre

Connecting Rural
Women in Mid Ulster

For more information call
Yvonne on 078 2443 1175

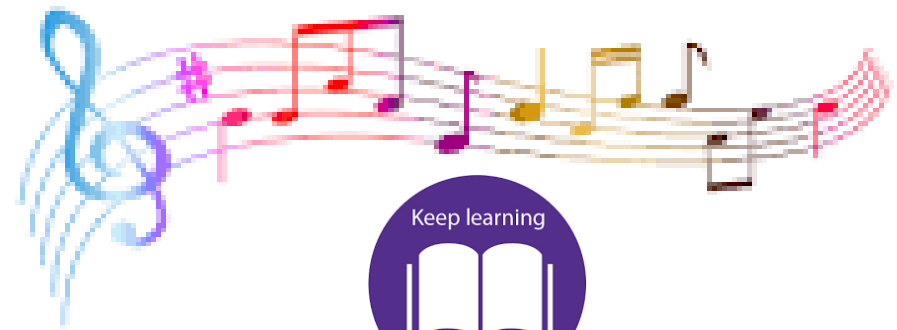


RURAL MELODY LADIES CHOIR

The Rural Melody Ladies Choir takes place on a monthly basis on a Tuesday evening from 7-8pm during the Autumn/Winter months.

Venue – Moneymore Recreation Centre

If you would like to attend or find out any further information please contact Yvonne

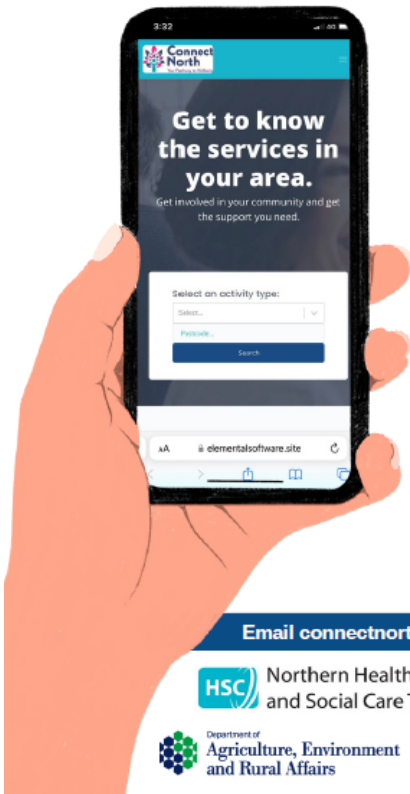


Connect North can help connect people to the right help and support to meet their social needs.

To find out about activities, services and supports available near you:



- 1 Scan QR code using the camera on your device
(or type [elementalsoftware.site/connectnorth](https://www.elementalsoftware.site/connectnorth) into your internet browser)
- 2 Open the link
- 3 Select 'Activity type'
- 4 Insert your postcode
- 5 Click 'search'



Email connectnorth@northerntrust.hscni.net for more information.



Connect North

Connect North is our social prescribing service for adults (18+) living in the Northern Health & Social Care Trust area. We help people find the right social, emotional and practical support to improve wellbeing and reduce isolation.

You can easily search our online directory to find supports, information or activities to suit your needs or the needs of a loved one: <https://www.connectnorth.co.uk>. You are also welcome to attend one of our Link Worker drop-in sessions to speak directly to our team about your needs. The dates are listed within the directory simply select 'Connect North Link Worker Drop-In Session' and enter your postcode.

Those who need more personalised support, can be referred to a Connect North Link Worker through our online portal.

Connect North also invites you to become a Community Connector, to help others find local support using the Directory. No training is required.

You can become a Community Connector in just a few minutes:

<https://northerntrust-hscni.pagetiger.com/CNCommunityConnector>

Further Information

To learn more about Connect North or how to refer someone:

Contact connectnorth@northerntrust.hscni.net

Mid and East Antrim Agewell Partnership

Home & Life Assistants now available in the Ballymena area

Dots...
Delivering Options through Tailored Solutions

Our team can help you manage daily tasks such as cleaning, laundry and assisted shopping.

We offer . . .

Compassion

*Listening and making what matters to **you** a priority*

Quality

Delivering a service with high and consistent standards

Trust

Providing staff that are trained, vetted and supervised



Contact us for a **FREE QUOTATION**
or for further information!



028 2568 9830



www.dotsni.co.uk

Part of **Agewell**
Mid & East Antrim
Partnership



IMPACTAgewell® Support

REFERRAL CRITERIA

- Aged 60 years and over
- Living alone or with another older person
- Registered with one of our partner GP surgeries
- One or more long term health conditions including:
 - Diabetes
 - Heart Failure
 - Stroke
 - Parkinson's
 - Coronary Heart Disease
 - Respiratory(COPD)
 - Frailty
 - Hypertension
 - Osteoporosis
 - Anxiety & Depression

