

## Activity 15.1

### Providing Advice and Help for Caregivers

If you have a friend or relative who cares for someone with a physical or mental disability, you may like to ask them about their experiences as a caregiver. In particular ask them what practical and emotional problems they encounter caring on a day-by-day basis for a handicapped individual. For example:

- Do they have practical problems around the house (e.g. will the sufferer wander off if doors are left open)?
- Do they understand what support and relief they can get from local services?
- Are they able to look after their own physical and mental health (i.e. do they become depressed and disillusioned)?
- Do they get support and help from friends and family?

Once you have identified some issues that are important for this particular caregiver, you could try and find out:

1. what advice national support groups give in the case of these particular issues, e.g. support groups such as the [UK Alzheimer's Society](#), the [Parkinson's Disease Society](#), or the brain injury association [Headway](#)
2. see how carer intervention programmes have been designed to provide caregivers with a range of skills (e.g. how to modify the home environment to support the sufferer or training in skills to develop self-care behaviours by the sufferer) (see [Gitlin, Hauck, Dennis & Winter, 2005](#); [Pinkston, Linsk & Young, 1988](#)).