

Excerpt from Alzheimers Scotland

"I'll get by with a little help from my friends...."

Is your friend living in a care home? "I find it really hard visiting Jessie in there."

- Regular, short visits are often better than long, rare ones.
- Don't make assumptions about what the staff will allow you to do. Ask if you can take your friend out, help with their care or visit their room.
- Take in local news and gossip - it keeps your friend part of the community. Remember to take the good news and bad.
- Perhaps a recording of favourite music can be listened to together, maybe a musical instrument they used to play.
- Think about what your friend did long ago and take in things to remind them. Perhaps a browse through some photographs.
- Take familiar playing cards, dominoes, jigsaw, or crosswords. Concentration may be a problem so activities may have to last for only a few minutes.
- Save up your postcards or take some travel brochures. Share holiday memories and dreams.
- If conversation is difficult, take newspapers or magazines to read - you can read snippets out from time to time.
- Well behaved children and dogs can give great pleasure.
- A book by the bed to record who has visited and what they did or brought is helpful.
- Offer to go with other friends who are shy of going alone.
- Other residents and visitors will also value your visits.
- There doesn't have to be constant conversation. You can both enjoy just sitting quietly together watching the world go by
- Physical contact can often be appreciated – doing your friend's nails or hair, or maybe just sitting holding hands or tapping out the time to some music.