

Information for Family and Friends

What can I do to help?

Denial is part of addiction. Most residents on admission will be aware that their own lives are chaotic but may not be fully aware of the effect their addiction has had on other people. To help our residents come out of denial and begin to face reality we ask the people closest to them to fill in a questionnaire giving details of how they have been affected.

The rehabilitation process is hard work and often painful. It is to be expected that residents will at some time feel angry, homesick and sorry for themselves. The urge to use alcohol or drugs may return with some force. You may find yourself on the receiving end of a phone call saying, "I've had enough, come and get me." If this happens you are strongly advised to bear in mind that these feelings may soon pass, and to speak to one of the counsellors before you make any decision as to what to do.

Rhosserchan recognises that addiction affects those closest to the addict as much as the addicts themselves. Rehabilitation involves change. You may fear that your loved one may come back home very changed, and you may be unsure of how to adjust to living with a person in recovery. You may have difficulty communicating with each other. You may have certain expectations or fears about your future. At an appropriate stage you may be invited to a family conference at which all these issues can be discussed honestly together. Rhosserchan counsellors are experienced at working with the relatives and friends of residents, and are here to offer help to you too.

Why do I feel so upset?

"For years I've been desperate for my relative to get help. Now he's finally got a place in rehab I feel even worse. What's the matter with me?"

We at Rhosserchan understand that loving someone who is suffering from addiction is a profoundly distressing experience. It is likely that you have been hurt, upset and frightened by your loved one's behaviour, possibly to the point where you feel unable to cope with it any more.

When your loved one is admitted to Rhosserchan you may find yourself having very mixed feelings: glad they are getting help, and relieved you know where they are so you can get a night's sleep, but also angry that you now have to be left to cope alone, sad that this is happening to you, and, in spite of all the chaos surrounding them, missing them. Some people feel guilty or somehow to blame for the fact that their loved one is an addict and needs to have professional help. Some family members feel angry that the addict is getting all the help but no-one is asking what they need.

We aim to provide help and support for you too, and you are welcome to talk confidentially to a counsellor by phone or in person.