



Carers Together in Redcar & Cleveland

Issue 30
Autumn 2008

This Magazine is **FREE** please take one

Opening Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday
and Thursday
10.30am–12.30pm
and 1.15pm–2.30pm

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National Carers Strategy

The eagerly anticipated National Carers Strategy, 'Carers at the Heart of 21st Century families and communities', was published in June. Signed up to by seven government departments, it aims to be joined up and support carers so they are not disadvantaged in their own communities.

There was a wide national consultation to find out what carers wanted to help develop the strategy. In Redcar & Cleveland we helped carers in many ways to have their say. The strategy certainly reflects what carers have told us about the effect that caring can have on their lives.

So what does the strategy mean to you?

It sets out a 10 year plan which says that central and local government, the NHS, voluntary sector, families and communities must work together and that by 2018:

- Carers will be treated with dignity and respect as expert care partners

- Carers will have access to services which support them in their role
 - Carers will be able to have a life of their own
 - Carers will not be forced into financial hardship by their caring role
 - Carers will be supported to stay mentally and physically well
- Children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring roles.

The important thing is that these changes actually happen and that the services are developed to respect the wishes and feelings of families and the people they support.

An omission from the strategy is the lack of promise to raise

This Magazine is also available in large print

Comments

Welcome to our 30th edition of the Carers Together Magazine. We are now delighted to be circulating this to almost 1600 carers across the Borough and to around 500 partner agencies and organisations. (Can I also add that we have managed all this without missing a single deadline!)

This issue is packed full of information including the launch of the eagerly anticipated Carers Strategy. The big issue now is how we make it happen!

There is a huge concern that carers benefits have not immediately been dealt with, but have been delayed for a review — we'll keep you updated on any progress.

We also have information from Carers Week 2008 on looking after your own health and in our next issue we will be running a feature on looking after your finances.

I'd like to thank those of you who have sent in your 5p's for the High Five for Carers Campaign, please keep them coming to help us meet our target of 5p for each carer in our Borough. We are also one of the charities registered with the Evening Gazette Make a Wish Campaign, so could we please ask that you send in your vouchers.

And finally, I'm sure those of you who know Jo Swinburne will join me in wishing her and her husband Roger our very best with the imminent arrival of their new baby. Good luck Jo from all of us!

Sue & Nic

Carers Allowance or other benefits immediately. This is very disappointing as carers identified this as a priority during the consultations. However, the government has promised a major review of carers benefits over the next few years

To make sure that progress on the strategy is under constant review, a Standing Commission on Carers has been set up. Dr Phillipa Russell, herself a long term carer and champion for carers, is its Chair. The Commission's role is to oversee the implementation of the strategy; to have a key advisory responsibility to government informing them of any emerging changes and developments as they relate to carers and will provide an independent policy forum to bring all partners together. It should ensure that the carers voice remains heard at both a national and local level.

For more information visit www.dh.gov.uk

Welfare Reform Green Paper

The Government published its latest Welfare Reform Green Paper in July 'No-one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility'. The green paper sets out plans for improving support and work initiatives and is a wide ranging consultation on the future of welfare.

It is not the review of carers benefits that the Government announced in the Carers Strategy.

The green paper can be found at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/noonewrittenoff> - the deadline for responses is 22 October 2008.



The Redcar & Cleveland Carers Partnership celebrated its first birthday on June 13th 2008. During this time it has established itself as a key partner in informing issues as they directly relate to carers.

Lynn Johnson, Head of Adult Social Care, gave an interesting presentation about Putting People First - the national agenda for change in the delivery of social care in the UK.

She acknowledged that change can be worrying for all of us, but putting people at the heart of the support they would like to receive is central to the personalisation agenda. Debbie Sheldon, Adult and Childrens Services, spoke about the progress made in Redcar & Cleveland. She said that the Local Authority were aware that current systems are not working as well as they could, so we need to consider how we can do things differently to improve peoples' lives. She explained that personalisation will offer choice and control to both the carer and the person they care for and that the Local Authority is committed to this; but we need to work together and listen to each other so we can make it happen. She welcomed the opportunity to speak to the Partnership and said she was looking forward to taking part in the discussion groups and listening to the views and thoughts of all participants. She added that this was the starting point and suggested that 'Personalisation' should become a regular item on the agenda.

Groups then took time out to talk about a



range of topics relating to the personalisation agenda:

- Direct Payments
- Services for the person you look after
- Support for carers
- Involvement/keeping you informed
- Coping with change

There was a real buzz about the room as everyone joined in with their thoughts and views. These have all been captured and copies of the comments are available. They will also be used to inform the development of services.

As a result some carers have put their names forward to be involved in some of the planning sub-groups. If you would like to receive information about the partnership or associated groups, please contact Angela on 01642 488977. A sign language communicator attends every meeting.

In your area



Irene Poynter

TS10 & TS11 Areas

There have been many consultations recently giving Carers the opportunity to make their views known.

Consultations have included the Older Peoples Consultation, Service Provision, Neurological Conditions, Coast & Country Housing Strategy and Learning Disabilities. There have also been opportunities for carers to attend the Carers Partnership, a discussion on Intermediate Care and a meeting with MP Vera Baird arranged by Epilepsy Action where questions were raised on a range of issues.

Some of the consultations have yet to be reported on and I will try to keep you all informed, alternatively watch the magazine for further details. The Learning Disabilities Consultation requested by Dr. Whalley produced a very positive outcome for carers. His team are now aware of carers' views and these will be written into their service plan.

The new Carers Strategy aims to improve services offered to carers at their GP practice and help to improve the health and wellbeing of carers. Some GP practices have patient groups, why not get involved so that your voice as a carer is heard within your practice. If you would like to get involved but don't know where to start give me a ring on 01642 491572.

Irene

Funded by the Big Lottery



Toni McHale

TS6 & TS7 Areas

As the summer comes to a close and the cost of living rises it might be time to take a few moments to check that you and the person you are caring for are

receiving the correct benefits. It is surprising how many people are not claiming their full entitlement, this year alone we have helped people claim benefits worth £80,000.

Many people are currently contacting energy suppliers, it may be worth asking if they have a priority register for customers who rely on energy for stair lifts, respirators etc. This will ensure in the event of any power cuts you will be one of the first to be reconnected.

The computer course held at Golden Boy Green during July was very successful. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed it, learnt a lot and has asked for more. We are trying to arrange further sessions, so if you would like to register on the waiting list, please contact me on 01642 491572.

Do you care for somebody who suffers from Dementia or Alzheimers? The friendly group meet every month over a bar meal and offer support to each other.

For more information on any of the above or for an appointment please ring me on 01642 491572.

Toni

Funded by Redcar & Cleveland PCT



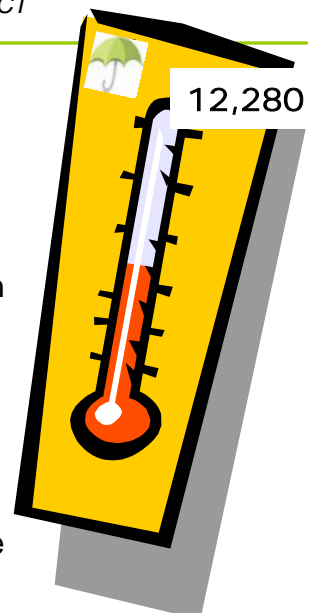
High 5's for Carers

Thanks again to those of you who have sent in your 5ps for our High 5's for carers campaign.

We have now collected £614 but still have a way to go in collecting 5p for each carer living in Redcar & Cleveland.

The money raised will go towards our Carers Social Fund which provides social activities (including our Carers Christmas Party see page 12 for details) and Carers Complementary Therapies.

4 Once again we'd like to give you all a big thank you and ask you to please keep collecting!



Watch this space!

To be confirmed

TS12, TS13, TS14 Areas

For those of you living in the above areas, we are currently awaiting to announce our new member of the team who will

be joining us to cover for Jo whilst she's on her maternity leave.

In the meantime, the rest of the team are all pulling together to cover the East Cleveland area until we have our replacement in place.

If you would like to speak to someone about any caring issues you may have, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01642 488977 and we can either chat over the phone or arrange to meet you at a convenient venue in your area.

Funded by The Northern Rock foundation



Glenda Middleton

Health & Wellbeing Grant

I have been working with carers of adults with a learning disability and registering them with the Emergency Card Scheme. I

visited many in their own homes to complete the forms which also gave us a chance to talk about Carers Assessments.

Following this a majority of carers decided to have an assessment. These led to a wide range of outcomes including increased benefits; Direct Payment to employ help in the garden; extra equipment and a move to supported living.

A Carers Assessment gives you the chance to talk about the help you need with caring, plus help to maintain your own health and balance caring with your life, work and family commitments. For more information contact The Access Team at Social Services on 01642 771500 or Carers Together.

Glenda

Funded by the Local Authority and WNF

Attention!

Carers Emergency Card



 Carers Together



“If I was suddenly taken ill or involved in an accident, who would know that I had someone at home, possibly left alone, that depends on me?”

If this is a question which frequently crosses your mind, then the Emergency Card Scheme is for you.

The Emergency Card scheme is a simple way for you to activate a pre-agreed care plan should you be delayed, taken ill or involved in an accident and were unable to get word to someone at home.

The card is the size of a credit card and fits into a wallet or a purse, discreetly identifying you as a carer. Each card has an individual number which you activate or can be activated on your behalf should the unforeseen occur.

To find out more about the card and how this could work for you, contact Carers Together on 01642 488977 or download a registration form from www.carerstogether-rc.org.uk

A Carer's Story

By Trevor & Janet Longden

Some time ago, Redcar and Cleveland Council decided to revamp the service they provided for learning disabled adults. Although many of the adults (along with their parents and carers) welcomed the change, there were some who were dissatisfied with the new regime and believed that an outside agency could provide a more tailored service.

Amongst those parents and carers were Trevor and Janet Longden. With the introduction of the new system, their 30 year old Downs Syndrome daughter, Sarah, was facing losing touch with friends. They decided to look at options available via a Direct Payment, a system that the Government were actively promoting whereby learning disabled adults were paid directly in order for them to purchase a service of their own choice. As more and more people looked into Direct Payments it became obvious to Trevor and Janet that there was a need for a service that placed the wishes of its users at its core.

Trevor and Janet both had long histories of involvement with learning disabled organisations. Trevor had spent time first as Chair of Governors, at Kiltonthorpe Special School as well as having been an active member of Special Olympics. Janet had also spent many years with Special Olympics, but

more importantly, she had spent the last 15 years working with learning disabled children and adults at Kiltonthorpe School and Skelton Social Skills Centre.

In April of 2007, Redcar Education & Development Group was formed with the unequivocal support of 16 learning disabled adults and their parents and carers. East Cleveland Baptist Church, Redcar, became a base for the group and the Leadership Council became a supportive partner.

Over the past 12 months Redcar Education & Development Limited has provided 16 learning disabled adults with an environment that they themselves have had a huge part in fashioning. Their days are filled with activities of their own choosing, such as visits to Hartlepool Maritime Museum; afternoons line dancing; day trips to Whitby; mornings practicing Tai Chi and much more. Because the group members themselves decide what they want to do, they also choose which days they want to attend. It can be 1 day a week or 5, or anything in between.

Should you want any more information about Redcar Education & Development Limited or what it can offer phone Janet Longden on 07778 543599.



Recipe

Roast Pepper, Tomato & Lentil Soup

Kindly provided by our very own Toni



1 Red Pepper
1 Orange Pepper
500g tomatoes
200g split red lentils soaked
(optional)

1 Garlic clove
1 Large onion
½ pint vegetable stock
A small handful of fresh basil
Salt and pepper to season

Deseed and chop the peppers and roast in a pre-heated oven at 200C/gas 6 for 10-15 mins
Chop the onion and garlic and fry in small amount of olive oil until tender
Add the chopped tomatoes, roast peppers, lentils and vegetable stock
Bring to boil, then simmer for 20 minutes (or until lentils cooked)
Five minutes before the end add the chopped basil and season to taste.

6 If you prefer a smooth soup liquidise or serve as it is with a nice slice of crusty bread



Carers Together in Redcar & Cleveland

Are you a carer?

People do not always recognise themselves as a carer and we regularly hear comments such as “I’m not her carer, I’m her daughter” or “but I don’t receive Carers Allowance”. However, if you read our definition on the back page, you’ll see that if you provide a significant proportion of your life providing support to someone, regardless of your relationship with them, then you are a carer!

Are you registered with us?

By registering with us, you will receive our magazine **free** through your door four times a year, we will keep you informed of changes in services, benefits and legislation. We tell you how you can get involved in consultations to improve services and you can join in with any activities or training events which we may be holding. We also have a Complementary Therapist who provides numerous therapies for only £3 per session!

All of your details are protected by the Data Protection Act and are not shared with anyone outside of our organisation.

Even if you do not wish to receive any information or participate with our activities, by registering with us, it allows us to collect statistical information which puts weight behind our continuous strive to improve services within our Borough.

You do not need to be registered with us to access our service, so if you do need to speak to someone in confidence about your caring role, then please do not hesitate to call us.

To find out more about our service or to register with us today, then contact us on 01642 488977.

Quiz Time!

Now it’s time to sit yourself down with a pen, piece of paper and a cuppa and have a go at our cryptic quiz. *The answers are all below.*

Name the musical groups

1. Basically Blood Coloured
2. Large meat eating birds
3. The head of the Church of England
4. An orange cocktail
5. 3ft of feathered friends



From the adverts—name that brand!

1. Lick the lid of Life
2. Do the Twist and keep your joints supple
3. It’s not just food it’s
4. We live electrical
5. Cleaner clothes down under

1. Muller Yogurts
 2. Seven Seas
 3. M & S
 4. Comet
 5. Daz
-
1. Simply Red
 2. The Eagles
 3. Queen
 4. Bucks Fizz
 5. The Yardbirds

Answers

'Carers can't afford to be ill'

The theme of this year's Carers Week was 'Carers can't afford to be ill'. Poor health and financial worries are often linked together in families where there is a sick or disabled adult or child who needs looking after. It is very easy to get into debt when you become a carer and there is much evidence to prove that carers neglect their own health because of caring responsibilities.

A Carers Week survey of 2,000 carers in the UK highlights the effect caring can have, particularly on health, relationships, career and finances; key findings that carers surveyed reported include:

- 77% feel their health is worse as a result of caring
- A large majority of carers feel ill, anxious or exhausted: a staggering 95% regularly cover up the fact their health is suffering in order to continue their caring responsibilities.

Based on the survey results, it is little surprise that the health of so many carers is suffering:

- 71% had been unable to take at least one week of "holiday" or "free" time by themselves
- 60% of carers in paid employment have used part of their annual leave to devote more time to caring
- 67% said there had been times when they could not fit in a visit to the GP about their own health.

This leads to extra worry and anxiety for many carers, 96% said they were very concerned about who would take over their role if they became ill.

Look After Your Health

Many carers suffer ill health due to the physical and mental strains of caring. If you neglect your own health you may have problems in the future so make the most of the support that is available.

• Your GP

Many carers see their GP as their most important source of support. Let your GP know that you are a carer and enter this on both your notes and those of the person you care for. This will give them an understanding of the pressure you are under and help them to provide the help that you need.

• Take care of yourself

If you are worried about your own health, make an appointment with your GP or Nurse for yourself. Don't try to discuss your own health at an appointment about the person you care for.

• Help from Social Services

Ask your local social services department for a Carer's Assessment. Think about what would help you look after **your** own health. You may wish to take a break from caring. This could prevent you from becoming exhausted or unwell. Or you may need extra help to manage on a daily basis.

• Your mental health

Caring can be stressful and you should look after both your mental and physical health. If you feel isolated and alone, think about how you can meet new people, perhaps through a training course, a new leisure activity or contact us.

• Safe lifting and handling

Make sure that you are lifting and handling the person you care for safely so that you do not injure yourself. Talk to a healthcare professional about training to help you lift safely. If you need equipment to help you lift safely, talk to your local social services.

• In an emergency

It can be worrying to think what would happen to the person you care for if anything happened to you in an emergency. Carers Together have an Emergency Card Scheme which will help you plan care for the person you care for if anything happens to you.

• Flu jab

Carers can ask for a flu jab every winter. GPs can give carers flu jabs, but only if they have enough supplies after vaccinating the other priority groups.

If you would like to speak about the above or any other caring issue please contact us on 01642 488977

Carers Online

We are delighted to announce the launch of our brand new exciting Website www.carerstogether-rc.org.uk.

The web site has been designed to give carers easy access to information and support relating to their caring role 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The site holds information on assessments, keeps you up to date with information on carers rights and legislation and also links to other relevant statutory and voluntary organisations and support groups.

The site also has past and current copies of our popular Carers Together Magazines, so even if you're not registered with us, you never have to worry about missing a copy! We keep you updated with our development work and the Carers Partnership and we can keep you in touch with both local and national issues all relevant to your caring role in our What's New section.



So next time you're online why not check us out and remember to pass our details on to anyone that you know that's caring! **Happy surfing!**

Fairer Charging Policy

Some of you may remember that during 2006 the Council asked people what they felt about the way they assessed peoples ability to contribute to their care costs.

As a result of the outcomes from the consultation and together with the need to maintain and improve services, from October 2008 the Council intend to include Day Services and Opportunities as chargeable services. This involves services such as day care for older people or day activities or opportunities for people with disabilities. It will also apply to people who receive a Direct Payment.

This will be undertaken under the Fairer Charging Policy which has been developed

under the national framework and means there will be a fairer, more consistent approach to charging.



Service users will only be asked to contribute to their service following an assessment of their ability to pay. This will take into account the cost of care, income and allowances made for expenditure, including additional expenditure which may arise from a disability. The council will ensure that the charge does not reduce the net income below the basic level of Income Support.

More information about the Fairer Charging Policy can be found on the council website at www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk



Action for blind people

Action for blind people is a national charitable organisation that provides practical support to blind and partially sighted people through work, housing, leisure and support.

Our vision is quite simple. We believe in a world where people who are blind or partially sighted are enabled to actively participate in society, and have equal access to the choices and opportunities that so many take for granted.

Redcar & Cleveland Supporting People Team are funding Action for Blind People to provide a housing related

service for visually impaired people living in Redcar & Cleveland. We can offer a wide range of support; tailored to meet individual needs, to enable visually impaired people to live independently in the home of their choice. Some examples of how we can help are: providing up to date information on the latest equipment available and developments in assistive technology; moving to more suitable accommodation or obtaining adaptations to make your home environment accessible; seeking or retaining employment; and support to obtain grants and benefit entitlements.

A gentleman from Redcar made the following comment in the Coast & Country magazine after receiving support from us:

“ In the last issue of your magazine you sent me a letter regarding Action for Blind People. I contacted these people and what a great help they have been to me. They are so polite and helpful. It was such a lovely surprise to know that people out there can reassure you with simple but effective help. If any of your readers are sceptical I can tell you first hand, have no fears in contacting them ”

So if you, or a family member is visually impaired and you would like to discuss a range of options that may help you to retain your independence please contact

**Action for Blind People's North East Team
on Tel: 01642 233439**

Do you have problems with your sight or know someone who does?

Whatever the need, Action for Blind People can help

Our free Mobile Sight Loss Information Service will be in your local area soon with the latest aids, equipment, information and advice at:

**Redcar Library Car Park
Coatham Road
Redcar
TS10 1RP**

Wednesday 24th September Between 10am and 4pm

If you need support with sight loss, talk to our experts—talk to Action. Please call our National Freephone Helpline on **0800 915 4666** Or visit our website on **www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk**



Q: Why wasn't the vampire working
A: Because he was on a coffin break



Q: How do monsters tell their future
A: They read their horrorscopes



Q: What do you get when you cross a ghost with an owl
A: Something that scares you and doesn't give a hoot



3rd DIRECT PAYMENTS FORUM

Independence, choice and control?

A Direct Payment is a payment that can be made to people who are eligible to receive community care services from Social Services, and who would prefer to arrange their own services. Direct Payments can offer more choice and control over the services and support you receive and give you more independence.

Do you already receive a direct payment?

- Does it work well for you?
- How could the service and support be improved?

Have you thought about receiving a direct payment?

- Need more information?
- Want support?
- Tell us what you think

Sandra Conway is the Direct Payments' Operations Manager for Redcar and Cleveland's Direct Payments' Support Service, North East Centre for Independent Living (**N.E.C.I.L**)

Chris Pope is the Direct Payments' Coordinator with **Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council's Adult Services Division**

Sandra and Chris will both be at this session and want to hear about your direct payments' experiences in order to improve the service as well as find out about the barriers or fears you may have about getting a direct payment.

Wednesday 12th November 2008

11.30am –12.30pm

Coatham Memorial Hall

7 Coatham Rd. Redcar TS10 1RH

ALL WELCOME! FREE DRINKS AND NIBBLES

Evening Gazette Make a Wish Campaign

Cash for your Community



The Evening Gazette Make a Wish Campaign has £30,000 to give away to local clubs, schools and charities and we are asking you to once again support us by sending us your tokens.

Thanks to your generosity, last year we were awarded £135.45 which was put towards our Complementary Therapy Sessions, allowing Carers to access a wide range of therapies for only £3 per session.

The money is divided by the number of tokens collected—this means the bigger the share of

tokens, the bigger the slice of cash. So from the 1st October 2008 when you see the tokens in the Gazette please send them to us at Carers Together, 23 Queen Street, Redcar TS10 1AB.

Thanks again for your support!



Who is a Carer?

A carer spends a significant proportion of their life providing unpaid support to family or potentially friends. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems.

*Carers at the Heart of 21st Century
Families and Communities*

Computer Courses for Carers

A number of carers recently participated in our Computer Course at Golden Boy Green in South Bank.

The group learnt about the basic functions of a computer, how to safely search the internet and how to set up and use their own email accounts.



The feedback which we received was excellent with people now wanting to learn more about online shopping, downloading photographs from digital cameras and using web cams.

We are hoping to set up a new course in the not too distant future, so if you would like to learn more about computers then please let us know.

Carers Xmas Party

Carers Rights Day 2008



We are once again celebrating Carers Rights Day 2008 in Redcar & Cleveland with a Carers Christmas Party.

This year we are holding the party at:

**The Coatham Memorial Hall
Friday 5th December 2008
11.30am till 3.00pm**

And will include a buffet lunch, the usual fun and games along with a visit from Santa.

The party is **free** to anyone caring within Redcar & Cleveland, but numbers are limited so please book early!

For further information please contact either Nicola or Angela on 01642 488977.



Dates for your Diary

GET TOGETHER PUB LUNCHES — for Carers who support a person with Alzheimer's or dementia.

THERAPIES FOR CARERS — every Tuesday £3.00 per session. Short courses have also been arranged as follows:

Complementary Therapies and their uses 15th Sept - 20th October £20.00 for 6 weeks

Facials and Product Making 10th Nov - 8th Dec £17.50 for 5 weeks

CARERS CHRISTMAS PARTY — Friday 5th December 2008 at Coatham Memorial Hall.

CARERS PARTNERSHIP — The next meeting is taking place on 1st December 2008

For information or to book a place on any of the above, please contact us on 01642 488977.