



Carers Together

in Redcar & Cleveland

Issue 40 (our Ruby Edition!)
Spring 2011

This magazine is **FREE**

Opening Hours

Monday to Thursday
9.00am – 5.00pm
and Friday 9.00am - 4.30pm

Contact Details

23 Queen Street
Redcar TS10 1AB
Tel: 01642 488977

Email:

carerstogoether@btconnect.com
www.carerstogoether-rc.org.uk

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The True Face of Carers



13 - 19 June 2011



The theme for Carers Week 2011 is *The True Face of Carers*, Carers Together is one of the many partners participating in Carers Week 2011, being held on 13-19 June 2011. During this week, thousands of events and activities will take place throughout the UK, around the theme "The True Face of Carers."

Full story on page 5

Tees Valley Carers Organisations unite to give carers a stronger voice

Carers Together are working in partnership with Carers Organisations including The George Hardwick Foundation, Sanctuary Carr-Gomm and Darlington Association on Disability to be part of Tees Valley Carers, providing a stronger voice for carers.

Although the four organisations will remain independent in their own area, we are working in partnership as 'Tees Valley Carers' to work together to

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This Magazine is now delivered direct to 2,454 carers

Comments

Welcome to our 40th Ruby edition to the Carers Together Magazine.

The magazine has been in circulation since the summer of 2001 when it was posted out to 300 carers. However, 10 years on and we are now delighted to be reaching out to 2,454 carers.

We are hoping that with our 'I care for someone campaign' (see the article opposite) we can contact many more carers across our borough and Tees Wide.

We've had a fantastic uptake to our Give Us a Break Health Checks and have many more activities planned for the next few months leading us up to Carers Week 2011.

If you'd like to join us at any of our events this spring, why not check out page 4 and see what's happening in and around your area.

As usual we would like you to continue sending us your stories, jokes and recipes for the magazine.

Have a enjoyable Easter.

Sue & the team



Continued from the front page

achieve common goals.

An example of the way we work together is that we now have a representative for the Tees area on the regional carers steering group, which ensures we are kept in touch with the Department of Health.

Tees Valley Carers have recently been awarded a grant from the Department of Health to produce and run the advertising campaign '**I care for someone**'. The campaign will raise awareness of carers and hopefully encourage them to contact their local carers organisation for support.

A radio commercial will be running on both TFM and Capital Radio from April through to July. We are currently in the process of filming a television advert which features several carers including Gordon Mogg, carer and Chair of the Carers Partnership. The advert will be shown from April and run throughout carers week until July and we hope that it will help identify carers and inform them of the support that they can access.

As part of the promotional campaign we are also producing posters and leaflets which you will soon be seeing around your local area and a website which will direct people to their local carers organisation.

Without the strength of a Tees wide carers group, an initiative like this would not have been possible to us as individual organisations.

Carers Rights Day 2010

We would like to apologise to all of you who were looking forward to our Carers Christmas Party to Celebrate Carers Rights Day 2010. Unfortunately due to the severe weather conditions we had to cancel the event at short notice.

We hope we can make this up to you by offering a free bus to take carers to York for the day during Carers Week. (See page 5 for details).

Carers taking care of their health

Each and every one of us can become a carer at any time in our lives and we accept this role and the tasks involved without any training.



In 2010, NHS Redcar and Cleveland funded Carers Together to develop and deliver a Health training programme for carers to promote carers health and wellbeing, increase the understanding of health and social care services and learn new skills relevant to their role.

handling medicines and dealing with stress and the importance of sleep. There was also a session on nutrition and diet, looking at way to introduce nutritious foods to the diet and using additions to food so that extra calories are consumed.

'my health is important, there is no one to look after my husband if I am ill'

The course consisted of eight two hour sessions and each was followed by a buffet lunch giving everyone a chance to speak to the tutors about their own individual circumstances.

The course included topics such as health and wellbeing with an introduction to basic first aid,

Chris Pope from the Local Authority provided a session on social care and carers assessments, informing carers of their entitlements and the process involved in having an assessment. Chris explained the different methods of providing services including personalisation, individualised budgets and direct payments.



Kathryn Tate and Debbie Allison from MRCCS provided a session on falls awareness and prevention, recognising and reducing the risk of falls and how to deal with the situation if someone does fall. The session also looked at assessment for equipment and the types of equipment available.

At the end of the course each of the carers involved were presented with a certificate and a brief evaluation was completed. The feedback which we received was fantastic and we are now planning to run further programmes and one off courses. If you would be interested in participating in any of our training, please contact us on 01642 488977.

Can you figure out these anagrams of songs by The Beatles (*find the answers are on page 7*)

1. BELT TIE (3 words)
2. TOOTH WOUND HAIRY LAND (6 words)
3. NANNY PEEL (2 words)
4. TARAS HIGH DANDY (4 words)
5. WOUNDS THIS TAT (3 words)
6. STEEDY RAY (1 word)
7. DOLE MOVE (3 words)
8. DIE TRICK TOTE (3 words)
9. SHOVEY LOUSE (3 words)
10. BEG TACK (2 words)

In your area

Welcome to in your area, the part of the magazine that tells you what is happening across our borough and within your local community.

Community Outreach Team

At Carers Together we have a team of Community Development Workers who are here to provide support to people caring for someone who lives in Redcar & Cleveland. Whether you have recently found yourself in a caring role and are unsure of what support is available to you; or if you have been caring for a while but are looking for someone to speak to who understands your situation, our team are on hand to help.

We work in partnership with many organisations



including health and social care, Citizen Advice Bureau, Department of Work and Pensions, leisure and housing, so regardless of your issue, we are here to help. We also house a vast amount of information in our Information Resource which is open for you to come and browse through.

To speak to a member of our team or to make an appointment to see us in one of our 21 community outreach venues contact us on 01642 488977 or 01642 491572.

Meet the Community Outreach Team

From left to right on the back row:
Irene Poynter Carers Health & Wellbeing Liaison Worker for TS10 & TS11 areas.

Jo Swinburne Dementia Advisor
Sue Humphrey Carers Development Worker for TS12, TS13 & TS14 areas.

From left to right on the bottom row:
Amanda Spencer Carers Development Worker for TS6 & TS7 areas.

Glenda Middleton Carers Development Worker



What's happening this Spring/Summer

March

Dementia Music Therapy Session	Friday 29th March 2—4 pm	25K Community Centre, Redcar
Give us a Break, Healthy Heart Screening	Tuesday 22nd March	Old Co-op Loftus
New Marske Carers Group	Wednesday 27th March 10—12	Surestart, Marske

April

Dementia Advisor Service Pub Lunch	Friday 15th April 12 noon	O'Gradys, Redcar
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May

New Marske Carers Group	Wednesday 18th May 10—12	Surestart, Marske
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As a user led organisation, the services, events and training which we provide are all developed through your comments and feedback. If you have any suggestions for activities or training that you would like us to provide or would be interested in attending please let us know.

The True Face of Carers

Continued from the front page

The aim of the Carers Week is to highlight what life is like for carers and what types of challenges carers face while caring for their loved ones. The week long events will also show how carers think that society sees them and the kind of help they receive from statutory agencies, and local and national government.

In celebration of Carers Week, Carers Together is providing the opportunity for a break by offering carers free return transport to York. Once the bus reaches York, carers will be able to spend the day as they wish either shopping, sight seeing or simply enjoying the British summer weather by the banks of the river (we can but only hope it's sunny!).

13 - 19 June 2011



The trip will take place on Wednesday 15th June and leave at 9.15am prompt from the Coatham Bowl car park and will leave York at 2.15pm, with an estimated return time of 3.45pm. If you would like to book your place (please remember numbers are limited so it will be first come, first served) then please contact us on 01642 488977. Unfortunately the places are only available to Carers.

Carers Together will also be displaying a number of information boards at GP surgeries across the borough in the hope of identifying 'hidden carers' and inform them of the support that they are entitled to.

Chilli's and Coastal View & Moor News invite you to a special night on the town

In association with Coastal View, Chilli's are pleased to announce they are holding a charity evening on Sunday April 17th, in support of Carers Together in Redcar and Cleveland.

Carers Together have a team of Community Development Workers who provide support to people caring for someone within the Borough of Redcar & Cleveland. They can offer information and guidance in all aspects of health and social care relating to both the citizen and the carer, in association with other local agencies where appropriate.

Chilli's and Coastal view applaud the vital work of Carers Together and ask you to support them by coming along to our charity night. For £9.95 per head, with a generous donation from every ticket sold going to Carers Together, you will be able to sample Chilli's legendary Indian Cuisine and first class service in their fine, spacious restaurant.

Not only that, you will be in very good company and amongst friends as local MP Ian Swales and his wife will be in attendance. Ian has agreed to give a short, informal after dinner speech and will take questions from those attending. Like many, Ian cares passionately about the people of his community and this evening will provide a unique opportunity to meet him in person.

We will also be holding a prize raffle with all proceeds going to Carers Together in support of their ongoing community projects. Staff from Carers Together will also be available should you wish to discuss any aspects of their services.

Tickets can be purchased in advance from either Chilli's or Carers Together whose offices are at 23 Queen Street, Redcar, TS10 1AB.

For further information please contact Chilli's on 01642 490892 or Carers Together on 01642 488977.



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VISION

All carers should have full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life, be respected and included as equal members of society.

Despite the Big Freeze and Christmas only 12 days away, the December Carers Partnership was once again well attended.

Karen Bowers, Local Authority, gave an update of the CQC Inspection Report and the implementation plan. Many concerns were expressed about the effects of spending cuts on carers issues; and there was a lively discussion about other ways of working together to deliver positive outcomes whilst reducing expenditure.

Sue Reeves introduced the refreshed National Carers Strategy, 'Recognised, Valued and Supported : next steps for the Carers Strategy' published on November 25th following the governments consultation to establish carers

priorities over the next 4 years, which the Partnership had responded to in September.

Sue Renvoize said that in light of the Refreshed National Strategy and CQC inspection we now needed to monitor and strengthen the local Carers Strategy. It was agreed to further develop the steering group to include carers which will report back to the Carers Partnership. Les Simpson and Gordon Mogg agreed to be part of the group.

STOP PRESS: Local Cuts Impact on Carers Partnership - March 2011

What a contrast in weather for the March Partnership, the sun shone, there were blue skies and members turned out in force once more.

Nikki Sidgwick, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Lead for the Local Authority, gave an overview of safeguarding adults and the importance of recognition and reporting.

Ian Hutchinson, Mental Health Services Carers Co-ordinator, then delivered a presentation about Carers Assessments and how they can lead to carers getting support.

Carole Dodd, Acting Head of Adult Social Care, attended the meeting on behalf of the Local Authority. She explained the council had to make financial cuts and that the Carers

would no longer be funded.

She expressed regret that this was the case and hoped that the views and involvement of Carers would be able to continue through other ways. Janet Evans, Board member of Carers Together, expressed concern that the cut could lead to a loss of public goodwill and that it is important to maintain routes of engagement. She emphasised Carers Together will continue to provide information and support to Carers and enable them to have a voice in various ways including focus groups.

Sue Reeves thanked Gordon Mogg for his work as Co-chair and informed the meeting that Carers Together would be organising a meeting in June to mark Carers Week, and details will be confirmed later.

A letter from Jack and Dolly

Dolly and I have always been involved in our local community and over the years have had a very active social life; we are soul mates and are quite self sufficient.

A few years back when Dolly started showing signs of confusion it was only natural for me to protect her and it was my duty as her husband to always take care of her. As she became more confused and I was doing more to look after her, our family started suggesting that we possibly needed some help. I refused to accept any help, in fact you could say that I was quite insulted by even the suggestion of it, but I wouldn't admit that I was actually beginning to feel pretty tired myself.

Someone, I can't remember who, told me about Carers Together and after chatting to them I decided to join one of their activity groups. It's a very relaxed and friendly group and if something crops up and I can't get there or I'm late, everyone understands. I've made some really good friends

with others like me who are looking after their loved ones and we've shared our tales both good and not so good. After hearing about how they manage and what help they get, I finally decided to take the plunge and contact Social Services.

The Social Worker came round and had a chat with us and told us that rather than having what I would call traditional carers, we could have a 'Personal Assistant'. Dolly is over the moon as she now has her 'friend' who comes in a few times a week to do whatever she fancies. She's a lovely lass and they get on really well, sometimes they have a cuppa and a chat; sort out some jobs around the house or pop out for a bit of shopping. It's a relief for me knowing that Dolly is happy and safe and I can get some time to myself. I'll admit it now, but my family were right! However, I'd still have still be struggling by myself if it hadn't been for my friends at the group, because by listening to their stories it's made me realise that there is nothing wrong in getting some help.



Recipe

Creamy Ham, Leek and Mushroom Spaghetti
Sent to us by Janet Evans



Ingredients

2 tsp olive oil
2 medium leeks, thinly sliced
200g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
300g spaghetti
140g low fat soft cheese
84g wafer-thin smoked ham, shredded
Small pack of basil
25g grated parmesan

- Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Stir in the leeks, 2 tbsp water and some seasoning, cover, then cook for 5 mins over a medium heat until softened. Add the mushrooms and garlic, then cook for 3 mins or more. Meanwhile, cook the spaghetti according to pack instructions, then drain, reserving a little of the cooking liquid.
- Stir the soft cheese into the leek and mushroom mixture, adding enough of the reserved pasta liquid to give a sauce-like consistency. Add the ham, basil leaves and Parmesan, then toss in the spaghetti.

Answers to our Beatles anagrams

1. Let it be 2. I want to hold your hand 3. Penny Lane 4. A hard days night 5. Twist and shout
6. Yesterday 7. Love me do 8. Twist and Shout 9. She loves you 10. Get back

Carers Missing Millions

A report into carers' unclaimed benefits

CARERS UK
the voice of carers

Over 300,000 people in the UK who care, unpaid, for ill, frail or disabled relatives may be missing out on the financial support they are entitled to. This amounts to £843 million in unclaimed Carer's Allowance every year (£2.8 million in Redcar & Cleveland), which could be providing basic financial support for carers.

There is a £53.90 a week Carer's Allowance, but it is not often claimed. Carers on low incomes might also qualify for other benefits on top of the allowance, such as means tested Income Support and Pension Credit. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, available via local councils, might be available too.

There are 6 million carers throughout the UK. Of these, 1.25 million carers care for 50 or more hours per week. Recent research by the NHS Information Centre has shown that this pressure on families is growing, as the percentage of carers caring for 50 hours or more a week has doubled in the last 9 years.

Carers UK estimates that carers save the UK £87 billion a year, yet many face isolation and financial hardship as a result of caring. It is vital that carers are guided to financial support and protections for the State Pension if they have give up work to care.

"Small Steps = Big Changes"

Parents Working in Partnership

Small Steps = Big Changes is a parent-led group in Redcar & Cleveland who have children with additional needs or disabilities.

We are working together to improve and influence services for children with disabilities and their families. We have a steering group of parents that are supported by the local authority's Participation Officer. The steering group meet six weekly, and arrange workshops and conferences where parents and professionals can come together as partners to improve the services in Redcar and Cleveland.

Levels of involvement

Having a child with additional needs or disabilities affects each family differently. That's why there are various ways you can be involved with Small Steps = Big Changes from being a steering group member to attending the quarterly workshops and conferences.

All expenses & childcare costs can be reimbursed to cover the cost of you attending our events, meetings and conferences – we hope to see you soon!

If you would like more information or to get involved please contact Stuart Myers on 01642 77164

Questions about your medicines?

We can help!
For confidential advice from a pharmacist about any aspect of your medicines
Call 0161 4415778 (9am-5pm)



Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

UKMi 24hr answer-phone also available - leave us a message and we will call you back as soon as we can



Give Us A Break, Health Awareness Days

Carers Together have now held two successful Give Us A Break events. Approximately 60 people attended on each of the days and a wide range of professionals displayed information about their respective services. Visitors were able to have taster sessions of on-line computer classes, make a pot with Wold pottery, enjoy a health walk or make a bead bracelet as well as pick up information and chat to professionals about all aspects of caring.



check for early signs of diabetes and many more spent time with the healthy living service to get an up to date record of their weight, height, BMI and take up advice on smoking cessation and healthy diet.

During the course of the two events, Carers Together played host to 26 healthy heart checks with each carer taking 30 minutes time out to monitor their own risk of having a heart attack. We are still awaiting official figures from the Cardio Vascular Disease Service but from chatting to carers on the day, it showed evidence that several people were grateful for having a referral back to their GP for further investigations. This intervention alone could have saved lives. 15 others took the opportunity to have drop-in blood glucose screens to

The event was a great opportunity for professionals to exchange information and share best practice and carers were invited to take away information about our Quilt project and join in by making a square of their own. We also held a raffle at the Eston event which raised £46, which will go into our Carers Social Fund.

If you would like to be informed of any future health checks please contact us on 01642 488977.

Personal Health Budget Pilot



A personal health budget is an amount of money that is available to you for your NHS care, for you to decide how best to spend it. The aim is to give you more choice and control over your healthcare.

Personal health budgets can be used very flexibly for a range of things to help meet your individual health and wellbeing needs.

This might include therapies, self-management courses, personal care, or lifestyle advice. You can be as imaginative as you like, as long as it meets your health and wellbeing needs as agreed in your personal plan. Personal health budgets are not

expected to be used on emergency service or the vast majority of primary medical services (including routine GP visits and assessments).

If you have COPD or a Neurological condition or are in receipt of NHS continuing care funding and would be interested in taking part in our personal health budget pilot then please contact either Phillipa or Emma on 01642 666725/666723.

Driving with Dementia

A diagnosis of dementia is not in itself necessarily a reason to stop driving. What matters, from both a legal and a practical point of view, is whether or not an individual is still able to drive safely.

Having dementia does not necessarily lead to an abrupt lifestyle change. Many people can still hold down a job and indeed continue to drive. However, there are channels to go through in order to determine whether a person with dementia is safe to drive.

Firstly, the driver has a legal responsibility to contact the DVLA – failing to do so could lead to a fine of up to £1,000. They will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which must include their GP's or consultant's details. The DVLA will then make contact with the driver's doctor and, based on the information received, make a decision as to whether the person can continue to drive. The person may be asked to take a driving assessment.

If they are deemed safe to continue driving, a new driving licence will be issued which will be valid for a limited period. The person's condition will then be reviewed regularly.

Any changes in circumstances may also affect insurance cover, so ensure that you read the small print on your insurance policy and, if in doubt, contact the insurer to clarify the policy cover.

Many people with dementia fear they will automatically lose their licence, or are in denial about struggling to drive safely, so do not always contact the DVLA. In these situations, a third party such as a concerned family member or friend may contact the DVLA and will be sent forms to fill out on the person's behalf. This may pose a moral dilemma due to feelings of guilt and betrayal. I would say that although taking this step isn't always an easy one, the DVLA's final decision will take into account the best interests of everyone concerned.

In time, people tend to adjust to using alternative forms of transport, and often find it less stressful.



we can help...

The following are ways you could try to support people who have stopped driving:

If at all possible, arrange to give people lifts, or offer to go with them on shopping trips etc and take the bus.

Help the person become familiar with the way public transport works by getting hold of bus or train timetables.

Find out about assisted lifts such as Dial-a-Ride.

Arrange to set up an account with a local taxi firm. It would be worth explaining that the person may forget they have ordered the taxi and may need prompting.

For more information about driving, you can write to the DVLA at Drivers Medical Section, Swansea SA99 1TU or call 0300 790 6806.

Or alternatively contact the Dementia Advisor Service on 01642 488408

Article taken from Living with Dementia, Alzheimer's Society



Hospital Passport for people with learning disabilities

Evidence still suggests nationally that people with learning disabilities receive poorer health care than that of the general population, (Equal Treatment, Closing the Gap 2006). The hospital passport is used across the country and recognised as a tool to identify people with a learning disability and give accurate information about them to staff to assist them to provide the best possible care to the patient.

The intention of the hospital passport is to improve knowledge about the patient with learning disabilities who may not be able to express themselves to health professionals and to improve communication between those providing care and treatment and the patient or their family/carers.

The passport is divided into red, amber and green sections, which helps people understand what is essential to know, what is important to know about the patient, as well as their likes and dislikes and any other important factors to improve their hospital stay and their experience of care. The hospital passport can give a valuable insight into every individual patient.

Experience in the Trust to date, through working with patients and families, also shows that the passports have had a positive impact. Families/carers feel more confident that the information that often only they know can be shared and benefits the patient.

You should be offered a Hospital Passport by a member of the hospital admission staff, or alternatively you can request one from your community nurse or social worker.

Nunthorpe Singers Donate £436

We would like to say a big thank you to the Nunthorpe Singers who kindly donated £436.00 to Carers Together.

The ladies choir do a concert each school term and the money raised from their ticket sales is donated to a charity. At their Christmas concert in December they very kindly chose Carers Together as the charity to receive their generous donation.

The money is being used to support our social activities for carers throughout the year and also helps us to provide Complementary Therapies for carers at a reduced rate.

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone else who has generously donated money to carers together or have participated in our fundraising events such as sponsorships and raffles.

Easter Fun



Q: What do you get when you pour hot water down a rabbit hole?

A: A hot cross bunny

Q: How do you post a letter to the Easter bunny?

A: Hare mail

Q: How do you make a rabbit stew?

A: Make it wait for three hours

Q; What do you call a row of Rabbits walking backwards?

A: A receding hairline



Q: Why did the Easter egg hide?

A: He was a little chicken



MP's discuss Welfare Reform

Carers Together joined a group of 3rd sector organisations to discuss the impact of proposed changes to the welfare system with our 2 local MP's Ian Swales (Redcar) and Tom Blenkinsop (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland).

The main concerns discussed were:

- The disproportionate impact of the proposed changes on disabled people.
- The removal of mobility payments for individuals in Residential Care (although this is currently on hold)
- Uncertainty about Independent Living Fund and the impact that loss of this funding would have.

Both MP's were sympathetic to the concerns raised including the potential 'double whammy' for carers from loss of income and increased caring responsibilities. They emphasised the importance of personal stories to demonstrate the impact of the proposed changes. So if you think you may be affected by the welfare reforms, tell your MP. Further information about the proposals to potential impact on carers can be found at www.carersuk.org.



Holiday Giveaway



We are delighted to be able to offer carers two chances to win a **FREE** holiday for one week in a Chalet at Filey week commencing either September 3rd or September 10th 2011, kindly donated by Middlesbrough & Teesside Lions Club

The Lions Club will provide transport to and from the chalet and provide a starter pack comprising of things such as milk, cereal, tea & coffee and tinned goods.

The chalet comprises a double bedroom with a double bed and en-suite toilet and bath & 2 single beds with adjacent toilet and shower. The chalet is accessible to wheelchair users with a ramp leading to French doors, however once inside the chalet the doors are not wide enough for wheelchair access. Unfortunately children and pets are not permitted, however the holiday would suit either a couple or a couple along with a friend/carer.

Colour TV, portable radio and a wheelchair are available and the chalet has central heating (should the weather turn cold!)

If you are free either the week commencing 3rd September or 10th September and fit the criteria as described above then why not enter the draw to win this fantastic prize. To do so, please complete and return the slip on the bottom of the covering letter enclosed with your magazine or contact us on 01642 488977. The prize will be drawn during Carers Week in June 2011. **Good Luck!**

