Editorial

Yet again I’m really pushed for space - I’ve even had to change the print style to fit everything in! I’ve just enough room to say that I hope you enjoy reading this packed edition of Carers News. I always welcome your feedback on the newsletter - please call me on 0113 380 4306. Jill Foalks

News from Carers Leeds

Caring with Confidence

Carers Leeds has submitted a bid (together with our informal partners NHS Leeds and Leeds Partnerships NHS Foundation Trust) to provide courses for carers - to support them in caring for both themselves and the person(s) they are caring for.

We do not yet know whether we will be successful, but as part of the planning (in case we are) we are hoping to identify people who may be interested in being Caring with Confidence Facilitators.

The initial Facilitator Training will last for 3 days. Each course lasts for 7 sessions and each session is 2-3 hours long. Each Facilitator will be expected to run several courses per year. Facilitators will be paid for each session they run.

If you would like more information, please contact Carers Leeds on 0113 246 8338.

Book Sale at Carers Leeds

Thank you very much to all those people who have donated books. However, please do not donate any more books to us just now - we have lots to sell at just 50p each!

Wheatfields carer support group

Carers Leeds, working in partnership with Sue Ryder Care Wheatfields Hospice, are starting monthly support groups for carers of people who receive palliative care. Palliative care is the active holistic care of patients with advanced progressive illness. Its goal is to achieve the best quality of life for patients and their families.

We invite carers of those people to join us in a support group at Wheatfields Hospice, Grove Road, Headingley, Leeds LS6 on Wednesday 1st April and Wednesday 6th May from 1.30 pm - 3.00 pm.

We hope the group will be a social and supportive group, helping carers come together to take time out and enjoy meeting others who may be sharing similar challenges.

Please come along and meet us. If you are unable to attend because of transport, replacement care or financial reasons, please do not hesitate to contact Val Hewison at Carers Leeds on 0113 246 8338 or Chris Ellis at Wheatfields on 0113 203 3342.
Otley Parent Carer Support Group

Tuesday 21st April & Tuesday 19th May from 10.30 am - 12 noon

This new group is held at Otley Children's Centre, Ashfield Primary School, Weston Lane.
If you are a parent carer of a child or young person with special needs, disabilities and/or a long term health condition in the Otley and surrounding area and would welcome an opportunity to meet other parent carers in a social and supportive environment, please come along to this group, set up by Carers Leeds working in partnership with Mencap and Otley Children's Services.

Pass the message on to other parent carers who may come along. Have a say in how you want your support group to run. For more information call Val Hewison at Carers Leeds on 0113 246 8338.

Carers Leeds Trustees

Ted Dawson has retired from the Board of Trustees. Our thanks go to him for his support over several years of service.

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered their services as a Trustee - we are working through the recruitment process as quickly as we can.

Looking ahead

The June / July edition of Carers News will contain full details of events in and around Leeds in Carers Week which begins on Monday 8th June.

Carers News will be bigger in future and will have a central pull-out section listing all workshops and courses for carers run by Carers Leeds, the Mental Health Carers Team and NHS Leeds.

Free energy saving light bulbs

We still have packs of 2 light bulbs available to personal callers at our office, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1. Please ask for some at Reception on the 1st floor.

Local & national news

Leeds LIk - Local Involvement Network

The role of the LIk will be to identify what people like and dislike about local Health and Social Care services, and to work with a range of bodies and organisations to help investigate and resolve them.

There are number of benefits to becoming involved in a LIk. These include:

♦ Helping the community voice their issues, ideas and concerns together
♦ Getting attention for neglected issues or ideas
♦ Influencing those who make decisions about new or existing health and care services

You do not have to attend meetings or be part of the LIk Steering Group to get involved. You can choose how you want to be involved in the LIk, through:

♦ Responding to questionnaires
♦ Attending occasional meetings
♦ Getting involved in specific health or care issues
♦ Becoming an authorised representative who views services to see how they are run.

For further information please call 0113 274 8775.
News from Leeds City Council Social Care

Carers Emergency Plan Scheme
A small scheme, which provides carers with a way of planning for who will take over in an emergency that prevents them from caring, has been in operation for nearly 3 years in Leeds. Government has provided specific money to enable us to improve the service. From March 1st this scheme has been enlarged and re-launched through a partnership between Leeds City Council and Claimar Ltd. We already have 420 carers on this scheme and they will be able to transfer into the new scheme. Under the new contract a member of staff from Claimar will visit carers at home to help complete their plan and discuss all their needs and those of the person they care for. We think this will greatly improve the take-up of the service, which aims to give carers greater peace of mind. The scheme will now be able to offer a replacement care worker for up to 48 hours (72 over a bank holiday) when an emergency occurs. It can also be flexible where carers have their own distant relatives who can help out. Claimar will be advertising in future newsletters and are taking enquiries on 07545 208739.

Carers Strategy for Leeds 2009-2012
Some carers reading this newsletter will have attended consultation meetings in 2006 and 2007 about the Carers Strategy and you will be wondering whatever happened? Your views and suggestions make up the Strategy which is in the final stages of being approved by the NHS Trusts and the Council. We expect to launch it in Carers Week.

Changing Places toilets
These are public toilets which are big enough to fit a person in a large wheelchair and 2 carers and also have an electric raising changing table and tracking hoist, so adult-sized people can be changed in comfort and with dignity for both them and their carers. We don’t have any of these in Leeds but, as a result of it being raised as a carer’s issue at a Carers Strategy Implementation Group meeting, it is now a commitment in the Carers Strategy and we hope to have two in the town centre over the next 12 months. They will also become a planning requirement for large retail and leisure developments in future. Do you have a view about which places are most important to have these facilities? Telephone Bridget Maguire on 0113 224 3991 or email bridget.maguire@leeds.gov.uk

News from the Family Fund
Families with a disabled child and disabled young people themselves up to the age of 25 can now make their money go further a new online website - Family Fund extra. Join for free and enjoy discounts of up to 25% from leading online retailers, including Comet, Argos, BSM and Haven Holidays. Register by visiting www.familyfundextra.org.uk

Family Fund extra also offers families with disabled children the chance to share their stories and experiences on “Chat with extra”

Family Fund also provides grants to low-income families with severely disabled children under the age of 18 to meet their additional needs. To find out more visit www.FamilyFund.org.uk

Information for carers in other languages
Carers UK can provide interpreters through CarersLine. CarersLine provide free and confidential advice on a range of caring issues. Their freephone number is 0808 808 7777 and lines are open on Wednesday and Thursday 10 am -12 pm and 2 pm - 4 pm. Their advisers can also be contacted through Typetalk.

Information is available in Punjabi, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Urdu and Gujarati.
Events for Carers in April & May 2009

*** Bookings taken from Tuesday 7th April: tel. 0113 246 8338 ***
All events are free of charge unless stated otherwise.

Wellbeing Days
Monday 20th April & Monday 11th May at Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1.
Choose from Aromatherapy Massage, Indian Head Massage, Reflexology, Relaxation or face and neck massage with pressure points.
Individual appointments, lasting 40 minutes, are available between 10.00 am and 2.10 pm at a cost of £3 per person.

*** Need to book: tel. 0113 246 8338 from 7th April ***

Please note: Each carer may have a maximum of 2 therapy sessions between April 2009 and March 2010.

Carers’ Cafés
All carers are welcome to drop in to Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1 on Thursday 9th April and Thursday 14th May from 11.00 am to 12.00 pm for a cuppa and a chat with other carers.
People who haven’t attended an event at Carers Leeds before are particularly encouraged to attend.

Coffee Morning & small aids for daily living
Friday 8th May from 11.00 am - 12.30 pm at Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1.
Carers are invited to bring along the person they care for, to meet a demonstrator from Clark & Partners and to try out small aids. No obligation to buy and a chance to ask questions.

*** Need to book: tel. 0113 246 8338 from 7th April ***

Extend Gentle Exercise
Thursday 23rd April & Thursday 21st May 11.00 am at Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1 and in Morley on Tuesday 19th May 10.00 am for 10.30 am at the Town Hall (Large Banqueting Room)
Extend is an hour long enjoyable and light-hearted gentle exercise class to music. Expect to move around a bit but not to get tired out!
Come and spend some time with other carers and be healthy whilst doing it.
Class followed by drinks and snacks if you wish to stay on for a short time.

*** Need to book: tel. 0113 246 8338 from 7th April ***

Mental Health Carers Support Group
Thursday 9th April and Thursday 14th May at Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1 from 5.30 pm to 7.00 pm - please note the earlier time than before!
Anyone who is caring for someone with mental health difficulties is welcome to come along - no need to book, just turn up on the day. Light refreshments will be served.
For more information please call Carers Leeds on 0113 246 8338.

Morley Carers

Join us in the Community Room at Morley Fire Station from 10.00 am - 12 noon for a chance to share experiences and information on caring for someone over a cuppa in a small, friendly group. We hope to have a speaker from the Fire Station on Fire Safety - as long as there are no fires in Morley that morning which take priority!
All carers welcome, but especially those living in the Morley area. More details from Jill at Carers Leeds on 0113 380 4306.

See the next column for details of an Extend session at Morley Town Hall in May.
Adult Learners Week
Carers Leeds once again are celebrating Adult Learners Week. Its aim is to encourage more and different adults to engage in learning activities and you know what?...find out learning can be fun! Come along to one of our activities and participate in learning about henna painting or glass painting. All materials will be provided.

Monday 11th May  1.00 pm - 3.00 pm at Building Blocks Centre, Maud Avenue, Beeston, Leeds LS11 - Henna Painting Workshop

Wednesday 13th May  1.00 pm -3.00 pm at Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1 - Glass Painting Workshop

Thursday 14th May  1.00 pm - 3.00 pm at Shine Enterprise Building, Harehills Road - Henna Painting Workshop

*** Need to book: tel. 0113 246 8338 from 7th April ***

PACES Parent Carers Express Support Group
for parent carers of children and young people with special needs, disabilities and long-term health conditions in South Leeds.

On Tuesday 21st April from 12 noon to 1.30 pm we’ll be meeting at the Belle Isle Family Centre on Belle Isle Road, hopefully with a speaker from Riding for the Disabled.

On Tuesday 12th May from 12 noon to 1.30 pm we will again be at the Centre and will have a speaker on Sports Development.

Soup and sandwiches are provided on both dates - please make a small donation if possible. More details from Carers Leeds: tel. 0113 246 8338.

Leodis Carers Support Group
This group will meet on Wednesday 1st April and Wednesday 6th May from 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm at Crossgates Good Neighbours, Station Road, Leeds LS15. All carers are welcome, but especially those living in East Leeds. More details from Carers Leeds on 0113 246 8338.

Carers’ Drop-in Surgery in Colton
The monthly Colton Mill Medical Centre drop-in surgery is suspended until further notice. We are reviewing our service provision in East Leeds.

You can drop in to Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1 from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm Tuesday to Friday or request a home visit by a Carers Support Worker.

Carers UK Leeds Branch Annual General Meeting
Carers are invited to attend this meeting, with a guest speaker, on Friday 15th May from 12 noon to 2.00 pm at Carers Leeds, 6-8 The Headrow, Leeds LS1. Buffet lunch provided. Please call David on 0113 275 4718 or Susan on 0113 278 4416 if you intend coming.

Wetherby Carers
meet at Wetherby Town Hall, in the Micklethwaite Room, on Thursday 21st May from 10.00 am - 12 noon.

Join other local carers for a chance to share experiences and information and to have a break from caring. Coffee, tea and cakes will be served.

There will be no meeting in April.

Just turn up on the day, or call Carers Leeds on 0113 246 8338 for more information.

Ten pin bowling
Wednesday 22nd April
Fancy a game of bowling? Why not come along and try it out? It’s not strenuous and you can have some fun learning how to do it. Tea or coffee and biscuits provided.

Meet at AMF Bowling, 52 Merrion Centre, Leeds LS2 at 10.50 am.

*** Need to book: tel. 0113 246 8338 from 7th April ***

Please note: there are 30 steps in and out of the building and no wheelchair access.

Otley Parent Carers Support Group
Please see page 2 for more information.

More events overleaf
More local & national news

Woman’s Weekly Magazine

Woman’s Weekly has chosen the Princess Royal Trust for Carers as its charity partner for the year. It will feature ’Sharing the Caring’ articles throughout the year.
The National Dementia Strategy

The Strategy is the government’s plan which explains what needs to happen to radically transform the quality of life for people with dementia and their carers in the next five years. The government announced an extra investment of £150 million to support local services deliver the Strategy.

It sets out 17 recommendations that the government wants the NHS, local authorities and others to take to improve dementia care services. The recommendations are focused on three key themes of:

- Raising awareness and understanding
- Early diagnosis and support
- Living well with dementia

The Alzheimer’s Society believes the Strategy offers a huge opportunity to put people with dementia in control of their lives by making sure they have access to an early diagnosis, good quality information and a range of support services throughout their journey with dementia. For more information on the Alzheimer’s Society in Leeds call 0113 231 1727.

Help with welfare benefits

Are you a registered patient at any of the following?

- Burley Park Medical Centre
- Craven Road Medical Centre
- Hyde Park Surgery
- Vesper Road Surgery

Call your local surgery to arrange an appointment to see a specialist worker from the Leeds Welfare Rights Unit.

Please note this service is only available to patients of the above practices. For details of other services offered by the Welfare Rights Unit telephone 0113 376 0452.

One Traveller

This is a company specialising in providing escorted holidays for small groups of individual travellers. 2009 destinations are Prague, Krakow, Vienna and Budapest. For 2010, tours to Russia, China and the Canary Islands are planned. Call 0844 800 5053 for a free brochure, or visit www.onetraveller.co.uk

Special Educational Needs Market Place Event

Monday 11th May, 10.00 am - 4.00 pm at Leeds Civic Hall

Pick up information from lots of different organisations, including Carers Leeds. See displays for parents of children and young people and also practical demonstrations and activities for pre-school children and their parents.

National Carers Poverty Protest

This is taking place on Wednesday 22nd April in London, as we mentioned in the last edition of Carers News.

Transport to London on the day may be possible - call Christine Steel, Chair of the Protest, on 01772 321952 or e-mail krys5440@hotmail.co.uk

If you are unable to take part due to caring responsibilities, there is a template letter at www.carerspovertyprotest.myfreeforum.org (click on Announcements and Newsletters, then Newsletter January 2009) to send to your MP asking him or her to support the protest.
‘Your next bus’

Did you know you can get bus times via your mobile phone? You simply create a text message, and enter the eight-digit bus stop number that you see on your bus stop. This number will start with 450. Send the text to 63876 (it spells METRO on the keypad!) You will get a reply within about 30 seconds. This tells you the times for the next few buses from the stop you enquired about. Real time predictions are shown in minutes (e.g. 3 mins), and scheduled times are shown as a 24 hr time for when the bus is due (e.g. 14:51) For more information pick up a leaflet at bus stations or go to www.wymetro.com

“Hot meal box”

Do you need to leave meals for the person you care for? The “hot meal box” from Temps L will keep food hot or cold for 5 hours. The lid screws on for an air-tight seal. There are three compartments plus a large dish underneath. The box costs £6.99 + p&p. Temps L also supply pretty 1 litre insulated ‘easy pour’ pitchers which keep drinks hot or cold for several hours and cost £6.50 + p&p. Order on 0871 384 1144 or visit www.tempsl.co.uk

Pet Alert

Wood Green Animal Shelter’s Pet Alert scheme provides pet owners with peace of mind that if something should happen to them Wood Green will look after their pet. Owners are safe in the knowledge that their pet will be placed in a loving and secure home.

The scheme enables you to register a contact telephone number for the person or organisation you wish to entrust with the care of your pets, should the need arise. This information is held by Wood Green Animal Shelters as a confidential record and you are given two Pet Alert cards, one to keep in a wallet or handbag and a larger one for displaying prominently in your home.

If you would like to find out more about the scheme please call the Wood Green Pet Alert department on 01480 831528 or e-mail legacies@woodgreen.org.uk

Tourism for All offers useful publications to help with holiday planning, including:
- Easy Access Britain (£8.99 incl. p & p)
- Holidays for families with a disabled child (£3.50)
To order call 0845 124 9973 or e-mail info@tourismforall.org.uk

Tried & Tested Walks with Wheelchairs across the UK

Free information on walking routes suitable for wheelchair users throughout the UK is available at www.walkswithwheelchairs.com

The site contains reviews, directions and OS maps as well as the facility to share routes with other wheelchair users.

Leeds.gumtree.com

This is a great website to visit if you want to buy or sell items free of charge - or if you are looking for freebies, information on community activities and much more.

If you can help us cut costs and receive your Carers News via e-mail, please e-mail your name, e-mail and postal addresses and your telephone number to: news@carersleeds.org.uk Carers News is also available in large print and on audio tape: please contact Valerie Banks at Carers Leeds on 0113 246 8338 to request your copy.

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