



Carers Week 11–17 June 2007

My life as a carer . . .



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newsletter 32

My life as a carer

Carers Week 2007 survey results

The Carers Week annual survey, the largest of its kind in the UK, sheds light on the devastating effects that looking after a loved one can have on all aspects of a carer's life. The research examines in detail carers' feelings about a range of issues, including finances, careers, health and relationships.

The survey will be unveiled at the start of Carers Week, and will reveal detailed results about the percentage of carers who say their relationships have suffered as a result of caring.

Relationships Suffer

Significant numbers of carers say that their sex life has taken a back seat as a direct result of their caring responsibilities, and large numbers also talk about the lack of quality time they have together with their partners.

Yet the all-consuming nature of caring for many carers is such that when carers do get time to relax, more than a fifth (21%) use it to catch up on their sleep.

The impact of caring on people's lives is so absolute, it's little wonder that it goes on to affect relationships,



both emotional and physical. The survey reveals this is one of the most difficult challenges of all.

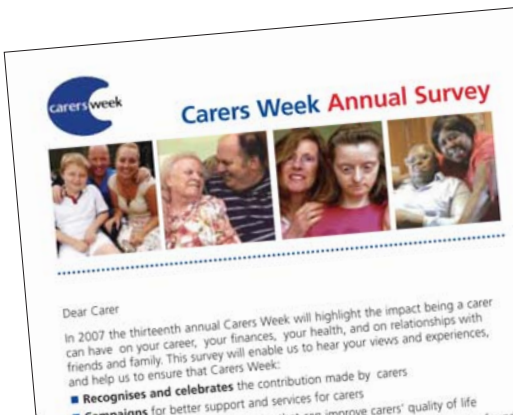
We sleep in separate bedrooms

The strain caring can put on relationships is highlighted by Nancy, 54, who cares for her 59 year-old husband with Parkinsons. She says:

"We now sleep in separate bedrooms as the medication he is on causes him to have terrible nightmares and he needs to go to the toilet frequently during the night. Although our love has grown stronger over the years, the dynamics of our relationship have changed so drastically that our sex life is now non-existent."

The detrimental effect caring has on people's finances is also revealed. More than two thirds are financially worse off. The financial situation of carers is likely to be weaker because they are less able to focus on their career, the results demonstrate.

Reduced promotion prospects, not being able to take up training opportunities and finding it difficult to get back on the job ladder are all highlighted as key issues.





On a more personal level, significant numbers of carers feel their identity had been lost as a direct result of their caring role. One of the most dramatic statistics to be revealed on June 11 will be the number of carers who have not had a regular break from their caring activities in the past 12 months, and those who had not enjoyed a single day off in that time.

It is clear that from the survey that caring can create a vicious circle of problems which all impact on each other - being demoted or losing a job can lead to financial difficulties which can, in the worst case scenario, lead to losing a home. This in turn can cause high levels of stress, depression and feelings of despair.

TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE

A general press release is now available on the Carers Week website for use by local partners. A second release, with embargoed statistics and tables will be sent by email the week before Carers Week



**BRENDA BLETHYN
PREETI DESAI
RUSSELL GRANT
SHEILA HANCOCK
DAVID JASON
PHYLLIDA LAW
SALLY LINDSAY
MIRIAM MARGOLYES
COLEEN NOLAN
ESTHER RANTZEN
DENISE ROBERTSON
CHRIS STEELE
CHRIS TARRANT**

Quotes and images from all of Carers Week 2007 celebrity supporters are available on request. Just email mail@carersweek.org with "please send celeb images/info" and include the names of those you would like in the body of the email.





11 Downing Street

Carers Week reception



This year's parliamentary reception is being hosted by Gordon Brown, and being held in the State Room at 11 Downing Street.

As well as carers, MPs and peers, other invitees include local partners organising events and activities in every

part of the UK.

The reception will celebrate the progress made by carers, much of it directly as a result

Ivan Lewis MP Minister for Care Services



Carers Week invited the Minister for Care Services to answer some key questions about what Government is doing for carers. This is what he had to say.

Carers Week: In 2006 the largest-ever survey of carers in the UK confirmed that caring can be bad for your health. How is Government supporting carers to take the breaks they need?

Ivan Lewis: We know that the best way to enable carers to continue to care is by enabling them to take a break from caring. We introduced a Carers Grant in 1999 to support councils in providing breaks and services for carers in England. The Grant is worth £185 million in 2007-08, which will mean that, by 2008, we will have invested £1 billion in support for carers.

CW: What progress has been made since you announced you would be providing extra

funding for Emergency Respite Care work?

IL: There is real evidence that the lack of proper planned alternative care provision in the event of a crisis is one of

the most important factors in limiting carer's freedom to have a life of their own.

"This is a truly collaborative venture and as a result the voice of carers will be at the heart of the new strategy."

We are working with stakeholders to identify the key principles that should apply to the provision of such emergency breaks and we plan to issue guidance in the summer. We are making £25 million available to ensure that cover is available in the event of a crisis or an emergency; such cover should be provided at very short notice and whenever possible in the home.

at 11 Downing Street

of campaigning and lobbying by carers and carers' organisations.

The new rights delivered by the Work and Families Act, which came into effect on 6 April 2007, will be a particular focus, as they have the potential to change the culture of work and awareness in the workplace for millions of carers.

The reception will equally highlight how much more needs to be done to raise awareness of the needs of carers and improve services and support.

CW: What is happening about the review of the National Carers Strategy?

IL: The strategy review will involve all Government Departments which impact directly on the lives of carers which have made a difference. The Group is made up of people across Government as well as the chief executives of the three main carers' organisations. This is a truly collaborative venture and as a result the voice of carers will be at the heart of the new strategy.

CW: How will you be consulting on the development of the new strategy?

IL: When Gordon Brown launched the New Deal for Carers he promised the most far-reaching national consultation ever on the future of carers. During Carers Week we will be announcing the detail, but I can assure you that we will be involving carers and other stakeholders extremely closely throughout the process.

This is an abridged version of our interview with Ivan Lewis. The full interview can be found at our website www.carersweek.org

David Cameron MP

Leader of the Conservative Party

I believe that helping carers is one of the best ways to help those they are caring for



"We all owe an immense debt to carers.

The work that full-time carers or those with little extra help do is unbelievable.

Some give up jobs and careers. Others balance work and caring - risking exhaustion, stress, even illness.

"They battle with bureaucracy. And they do it to ensure that someone they love stays at home rather than going to an institution.

We don't do enough to celebrate that work. I believe that helping carers is one of the best ways to help those they are caring for".

Carers Week Parliamentary Motion

Over 250 MPs have so far signed EDM 1340, tabled by Carers Week parliamentary champion, Barbara Keeley MP.

The motion follows the general themes of Carers Week 2007 and states that the "National Carers' Strategy presents an opportunity to address key issues for carers such as benefits, how carers can find suitable services to help them and the person they care for, and how carers can maintain their own health and wellbeing."

To find out if your MP is supporting the motion go to

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=33115&SESSI ON=885>

LOBBY YOUR MP



This year's lobbying campaign calls on MPs to:

- Join the Carers All-Party Parliamentary Group
- Visit their local carers organisation
- Hold a special carers surgery

We hope as many carers as possible will send our special postcards to MPs. These are now available so please use the form to order your postcards as soon as possible.

More information about this campaign can be found on the Carers Week website www.carersweek.org

PLEASE SEND ME _____ CARERS POSTCARDS
(MAXIMUM 100)

PLEASE PRINT OR USE BLOCK CAPITALS

NAME _____

ORGANISATION _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____

SEND TO PAUL MATZ, CARERS WEEK, 20/25 GLASSHOUSE
YARD, LONDON EC1A 4JT



Don't forget...

to send us your press
cuttings and pictures
from your events



Carers Week newsletter 32 is published by Paul Matz. Registered office is Carers UK, 20-25 Glasshouse Yard, London EC1A 4JT. Registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee 864097. Registered charity 246329.

Looking out for those who care for others

Around one in ten adults in Bath and north east Somerset is a carer, which adds up to more than 16,000 people. As this year's Carers Week draws to a close, reporter Colette Warbrook finds out why army of devoted of a re

The challenges of life as a carer

A 50s woman has described the life of a carer who looked after her husband for 30 years as 'a hell of a job'. She says she has never had a day off and that she has to be on hand 24 hours a day. She also says that she has to be on hand for her husband's needs and that she has to be on hand for her husband's needs.

Ensuring carers are taken care of

CARERS week got off to a fast start with a mouth-watering picnic on the beach.

Rethink Good Companions organised the treat at Southend beach to the in with carers week which runs until Sunday.

Alison Williams, mental

much in support of the theme of this year's carers week, which is sickness and health.

"We especially want to reach those mental health carers who are not aware of the information and support Rethink can offer."

Recognising our unsung heroes

More than six million people across the UK are caring for a friend or family member. To reach National Carers Week, Carers Magazine events organiser who looked after a loved one and finds out what help is available.

Carers Week is a time to celebrate the people who care for others. It is a time to recognise the hard work and dedication of carers and to let them know that they are not alone. Carers Week is a time to celebrate the people who care for others. It is a time to recognise the hard work and dedication of carers and to let them know that they are not alone.

The children are caring for their parents and the parents are caring for their children. The children are caring for their parents and the parents are caring for their children. The children are caring for their parents and the parents are caring for their children.



DENISE ROBERTSON

"I am delighted to be supporting Carers Week. In my role as an agony aunt on ITV's *This Morning*, I come into contact with many carers - young and old, with so many different experiences of caring. I know how hard a role it can be and how desperate many carers can feel because I've been a carer myself. I will be doing all I can during Carers Week to make sure carers know where to go for the help and support they richly deserve."

Devoted dad



also contact your local District Nurse Information Service on 01223 333333 or the Carers Helpline on 0800 401144. You can also contact your local District Nurse Information Service on 01223 333333 or the Carers Helpline on 0800 401144.

REWARD THEIR DEDICATION

Please send cuttings and pics to Carers Week, 20-25 Glasshouse Yard, London EC1A 4JT, or by email to mail@carersweek.org



CHRIS TARRANT

"I think it's a travesty that there are so many carers in the UK who are unaware of the help that is available to them. Too many carers struggle on their own with no support whatsoever. I really hope my support for Carers Week 2007 will help highlight the fantastic job that carers do and how they do not have to do it alone."



BRENDA BLETHYN

"I have played the role of a carer in films on two separate occasions - in 'Belonging' and 'Mysterious Creatures' and the experience touched me greatly. I have great admiration for carers and the challenging and complex nature of their work. They often care for a family member where the emotional bond is strong but the work is constant and often thankless."

"Whilst wishing to support for their loved one there is often no choice and the carer can be plunged into an isolating position from which there is no escape. Raising awareness, through Carers Week, of the tireless role carers perform, and also making other carers aware of the help and support that is available, is something I'm proud to be involved with."



AS PART OF OUR PACKAGE OF SUPPORT FOR CARERS DURING CARERS WEEK SUPERDRUG ARE OFFERING A COMPLETE WELLBEING HEALTH CHECK – OUR COMPLETE CARDIAC ASSESSMENT – FOR ONLY £5 INSTEAD OF THE USUAL PRICE OF £25.

Routine screening tests carried out are:

- Blood pressure measurement
- Body Mass Index (BMI) and Body Composition (ration of fat to muscle, which is a more important indicator to health than BMI alone)
- Diabetes screening
- Cholesterol Test

Our pharmacists, with the health of advanced software, can either evaluate your risk of developing specific diseases based on your current test results and lifestyle habits, or help you understand how to manage an existing disease. Most diseases are preventable through good nutrition and regular exercise.

This offer is available from the beginning of Carers Week up to 31 August 2007 at participating stores (a full list is on the Carers Week website). Just cut out and use the form below.

This voucher is also available to be downloaded by carers on the Carers Week website www.carersweek.org

Please enjoy a Complete Cardiac Risk Assessment at

Superdrug 

for only £5.00

Full price £25.00



TO THE CUSTOMER

This coupon entitles you to £20 off a Complete Cardiac Assessment at Superdrug.

- Only original coupons will be accepted – photocopies are not eligible.
- No cash alternatives will be offered.
- Only one coupon may be used per transaction

This offer is only valid for use by Carers / Voucher valid until 31 August 2007.

NCH Code: 0771 13893

- Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer.
- Coupon will be retained by the cashier at the time of redemption.
- Subject to availability.

TO SUPERDRUG

To redeem this coupon, send to NCH, Corby, Northants, NN17 1NN



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the voice of carers
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for older people, their families and carers
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www.counselandcare.org.uk

CROSSROADS
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CANCER SUPPORT
0808 808 2020
www.macmillan.org.uk

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Multiple Sclerosis Society
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www.mssociety.org.uk

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www.rethink.org


The Princess Royal Trust
for Carers
020 7480 7788
www.carers.org

ACENational
action for carers and employment
020 7490 8818
www.acecarers.org.uk

 Carers Week is part funded by the European Social Fund under the Equal Community Initiative Programme.