

Carers Rights Day

This year's Carers Rights Day was held on 24 November and you may have been aware of some of the Sheffield events, or seen the Carers Centre Twitter activity. The aim of Carers Rights Day, a national event organised by Carers UK, is to bring organisations across the UK together to help carers in their local community know their rights and find out how to get the help and support they are entitled to.

One of the things most commonly said by carers is how important it is to be able to access the right information at the right time. Caring can be complicated, due to the complexities of the benefits and social care systems, the difficulty of understanding how to fund future care costs or balancing work and caring. Trying to untangle information on any one of these can be bewildering and frequently carers have to consider all of this and more at the same time.

Working and caring

Employment rights are a good example. Many working carers, and unfortunately also employers, are not aware of their employment rights, and how employers should support and accommodate the needs of the carers they employ.

It's well known that the number of people becoming carers is growing because of our ageing population and a significant number struggle to cope with the dual responsibilities of caring and working. The result is that more and more people are forced to leave their jobs to become full time carers with a knock-on effect to themselves, their employer and the wider economy.

A guide to inform and advise employers on how they can better support the carers they employ has been developed

produced by Think Local, Act Personal, and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), in collaboration with working carers, carers' groups, businesses, employer organisations and health and social care partners. The Working Carers report and Top Tips for Supporting Working Carers papers identify ways in which businesses can develop their policies and working practices to accommodate, and benefit from, the growing workforce of working carers.

Continuing to work while caring can be essential financially, but it can also help carers to remain positive, have a break from their caring responsibilities and provide social interaction. Juggling working and caring, though, can feel daunting, and it is important that carers understand their rights in the workplace. For example, carers are legally entitled to request flexible working patterns and time off to care for dependants.

It is in an employer's interest to make provision for working carers if needed as it increases staff recruitment and retention, and productivity. It also improves service delivery, reduces sick leave and improves relations with staff.

Advice for carers includes informing your employer or manager that you are a carer, and seeking out their relevant policies or procedures, for example relating to flexible working. Carers have the backing of the law in making requests to work flexibly and employers must give the request due consideration.

Carers can get advice relating to their rights through the Carers Advice Line. The Carers Centre has a contract arranged with Sheffield Occupational Health Advisory Service (SOHAS) to support carers who are having difficulties in the workplace, or worry they may have to leave their job because of the demands of

Inside...

Welcome to Noshee page 2

Changes on our Board of Trustees page 3

Healthwatch Sheffield speaks up for you page 3

What's on? page 4

Flu jabs for carers page 5

Time for a Break? page 6-7

New 'digital inclusion' for younger adult carers page 8

Does your GP know you are a carer? page 9

News from Sheffield Mencap and Gateway page 11

A-Z of Health page 12

their caring role. If necessary, we can arrange for carers to get specialist support from one of the advisors at SOHAS who can help them to understand their rights or advise on how to handle difficult situations or discussions with managers. Their aim is to support carers who wish to remain in work to do so. SOHAS advise that the earlier advice is sought the better, so don't wait for difficulties to arise - contact the Carers Advice line if you need support in balancing employment and caring.

If you would like to view the full 'Top Tips for Supporting Carers' report, it can be seen on the Carers Centre website: <http://sheffieldcarers.org.uk/working-and-caring>

Welcome to Noshee

We are delighted to welcome a new member of the team, Noshee Zameer. Noshee took up the post of Carer Advisor: BME Communities in October.

As well as an MA in Public Health, Noshee brings with her a wealth of experience of advice and information work. Noshee says *"I am committed to the provision of high quality services for all carers, and have a particular interest in supporting those from black, minority backgrounds who may experience*

inequality and barriers to accessing services." Noshee has worked in a number of roles, specialising in health information, also as a community development worker and genetics outreach worker.

She has worked with families including carers, supporting them to access mental health services, and speaks Urdu and Punjabi. We're really pleased that Noshee has joined the team and wish her every success in the post.



Changes on our Board of Trustees

There have been some changes recently to the Board of Trustees of the Carers Centre. Two trustees have retired and three new trustees joined the Board at our AGM on 22nd September. We said a fond farewell to Glynn Sherwin, our Treasurer, and Peter Purkiss, a former carer. Both men have

supported the Centre for many years and contributed a great deal of expertise, sound advice and commitment to our work.

We have been joined by three highly skilled new trustees - Mandy Forrest, Kate Register and Les Griffiths, who has taken on the role of Treasurer. Mandy's background is in the NHS, in which she

is still very involved, in Patient Participation Groups amongst other things. Kate has experience from local government and commissioning and has a particular interest in governance and leadership. Les is an accountant and auditor who has previous charity finance experience. We are delighted to welcome them to our Board.

Your Newsletter

Following articles in previous editions, many of you have made donations to the Carers Centre to help us meet the cost of producing this newsletter – we are very grateful to all of you.

The Newsletter costs us about £20,000 per year to print and mail out.

Make a donation!

If you have not already done so, you might like to help towards the cost of the Newsletter. A donation of just £5 will cover the cost of your Newsletter for a whole year. If you are able to help in this way, please send a cheque payable to Sheffield Carers Centre, to the address on

the back of the Newsletter. Don't forget to include your full name and address. Or you can donate by texting SHEF24 £5 to 70070.

How else can you help?

If you have access to the internet, you can ask us to send your Newsletter by email – this will save us money and it will help you too, because you will receive your newsletter a couple of weeks earlier. If you would like to get your newsletter this way, please let us know your email address by sending a message to office@sheffieldcarers.org.uk – or use the Contact Us page on our website.

Thank you for your help!



Live Wise, Age Well

Activities and courses for over 50s



The course aims to strengthen our ability to "bounce back". Learn coping strategies; learn from others. The six sessions will cover: Adjusting to changes as we age, maintaining a healthy body, maintaining a healthy mind, keeping active, healthy relationships and the circle of support, and travelling forward.

We are aiming to put on this course for carers early next year, with topics adjusted to support your caring role.

If you would like more information and dates please contact Jan on 0114 278 8942, or email jan@sheffieldcarers.org.uk - or ring the number below.

Call 0800 032 3723 for more information.

drinkwiseagewell.org.uk

Healthwatch Sheffield speaks up for you

Ben Christmas, Policy & Evidence Officer at Healthwatch Sheffield writes...

Healthwatch Sheffield is your local watchdog for health and social care. We are an independent organisation that listens to people's experiences of care and then passes this information on to those who have the power to change services for the better.

We gather views from lots of different people and in lots of different ways. This includes everything from our Trip Advisor style rate and review function on our website, where people can leave feedback on any health or social care service they have used, to 'Enter and View' visits, where we visit specific services and give a patient eyes view appraisal.

Like a lot of our work, the 'Enter and View' visits are carried out by trained volunteers. People with an interest in improving services can join our team, be trained and take part in 'Enter and View' visits or other research activities. We are actively looking for new volunteers at the moment so if you are interested please contact our volunteer coordinator Mark Smith on **0114 253 6688** or by emailing m.smith@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk

Healthwatch Sheffield also conducts focused work with groups of people who might be often overlooked when services

are being designed or changed. In this vein we recently held a series of events bringing together members of the deaf community and senior members of the clinical commissioning group and the hospitals. This event led to some frank discussion about the availability and quality of interpreting services, and we are continuing to work with service providers to improve services for deaf people.

Healthwatch Sheffield also conducts longer investigations into people's experiences. For example, we recently published a report on the experiences of people with learning disabilities and their carers. One of the things our report showed was that many people were concerned about access to social workers and in particular being able to get help and advice when they need it. Our report also showed that 75% of GPs have received no training to help them treat people with a learning disability. As a result of our findings we made a number of recommendations and we will be following these up over the coming year. The full report can be viewed on our website.

Our next larger scale investigation is going to be based around peoples experiences of adult social care. We are only just starting this piece of work and so we would find it particularly valuable if



Healthwatch team member Grace Edwards talks to the Lord Mayor Anne Murphy at a recent volunteer recruitment event

you could leave feedback of an adult social care service you have experienced recently. You could do this on our website

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk, by emailing us info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk or by calling us on **0114 253 6688**

We look forward to hearing from you.

Carers' Expert Panel

Jean Booth writes...

The Carers Expert Panel is a group of carers who have volunteered to give their view on various aspects of the Centre's services

Earlier this year, fifteen carers came forward to serve on the panel. We initially had reservations about being described as "experts", but it soon emerged that between us we could boast a great experience of caring. We have a fairly even balance of gender and a good range of caring situations. I found it humbling to hear of our differing roles, and we have all learned a great

deal from each other.

During the meetings already held, we have learned of the overall structure of the Carers Centre, its various committees and sub-groups and the proposed way in which the Panel will fit into this. We have agreed to the Panel's terms of reference, and members of the Centre's staff have told us about their areas of responsibility.

The Panel has looked at some of the information sent out by the Centre and considered how user-friendly it is, including the newsletter (the title of which we considered) and the welcome

pack which is sent to all carers joining the carers' register.

We aim to represent carers and to reach out to carers city wide - not solely those already registered with the Centre. We invite you to contact us, and let us know your wishes and concerns and, to use us as your representatives. It is good that the Centre recognises the value of enabling carers themselves to have an input to an organisation that works on their behalf.

If we can help you in any way, please contact us by sending an email to expertpanel@sheffieldcarers.org.uk or

Update on the Sheffield Carers Strategy

Lee Teasdale-Smith from Sheffield City Council writes...

Nearly a thousand carers in Sheffield provided input into the city's Young Carer, Parent and Adult Carers Strategy, saying what it was like being a carer in the city, including what is difficult or challenging. In particular, carers were asked:

- *What should our carers support service look like and how should it work?*
- *Who should provide those services?*
- *How can the Council improve its adult social care services?*
- *What do carers think about carer's assessments?*

The Strategy is now being implemented and the Council has responded to many of the needs and preferences expressed by carers. Below are some examples of what carers said and how we have responded.

Support services should link with health services to identify carers earlier - the new support service run by the Carers Centre is exploring ways of basing volunteers at NHS sites. It is being made easier for carers to be identified by their GP and a new Adult Access Team will help to ensure that

carers are given the information promptly.

Carers should help design the new support service and pick the provider

- this did take place – carers were involved in drawing up the new service specification and in selecting the winner of the tender process, won by the Carers Centre.

Information should be relevant and timely

- 1,500 new carers per year (caring for less than 6 months) should be identified by the Carers Centre. New carers will receive a personalised information pack.

Short breaks from caring should be available

- the Carers Centre provides a Time for a Break service to help carers get a break and advise on respite options. The City Council will buy new respite services based in the community, and will continue to offer Shared Lives for short term and emergency respite breaks.

Carers should be supported to plan for emergencies

- the Carers Centre offers a 'In Safe Hands' service which helps carers to plan for what would happen if they are unable to care for a short time.

A regular carers' newsletter should be provided - the Carers Centre newsletter, published four times a year, will continue.

Health and social care systems are hard to understand – the Carers Service Improvement Forum is attended by carers who feed back on adult social care services. The Forum has now been expanded to include representatives from both health and social care services.

Some carers don't understand their right to an assessment – the Carers Centre will engage with more carers than ever and inform them of their rights. The Centre is now the organisation that carries out Carers Needs Assessments.

Caring can have a negative financial impact - the Council is providing funding for setting up and delivering the Carers Access Card which will enable carers to get discounts on certain goods and services.

If you have any questions about how the Sheffield City Council supports carers, please contact Lee Teasdale-Smith, Commissioning Officer at: lee.teasdale-smith@sheffield.gov.uk

What's on?

Carers Centre Events

Carers Café

Come along to the United Reformed Church on Norfolk Street, 10am - 12, to meet other carers and volunteers and staff from the Carers Centre. You are very welcome to bring the person you care for to these events.

- Friday 8th December 2017
- Friday 12th January 2018
- Friday 9th February 2018
- Friday 9th March 2018

Mental Health Hub

This group is aimed at carers of people with mental health problems. It meets at the Sheffield Carers Centre on Thursdays 10:30am - 12pm. It's an ideal opportunity to meet others in the same situation, share experiences and receive support.

- Thursday 21st December 2017
- Thursday 18th January 2018
- Thursday 15th February 2018
- Thursday 15th March 2018

External Events

Ecclesfield Carers Group

Meets on the **2nd Wednesday** of the month, 7pm - 9pm, Ecclesfield Support Unit, Wordsworth Avenue

Hillsborough Carers Group

This is an informal carer-led carers' support group that meets on the **fourth Thursday** of each month at the Rawson Spring in Hillsborough

Note there is no meeting in December
 Thursday 25th January 2018
 Thursday 22nd February 2018
 Thursday 22nd March 2018
 Time: 10:30am - 12:30pm

Lowedges Carer Support Group

This carer support group meets at the Terminus Café, Lowedges on the **2nd Tuesday** monthly from 10.30 - 12.

Zest Carer Support Group

This is a newer support group for carers in the Upperthorpe area – all welcome!

Contact: Jenny 0114 270 2040

- Thursday 7th December 2017
 - Thursday 21st December 2017
 - Thursday 4th January 2018
 - Thursday 18th January 2018
 - Thursday 1st February 2018
 - Thursday 15th February 2018
 - Thursday 1st March 2018
 - Thursday 15th March 2018
- Time: 10:30am - 12:00pm

Woodhouse Carers Group

Meets on the **2nd Wednesday** of the month, 10.30am - 12, Salvation Army Hall, Tannery Street

Shipsape Carers Group

Shipsape Carer Support Group meets on the **third Tuesday** of the month, 10am - 12 at the Shipsape Health and Wellbeing Centre on Sharrow Lane.
 Tel: 0114 250 0222.

Flu jabs for carers

Flu occurs every year, usually in the winter. It is a highly infectious disease with symptoms that come on quickly. A bad bout of flu can be much worse than a heavy cold. The most common symptoms of flu are fever, chills, headache, aches and pains in the joints and muscles and extreme tiredness. Healthy individuals usually recover within two to seven days, but for some the disease can lead to hospitalisation, permanent disability and even death.

Flu is caused by the influenza viruses and is spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes, and the virus is spread in tiny droplets of saliva over a wide area. These droplets can then be breathed in by other people or they can be picked up by touching surfaces where the droplets have landed.

You can prevent the spread of the virus by covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and you can wash your hands frequently or use hand gels to reduce the risk of picking up the virus.

Flu can affect anyone but if you have a long-term health condition, the effects of

flu can make it worse.

Vaccination is offered free to those who are in receipt of a Carers Allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill. If you are the main carer for someone who is elderly or disabled, speak to your GP or pharmacist about having a flu jab along with the person you care for. Also by having the flu vaccination, people are less likely to pass the virus on to friends and family especially to other people at higher risk of contracting flu, such as older people, infants or someone with an underlying health condition.

Flu jabs for children and adults with a learning disability:

If you are the carer of a child or adult with learning disabilities, you will be only too aware of the impact that flu and other respiratory illness can have on them throughout the winter months. All children and adults with learning disabilities can be offered vaccination from their GP practice. A nasal flu vaccination can be used if someone is severely needle phobic. A flu vaccination is the best way to protect them against

flu this winter.

The vaccine is available now, so please contact your GP surgery to make arrangements for the person you care for to be immunised.

For more information, please go to the relevant pages of the NHS website:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/who-should-have-flu-vaccine.aspx>

There is also an Easy Read leaflet about flu for people with learning disability.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/637939/PHE_Flu_easy_read_adult_flu_leaflet.pdf



The best way to avoid catching and spreading the flu is by having the vaccination before the flu season starts.

Carers, a chance to tell your story

Alan Marshall, a lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University, runs a Best Interest Assessors course each October.

This course trains social workers and other professionals to carry out assessments on people who may have no capacity to make certain decisions about whether they need the care of a care home or hospital. Carers have a key role as advocates for those who have their liberty deprived in this way.

Alan has put aside a section of the course for carers' input to help the students get a better picture of the pressures on carers in these situations, what helps them cope and also to describe bad experiences they

have had. This section of the course provides balance, opening students up to the human side of the situation as opposed to the legal elements.

Ideally Alan would like to talk to carers of people who have experienced supporting friends/relatives who lack capacity to say where they live. He can support any carers who would be prepared to contribute to the course, telling their story in an informal manner and taking students' questions.

There is a payment for your input and for expenses. If you are interested in contributing to the course in 2018, please contact Alan on **0114 225 2591** or email alan.marshall@shu.ac.uk

Volunteers wanted!

Do you like meeting new people, are a great communicator and like having a chat?

We are currently looking for volunteers to help out at our monthly Carers Café on the second Friday of every month for 2-3 hours. If you are interested please contact Scott Liddle on 0114 278 8942 or email scott@sheffieldcarers.org.uk

Time for a Break?

At the Carers Centre, we want to help as many carers as we can to get a break, whether an evening out, a sport or hobby, or a short break. Sadly, we can't give a grant to all carers, even though we know how important it is to have some sort of a break and something to look forward to. This is why our Time for a Break Co-ordinator has been seeking opportunities, offers and discounts for our carers, so we can extend the range of options we can offer.

We need to make sure that the limited grants we are able to give go where they are most needed, supporting those carers who are most in need of a break, and least able to have one without some financial support. Many of you will remember that the former grant scheme we used to offer was so successful that the money ran out and many carers who were very much in need of a break, were disappointed. Our aim is to avoid this happening again, and to do this we need to get creative!

Carers are offered support to have a break following a discussion with one of our Carer Advisors which focuses on the caring situation, when and how able they are to have a break. So if you contact the Carers Centre to talk about how you can have a break, while grants are sometimes available, you may also be offered alternatives. Here are some examples...

Time to volunteer?



If you are a carer that receives just a few hours respite a week, TimeBuilders has a range of opportunities for you to

volunteer. You can use your skills in a variety of ways, making a difference while making new friends, on a flexible 'hour by hour' basis. Volunteers earn a time-credit for each hour they contribute to one of the projects. Time-credits can later be spent on something fun or educational; a guitar class, a language class, vouchers from local leisure organisations or even a day trip.

Here are some of the projects created by volunteers that respond to real needs in our communities:

'Nourishing' projects transform food that would otherwise be wasted into meals and occasions that nourish body and soul. You can bring your cooking skills, from chopping carrots to seasoning soup, welcoming guests and doing the dishes;

'Learning' projects deliver informal English conversation classes to recent migrants who are keen to be part of our communities. You can bring your communication skills - listening, correcting, encouraging and keeping the conversation flowing;

'Growing' projects make use of empty city spaces to grow vegetables, from church yards to front yards. You can bring your green fingers and gardening tips. Celebrating home grown food is a great way to bring neighbours together;

'Making' projects share tools, materials and skills in the communal workshop. TimeBuilders make, mend and up-cycle all kinds of things. You can join team sessions that are building items for the community such as planters and benches;

'Connecting' projects allow members to share their hobbies, everything from Art to Zumba. You can bring your passions and knowledge, to join a group or lead a class.

TimeBuilders makes it easy for everyone to get involved in their community, with flexible opportunities to contribute whatever they have. They have offices at St Mary's on Bramall Lane, but volunteers work across Sheffield. Please

get in touch to find out how to make use of your skills, knowledge and time. Find out more here: www.timebuilders.org.uk, or email to make an appointment for a chat: james.starky@timebuilders.org.uk (tel: 0114 223 0240).

Time for yourself



With thanks to Spa Naturel at Sheffield St Pauls Mercure, carers registered with the Carers Centre can enjoy a mini pamper day at a special rate of £39 (normally £55).

Your mini pamper day can be any day from Monday to Thursday, in the morning or afternoon, or a twilight experience after 5pm. Your day of relaxation will include a robe, slippers, refreshments and any 40-minute treatment from their brochure.

Spa 1877 also continue their generous offer of a free spa voucher for carers registered with us, which allow them to have a relaxing session in the luxurious Victorian Turkish Baths. Carers don't need an assessment with a Carer Advisor for this one, just call our office number. Remember, you can only have this once.

Time for a Tabby Tea



This is definitely one for cat-lovers! Have you heard about Tabby Teas, the new 'cat café' in Sheffield? It is a quiet and welcoming home to a number of cats

who have been re-homed from rescue centres.

Owners Charlotte and Michael have agreed to waive the entrance fees for up to 6 carers on Wednesdays between 12 and 1:30pm. A table will be reserved for carers registered with us, and you can choose whether you want to purchase refreshments or not (drinks range from £0.85 - £2.50, and cakes and biscuits from £1.00 - £2.50).

There are house rules, including no children under 10, no high heels, laser pens or loud noises, and don't wake a cat if it's sleeping. There is currently no disabled access.

Time for a photoshoot



Here is something different, maybe not exactly a break in the usual way, definitely could be a nice thing to do. How would you like a photoshoot, individual or group, not in a studio but maybe a public space or natural outdoor setting, in or near Sheffield? An aspiring local photographer and carer herself, is seeking to build her portfolio and launch her photography business.

The photoshoot and digital copies of the pictures (once edited) will be provided to you for free. All that she asks is that if you are happy with the pictures you consent to them being published on her Facebook page. It is up to you what you do with the digital copies provided to you – a number of high street shops provide printing services so you could purchase your own prints if you wish.

Places are limited, especially in the run up to Christmas, but there will be a few more slots available in the New Year.

There is a maximum of 6 separate opportunities.

Time to climb



Up to 6 people can enjoy 6 free monthly instruction sessions with a qualified coach at the Climbing Works. This is an indoor bouldering wall, with a balanced membership of men and women. A wide range of abilities are catered for but these sessions are suitable for beginners, or climbers who've become a bit rusty!

Bouldering is an excellent way of keeping fit – it is a physical activity and one that does have an element of risk. Each hour-long coaching session will be held between 10am and 6pm between Monday – Thursday (time and date to be confirmed subject to carer availability).

Time for Bingo



Gala Bingo at Wadsley Bridge are offering a VIP session of bingo on a monthly basis to carers registered with Sheffield Carers Centre. Carers would be given an exclusive voucher for a free meal, a free drink and a free paper main event.

If any of these offers appeal to you, mention this in your discussion with the Carer Advisor.

Planned changes for urgent primary care in Sheffield

Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has recently revealed plans to open a new Urgent Treatment Centre at the Northern General Hospital and close both the Minor Injuries Unit at the Hallamshire Hospital and the Broad Lane Walk-in Centre near the city centre. There will also be changes to out-of-hours access to GPs and the way urgent eye care is delivered.

To find out more about the proposed changes and about how you can share your thoughts, by go to <https://www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/news/changes-planned-for-urgent-primary-care-in-sheffield>

There will be a public consultation event on **Wednesday 6 December 2017, 1.30 – 3.30pm** here at the Carers Centre – please ring 0114 305 4609 to book your place.

ADVERTISEMENT

Do you or the person you care for need a companion: someone to spend one-to-one time with - have a chat over a cup of tea?

Would a little support at home help you to get on with day-to-day living?

If you are a carer and need companionship support for yourself, or for the person you care for whilst you get out and about – please call: Debbie Mansfield 0114 229 5665 or 07890 134656 for a free half hour visit or go to:

www.treasuredtime.co.uk

Note: No personal care provided. Public Liability Insurance and DBS checked.

New digital inclusion support for younger adult carers

We are now able to offer younger adult carers an exciting new opportunity to become more digitally aware.

The Carers Centre has been given a grant by Carers Trust (the national carers' charity), as part of Nominet Trust's Digital Reach programme – a pioneering initiative developed to support the efforts to increase digital skills amongst some of the UK's most disadvantaged young people.

The pilot project here at the Carers Centre offers online digital training to young adult carers aged 16-24, using a bespoke version of 'Learn my Way', a

website of free online courses for beginners that helps them make the most of the online world.

Our 'digital cafe' runs every Wednesday afternoon at our premises at Concept House, but we are also encouraging our growing network of young adult carers to take up the learning challenge from home. We know that carers find it difficult to commit to set weekly sessions due to their other commitments, which is why the flexibility of this project is perfect. As well as helping improve digital skills, 'Learn my Way' is packed full of useful digital resource ideas to help carers, such as job-match tools, online training and even mindfulness and

meditation apps for carers to try.

Isaac Walsh, a young adult carer, has already started attending the sessions at the Carers Centre and commented: "It's a good resource as it's broken down into sections so you only have to complete the parts you need to". It's easy to understand and although I'm quite good on computers, I still learn something new every time I log in'.

If you are interested in signing up for Digital Reach, or finding out more, contact Julia McInally our Young Adult Carer Worker on 0114 278 8942 or email her at julia@sheffieldcarers.org.uk

More Blood Donors needed!



Blood and Transplant

Blood donors make a difference every day, saving people whose lives depend on blood. One donation can save up to 3 people.

Over the last year 900,000 people nationwide have given up their time to donate blood to help patients in need. But 200,000 new blood donors are needed to ensure that patients in the future have access to the blood they need, when they need it.

There is also an urgent need for 40,000 new black donors to improve the lives of thousands of patients with sickle cell disease. They need life-saving blood from black donors, which provides the closest match to their own

Sheffield Donor Centre is located in the city centre near to the Cathedral tram stops. It's open Monday to Friday with a variety of opening hours from early morning to evening sessions. The centre

provides free wi-fi and refreshments after donation.

Register to give blood

Visit www.blood.co.uk or call **0300 123 23 23** to book an appointment to save a life.



Can GoodGym help you?

GoodGym runners want a reason to run so as part of their runs, they stop off to help people aged 60+ with one-off household and garden tasks. These tasks are known as missions and can include;

- *changing light-bulbs*
- *garden clearance/mowing the lawn*
- *putting together flat-pack furniture*
- *helping to move heavy items*
- *basic painting*

Missions are one-off tasks so the runners cannot carry out shopping, household cleaning or regular garden maintenance. They are enthusiastic volunteers, not DIY specialists or gardeners and you need to provide any tools and equipment they might need.

How can GoodGym help you?

If you need some help with a household or garden task (a mission) you can use an online form (www.goodgym.org/request-a-mission) or call the GoodGym office on **0203 432 3920**.



GoodGym runners carrying out a mission

Does your GP know you are a carer?

There are a few things you can do to help any healthcare professional such as your GP support you better as a carer.

Ask your GP or GP receptionist to make a note that you are a carer. This is the simplest way of getting the support you may need as a carer. Some GP practices have arrangements in place for carers, such as a more flexible appointment booking system. You may also be contacted about flu jabs and other services relevant to you as a carer.

If the person you care for is also a patient at the same practice as you, make the reception staff aware. Communication is key. Be open with healthcare professionals about the impact your

caring role has on you. The more they know, the better they can support you. All patients' records are confidential! If you need a GP to discuss information with you about the person you care for, speak to the receptionist to find out what arrangements, if any, your practice has in place, and what you need to do to help make this happen.

If you know other carers, encourage them to also let their GP know about their caring responsibilities so that they too may get the support they need now or in the future.

Remember, 40% of carers are thought to live with stress and depression at some time during their caring role. It is essential your GP knows you are a carer and supports you.

Carers visit to Lifewise

Jan Outram, our Community Liaison Worker, took a group of carers to the Lifewise Centre.

The Lifewise Centre is an interactive learning centre for South Yorkshire communities, developed by South Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue. It looks rather like the set of Coronation Street and features a pub, a shop, a hospital, a park and a police car – compete with flashing blue lights! The Centre is used to educate visitors about safety and citizenship, with the ultimate aim of reducing crime and improving quality of life.

With the help of a grant from the Carers Trust 'Rank' fund (money raised by Rank Organisation) 25 carers visited the centre in August. We were met with cups of tea, and cake, kindly provided by Wiltshire Farm Foods, and heard talks on various safety issues and took part in interactive role-plays demonstrating how easy it is to become the victim of a scam or rogue trader.

Learning about personal safety, fire safety, scams, door step crime might not have sounded like a fun summer outing, but all the carers who took part was pleasantly surprised at how enjoyable and fun it were.

To end a lovely day, all the carers received a 'goodie bag' made up of information leaflets and pens and some wonderful beauty products donated by Lush!

Thanks are due to Andy Foster, the driving force behind this initiative whose down-to-earth-Yorkshire humour kept us entertained all day, and to the Rank Organisation, especially Shakara and Mark at Grosvenor Casino who tirelessly fundraise for us.

Community Mental Health services in Sheffield

There are changes to the way adult community mental health services are currently provided. Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Foundation Trust (SHSC) has spent the past year talking to service users, carers, GPs, staff and other stakeholders about how we could better organise our services to meet the needs of the people of Sheffield.

SHSC has said that everyone currently in receipt of services will have their care plans respected and will continue to receive a service with as little disruption to them as possible while changes are made.

The aim of the changes is to make sure that people can get the help they need when they need it, while also making sure that the new services are financially sustainable. The focus of the changes is on easy access, consistent waiting times across the city and services which are able to respond flexibly as service users' needs change.

You can find out more about the changes on the SHSC website at: <https://shsc.nhs.uk/about-us/adult-community-mental-health-services-are-changing/>

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News from Sheffield Mencap and Gateway



'Keep in Touch' Service (KITS)

As part of the partnership work with Sheffield Carers Centre, Kirsty and Cathy are keeping in regular contact with carers aged 55 and over, and supporting those people to think about emergency and long term planning. This service includes continuing to organise and host information sessions and workshops for carers.

For more information, advice and support feel free to call us Monday - Thursday: 9.30am - 4.30pm on 0114 275 8879.

Carers Support Groups

Three Sharing Caring Project support groups for carers meet regularly in the north, south-east and centre of Sheffield. We are working with other organisations to find ways that families from the Pakistani community can be supported to meet regularly.

Our newest carers session is meeting at Sheffield Mencap and Gateway Community café. As part of this we wanted to try and build up a new community carers social support session the First Thursday of every month. The cost of these lunches at the community cafe will be £3.50 for a 2 course lunch and a drink. Please just pop along or give us a call for more

information.

There is also a weekly 'drop-in' session between 12noon and 2pm on Thursdays for carers to come and talk with Kirsty or Cathy about any issues, or bring paperwork to look at.

FLASh (Families Lobbying & Advising Sheffield)

FLASh meets to ensure that the voices of families of people with learning disabilities/autism remain strong and to speak up on behalf of these families. Whilst they cannot take on individual cases, the FLASh committee would love more family carers to get involved, to respond to consultations and to share their caring experiences – positive as well as things that need to be improved. Information will be regularly collated and patterns noted and taken to a range of forums and meetings. Please email flash575@gmail.com and ask to be added to their mailing list or for more information.

Information Sessions

Wills and Trusts with Tricia Carter and Siobhan Scattergood from Lupton Fawcett Denison Till: Thursday 18th January 10.30am – 12.30pm at Sheffield Mencap and Gateway.

This session will talk about some of the things families may need to know if they, or other relatives, are thinking of leaving any money or property to someone with a learning disability and/or autism. This includes information about Discretionary Trusts, choosing Trustees, safeguarding people's incomes, legal obligations for parents of disabled people and more. Tricia and Siobhan will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Power of Attorney with Tricia Carter and Siobhan Scattergood from Lupton Fawcett Denison Till : Thursday 1st February 10.30am – 12.30pm at Sheffield Mencap and Gateway.

Power of attorney is a legal document that allows someone to make decisions for you, or act on your behalf, if you're no longer able to or if you no longer want to make your own decisions. There are a number of reasons why you might need someone to make decisions for you or act on your behalf: This could just be a temporary situation: for example, if you are in hospital and need help with everyday things such as making sure bills are paid.

Please let us know if you intend to come to one of these sessions so we know how many people to expect and so we can let you know if dates change.

If there is enough interest, we can also look at an evening session.

For sale and wanted

We receive many requests to advertise items carers would like to sell (or buy). Unfortunately, we don't have room to advertise them all in the Newsletter - but we do now advertise all these items on our website.

If you want to see what's available to buy, please go to www.sheffieldcarers.org.uk and click For sale/wanted on the left hand side. If you are looking for an item but don't

have access to the internet, please ring us on **0114 278 8942** and we can tell you what is currently being advertised.

Examples of things we've been asked to advertise recently include:

- **Suction grab bars** (£5 each) in S11
- an **Excel G-Lite manual wheelchair** (£40) in S11
- a **Bellavita bath lift** (£40) in Mosborough

- **2 adjustable commode chairs** (£10 each) in S7
- a **Stannah straight stairlift** (£400) in the Charnock area

If you would like to advertise an item on our website, you can email details to office@sheffieldcarers.org.uk or call us on 0114 278 8942, and we will take down the details and place the advert for you.

A-Z of Health



We continue this series by looking at D for depression. As usual, further information and more detailed information is available through the NHS Choices website.

Depression is more than simply feeling unhappy or fed up for a few days.

Most people go through periods of feeling down, but when you're depressed you feel persistently sad for weeks or months, rather than just a few days.

Some people think depression is trivial and not a genuine health condition. They're wrong – it is a real illness with real symptoms. Depression isn't a sign of weakness or something you can "snap out of" by "pulling yourself together".

The good news is that with the right treatment and support, most people with depression can make a full recovery.

How to tell if you have depression

Depression affects people in different ways and can cause a wide variety of symptoms. They range from lasting feelings of unhappiness and hopelessness, to losing interest in the things you used to enjoy and feeling very tearful. Many people with depression also have symptoms of anxiety.

There can be physical symptoms too, such as feeling constantly tired, sleeping badly, having no appetite or sex drive, and various aches and pains. The symptoms of depression range from mild to severe. At its mildest, you may simply feel persistently low in spirit, while severe depression can make you feel suicidal, that life is no longer worth living.

Most people experience feelings of stress, unhappiness or anxiety during difficult times. A low mood may improve after a short period of time, rather than being a sign of depression. If you've been feeling

low for more than a few days, there is a short test on the NHS Choices website which may help you work out if you're depressed.

When to see a doctor

It's important to seek help from your GP if you think you may be depressed.

Many people wait a long time before seeking help for depression, but the sooner you see a doctor, the sooner you can start to recover.

What causes depression?

Sometimes there's a trigger for depression. Life-changing events, such as bereavement, losing your job or having a baby, can bring it on. If you are a carer, however willingly you do this and choose to continue caring, the impact this has on your life can be significant, and it's not surprising that carers can sometimes experience anxiety or depression.

People with a family history of depression are more likely to experience it themselves. But you can also become depressed for no obvious reason.

Depression is fairly common, affecting about one in 10 people at some point during their life. It affects men and women, young and old.

Treating depression

Treatment for depression can involve a combination of lifestyle changes, talking therapies and medication. Your recommended treatment will be based on whether you have mild, moderate or severe depression. If you have mild depression, your doctor may suggest waiting to see whether it improves on its own, while monitoring your progress. This is known as "watchful waiting". They may also suggest lifestyle measures such as

exercise and self-help groups.

Talking therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), are often used for mild depression that isn't improving, or for moderate depression. Antidepressants are also sometimes prescribed.

For moderate to severe depression, a combination of talking therapy and antidepressants is often recommended. Those experiencing severe depression may be referred to a specialist mental health team for intensive specialist talking treatments and prescribed medication.

Living with depression

Many people with depression benefit by making lifestyle changes, such as getting more exercise, cutting down on alcohol, giving up smoking and eating healthily.

Reading a self-help book or joining a support group can sometimes help. They can help you gain a better understanding about what causes you to feel depressed. Sharing your experiences with others in a similar situation can also be very supportive.

A key message therefore is - don't just put up with it. It can be difficult to seek help when feeling depressed but it can help to ask for help when it's needed. Just knowing you're not alone and help is available can make a difference.

As well as your own GP, the Samaritans (116 123) operates a 24-hour service available every day of the year. The NHS Choices website provides more information about how and where you can seek help with depression.

NHS Choices

<https://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Pages/hub.aspx>

How to get in touch with Sheffield Carers Centre

Carers Advice Line

For information and a listening ear or to arrange a face to face appointment:

0114 272 8362

(Mon-Fri 9.00 am – 6.00 pm)

For information and support by email:
support@sheffieldcarers.org.uk

Office enquiries

Telephone: **0114 278 8942**

Email: **office@sheffieldcarers.org.uk**

Website: **www.sheffieldcarers.org.uk**

Post: **Ground Floor East, Concept House,
5 Young Street, Sheffield, S1 4UP**

We always welcome articles from carers for our newsletter. Please send by mail or by e-mail (Word or plain text format).

The deadline for copy for the next edition is: **Friday 26 January 2018**

*This newsletter is produced by Sheffield Carers Centre (registered charity no. 1041250).
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