



The Princess Royal Trust for Carers
Network Member

ISSUE 56

CARERS' voice

News from North Tyneside Carers' Centre

July 2010



Inside this
issue...

Extended
opening
hours

Sharing the
Caring

Nexus
Companion
card

Power of
Attorney

**North Tyneside
Carers' Centre**

Third Floor,
YMCA building,
Church Way,
North Shields,
NE29 0AB

0191 200 1111

The Emergency Budget - What does it mean for carers?

The Treasury has set out estimated savings of £360m in 2013-14 and over £1bn in 2014-15. These cuts are significant and the Carers' Centre is concerned that this may place vulnerable families at risk.

The Government has decided to link the measurement they use to decide on benefit levels to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rather than the Retail Price Index (RPI) which is currently used. The CPI is usually lower and this could mean that carers are worse off. For example if the Carers Allowance had been linked to CPI over the last ten years the current rate would be £5.26 a week less than it is now.

The Government will introduce a medical assessment for Disability Living Allowance from 2013, which will be applied to new and existing claimants. These tests could have a huge affect on carers, as their own benefits, Carer's Allowance and others, are often based on the disabled person they care for receiving Disability Living Allowance at a certain level. Evidence from Carers UK's advice line shows that experiences of similar testing for Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit have been extremely negative, with many cases being challenged. We are concerned that this testing system will cause considerable fear, stress and uncertainty to families already coping with heavy caring responsibilities, and that the costs of implementation and subsequent appeals will not deliver the savings the Government hopes for.

The Government will increase the standard rate of VAT to 20% from 4 January 2011. The impact of the VAT rise in those with incomes below £10,000 will be between £50 - £100 a year. A survey by Carers UK in 2008 showed that 74% of carers were struggling to pay essential food and heating bills and over half of carers are falling into debt as a result of caring. Any rise in basic living costs may have a devastating impact on those already in debt and financial hardship as a result of caring. The VAT rise could also have a higher impact upon carers' expenditure as the additional costs of disability mean that they end up spending more on a range of VAT rated products like cleaning materials, continence pads, and bandages.

North Tyneside Carers' Centre would like to thank Carrie Sanderson who is doing a sponsored **Bungee Jump** to raise funds for us. The jump will take place on **1 August 2010** and all sponsor money raised will go directly to the charity.



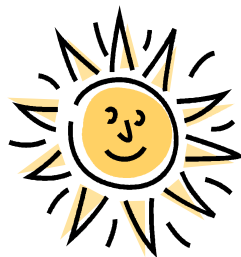
This Bungee jump is one of many sponsored activities that Carrie has taken on for charity and is a remarkable achievement as she has a number of health problems and phobias. However, she has not let these get the better of her and with the help of Joanne one of the centre's 'Sharing the Caring' workers, she is slowly but surely starting to overcome them.

Joanne has been encouraging and supporting Carrie so that she has been able to build her confidence, get out and about and tackle her fears. Her husband Eddie has been able to have a break from his caring role in the knowledge that Carrie is receiving high quality support and having a good time. Eddie says "Without the help from Joanne I am sure that these problems would never be resolved".

If you are interested in sponsoring Carrie or finding out more about how Sharing the Caring can help you please contact us at the Centre.

Looking after yourself and others during hot weather

The heat can affect anyone, but some people are more vulnerable and run a risk of serious harm.



These include, older people, those over 75, babies and young children, people with mobility problems or on certain medication, or those with breathing or heart problems.

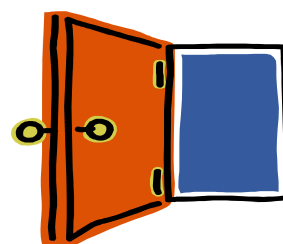
The NHS Foundation Trust Patient Information Centre have published a leaflet which gives tips on dealing with the heat and keeping cool. You can order direct by phoning the Patient Information Centre on 0191 223 2545 or visit www.orderline.dh.gov.uk and quote 301454/Heatwave to download a pdf. copy.

Extended Opening Hours

The Carers' Centre is now open

- Saturday's from 9am until 1pm
- Wednesday evenings until 8pm.

You can contact us for information, advice and support or to make an appointment. We also have advice and information sessions at various venues throughout the borough from 1 August 2010 (see enclosed flyer) so that you can access support closer to home. Please contact us for more information or check our website for details.



Direct Payments—a flexible friend!

“Having control of my own money and the freedom to choose what to do has changed my life beyond recognition”
Sue, User of Direct Payments

A Direct Payment is a cash payment that is paid to a person after they have been assessed by Social Services with a care need. It allows them to choose:

- What support or service they want.
- Who will provide it.
- When it will take place.
- Where it will take place.

You can directly employ personal assistants, or contract with agencies to provide workers. Direct Payments can be used to pay for a range of things including personal care; a support worker to help you take part in activities or go out and meet friends; equipment and adaptations; respite.

Using Direct Payments— a case study

Mark and Sarah are married, they are both 41 years old. Mark is a full time carer for Sarah who is disabled and has difficulties with her mobility. Sarah had

been using a day centre but did not want to continue as she would rather take part in community activities with people of her own age. She found out about direct payments and following an assessment of her needs received £50 per week as a direct payment to support her in her social needs. Mark was eligible for carer respite and also decided to take a direct payment which was calculated at £23.94 per week.

Mark and Sarah both decided to use their direct payments with the Sharing the Caring service at North Tyneside Carers' Centre, Sarah arranged 3 hours of support every Monday morning. Mark chose 3 hours of carer respite per fortnight. It was arranged that this would follow on from Sarah's service thus giving Mark a 5 hour break from his caring role every two weeks. Sarah was also very happy as she had the same worker each time, supporting her to take part in activities which she enjoyed.

Neither would have the benefit of this without the others direct payment.

Do You Need A Break From Your Caring Role? Sharing the Caring could help!

Sharing the Caring is a well established service that gives carers the opportunity to have a break from their caring role. The service gives carers the chance to take time out by providing workers who give support, care and stimulation to the person cared for, regardless of their disability or illness.

Our highly trained and skilled staff team are able to provide support to both the carer and the person they are caring for. The service will, whenever possible, send the same worker to provide breaks. Breaks are available from 1 hour up to 24 hours in length, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. If you would like further information on the service please contact:

Amy Anderson, Sharing the Caring Coordinator, on (0191) 2001111 or at amy.anderson@ntcarers.co.uk

North Tyneside Dementia Adviser Service

Special support is on offer in North Tyneside for people with dementia and their carers, thanks to a new Dementia Adviser Service. From diagnosis onwards, the service gives those living with dementia the opportunity to have one-to-one meetings with a Dementia Adviser, who can provide a wealth of information, advice and signposting, personalised to the individual's needs.

The role of the Dementia Adviser is to be the first point of contact following diagnosis, for a person with dementia and their carer. They can signpost and facilitate engagement with specialist services that can provide care and support simply and quickly. Furthermore, provide timely, helpful and appropriate information in a way that is understood.

The service is specifically for people who have received or are in the process of receiving a diagnosis of dementia. People who have been diagnosed for some time could still benefit, if they wish to start a personalised information plan for the future. It is preferable that people are aware of their diagnosis and willing to talk about their dementia, as tools that are used talk openly of dementia.

Further information about the Dementia Adviser Service or to make a referral into the service (referral form available which can be sent out via post or e-mail; telephone referrals accepted), please contact Dementia Adviser's Paul Bates and Paul Devine on telephone number 0191 257 1245; or email: paul.bates@alzheimers.org.uk or paul.devine@alzheimers.org.uk.

'This is Me'

The Alzheimer's Society have launched a new leaflet called 'This is Me' for people with dementia who are going into hospital. This is Me is a simple and practical tool that can be given to hospital staff and will provide a snapshot of the person with dementia providing information on their individual's needs, preferences, likes, dislikes and interests. This will reduce stress for them and their carers and help to prevent issues such as malnutrition and dehydration.

Leaflets are available from the Alzheimer's Society on 0191 2571245 or alternatively you can download it from their website www.alzheimers.org.uk

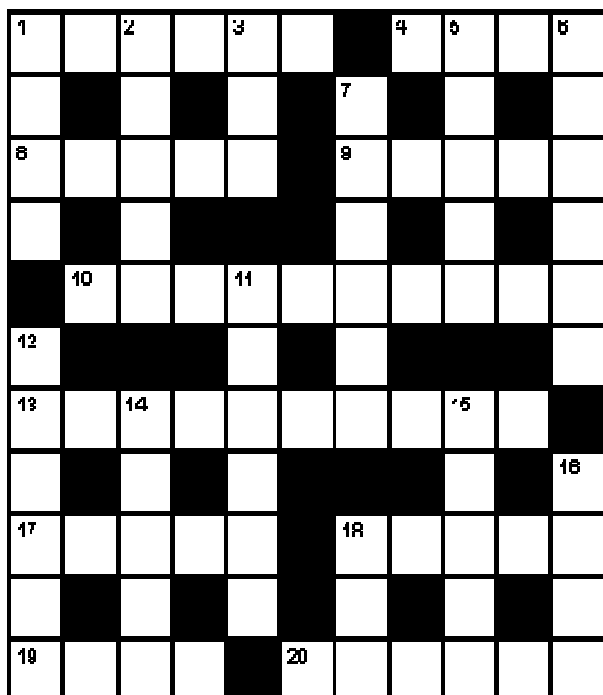


Free Debt Advice

If you would like advice on dealing with debts or managing your money you can speak with an impartial adviser at the Citizens Advice Bureau.

You can contact them on: 0300 333 3445,
9am - 5pm, weekdays.

Quick Crossword



Down

1. Mentor (4)
2. Evade (5)
3. Point (3)
5. Breed of dog (5)
6. Answer (6)
7. Outcome (6)
11. Mystery (6)
12. Collector's item (6)
14. Motionless (5)
15. Oversight (5)
16. Portable shelter (4)
18. Atmosphere (3)

Across

1. Constant (6)
4. Evidence of past Injury(4)
8. Haggard (5)
9. Fiends (5)
10. Salutory (10)
13. Clearly (10)
17. Dialect (5)
18. Copious (5)
19. Part of an egg (4)
20. Pressing (6)

News from Nexus

The Companion Card, is provided by Nexus and could be very helpful to carers. A Companion Card lets the holder take someone with them free of charge when they travel on buses in Tyne and Wear, County Durham and Northumberland. It's available to residents of Tyne and Wear who receive certain allowances and are not able to travel without a companion.

As long as you are travelling with a Companion Card holder and they have their card with them, you do not have to pay bus fares. If they have a Metro Gold Card, the Companion Card will be valid on the Metro too. A Companion Card is not for people who can use public transport unaided even if they need a carer in other aspects of their life.

Someone will automatically qualify for a Companion Card if they receive either of the following:

- higher rate care component of the Disability Living Allowance
- high rate Attendance Allowance



If you know someone who might benefit from having a Companion Card, please pass on this information.

You can pick up a Companion Card application pack at Nexus TravelShops which can be found across Tyne and Wear. You can also request a form by calling 0191 20 20 720, emailing access@nexus.org.uk or writing to: Companion Card Applications, Nexus, Grainger Chambers, 3-5 Hood Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6JQ.

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)

A lasting power of attorney is a legal document that allows you to choose others who you want to make decisions on your behalf if you lack mental capacity to make the decision yourself. The person making the lasting power of attorney is legally referred to as the 'donor'. The people (or trust corporation) chosen to make decisions on the donors behalf are called 'attorneys'. There are two types of LPA - Property and financial affairs and Health and welfare.

A registered property and financial affairs LPA lets the people you choose make decisions about, for example: buying and selling your property; opening, closing, and operating bank/building society accounts; claiming, and using your benefits, pensions, and allowances.

A registered health and welfare LPA lets the people you choose make decisions including: giving or refusing consent to particular types of health care; you staying in your own home; you moving into residential housing and choosing the right care home; day-to-day issues, like your diet, dress, or daily routine.

An LPA is a powerful legal document so needs to be carefully considered and you might want to obtain legal advice. The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) manages the registration process of LPAs and they maintain a register of them. They produce guidance and Support materials to help people make and register an LPA and deal with any complaints, and concerns raised if, for example, someone feels a person has been pressurised into making an LPA.

If you lose mental capacity at some point and you haven't completed an LPA, other people may need to apply to the Court of Protection to be able to make any decision on your behalf. This can be costly, and can be demanding and stressful for your relatives, friends and carers.

Anyone aged 18 or over can make an LPA and you must make it as an individual. You can have help in writing it, but another person cannot make an LPA for you. Anyone making an LPA needs to have mental capacity when they make it.

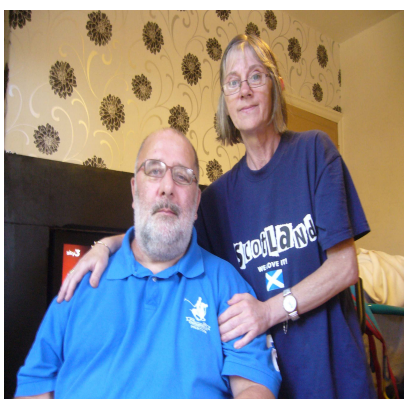
From a legal perspective, your attorney(s) must follow the Code of Practice of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. If they don't always act in your best interests the OPG can step in, and they may be held accountable.

There are 4 key steps to the LPA

1. **Choose** your attorney(s) and all the other people you need to be involved in your LPA, and think about how you want your them to make decisions on your behalf.
2. **Complete** your LPA form.
3. **Keep**, your LPA until you (or your attorney) need to use it. During this period it cannot be used and you continue to make decisions yourself.
4. **Register**, your LPA with the OPG

More information can be obtained from Office of the Public Guardian
PO Box 15118
Birmingham. B16 6GX

"The Hour that Changed our Lives" A Carers' Story



**Ann with
her
Husband
Paul**

It was 8th July 2008 a lovely warm summer's day. My husband Paul went to cut a hedge and I took our dog to the vet. When I got home my son asked why his Dad had not parked his car on the drive as usual. Before I could answer him my neighbour came running over to inform me that Paul had fallen over and had been rushed to hospital.

We hurried to the hospital thinking that he had probably bumped his head, and then the nightmare began. When I got to casualty I had to give his name and details and they told me his name was Michael, which was his brothers' name. I wondered why he had said that. Eventually my son and I got to see him, and we were hit with the bombshell that he had had a massive stroke.

We had heard about strokes but had never had any first hand experience. After months of hospital treatment, intensive care and speech therapy Paul slowly started to improve and was allowed to come home. That is when my battle began. I had to get Paul a special hospital bed as he couldn't lie flat. He required a hoist for

his day to day needs and we had a long wait for adaptations such as a wet room, a ramp for a wheelchair and wider entrances. I even sent a letter to the Mayor of North Tyneside to see if he could help.

Transport is always a problem. When going on the Metro Paul has to sit at the doors as his wheelchair is too big for the aisles. Buses are a nightmare and even taxis can be a problem. I have found that facilities for wheelchair users are very poor and I have to research on the internet before I go anywhere to check that there are suitable toilets etc that will accommodate his wheelchair.

I have written this article to highlight the frustrations that carers may face and I hope that together we can improve services.

Ann Grimes (Carer)

If you would like to respond to Ann's article or include an article of your own in future Newsletters, please contact Kath or Julie at the Centre on our usual number.

How to recognise a stroke

Assess the 3 specific symptoms of stroke and then if necessary act **FAST**:

- **F**acial weakness - can the person smile? Has their mouth or eye drooped?
- **A**rm weakness - can the person raise both arms?
- **S**peech problems - can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?
- If not **T**ime to call **999**

If you would like more information contact the Stroke Association helpline on 0303 303 3100.

Solution to Quick Crossword

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | N | E | G | R | U | | K | L | O | Y |
| N | | S | | I | | A | | L | | T |
| E | L | P | A | M | | W | O | I | D | I |
| T | | A | | | | G | | T | | D |
| | A | L | T | C | N | I | N | S | T | D |
| T | | | | A | | N | | | | O |
| L | A | V | I | C | I | F | E | N | E | B |
| U | | G | | D | | | | D | | E |
| S | E | R | E | G | O | | T | N | T | G |
| E | | O | | Z | | O | | L | | A |
| R | A | C | A | S | | Y | A | D | E | S |

MAILING LIST

If you do not subscribe to this newsletter and would like to receive future editions, please contact us : enquires@ntcarers.co.uk or telephone: 0191 200 1111
Alternatively you can send a letter with your details to:
North Tyneside Carers' Centre
Third Floor , YMCA building, Church Way
North Shields. NE29 0AB



North Tyneside Carers' Centre is seeking new trustees who are interested in supporting and developing the work of the Centre. If you would like further information about the roles and responsibilities of being a trustee, please contact Claire Easton on 200 1111

Complaints Policy

North Tyneside Carers' Centre is committed to providing a high quality service to the people it serves. Occasionally we may fail to meet our usual high standards for whatever reason and we would like to know if and when this has happened, in order that we can rectify and make the necessary improvements.

If you have any concerns, we would be interested in hearing from you. Please address any complaints to The Centre Manager .

Carers' Forum

The guest speaker at the next Carers' Forum will talk about 'Personalisation'. The Personalisation agenda aims to give social care service users control over how money allocated to their care is spent. It includes direct payments, personal budgets and user-led services.
The Forum will be held on Tuesday 12th October at The Carers' Centre.
12:30pm Buffet Lunch. 1:15 Guest Speaker Sheila Watson (Business Assurance Manager) at North Tyneside Council.

If you have any difficulties reading our Newsletter, please contact us and we will make arrangements to help you with this.



Any Views or opinions expressed in Carers' Voice are those of the author and may not necessarily be those of North Tyneside Carers' Centre

Penny Print
Unit 1,
Halifax Road
Dunston
NE11 9JW