



The Princess Royal Trust for Carers  
Network Member

ISSUE 58

# CARERS' voice

News from North Tyneside Carers' Centre

November 2010



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North Tyneside  
Carers' Centre

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

0191 643 2298

## Dear Carers

Its been another very busy year for the Centre. We now have 1719 adults and 369 young carers registered with us and we received 259 new referrals for support this year. We have won new contracts with the Local Authority to provide Carer Respite and Information and Advice and we have welcomed 3 new members of staff.

We have been working hard to raise awareness about Carers' issues by attending community events, delivering training to health and social care professionals and sending out press releases and information bulletins.

We have also begun the consultation process which will help us develop our strategy for the centre over the next 5 years and have been collating the feedback you have given us in the annual survey. Look out for our responses to the issues you have raised in the next newsletter. One issue that has been flagged up is the lack of clarity about Direct Payments. If you are a user of Direct Payments, would like more support and are interested in getting together with others to talk about your experiences please contact us at the centre.



We look forward to working with you all in the coming year. On behalf of all of the Trustees, staff and volunteers here at the Centre we wish you a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

## Changes to the way the Council charges for Social Care

The way adult social care is provided is changing. People are being given more choice and control over how their needs are met. If you are eligible for social care services you will be given a Personal Budget and will be asked, where you can afford to do so, to make a contribution towards the cost of services provided to you in line with the Council's new Fairer Contributions Policy, which comes into effect on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2011. Personal Budgets put the needs of the person at the centre of decisions taken about their needs or care. You will receive a Personal Budget, which is a sum of money that has been identified to meet your care and support needs as set out in your support plan. You can take your Personal Budget in a number of ways:

- You can take control by having it as a direct payment and making your own arrangements for the services you want to meet your assessed needs
- You can ask the Council to manage your Personal Budget on your behalf and arrange services for you
- Or you can have a combination of

the two previous options.

Everyone in need of care will also receive a financial assessment (please note the need for carer respite is not financially assessed). This will be used by the Council to calculate whether you need to contribute to the cost of your care. The council has policies in place in line with government guidance to ensure that only those customers, who can afford to pay, do so. The amount you may have to pay depends upon your own financial circumstances and the amount of your Personal Budget or the cost of the services you receive.

A member of the Council's Financial Assessment Team will contact you to undertake a financial assessment. You will be asked for information about your current financial circumstances. In many cases the Visiting Officer will be able to tell you the charge at the time of the visit but you will receive written confirmation of your assessed charge. The Visiting Officer will offer you a full welfare benefits check and assist you to apply for any additional benefits you may be able to claim. For more information ask your Social Worker or visit our website [www.northtynesidecarers.org.uk](http://www.northtynesidecarers.org.uk).

## North Tyneside Council Ease Card for Carers

North Tyneside Council issues 'ease cards' that entitle the holder to discounts at a variety of Council venues. Carers may be entitled to additional benefits. The ease card offers discounts on a huge variety of sport and leisure activities and facilities in North Tyneside.

Discounted activities include swimming, gym and health suites, exercise classes, bowling, adult community learning courses and allotments.

The ease EXTRA and ease EXTRA 60+ cards give additional benefits including combined library and leisure facilities membership and retail discounts. For further information or to request an application form ring 0345 2000 101 or visit [www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk)



**Carers Rights Day - Friday 3 December**  
**The theme this year is "Know Your Rights".**

In difficult financial times and with public services under pressure, there has never been a more important time for carers to know their rights and access all the financial and practical support they are entitled to. For example the new Equality Act gives carers new protections from discrimination in both the workplace and when they are receiving goods and services. It is important that carers and carers groups know about these rights and know what to do if they face discrimination as a result of their caring responsibilities.

**With this in mind come along and join us :**  
**E-Quality Treasure Hunt**  
**Friday 3 December at the Carers' Centre**  
**11am - 2pm**

**This will be a fun and interactive session which includes lunch.**

To book a place please ring us on 0191 643 2298.

**Don't miss out on your flu jab!**

People aged 65 and over and people of any age with a serious medical condition in North Tyneside are being reminded to make an appointment to have their annual flu jab. The vaccine protects those in the 'at risk' groups against seasonal flu which can have serious implications.

Older people, those of any age with chronic medical conditions particularly heart, chest, liver or renal conditions, are entitled to a free seasonal flu jab as well as those people who are the main carer for an older person or someone with a disability. Each year the seasonal strain of flu changes which means a new vaccine has to be developed to ensure it will be effective against the condition. It is therefore important that people get the jab every year.

Dr Mike Guy, medical director for the three North of Tyne primary care organisations, said: "Anyone can get seasonal flu but it is obviously more serious for older people and those with serious medical conditions. Flu can lead to complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia and may be life threatening for people who are already ill. Immunising carers is also important as it helps keep them healthy and protects the person they are caring for from the risk of flu."

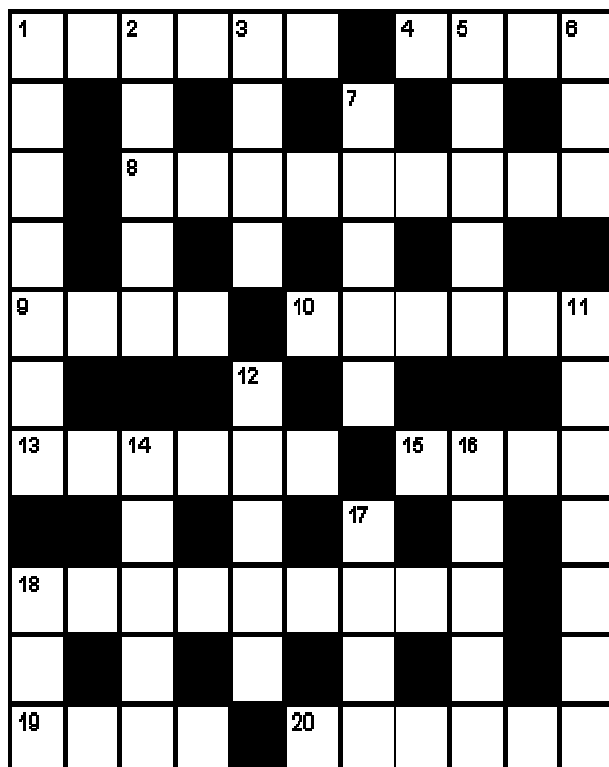
People are urged to make an appointment with their GP surgery to make sure they get their jab before the flu season begins.

## Paying winter fuel bills

If you are having difficulty paying your fuel bills, it is important to seek help as soon as possible. Here are some helpful tips:

- Contact your fuel supplier to let them know of your concerns, and tell them about anyone in your household who is vulnerable. You may be able to change your payment method or transfer to a different tariff. Gas and electricity suppliers have obligations to protect vulnerable customers.
- All major suppliers have a Priority Service Register. This is a special service for elderly or disabled people and those living with long-term health conditions that includes bills in easy-to-read larger text or in Braille, as well as security pass words and a free annual gas safety check.
- All major suppliers also have flexible payment options for vulnerable customers in fuel debt. Some suppliers also offer special discounted tariffs for vulnerable customers.
- The Energy Retail Association is an association of the main gas and electricity suppliers. It has a safety net scheme to ensure that vulnerable customers are not disconnected.
- The EDF Energy Trust can give grants towards helping EDF customers struggling with the cost of energy bills or other domestic bills. The British Gas Energy Trust can give similar grants to customers of British Gas and Scottish Gas. For more information about these trusts, as well as trusts run by some of the water companies, call 01733 421050
- If you are in receipt of Income Support, Pension Credit, Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, or Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, and you are unable to pay your fuel bill, the "fuel direct" system can help to avoid disconnection by allowing deductions to be made from your benefit and paid directly to the fuel supplier. It covers your current fuel use and also pays off a certain amount of your unpaid bill each week. Contact your local Jobcentre Plus office if you want to set this up.
- If disconnection has taken place you may be able to apply for a Crisis Loan from the Social Fund to pay for reconnection. A Crisis Loan may also be paid if you need a fuel powercard or token which includes an amount to make up for having used emergency supplies of fuel, and an amount to cover forward/future consumption. A Crisis Loan is available in an emergency if you are without sufficient resources to meet the immediate short term needs of yourself and/or your family. For information visit the Jobcentre Plus website.
- You or someone else in your home may be entitled to a Winter fuel payment and/or a Cold weather payment.
- You should also check to see if you or the person you are looking after are entitled to any benefits to increase your income.

## Quick Crossword



### Across

1. Elementary (6)
4. Sort (4)
8. Made known (9)
9. Scintilla (4)
10. Season (6)
13. Fluent (6)
15. Unguent (4)
18. Reptile (9)
19. Bed on a ship  
or train (4)
20. Conflict (6)

### Down

1. Law officer (7)
2. Intended (5)
3. Solitary (4)
5. Watercraft (5)
6. Conclusion (3)
7. Sound (5)
11. Violent disorder (7)
12. Flower (5)
14. Diadem (5)
16. Obviate (5)
17. Passport  
endorsement (4)
18. Young mammal (3)

### Manual Handling Training

The Centre has teamed up with Age UK to deliver manual handling training sessions.

The sessions will run on Thursday 3rd and 10th February at Age UK, Park Road, Whitley Bay. The sessions will run 10am – 1pm and refreshments will be included. The training will cover safe handling techniques, risk reducing measures, spinal awareness, replacing lifting with sliding, safeguarding and much more. The training is aimed at those carers who may have to move and lift the person that they care for on a regular basis to ensure that they are following safe principles and to encourage risk reducing measures within their caring role.

**To book your place or to find out more please contact the Centre.**

### The Carers' Centre has been nominated for a Natwest Community Grant

We have been shortlisted with two other charities for a Natwest Community Grant. The public, staff and customers can vote for the charity they think should receive the top prize of £5000. The other 2 charities will receive £1000 each.

The public can vote by completing a leaflet in any branch between the 8th – 26th November or by logging into

<https://communityfund.natwest.com/Vote/FindBranch>

In the box enter your postcode, select the North Shields branch from the drop down list then click 'Enter'. On the next page click 'Vote' under the Carers' Centre.

**Please encourage all of your family, friends and contacts to support the Carers' Centre so we can get as many votes as possible.**

Activity/Group	When	Where
ADHD Parent Carer Group	2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. 10am—12pm 24 November 8 December  <b>From January 2011</b> 2nd Wednesday of the month 10am-12pm 4th Wednesday of the month 6.30-8pm 12 and 26 January	Carers Centre
Autism Support group  (For adults caring for other adults)	2nd Thursday of each month 10am– 12pm  9 December 13 January 2011	Carers Centre
Carers Lunch Club.  (Open to all carers)	Meet at 12.30pm  Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> November  Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> December 12.30pm  Thursday 20 January 2011	Gibraltar Rock, Tynemouth  The Dolphin, Tynemouth (deposit required)  Powder Monkey, Wallsend
Carers Evening support group (open to all carers)	Monday 10th January  Monday 14th February	Killingworth Arms Killingworth Village  Taste of Persia Newcastle
Mental Health Support Group (for carers supporting someone with mental health problems)	24 November. Meet at 5.30pm	The New Coach Inn, Forest Hall
Parent Carer Group	First Tuesday of the month 9.30am—12 noon  7 December 4 January 2011	Carers Centre
Walking Group	Please contact the centre for details	



**Come along and join us at Nidd Hall,  
Harrogate for their Christmas Lunch  
and Celebrations on  
Thursday 9th December**



Come and celebrate with us at Nidd Hall, a Grade II listed stately home set in 45 acres of parkland. On arrival you will be greeted with mulled wine and shortbread biscuits followed by a quiz. A three course carvery meal will be served at 12:00pm followed by one hour of live entertainment and a two hour disco.

**Current/former carers: £8.50    Guest: £12.50 (one guest per carer)**  
**Coach leaves Carers' Centre at 9:15am. Coach leaves Nidd Hall at 5:00pm**  
**To reserve your place, telephone the centre on (0191) 643 2298.**

**\*NB Bookings will not be taken until 10:00am on Monday 22 November**

Payment must be received within 5 working days of booking. You can call into the centre to make payment by cash or you can send a cheque or postal order made payable to **'North Tyneside Carers' Centre'** at:  
 North Tyneside Carers' Centre 3rd Floor, YMCA Building, Church Way, North Shields, Tyne and Wear. NE29 0AB.

You may be able to have a Sharing the Caring worker to support the person you care for so you can access this activity, although there will be a charge for this. Contact - Amy Anderson.

### Carers' Surgeries

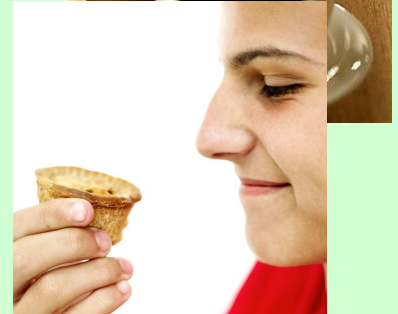
<b>Monday</b>	1.30pm - 4.30pm	Monkseaton Medical Centre	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday of the month	Appointment basis – patients only.
<b>Tuesday</b>	9am - 12pm	Village Green, Wallsend	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month	Appointment basis - open to all.
	11.45am -1.45pm	Quadrant East, North Tyneside Council	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month	Appointment basis. Open to anyone working at Cobalt.
	1pm – 4pm	Oxford Centre, Longbenton	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month	Appointment basis – open to all.
<b>Wednesday</b>	5pm – 8pm	Carers Centre, YMCA Building, North Shields	Every Wednesday	Appointment basis – open to all.
<b>Friday</b>	10am - 12pm	Collingwood Surgery, North Shields	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday of the month	Appointment basis – patients only.
	9am – 1pm	White Swan Centre, Killingworth	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of the month	Appointment basis – open to all.
<b>Saturday</b>	9am – 1pm	Carers Centre, YMCA Building, North Shields	Every Saturday	Appointment basis – open to all.

## Coffee Morning

Our first coffee morning was a great success. 16 carers came along and enjoyed a cuppa, a chat and some cake!

The next one will take place on Thursday 2nd December 10am - 12pm at the Centre.

All carers and former carers welcome. Come along and join us for a coffee, a mince pie and a laugh! 20p per person. No need to pre-book.



## New services from the CAB

North Tyneside Citizens Advice Bureau is now able to offer additional services from 15 November 2010. The new services are in addition to the existing specialist services already offered in relation to benefits and debt. Legal advice will be available around



- Housing issues such as homelessness, eviction, disrepair, possession proceedings
- Community care issues such as concerns about Care Assessments for service Users or Carers, Care Plans, Difficulty accessing services, charges for residential and Non residential Services, Health or Social Services complaints

For information on eligibility for these services contact the Carers' Centre or drop in to one of the Bureau's offices at Wallsend or North Shields. Generalist Advice continues to be available at

### North Shields Bureau 51 Bedford Street

#### North Shields NE29 0AT

Monday	10am – 3pm
Tuesday	10am – 3pm
Wednesday	1pm - 3pm
Thursday	10am – 3pm
Friday	10am – 1pm

### Wallsend Bureau

#### St Lukes Church House

#### Hugh Street, Wallsend NE28 6RL

Monday	10am - 1pm
Tuesday	10am - 1pm
Wednesday	Appointments only
Thursday	10am - 1pm
Friday	10am - 4pm

**Debt Hotline - 0191 2704485**

### Outreach Services are available at

Killingworth (White Swan Centre)	Monday	10 – 1 p.m
Longbenton (Oxford Centre)	Tuesday	10 – 1 p.m
Dudley (John Willie Sams Centre)	Thursday	10 – 1 p.m

To make an appointment contact 0345 2000 101

## What the Cuts mean for Carers..

The Government's plans to cut spending will inevitably impact on many carers. Changes to benefits and social care services are particularly worrying. Unfortunately it's not possible to see how extensive some of the cuts will be because plans will not be revealed until Councils make their budgets for social care next year. Here are some of the main changes:



- Contributions based Employment and Support Allowance (which replaces Incapacity Benefit) will be removed after a year if a claimant has a partner who works (whatever the wage level).
- Parents with children will have to work 24 hours a week to receive any work tax credits now (up from 16 hours) and one partner will have to work at least 16 hours.
- The Government intends to replace Carers Allowance with some kind of Universal Credit in the future. This change is thought to be many years away and might not see the light of day.
- Carers over 25 will no longer be able to study GCSE's and A levels for free, but can access a loan to cover tuition fees.
- A cap on benefits of £500 a week for families except where somebody is claiming DLA. This is likely to effect large families and families where somebody has alcohol problems.
- An increase in the rents for social housing.
- Housing benefit to be reduced by 10% after someone has been on Job Seekers Allowance for a year.
- Education and Maintenance Allowance for 16 to 18 year olds to be phased out.
- The mobility component of DLA will be removed for those in residential care. Carers are more likely to have to compensate their cared for's from their own pockets if they can do so.

## New support group for carers of people with autism

In response to recent developments to support people with autism, both nationally and more locally, the North Tyneside Learning Disability Partnership Board agreed to fund a new support group for one year.

A launch event was held at the Riverside Centre on the 7<sup>th</sup> October where parents agreed a support group was needed, as well as ensuring carers' views and experiences were fed in to health and social care to shape future service delivery.

The Carers' Centre will host this new group which is aimed at adult carers caring for an adult with autism. The group will meet at the centre on the second Thursday of every month from 10am until 12pm. If you would like further information, please contact Claire Easton at the Carers' Centre on 643 2298.

## 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) 643 2298 or at  
[amy.anderson@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:amy.anderson@ntcarers.co.uk)

## WANT TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW?

At the Open University we have courses to suit everyone from all walks of life. You don't need qualifications to take most of our courses and we offer a wide range of learning opportunities. For example, as a carer you may be interested in one of the many courses we offer in the field of health and social care. Topics like Understanding Cancers, the Certificate in Health and Social Care, Understanding Children, Diabetes Care, Understanding the Autism Spectrum and many more. We also offer courses in most other subjects such as languages, history, literature and science. Learning is based around your needs, you don't have to attend classes and you can study at a place convenient to you.

Recently, a group of women from a Children's Centre in Middlesbrough got together and decided to study our Understanding Children course. The women were supported by both Open University and Children Centre staff and all enjoyed the content of the course. For one of the students it was the first time she had studied since leaving school but she found that undertaking the course really helped her confidence levels and she has now decided to continue learning with a view to a career in social work.

Depending on your household income, many courses are offered free or at a subsidised rate. It may also be possible to help groups study together by offering extra support throughout a course.

**If you are interested in getting together to learn with other carers please contact Julie at the centre**

You can find out more information about our courses on our website at [www.open.ac.uk](http://www.open.ac.uk) or contact Katrina Coleman on 0191 4776100.  
Email: [k.m.coleman@open.ac.uk](mailto:k.m.coleman@open.ac.uk)



**The Open  
University**

## A Results Based Fitness Challenge



Reach Your Own Personal Fitness Goal in 6 weeks at The YMCA

### *Do you want to...*

- Drop a dress size for that Christmas Party in December?
- Lose a few pounds?
- Increase your upper body strength?
- Lower your body fat percentage?
- Improve your cardio / flexibility?

Sign up for our 6-week challenge

**Step 1:** Decide on an achievable fitness goal with your fitness instructor

**Step 2:** Your fitness instructor will design a programme to help you achieve your goal

**Step 3:** Follow your fitness plan... and...

...if you achieve your chosen goal, you will be entered into a raffle to win a prize! And of course you'll have the satisfaction of achieving your fitness goal, whatever it may be.

Don't delay, there are limited spaces.

**Speak to a member of the Fitness Team at The YMCA for more information or to sign up Tel 0191 257 5434**

If your feeling stressed at the thought of Christmas there are still places available on:

### **Carers' Relaxation Class**

**1:30pm-3:30pm**

**Tuesday 16 November -**

**Tuesday 14th December**

at the Carers' Centre.

Carers/Former Carer £3.00 Guests £5.00

Contact the Centre to book your place or for more information.

## Young Carers' News

**Young Carer drop-in gym sessions**  
Ages (12-17)

### **November**

Wednesday 10th

Wednesday 17th

Tuesday 23rd

### **December**

Wednesday 1st

Thursday 9th

Wednesday 15th

### **Session times**

4:30—5:30pm



**For more information**

**call Steve on**

**0191 6432298**

**or 07919414703**

### Solution to Quick Crossword

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

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

### 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 .

### Xmas Holidays

The centre will close at 5pm on Thursday 23 December and reopen at 9am on Tuesday 4 January 2011. If you need help over the holidays here are some useful contacts:

- <http://www.northtynesidecarers.org.uk/>
- Social work services (out of hours) - 0300 123 0812
- Carers UK's advice line - 0808 808 7777.
- North Tyneside Council Emergency Response - 0191 200 6800
- Care Call - 0191 200 6800
- Electricity - 0800 668 877
- Northumbria Water customer care centre (issues relating to flooding, sewage etc.) - 0845 717 1100
- Gas - 0800 111 999 Leakline - 0800 393 084
- NHS Direct - 0845 46 47



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



### MAILING LIST

If you do not subscribe to this newsletter and would like to receive future editions, please contact us :

[enquires@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:enquires@ntcarers.co.uk)

or telephone: **0191 643 2298**

Alternatively you can send a letter with your details to:

**North Tyneside Carers' Centre  
Third Floor , YMCA building, Church Way**