



The Princess Royal Trust for Carers
Network Member

ISSUE 54

CARERS' voice

News from North Tyneside Carers' Centre

February 2010



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Group

**North Tyneside
Carers' Centre**

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

Tel: 0191 200 1111

Tender Triumph

We are delighted to announce that North Tyneside Carers' Centre has been awarded two contracts from North Tyneside Council to continue providing carer support services to adult carers caring for an adult in the borough for three years from 01 May 2010. These contracts are to provide:-



1) **Information, Advice and Guidance** – this will be a continuation of the support we have provided in the past. This service will be enhanced through the:

- Development of a new website to provide a range of comprehensive information and support to both carers and professionals.
- Development of additional surgeries at community venues throughout the borough to improve access to information and support for carers.
- Extended opening hours - we will be open until 8pm on a Wednesday evening and from 9am until 1pm on a Saturday, particularly to meet the needs of carers in employment.
- Delivery of carer awareness training to health and social care staff.



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2) **Carer Support Workers** – this is a new contract through which Carer Support Workers will work with North Tyneside Council's Adult Social Care Team to:

- Increase the number, quality and outcomes of Carers' Assessments by social care staff.
- Support carers through the Carer Assessment process.
- Provide time limited support to individual carers where a specific need is identified during their Carer's Assessment.



3) **Carer Respite** - We have also successfully been included onto the council's service framework to provide carer respite. Our Sharing the Caring service will provide breaks:

- To carers who have had a carers assessment undertaken by the Council and have been identified as needing a break.
- To carers who choose to fund the service themselves.
- From one hour to twenty four hours.

More information regarding our Sharing the Caring service is available on page 3 of this issue.

This funding ensures long term sustainability for the centre and all the staff, trustees and volunteers are excited about the future and the challenges which lie ahead. We look forward to working closely with other support providers to reach more hidden carers in the borough.



Raising a glass or two in celebration of winning tender

Sharing the Caring - Respite Service Open To All

Our Sharing the Caring respite service is changing in big ways to provide flexible support to carers in the borough. Carers who need time off from caring will have the choice of using the service at nights and weekends as well as weekdays. The service is able to provide daytime breaks upwards of 1 hour in length, overnight breaks from 8 hours up to 10 hours in length and full day breaks of 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Carers can now choose to pay for extra support and in an important move; the service will be available to parent carers. Carers will be able to pay for the service with their own funds or for those eligible, with direct payments or personal budgets from North Tyneside Council.

Sharing the Caring is a high quality service that gives carers the opportunity to have a break from their caring role by providing workers to give support to the person cared for, regardless of their disability or illness. The highly trained and skilled team of Sharing the Caring Support Workers are able to support both the carer and person they are caring for, and during sessions provide stimulative support to the person cared for to enable the carer to have some time to themselves.

Stimulative support can include, but is not limited to, reminiscing activities, arts and crafts, and visits to museums, the cinema and places of interest. All activities are based on the person cared for's own interests and hobbies. Support Workers will plan activities for sessions in advance with the carer and the person they are caring for. The service always strives to promote choice and independence for carers and the person they are caring for.

Carers currently accessing the service have told us:

"the service just is superb"

"I am most grateful for the support, it has given me some time for myself to recharge my batteries".

"A warm caring service – it's so good to have an organisation that cares about carers. The involvement of the carer and the person being cared for is always considered important. I can rely on my father having a good stimulated session and I can have "my time without worry".

If you would like further information on the Sharing the Caring service please contact Amy Anderson, Sharing the Caring Coordinator, on (0191) 2001111 or at amy.anderson@ntcarers.co.uk



Carers' Allowance: The Facts



Oliver Mawdsley is an Outreach Manager for Carer's Allowance, his role is to promote Carer's Allowance to the UK. There are 6 million Carer's in the UK but only 1 million

Carer's Allowance customers and each year there are millions of £££ of unclaimed benefits, I hope after reading his article you are encouraged to claim the benefit. Oliver writes:

I always point out to people I meet on my travels Carer's Allowance is a non means tested benefit, this basically means we will not look in to any of your or your family's savings.

The first thing we check is that the person you care for is receiving a qualifying benefit which is either Disability Living Allowance at the middle or high rate of the 'care' component or any rate of Attendance Allowance, once this is in place is the time to claim Carer's Allowance as with out it your claim will not be awarded.

If you are working you can earn £95 per week take home pay, often customers earn over £95per week but with allowable expenses this takes them to the £95. The expenses we can take in to account are Tax, National Insurance, half of a private pension and 50% of care costs for a child or the person you look after while you are at work. If you are self employed then we can look at more of your expenses.

Another main part to Carer's Allowance is that you care for some one for 35hrs per week but as there is no definition of care this means you do not have to be with them for all of the 35hrs but are able to help them if needed or it may be you go shopping for them or take them to the doctors.

A carer must be 16 years old or over to claim the benefit and if you are in education you must not be studying for more than 21 hrs per week

which includes home work.

For each week you are entitled to Carers Allowance you are paid a National Insurance Credit towards your state pension, also if you receive Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance or Pension Credit you may be entitled to a Carer Premium of £29.50 per week.

One thing to be aware of is if the person you care for lives on their own and also receives a Severe Disability Premium they will lose this when you are paid Carers Allowance.

Caring is a demanding role and Carer's Allowance allow you to have breaks in care during the year, if you or the person you care for goes in to hospital you may be entitled to Carer's Allowance for up to 12 weeks in a 26week period, also if you have a break for respite or a holiday you may be entitled to Carer's Allowance for 4 weeks in a 26 week period.

If you receive another benefit which is more than £53.10 pwk you may be entitled to Carer's Allowance but it will not be payable, this is called 'Underlying Entitlement', basically you have all the entitlement conditions which may entitle you to discount on your council tax, Housing Benefit or extra premiums on other benefits, the benefits which over lap are Incapacity Benefit (now ESA), Severe Disability Allowance, Job Seekers Allowance contribution based only, Bereavement Benefits, Maternity Allowance, State Pension, Employment Rehabilitation, Gateway to Learning, Industrial Benefit and some Unemployability Benefits.

I hope this has been of help and hopefully I will see you when I am on my travels promoting Carer's Allowance.

Oliver Mawdsley

Oliver will be Guest Speaker at the Carers' Forum in July. Please see activities grid.

Local Watchdog Needs Patients' Stories

North Tyneside LINK is trying to record people's experiences of seeking help for stress and feeling down in North Tyneside.

They are interested in finding out who people saw, how long they had to wait and how successful their treatment was. The study will look at people who have asked for help with mild depression or anxiety or panic since January 2009. The interviews will take 30 minutes and those participating will receive £15 to compensate for their time. If you are interested please leave your name and a telephone number or an email address with North Tyneside LINK.

Contact North Tyneside LINK on 0191 200 1429 or go to the website

<http://nthealthsurvey.wordpress.com/> for more information.

Mental Health Support Group

If you care for someone with a mental health difficulty you may want to join our Mental Health Support Group.

The group meet on the last Wednesday of each month at various locations throughout North Tyneside from 5:30pm onwards.

If you would like to meet up or find out more details please contact :

Paula Edwards
(Mental Health Carer Development Worker) on:

0191 200 1111

Mid Life Moves

Age Concern is running a range of free weekly sessions on living, learning and working for the over 50's and the opportunities and options open to you.

The sessions are aimed at those who want to get back on board and find work or to follow their rainbow as they approach retirement. Sessions will include Midlife Moves, Believe in Yourself, Know Yourself, Have a Plan, CV's, Interviews, Job Search and many more.

Sessions will run 10am – 3:30pm Thursdays in February and March 2010.

If you would like more information or to book a place please contact:

Kelly Oliver or
Rosemary Allen on:
0191 280 8484.



Trustee News: New Chair Person



At the Centre's Annual General Meeting in January Eddie Gorman stepped down from Chair of Trustees to Vice Chair.

Angela Brownbridge, who had been Vice Chair and a Trustee with the Centre for three years agreed to step up to the role of Chair. We wish Angela well and would like to thank both Eddie and Angela for their ongoing support and commitment to the centre.

A Fond Farewell

The Centre sadly bids farewell to mental health carer support worker, Helen Hannard.

Helen writes:

I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to my wonderful colleagues and the many carers I have had the pleasure of providing support for, in making the past two and a half years memorable and enjoyable.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working at the Carers' Centre. It has provided me with many opportunities which have led me to embark on a two year post graduate mental health nursing diploma at Northumbria University in January 2010.



I will miss you all and sincerely wish you all the very best for the future.

Helen Hannard

A message from your local Police

Distraction burglars and rogue traders operate in this area.

Never employ the services of a cold caller, always ask for ID.

If in doubt, keep them out!

Please pass this message on to older friends, relatives and neighbours.

Call the police immediately if you see something suspicious.

If you require any further information then please get in touch with your local Police, or if you want to remain anonymous ring Crimestoppers on: 0800 555 111 or visit www.crimestoppers-uk.org.

Caring with Confidence

The Centre has recently run a series of Caring with Confidence training sessions and will be running more in due course. We will keep you informed. *Please read the feedback below from a carer who attended:*

The Carers' Centre are always involved in bringing to carers opportunities, sometimes to try new things like ceramic painting and writing. They also set up training courses. I went on a course recently called Caring with Confidence. I was recommended it by a carer who had been to the first one, I attended the remaining six. They involved a variety of issues that carers worry about including money management, getting the help they need for the people they care for. It also includes talking about your own health something that a lot of carers neglect. The course helped me to sort out a lot of things that I had been neglecting. One massive benefit was meeting some lovely people who were carers. We all had a different caring role but as I say "we are all in the same boat with different oars". As one lovely carer said we met at the start of the course and we left as friends. If you get the opportunity to attend this course grab it with both hands. You won't be sorry.

Pat Ardis Neil



Did you Know?

From 2nd November 2009 there have been changes in the way that North Tyneside Council calculate Housing and Council Tax Benefit, they now disregard child benefit in full. This means families who have dependant children may qualify for help towards their council tax bill and rent. If you would like to learn more about Housing and Council tax benefits you can call into one of the Customer Service Centres or ring them on:

0845 2000 104. You can request a claim form by e-mail
benefits@northtyneside.gov.uk

Customer Service Centres:

Park House, Park Road, Wallsend, NE28 6QY
The White Swan Centre, Killingworth, NE12 6SS
Unicorn House, Suez Street, North Shields, NE30 1BB
Victoria Terrace, Whitley Bay, NE26 2QW



Toward Inclusive Living

Carers and Family Members can take part in shaping a £200 000 research project based at Walkergate Park Neuro - rehabilitation Centre.

A team of researchers who have been successful in securing £200,000 from the NHS want to find out if there is a link between the way people with neurological impairments are included in the NHS and the way they use treatment to develop their skills and independence in the community.

Carers (unpaid) and family members have important knowledge and experiences that could help us in this research. This could be your opportunity to make a difference to how patient and families experience treatment and care. The outcomes from the study will feed directly into national policy and will directly influence local practice.

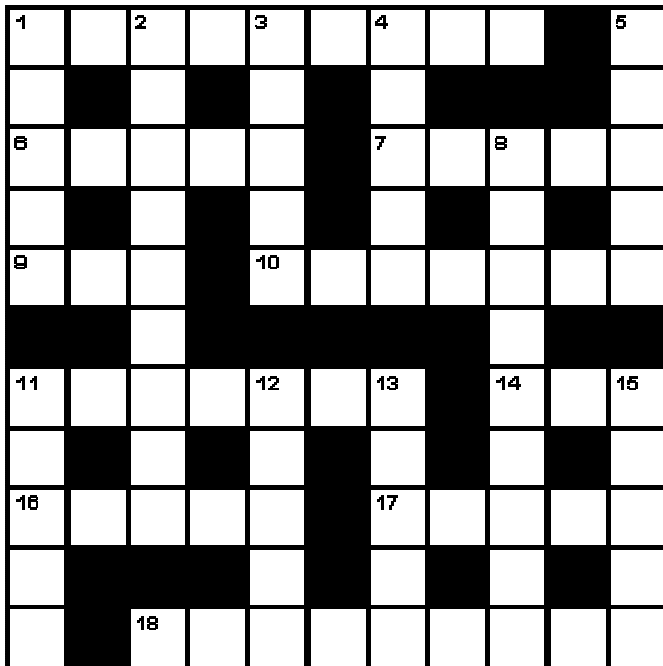
**So, carers (unpaid) and family members,
that's why we need to hear from you.**

If you are over 18 and care for a person who uses Walkergate Park Service you can take part. You choose how much time you want to give and how much you want to be involved.

The research has ethical approval from the NHS.

For further information about the study please contact Helen Atkin helen.atkin@northumbria.ac.uk or Eileen Birks e.birks@northumbria.ac.uk Or Telephone: 0191 215 6202 and ask for Helen or Eileen

Quick Crossword



Across

1. Perspicacious (9)
6. Egg-shaped object (5)
7. Vacuous (5)
9. The night before (3)
10. Display of bad temper (7)
11. Get (7)
14. Large antelope (3)
16. Musical drama (5)
17. Melodies (5)
18. Rife (9)

Down

1. Range (5)
2. Monstrous (9)
3. Trainee (5)
4. Vegetable (5)
5. Cherished desire (5)
8. Hubris (9)
11. Fragrance (5)
12. Picture (5)
13. Minor actor in a crowd scene (5)
15. Distressed (5)

Useful Websites

www.stressbusting.co.uk

Tips for living a stress free life.

www.carerscentre.com

An online resource for unpaid family carers and their families.

www.evidence.nhs.uk

Help with decisions about treatments, health and social care resources.

www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Impartial advice, information and training on independent living for disabled adults and children.

Stop Smoking Clinic

The **YMCA** are currently holding a Stop Smoking Clinic on Wednesdays 12pm—2:00pm

The Community Health Development Service are holding various clinics around the borough. Did you know that you are 4 times likely to QUIT for good with their help. For more information on venues and times, please contact the Newcastle and North Tyneside Community Health Development Service on 0191 2704510.

The Centre needs your help to raise funds to support Carers. If you would like to make a donation or help with fundraising please contact Claire Easton or Mick Thompson on 0191 200 1111

Carers' Walks

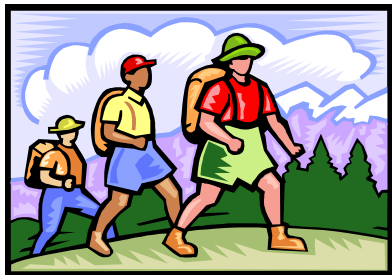
The Carers' Walks will be resuming in April, please see (Carer Activities Grid).

Alan Rogerson (walk leader) writes:

Hi there folks,

Welcome to 2010. Christmas is now a distant memory and the cards and tree have been recycled, and hopefully no one is likely to offer me a turkey sandwich or mince pie!

Once again I have been invited, together with Ann Nicholson to lead a series of walks for the Centre. The walks will start in April and will take place on a Monday, meeting at the Carers' Centre at 10:15am for a 10:30 start.



We have a few new ideas to try this year such as, where possible, stopping for refreshments during, or at the end

of the walk. We will also try doing some walks in the afternoon come the summertime. It is very much a case of 'Watch this space' for further details.

Our first walk will be incorporated in a coach outing to Barnard Castle in April. This will be a short stroll of less than two miles following a 'town trail'. This should leave ample time for a visit to the magnificent Bowes Museum, or browse around the many antique shops of which Barnard Castle is becoming well known for in the North East.

Ann and I very much look forward to seeing you all on the walks, and please do remember to wear suitable shoes and pack waterproof clothing.

See you soon. Alan Rogerson (walk leader).

Home Care Services in North Tyneside

Do you receive care in the home?

Are you a carer for someone who receives care in their own home?

We would like to hear about your experiences.

Please tell us about anything that is good and anything that you feel needs improving in the care service you receive.

North Tyneside LINK is focusing on quality of home care services and the experiences of people who are in receipt of home care. We want to know what recommendations you feel would help improve your situation [if any] and other peoples

You will be able to talk about your experiences in privacy and be assured of confidentiality.

If you would like to be contacted please contact:

Maria Laben

Telephone: 0191 242 1228

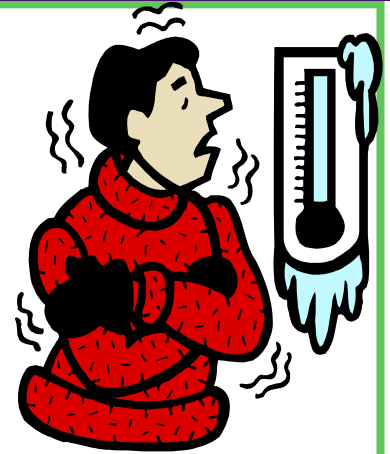
We do need to hear your views



Are you Entitled to a Cold Weather Payment?

If you're concerned about winter fuel bills and receive a qualifying benefit, you might be eligible to receive a payment from the Government due to the continuing cold weather.

The Cold Weather Payment means that this year you can get £25 when the average temperature where you live is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below over seven consecutive days during the period from 1 November to 31 March.



These payments are non-refundable and different from the Winter Fuel Payment, which is available to people over 60. You must not be living in a care home or subject to immigration control.

Who is eligible?

You can qualify for a Cold Weather Payment if you get Pension Credit (Savings Credit or Guarantee Credit) or income-related Employment and Support Allowance in its main phase.

You can also qualify if you get Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or income-related Employment and Support Allowance in the assessment phase and have one of the following:

- a disability premium, enhanced disability premium or severe disability premium,
- a pensioner premium or higher pension premium,
- a disabled child premium,

You don't need to apply. You'll get a Cold Weather Payment automatically as long as you qualify.

Tell your pension centre or Jobcentre Plus if you think you should have received a Cold Weather Payment but you have not had one.

Call the Winter Fuel Payment Helpline on 0845 915 15 15

Visit www.directgov.uk or www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk for full details and more information.

Flu Jabs

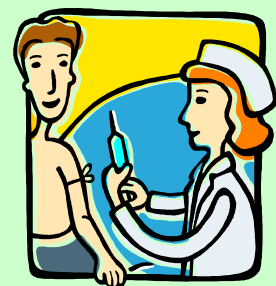
You are entitled to a free flu jab if you are aged 65 or over, have a serious health condition that may put you at risk if you come into contact with flu or are the main carer for a vulnerable person.

Contact your GP surgery for more information or visit:

www.nhs.uk

or contact

NHS direct on: 0845 4647



Young Carer's News

During November and December of last year six young carers who attend the North West young carers club worked together on a key fund project to raise money for a group activity. The project covered skills such as negotiating, planning, problem solving, communication and decision making.

Through their hard work they raised £250 which enabled them to visit Newcastle life centre and ice rink then finish the day with a meal at Gekko restaurant in the Gate.



In order to secure the money the group had to present their plan to the Key Fund Panel. As part of the presentation they had decided to invite two new members of the club to their activity. The panel felt that this action was a benefit to their community and was the deciding factor in their decision to award the funding.

The day turned out to be great fun, we all learned a bit in the Life Centre, fell over a lot on the ice rink and ate too much in the restaurant. Well done to Thomas, Anastasia, Esme, Aimmii, Lauren and Daniel with a big welcome to Mitchel and Ross.



Young Carers @ Gekkos' Restaurant and Ice Skating



Parent Carer Autism Support Group

A new support group, backed by North Tyneside Community Learning Disabilities Team, is being launched at the Carers' Centre. It is aimed at supporting parents and carers of people with autism. The group will act as an information sharing, peer support and social networking hub. The group will be run for parents and carers BY parents and carers.

The first meeting will be a special launch event on Thursday 29th April at Riverside Centre, Minton Lane, North Shields between 10am – 1pm with lunch provided. Registration from 9.30 am.

The group will then meet on the last Thursday of every month 10am – 12pm at the Carers' Centre. All welcome.

Solution to Quick Crossword

T	N	E	L	A	V	E	R	P		A
E		C		R		G				M
S		N	E	T		A	R	E	O	P
P		A		X		M		U		R
U		G	N		E	R		I	A	C
		O						S		
M		U	R	T		A	N	T		E
A		R		O		E		T		P
		N	A	N		I	D		O	V
R				N		A		R		C
D		S		U		I		A		S

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



For Your Convenience

We have inserted a carers' clinic and events flier with this Newsletter so that you can see at a glance what's on where and when. Please keep it at hand for future reference.

MAILING LIST

If you do not subscribe to this newsletter and would like to receive future editions, please contact us via e-mail: 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 would like to make a complaint, we would be interested in hearing from you.

*Please address any complaints to:
The Centre Manager at our usual address.*

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

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