



# North Tyneside Carers' Centre

Professionals Newsletter Oct 2021



## Adult Carers Survey

What did carers say?

## Introducing the Young Carers Service

Support we offer to young carers

## Training

Opportunities for professionals

Aspirational

Empathetic



Approachable

Empowering



Responsive

# Welcome to the Professionals Newsletter

Supporting you to support carers



Welcome to the October 2021 edition of the professionals newsletter, supporting you to support carers and bringing news, events and stories from North Tyneside Carers' Centre.

Over the last few months we have seen the reintroduction of face to face sessions, an expansion of our training offer, while continuing to offer online options for carers who are not yet ready to return to face to face. There are also opportunities for professionals to participate in training to give you the tools to support carers.

We want to continue to tell carers stories, celebrate achievements and ensure that both adult and young carers are supported as we move into the winter months.

In our bi-monthly newsletters you will find information about events for professionals at the Carers' Centre, alongside advice about how you can support carers you work with

If you need to get in touch to discuss supporting a carer or referring a carer to us you can phone the advice line on; (0191) 643 2298 or by emailing [enquiries@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ntcarers.co.uk).

Young Carers from the age of 5 - 18 can access support from the Carers' Centre following the completion on a Young Carers Needs Assessment by a council professional (usually a teacher at school or a social worker.)

We hope you enjoy this newsletter. Thank you for working with us to support unpaid carers in North Tyneside. 🍷

## Adult and Young Carer Awareness - Online Learning and Training Sessions



Did you know the 2011 census indicated there was 22,000 adult carers in North Tyneside? Research by the BBC and Nottingham University in 2018 shows there are one in five young carers in every North Tyneside secondary school class.

Did you also know that an additional 4.5 million people have taken on caring responsibilities across the UK during the pandemic?

A range of short online learning sessions have been developed by North Tyneside Carers' Centre to support staff in health and social care to identify and support carers. These are free for people working in North Tyneside and are hosted on North Tyneside Council's learning pool.

### Adult Carer Awareness

This online learning will raise your awareness about Adult Carers. By the end of the session you will be able to:

- Identify who is an adult carer
- Understand practical and emotional aspects of caring

- Identify actions you can take to help improve early identification of adult carers
- Describe support and information that adult carers may find beneficial in their caring role

Duration: Approximately an hour to complete.

Target Audience: Anyone working in a client facing role.

### Young Carer Awareness (Module One)

This online learning will raise your awareness about the issues young carers face. By the end of the session you will be able to:

- Identify who is a young carer
- Understand the impact of their caring responsibilities on their life and wellbeing
- Identify actions you can take to help improve early identification of young carers
- Describe support and information

# Adult Carers Survey

that young carers may find beneficial in their caring role

Duration: Approximately an hour to complete.

Target Audience: Anyone working in a client facing role.

## Young Carers Needs Assessments (Module Two)

This online learning will support professionals who undertake statutory assessments for young carers. By the end of the session you will be able to:

- Complete the Young Carers' Needs Assessment process
- Recognise where a young carer is providing inappropriate or excessive levels of care
- Access resources for young carers

and develop a support plan to meet their needs

Duration: Approximately an hour to complete

Target audience: Professionals who are designated to undertake Young Carers' Needs Assessments.

To access the following online packages, visit, <https://northtyneside.learningpool.com/login/index.php>

North Tyneside Carers' centre also facilitate face to face sessions that focus on Identifying and Supporting Carers and the next one will be via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 9th December (2pm – 3pm).

To sign up for this session or find out about the online learning in more detail contact [training@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:training@ntcarers.co.uk)



During June and July 2021, the Carers' Centre and Healthwatch asked carers in North Tyneside to tell us about their experiences of caring during the pandemic and the impact it had on their wellbeing. The survey was undertaken on behalf of the Carers' Partnership Board and the results were presented at the Board's meeting in August.

258 carers responded to the survey and some of the findings were harrowing: 79% of the respondents were female; 20% male; 0.5% non-binary and 0.5% other. 52% of carers advised that they were providing significantly more care than they were before the pandemic. When asked to describe how they felt over the last 12 months, comments included:

- "Struggled to remain calm - pushed to my limit emotionally."
- "Many dark days."
- "Living under extreme constant stress has affected my mental and physical health."
- "Struggled to cope."
- "Pressure cooker situation."
- "I was so stressed I took an overdose and ended up in critical care – still no change."
- "I wake up in the morning and think not again – but you have to get on and deal with it."
- "System weakness have been magnified by the pandemic."

The issues and themes raised by

carers throughout the survey included:

- Feeling increasingly lonely and isolated
- Reduced support networks through not seeing friends and family
- Unable to take a break and have time to self
- Deterioration in the condition of the person they care for
- Dealing with challenging behaviour
- Shielding and the stress and strain of providing 24-hour care for someone who is clinically/medically vulnerable
- Covid anxiety and providing constant reassurance
- Services closing or changing
- Accessing healthcare
- Juggling working and caring
- Money pressures
- Bereavement

50% of carers identified that they felt more isolated now, compared to before the pandemic. The results of the survey have been shared with key decision makers in North Tyneside, to influence the support carers need. We will keep you updated on the progress.

If you working with a carer who is exhausted, struggling or isolated and lonely, please encourage them to reach out to us. Give us call on (0191) 643 2298 or to visit our website at: [www.northtynesidecarers.org.uk](http://www.northtynesidecarers.org.uk) to access support and a listening ear.

# Connecting lonely & isolated Carers



Many carers have experienced loneliness and a sense of isolation during the Covid-19 pandemic. This can have a huge impact on an individual's mental health and wellbeing. North Tyneside Carers' Centre is working with other local organisations including VODA, Age UK North Tyneside and North Tyneside CAB to support local people and address this growing issue.

Our three Carers' Community Link Workers funded by the National Lottery, are working in locality areas to engage with organisations and groups to build strong partnerships and raise awareness of carers issues. This will increase capacity across North Tyneside to support carers and help create carer friendly communities.

The team will be working with individual carers to address any barriers they face which contribute to their isolation and help them explore their own interests and aspirations. Linking carers in with local groups and making caring an ordinary part of life, helps reduce isolation and increase support networks.

We are recruiting volunteers to help us establish new support groups, facilitate social activities and ensure that carers have access to the advice and information they

need to feel supported and confident in their caring role. We are also providing a range of wellbeing sessions based around the five ways to wellbeing to help carers take time out, relax and think about their own needs.

If a carer is feeling isolated or lonely and would like a chat about their situation, our advice line (0191 643 2298) is open Monday to Friday from 10am until 4pm or they can email us: [enquiries@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ntcarers.co.uk).

Additionally, the Centre's website has a range of information to help carers consider their wellbeing and professionals are able to can make an online referral for an adult carer.

<https://www.northtynesidecarers.org.uk/information-resource-for-carers/health-wellbeing/>

<https://www.northtynesidecarers.org.uk/professionals/adult-carer-referrals/>

There are little things we can all do to help look after our own mental health. Having good mental health helps us relax more, achieve more and enjoy our lives more. The NHS website Every Mind Matters has advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing.

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>

## Introducing the Young Carers Service

The Young Carers Service is a team made up of professionals with backgrounds in Social Work, Youth Work and Teaching, who enable young carers to have a break from their caring role, benefit from 1:1 support and take part in youth participation to share their stories about being a young carer.

### Family Support Work

Caring shouldn't be a barrier for young people to achieve their full potential. When offered the right support at an early age, young carers often flourish, going on to inspire and motivate other young carers. Early identification is often key. Our Family Support Service enables young carers to explore their physical and mental health in a non-judgemental environment. It is our goal to support young people to access the same opportunities as their peers who do not have caring responsibilities. The Family Support Worker will develop an individualised plan with the young carer and family, to explore difficulties, challenges and also achievements relating to their life as a young carer.

### Family Support includes:

- Getting to know the young person and understanding how they feel about being a carer.
- Putting the young carer and family in touch with other people and

organisations that can help or give advice.

- Helping the young carer to understand more about the illness or disability that is affecting their family.
- Making sure that caring doesn't prevent the young person from doing things they want to do, such as going out with friends, going to school/college or getting a job.
- Helping other people in their life understand how caring affects the young person, including teachers at school.

### Social Action

Social Action is about people coming together to improve their quality of life

and solve important issues within their communities. Our programme, with youth participation at its heart, supports young carers to identify things that they would like to change and helps them to implement those changes.

Young people have enormous potential and we're dedicated to helping young carers reach their goals. There are various ways young carers can take part in Social Action at North Tyneside Carers' Centre. These include:

### Social action groups:

We work with groups of young carers across both primary and secondary



aged in schools and in the community. Social Action is about young people coming together to have their voices heard, to be listened to and have a say on issues that matter to them. Recently a group of young carers decided to write a book to share their stories, as young carers living through Covid-19.

### Youth Forum

We have a Young Carers' Forum, which is held fortnightly. This is an opportunity for young carers to have a say about how things are run at North Tyneside Carers' Centre. Young people who have taken part in previous Social Action projects are often invited to join Youth Forum as a progression. All voices matter at youth forum, and no idea is a bad idea.

Forum members have explained in their own words what it means to be part of the Young Carers' Forum:

“Youth forum is about making other young carers feel as though their voice is heard in the community and by North Tyneside Carers' Centre.

We make sure that young carers are all heard and when young carers attend the Youth Forum they will feel listened to. Without judgement, we are able to discuss issues that concern us, so that we can work together to make North Tyneside a better place for young carers. This makes young carers feel valued which is what we, as a youth forum, pride ourselves on.”

### Breaks and Activities

Our Breaks and Activities Service

offers young carers the opportunity to relax, have fun and meet other young carers.

Young carers are able to learn new skills, make new friends, increase their confidence and feel supported by staff and other young carers. Our activities have included arts and craft sessions, games, treasure hunts, issue based discussions and trips to Powburn Activity Centre.

We are running a variety of activities over the next few months, which include:

- Activities for Primary aged young carers.
- Activities for Secondary aged young carers.
- One off events, including Halloween & Christmas parties.

### Drama Therapy

North Tyneside Carers' Centre have worked hard in response to young carers needs and secured funding for a therapeutic practitioner to work with children and young people who are experiencing difficulties. This may include but is not limited to; emotional, social or behaviour difficulties including mental health concerns. It is available to young carers aged from 5-25 years.

Drama therapy is a form of psychotherapy which specifically employs drama, theatre and other alternative creative mediums to enable the young person to work through their presenting difficulties. Drama therapy can be accessible for anyone

who seeks to explore the difficulties in an alternative way. Drama therapy is usually accessed following 1:1 support with a Family Support Worker. It may then be agreed with the young person and family that drama therapy would be the next step.

Drama therapy can enable a young person to access an array of creative mediums to help them, explore, express and transform.

Mediums include: talking & listening, role play, art, mask work, puppetry, small object work and much more. Referrals to drama therapy are made through the young persons Family Support Worker.



### Do you work with a young carer?

If you think a young person you work with is a young carer, they could be entitled to support and advice from our service. To refer a young carer, a local authority professional, usually a teacher or social worker will have to complete a Young Carers Needs Assessment. There is advice and training on how to do this accessed through North Tyneside Council's Learning Pool. For more information and advice about how you can ensure young carers get the support they need, please contact the Young Carers' Project Manager, Peter Thorp, on: 0191 6432298 or by emailing: [peter.thorp@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:peter.thorp@ntcarers.co.uk)

### Top Tips to Identifying and Supporting Young Carers

- Know who is a young carer in your school or organisation.
- Make sure the young carers know who knows they are a young carer, to help provide a point of contact if needed.
- Complete the young carers training on North Tyneside Council's Learning pool.
- Ensure they feel listened to.
- Provide a safe space for young carers to offload.
- Understand the issues they face, and that what looks like a 'lazy or unmotivated' young person, may be as result of overwhelm due to their caring responsibilities.

### Better Connect, Caring creatively

**Caring responsibilities often go unnoticed and sometimes are not even recognised by carers themselves.**

This is why local arts charity, Helix Arts, have designed and are leading on 'Better Connect,' a social prescribing project across North Tyneside aimed at connecting 350 young and adult carers with arts and culture to transform experiences after COVID-19.

Better Connect realises the ambition of bringing arts on prescription to North Tyneside as part of the National Academy for Social Prescribers Thriving Communities Fund.

Better Connect is a cultural programme of opportunities for carers, supporting people in North Tyneside to take time out.

Many people may have a caring role but do not identify with the term carer, so different ways of engaging with specific audiences are being explored and the impact is being evaluated with Arts and Health expert Professor Stephen Clift.

Helix Arts are working with local community voluntary partners to create an alliance of organisations to support carers across the borough, especially in Wallsend and North Shields. These include North Tyneside Carers' Centre; Family Gateway; Age UK North Tyneside; Meadow Well Connected;

North Tyneside Arts Studio; Tyne and Wear Museums; First Contact Clinical; North Tyneside Council and VODA.


Current projects include;

- Online creative journaling programme.
- You: Your Art for adults living with mental health problems who also have a caring role.
- Falling on Your Feet - a dance and health programme for people aged 55 and over to reduce the risk and fear of falling.
- By Your Side - a twilight programme of relaxation for adult carers to explore how creativity can maintain positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Parent Voice - a weekly creative group for Parent Carers to take time for themselves with like minded people.
- Due to launch soon - opportunities for young carers through Family Gateway and North Tyneside Carers' Centre.

To get in touch; email [connect@helixarts.com](mailto:connect@helixarts.com) or call 07988 072993. Or visit their website - <https://www.helixarts.com/work/better-connect/>

To date the Return to Work Carers Project in North Tyneside has connected with forty seven carers from age 16 to over 60 and supported them with a range of issues including accessing training and education, work placements, voluntary work and employment.

Since the start of the project in April 2020 over 30% of carers registered have moved into sustainable employment with a further 10% securing relevant education and training placements.

Our Carers into Work Adviser is able to support carers one to one, tailored to their needs. This includes carers who are already working and may be struggling to balance caring and working. Our Carers into Work Adviser can support working carers to negotiate flexible working for example with employers or just be there to listen when most needed. 





# North Tyneside Carers' Centre

**W**e hope you have enjoyed this edition of the Professionals Newsletter; as always you can get in touch with the Carers' Centre for advice & support on a variety of carers issues.

You can call us on: (0191) 643 2298 or email: [enquiries@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ntcarers.co.uk).

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter or have received this in error please contact us on the number above and we will take you off our mailing list.