

A community for carers

The Newsletter for Volunteers in our Carer Support Hubs



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May 2018

In this issue you can read about the Admiral Nurse Service and an update on Personal Independent Payments (PIP) from the Money Advice Unit. Both services have sent speakers to Hub meetings recently. You can also read about some of the latest volunteer opportunities and our free courses.

We hope you enjoy the articles in this newsletter. Our aim is to increase the skills and confidence of volunteers and to get them to think about trying new things.

The Hub Volunteer Newsletter is produced with the help of pictures and stories from you, so please do let me know if there is something you would like to see featured in a future issue. If you wish to get in touch, please contact Alex Daar, Project Officer Caring Communities, on 07714 077686 or email alex.daar@carersinherts.org.uk

For any other issues or to speak to someone in the office please:

Call: 01992 58 69 69

Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk

Visit: www.carersinherts.org.uk

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Welcome

We are now into the final year of the Caring Communities Project. We will be starting the last three Hubs as part of the project during 2018/19. They will be in Borehamwood, Harpenden and Royston.



On 23rd April we held the initial event for the new Borehamwood Hub which was attended by over 25 carers. We also issued 14 Carers' Passport Discount Cards. We are just working on the date and venue for the regular meetings and expect to hold the first monthly meeting before mid-July. We have received a number of offers from carers who wish to volunteer to run the Hub which is fantastic.

We were successful runners up in the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire Awards for how we include volunteers in our work and the support we give them. As part of the Award we have received some money and we plan to use some of it to run another Volunteer Conference as last year's event was so successful. Well done to all the volunteers who helped us win this award for the great work you do.

If you have any suggestions for good venues for Hubs in Harpenden or Royston, especially free ones, then let me know.

Managers in Carers in Hertfordshire are working hard on securing new funding to run the Hub Support Groups and train Ambassadors going forward beyond April 2019 so watch this space. The external evaluator has found that the Hubs are making a measurable, positive difference in improving the quality of life for carers and reducing social isolation. This is very promising and will strengthen our case when we are ready to put it forward to new funders.



LOTTERY FUNDED

Making Carers Count

What is the caring situation in Hertfordshire - our survey results!

Many thanks to everyone who either responded to our Caring in Hertfordshire Survey or who helped distribute it. We had 1,434 responses, of which 105 were completed at an event, many at a Hub meeting. We are currently analysing the detail of the data, and some headline statistics are in the latest issue of Carewaves, but here are a few interesting snippets.

More information will be published on our website so keep a look out for it.

Jo Willis, Carer Learning and Development Manager

Some of the Survey results

- About 1 in 7 carers are caring for more than one generation.
- 1 in 6 people are caring for more than one person.
- 58% of respondents care for 50+ hours per week (slightly less biased than our last survey in 2015).
- 36% had difficulties with social services and health services working together.
- Three quarters of carers responding said they are stressed.
- 40% neglected their own health.

New portable alarm service now available from Herts Careline

In response to customer demand Herts Careline now offers personal alarm services that work away from home as it has launched the Herts Bernie Location Service.

How does Herts Bernie work?

The Herts Bernie portable pendant is a small device that combines the functions of a mobile phone with a Global Positioning System (GPS) locator.

If a person gets disorientated or needs help while they're away from home, they can simply press the SOS button on the device to speak to a linked responder (family member or friend) or a Careline operator, who can:

- check that they're OK;
- tell them where they are;
- give them directions to their destination or a safe location;
- contact a relative or friend to come and help them;
- call emergency services, if needed.

For more information call 0300 999 2 999 or visit www.care-line.co.uk



Caring with Confidence Course

Our free Caring with Confidence Course is run over five sessions to give carers tips and knowledge to help them with their caring role.

The course covers topics such as finances and benefits and looking after your own health and wellbeing. The next course will take place in Hoddesdon, Tuesdays 26th June - 24th July 2018 10am - 1pm.

To book yourself a space please:

Call: 01992 58 69 69

Email: learning@carersinherts.org.uk

Visit: www.carersinherts.org.uk/events

Feedback from our Volunteers

“I'm a carer and am aware how important and supportive Carers in Hertfordshire is for carers like me. I volunteer as I want to give something back and help others.”

93% of our volunteers have recommended Carers in Hertfordshire as a charity to others. 'Volunteer Impact Survey 2017'.

Admiral Nurse Service - something special for Hertfordshire

The Admiral Nurse Service, which is hosted by Carers in Hertfordshire in partnership with Dementia UK, has been going for almost a year now - since June 2017.

Admiral Nurses are specialist dementia nurses that support carers and families in their caring roles by offering a range of tailored interventions. Here Lesley Potter, our Lead Admiral Nurse, explains about the support they provide.

We work with carers that are at risk of or are experiencing carer breakdown whilst caring for someone with dementia or memory loss. One area we focus on is supporting families at key transitions, giving them the advice they need to make informed choices that meet the needs of the person they care for whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing.

We also offer educational support for families, where we look at the management of symptoms and potential distress for the person with dementia and we discuss the use of medication and recognising potential side effects.

A high percentage of carers we work with have their own physical health problems or are struggling with low mood/anxiety. We support carers to recognise their own needs and to adopt coping strategies to help them maintain their caring role. There may be occasions when we feel carers may need more intensive support and will discuss with them referrals to other agencies if needed.

We work in a family-centred way and recognise that dementia impacts on the whole family. We work quite intensively to support families when there may be potential challenges and relationship breakdowns, which can have a significant impact on the carers health.

Currently, the team consists of four nurses and they cover the whole of Hertfordshire, each nurse with their own area and caseload.

Families can request support directly or GPs and other health or care providers may refer someone for support. The service doesn't accept referrals from people under the care of the Early Memory Diagnosis and Support Service (EMDASS).

All referrals should be made through HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044. Should you wish to discuss a referral with an Admiral Nurse please call Carers in Hertfordshire on 01992 58 69 69.



Digivan visits give carers help with IT

Property management company Fortem adopted us as Charity of the Year last year and as part of their support they sent a Digivan to two Hubs. Carers could then get help with their computers, smartphones and tablets.

Feedback from carers was positive and some carers said "It was very useful to have individual attention from an expert."

Fortem is continuing to support us and has offered more sessions this year.

Diary Dates 2018

Manual Handling Training - Hemel Hempstead

Tuesday 22nd May 2018 10am - 3pm
Learn how to help safely lift or move someone you care for that has limited mobility, whilst looking after your back.

Practical Caring Course For Family Carers - Letchworth

Mondays 11th June - 9th July 2018
1.30pm – 3.30pm
Sessions include legal matters, practical caring tips, planning for the future, relaxation and more.

Introduction to Resilience - Bishop's Stortford

Monday 18th June 2018- 1pm - 3pm
An introduction to tools that may help you to become more resilient and able to cope with your caring role.

Every Day First Aid - Rickmansworth

Thursday 5th July 2018
10am - 12pm noon
Learn 5-7 key skills for every day first aid.

Fundraising and Awareness Sessions at Watford Sainsbury's Dome Roundabout

We are the store's Local Charity of the Year and have been invited to hand out information and collect donations. If you can spare some time to volunteer please get in touch. We particularly need help on 1st, 2nd, 12th and 17th June 2018.

Live Music events at the Hertford Club, Hertford.

We want to have an information and fundraising stand at the K Fest on Saturday 11th August 2018 and as part of the Hertford Music Festival on Sunday 26th August. Why not pop along? If you can volunteer please contact us.

To learn more about any event, to book a place or get involved:

Call: 01992 58 69 69

Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk

Visit: www.carersinherts.org.uk

Update from the Money Advice Unit

As a result of two recent High Court decisions, some disabled benefit claimants could soon be receiving substantial arrears of benefit.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has to cope with a seemingly never-ending stream of new legislation about benefit reform. Sometimes, the legislation might get through Parliament, but when put into practice, faults emerge. At that point, the independent Tribunal and Court system kicks in to 'correct' that legislation. This can produce some quite spectacular results!

For example, the DWP have to review 1.6 million Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claims to see if the claimants should have been awarded PIP Mobility on mental health grounds. Around 220,000 people are expected to receive more money, starting from Summer 2018. It comes after the DWP decided not to challenge a court ruling that said changes to PIP Mobility were discriminatory to people with mental health conditions.

The PIP reassessment will NOT involve any face to face assessments and the DWP have said that no-one will have benefit reduced as a result of it. It will only look at PIP Mobility decisions, and the DWP believe that they should only be paying arrears back to November 2016, although this may be challenged. The DWP's advice is 'sit tight' and wait to be contacted but if you know someone with a mental health condition who was disallowed PIP Mobility before 28th November 2016, the claimant should get advice and consider making a new claim.

The DWP have also agreed that they need to re-examine around 300,000 Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claims made by people with physical, mental health or learning difficulties, who moved onto ESA from Incapacity benefit after October 2011. Many claimants were simply 'slotted-in' to contributory ESA. In fact, they should have been assessed at the time to see if they were entitled to an income-related ESA top-up payment as well. The DWP estimate that around 77,000 people may have been underpaid as a result. The trawl of old cases is likely to take 12 months and those affected will be sent a form by the DWP asking for financial information, going back to 2011!

If you would like to discuss your caring role or be referred to the Money Advice Unit for some financial advice please call us on 01992 58 69 69.