

"Involving People"

The newsletter for learning disability carers



Carers
in Hertfordshire

charity registration number 1085491

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For more information about anything in this newsletter or to find out more about our support for carers of people with a learning disability, please get in touch with us. You can also contact the office or visit our website to find out about our upcoming free courses and workshops and the latest offers and discounts as part of our Carers' Passport. Contact us at:

☎ 01992 58 69 69

@ contact@carersinherts.org.uk

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Making Carers Count

Carers invited to have a say in State of Caring Survey 2019

National carers charity Carers UK is calling for unpaid carers supporting someone who is ill, disabled, has a learning disability or is elderly, to complete its 2019 State of Caring Survey. Responses will help Carers UK identify issues affecting carers and in campaigning to Government or others for change. You can learn more or get the link to the Survey at www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/state-of-caring-survey-2019

The Survey closes on 24th May 2019.

Welcome

I hope 2019 has been good to you so far, it certainly is flying by. I wanted to start by saying that this is my last newsletter as I am leaving my role as Involvement and Development Worker for Learning Disabilities and Autism at the end of April to retire. I have loved my time at Carers in Hertfordshire and wish all the lovely carers and colleagues I have met and worked with all the best for the future.



The Involvement Team at Carers in Hertfordshire, which I am part of, has recently been restructured. There are now three Involvement and Development Workers, who work with carers of someone with a physical or learning disability, an autistic spectrum condition, dementia, as well as the frail and elderly. The team consists of me - Sue Maskell (for now), Sally Stratford and Maria Kiely. We help carers represent their views and experiences to those planning or providing health and community services in Hertfordshire.

This newsletter includes information about new resources for people with a learning disability and their carers and tips for making a plan for when you cannot care due to an emergency, age or ill health.

You can also find out about our upcoming Forums on the back page. If there are any issues or topics you want covered at future Forums or in our newsletters please call 01992 58 69 69 and ask to speak to someone in the Involvement Team.

Sue Maskell, Involvement and Development Worker for Learning Disabilities and Autism.

Organisations set out plans to support carers and people with learning disabilities in Hertfordshire

Health organisations, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and partners have set out commitments to unpaid carers and county residents with learning disabilities through two plans.

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) has renewed its Carer Pathway for 2019 to 2021. They have a Triangle of Care and pledge that carers are identified and welcomed; supported and involved; and helped through changes.

A new addition to the Pathway following feedback from carers is helping carers feel safe in their caring role. This involves making carers aware of the contacts for support and their rights around safeguarding.

Hertfordshire County Council along with the county's two Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Learning Disability Partnership Board have produced a Big Plan for ways to support Hertfordshire residents with learning disabilities to live long, fulfilling and healthy lives.

The five-year strategy, agreed by HCC in February 2019, was produced following a public consultation. It has three priority areas - Healthy Lives, Living Locally and Connected Lives in the Community.

As part of the Healthy Lives section the organisations want to:

- Help more people to be included on the GPs' Learning Disabilities Register, so they are identified and receive the right health care. Just 24% of people in Hertfordshire with a learning disability are registered (around 5,000 people out of an estimated 21,000).
- Ensure that people aged 14+ with a learning disability receive good quality annual health checks and immunisation.

The 'Living Locally' goals include providing quality information about housing and support options and support with getting a job.

The 'Involvement in local Communities' includes aims to make people better informed about activities, employment and volunteering opportunities near them.



Web pages help get health information to people with a learning disability

Hertfordshire County Council has launched some web pages to help people with a learning disability and their carers access information about health and support.

The Help with your Health area can be accessed via www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/LDmyhealth and contains:

- Easy read leaflets about Community Learning Disability Nursing, the Health Liaison Team and Specialist Epilepsy Nurses.
- Information about Annual Health Checks including a Carers' Preparation Tool.
- Information regarding Purple Folders, which are used to provide information about the person with the learning disability and how to deliver effective healthcare to them. Details online include how to best utilise the Purple Folder, obtain extra pages and the contact details to apply for one.
- A 'How to Stay Healthy' section that has printable, easy read information on various subjects including sepsis and routine body checks and how to look for changes.

The website will be updated regularly.

Go Prepared for the Annual Health Check

Annual Health Checks for people with learning disabilities aged 14 and over are really important to reduce health inequalities. People with a learning disability die an average of 17 years younger than the rest of the population.

An Annual Health Check provides an opportunity to identify undetected health conditions early and ensure ongoing treatments are appropriate. They also establish trust and continuity care.

To get the most out of a health check there is Carers Preparation Tool that you can complete with the person with a learning disability that you support or on their behalf, before the appointment. It asks for information such as their height, weight, smoking and drinking habits and other health related topics.

Your GP surgery can only work with the information you give them. There is also an easy read document.

The Tool has been created by the Community Learning Disability Nursing Service in Hertfordshire. The documents can be downloaded via Hertfordshire County Council's website at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/LDmyhealth



Planning for the future: What will happen to the person you care for if you can no longer continue caring for them?

Caring for someone is a great responsibility and it's important to make plans for who will look after the person you support if you have an emergency or can no longer care.

We've worked with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) to provide some practical support and solutions that will help ensure you and your loved one(s) receive the care and assistance needed. You can find more information and download all resources at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers

So what can you do to prepare for the worst? The answer is simple, all you need to do is PLAN!

Preparation: There are a few things you can do to get ready for every eventuality;

- Complete a Carer's Assessment, let us know you have caring responsibilities and HCC can help you create a Contingency Plan for the unexpected;
- Fill in a weekly or monthly planner and leave it on the fridge or by the phone so the whereabouts of you and your loved one(s) can be easily known;
- Carry a card identifying you as a carer in case of emergency, HCC will issue one when you agree a Contingency Plan;
- Add an ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact number into your mobile phone;

If the person you are caring for is at risk of going missing, no matter what their age or needs, download and complete a Missing Persons Form.

List: Make a list of emergency contact numbers and keep this by the phone or on the fridge so you always know where to find it.

Act: Make this a priority! The sooner you make a Contingency Plan, the better you will feel.

Notify: Once your plan is in place make sure you update the relevant people or organisation(s) of your wishes; that way if anything does happen you know that your plan will kick into action.

If you want to call Hertfordshire County Council the number for general enquiries is 0300 123 4040 and for HertsHelp, that has information about organisations providing support, call 0300 123 4044.

Have your say in two consultations

The Government wants to hear from people with a learning disability or autistic spectrum condition and their carers in some consultations.

One consultation is about the Think Autism Strategy that was published in 2014 and is to be updated to include children as well as adults. The Government wants to hear from people with autism and their family carers about their experiences of care and support. The consultation closes on 16th May 2019. For more information or to take part visit www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-the-national-autism-strategy-think-autism-call-for-evidence

The other consultation is related to the NHS Long Term Plan and people are being asked their views on how NHS services for people with conditions such as a learning disability, dementia or cancer, could be improved, and how people can live healthier lives.

The survey is available at www.healthwatch.co.uk/what-would-you-do until 30th April 2019. An easy read version is available. For queries or other formats call 03000 68 3000.



Forums and Groups

Our Forums are open to carers of an adult with a Learning Disability, Autism or Asperger Syndrome. The Forums provide an opportunity to meet other carers, listen to professional guest speakers, get up to date information related to your caring role and to have your say about caring issues and improving services.

Upcoming Learning Disability Carers' Forums:

Tuesday 4th June 2019

Tuesday 6th August 2019*

Tuesday 1st October 2019

Tuesday 3rd December 2019

All the meetings take place from 10am to 12.30pm and are followed by a sandwich lunch.

At Birchwood Leisure Centre, Longmead, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, Herts, AL10 0AN (* except for the August meeting which will be at Howe Dell Community Centre, The Runway, Hatfield, AL10 9AH.

Upcoming C4A Carers' Group

This group is for people caring for an adult with high functioning Autism or Asperger Syndrome:

Monday 13th May 2019

Monday 1st July 2019

Monday 2nd September 2019

Monday 4th November 2019

All of the meetings take place from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. At Oxlease House, Travellers Lane, Hatfield, AL10 8TJ.

To book your place to attend either group contact us:

☎ **01992 58 69 69**

@ contact@carersinherts.org.uk

🌐 www.carersinherts.org.uk

If you don't have your own transport and wish to attend contact us to discuss travel arrangements.

We can also cover the costs of alternative care.

We're recruiting Carer Representatives

We are still looking for carers of adults with a learning disability to become Carer Representatives and be involved with Hertfordshire's Learning Disability Partnership Board (LDPB).

As a Carer Representative you will represent carers' views and opinions with professionals from the organisations that provide or make decisions about local health and community services.

The LDPB meets in Hatfield, currently once a month, and you should be prepared to attend these meetings and some of our Forums.

If you are interested in the role, please contact kim.honeyball@hertfordshire.gov.uk or call 01438 844083.