

B-E-E CARING

Produced & Distributed by Carers of Epsom

Supporting Carers in Banstead, Epsom & Ewell



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010



Welcome to our first newsletter of 2010.

Firstly we would like to wish all our readers a very Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year. As we start the New Year, we hope that we will be able to meet more of you in 2010, either at home visits, lunch meetings and outings.

As you have probably noticed, this newsletter is a two monthly edition, covering January and February. In future we will be producing our newsletter every two months.

This won't effect any of the information or events we run for Carers, but it will cut down our core costs.

JANUARY & FEBRUARY
2010

Dates for your Diary



EPSOM CARERS LUNCH

Thurs 14th January – 12 noon

The Vestry,
Church Street,
Epsom.

BANSTEAD CARERS LUNCH

Tues 2nd February – 12 noon

The Woolpack
186 High St. Banstead,
SM7 2NZ

EWELL CARERS LUNCH

Wed 10th March – 12 noon

The Spring, Ewell Village

All Carers are very welcome and a Support Worker is always available for a chat or to request information or help.

If you have never joined us at one of our events and would like to but are a bit shy, please call the office and we will arrange to meet you and introduce you to other carers.

TAKE A BREAK SCHEME



The Take a Break Scheme is funded by Surrey County Council and is designed to give financial assistance to carers to enable them to take a break from caring.

A break could be a holiday, a weekend away, day trips out, a course of aromatherapy or an activity which gives you a few hours away from caring to relax & enjoy yourself.

This is a non means tested scheme which is administered by Carers of Epsom. It runs all year round, to help carers get an all important break. Carers may apply at any time.

If you are a new Carer or a longer term carer and haven't had a break for a while and would like help to take a break please call us at the office and we will arrange for our Support Worker to talk through your situation with you and help you get a break.

DIFFERENT STROKES

Different Strokes was established in 1996 by younger stroke survivors for younger stroke survivors.

Their aim is to enable younger stroke survivors to optimise their physical and psychological recovery, take control of their own lives, regain as much independence as possible and move onto live a full and active life.

To contact Different Strokes:

Write to: Different Strokes
9 Canon Harnett Court
Wolverton Mill, Milton Keynes
MK12 5NF

Phone: 01908 317618 or 0845 130 7172

Email: info@differentstrokes.co.uk

BACK CARE ADVISORY SERVICE

Our Back Care Advisory Service is open to any carer who feels that they could benefit from advice on lifting, moving and handling. We give practical advice on how to look after your back.

If you would like more information on Back Care or to make an appointment with a Back Care Advisor, please contact us on 01372 729947

HOW TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure is a known risk factor for heart disease and stroke. A salty diet, smoking, low physical activity levels and excess weight can all raise blood pressure. If yours is high, you can lower it by following some of the advice below.

DIET

Salt

One of the simplest ways to help keep your blood pressure down is to eat less salt. An adult should eat no more than 6g of salt a day.

Fruit & vegetables

Try to eat at least 5 portions a day. A portion is 80 grams, roughly a handful of fresh fruit or vegetables. Fruit and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and fibre, which help keep your body in good condition. They also contain potassium, which counteracts the effects of salt, and potassium in fruit and vegetables could help to lower blood pressure. Pulses, like beans and lentils and fruit juice all count towards your five a day.

Alcohol

Too much alcohol can raise blood pressure over time, and also contains a lot of calories which can make you overweight.

Fat

Saturated fat Can raise cholesterol levels in the blood and can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. This is found in fatty cuts and skin of poultry, dairy foods, palm oil, coconut and ghee.

Polyunsaturated & monounsaturated fats

found in olive oil, rapeseed oil and sunflower oil can help to lower cholesterol levels. Oily fish is also high in Omega 3 oils.

Physical Activity

Regular physical activity (30 minutes, 5 days a week) can help you to lower blood pressure, and keep to a healthy weight.

Weight

Maintaining a healthy weight is a very important way to keep your heart and blood vessels healthy. It is important to notice what shape you are, if you are an apple shape and store fat around your abdomen then you are more at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

More information is available on the British Heart Foundation website: www.bhf.org.uk or via the Heart HelpLine 0300 330 3311.

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON **An opportunity for carers to share their views**

- Do you spend several hours a day caring for an adult aged between 18-65 years old who has had a stroke?
- Would you like to influence change in services that allow carers to take a break?

If you answered yes to both of these questions, then a team at King's College London would love to hear from you. It has been commissioned by the Department of Health to find out about carers need for and experience of replacement care service (also known as respite care). The team would like carers to complete a survey to help them do this.

If you are interested further details are available on the internet at:

www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/medicine/depts/palliative/arp/eval/carers.html

Alternatively please contact David Williams on 020 7848 5418 or at kclcarestudy@kcl.ac.uk

'CITIZENS HUB'

Funding has been obtained from the Department of Health to set up a 'Citizens Hub' in the Epsom Area.

The hub will be run by disabled people for disabled people and will be in an accessible location. The hub will act as a gateway to information, advice, advocacy and services. It will also be accessible via a website, email, telephone, text and Minicom.

The project team supporting the development of the hub want the involvement of local disabled people and carers at a very early stage so that you can shape how the hub will look and what it will provide and hope you will be able to drop in on Wednesday 20th January 2010 between 1pm-4pm at the Ebbisham Centre, Epsom to give your support and views.

Coffee and mince pies will be provided.

If you have any queries please contact:

Keri Marshall

Community Development Worker

Tel: 01372 722911

Email: keri@centralsurreycvs.org

How do I challenge decisions and make a complaint

We have been asked by Carers in the past, where and how they appeal against decisions made by the Social Care Team.

You may wish to raise concerns about how your Carer's Assessment was carried out, or you may wish to challenge decisions about your cared for's care plan, including care put in place after a patient is discharged from hospital, possibly to challenge the amount being charged for services. If your complaint is on behalf of the person you care for, you must have their consent if they have the capacity to do so.

Whatever your situation is it is important to know your rights and have access to advice. Advice centres like the Citizens Advice Bureau or a disability organisation can help you make a complaint or give you details of lawyers able to advise on community care law.

Carers who have been through making a complaint say it is always helpful to make a note of telephone calls. Write down who you spoke to, the time and a brief note about what was said.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998:

- You can ask social services for a copy of your file
- If you are legally able to act on behalf of the person you are caring for, you can also ask for their file
- You should receive this information within 40 days, but the local authority can charge

Every local authority is required to have a complaints procedure. In most circumstances a complaint should be made within one year of the event or the date that the issue came to your notice.

You can make your complaint orally, in writing or by email. If you make it orally, your local authority should record it in writing and give you a copy. You should receive an oral or written acknowledgement within 3 days.

If your complaint is about both the local authority *and* the agency, the local authority has a

duty to co-operate with the agency to ensure that they work together in both investigating and responding to your complaint.

You can ask for your complaint to remain anonymous and if you feel uncomfortable making your complaint directly to the Care Manager, please contact the Families Customer Relations Manager.

There are some situations when a local authority is not required to investigate a complaint. This includes where you are complaining on behalf of someone who lacks mental capacity and the local authority does not consider that you are acting in their best interests. It may also include where your complaint has already been investigated.

If the local authority does not provide you with a response within 6 months of receiving your complaint, it must write to you to explain why. It must also provide you with a response as soon as reasonably practical. If there is an unreasonable delay, you may wish to contact the Local Government Ombudsman.

If you have gone through social services' own complaints procedures and are still not satisfied you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints against local authorities, including social services. S/he will only do so where there has been 'maladministration' - such as unreasonable delay, or failure to follow proper procedures. You can complain to the Ombudsman up to 12 months after the incident.

Making a complaint does not mean that you will receive less help or that anyone will make things difficult for you. The complaints procedure is designed to stop discrimination and make sure everyone has equal access to services. Their aim is to treat everyone fairly and equally regardless of age, disability, race, culture, nationality, gender or sexual orientation.

Please contact Heidi Dendy in the office if you would like this information sent to you in the post.

DLF

The Disabled Living Foundation (DLF) has an excellent website and has just added an additional section titled "Living made easy for Children". This provides impartial advice and information on wheelchairs and mobility products for children who have disabilities.

Their website is:

www.dlf.org.uk

Managing Stress for Carers By Dr Ann Edworthy

This book is available free of charge to parents, from Cerebra – a charity set up to help improve the lives of children under 16 years with brain related conditions. It is intended for any parents dealing with the pressures of caring for a disabled child. Filled with practical tips that are easy to understand, it aims to show parents how they can deal with stress before they experience "burn out".

Cerebra has a number of Parent Support services which include:

- A grant scheme which may be able to help fund items such as computers, specialist car seats, harnesses, buggies/wheelchairs, hoists, trampolines. Services such as conductive education/therapy, music therapy, hydrotherapy, riding for the disabled and outdoor activity centres may also be included.
- A step by step guide to help with claiming Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children under 16 with brain related conditions.
- A Personal Portfolio service – sometimes called a passport, this is a colourful, reader friendly book designed to help a child with communications problems tell others about themselves. It is useful when going for respite, having hospital visits, starting a new school and meeting people for the first time.

Visit www.cerebra.org.uk for more information or contact 0800 328 1159

WARM FRONT

A grant to make your home warmer

If you own your home or rent it from a private landlord and receive certain benefits or credits, you could have a range of insulation and essential heating improvements installed in your home up to £3,500. This could include loft and cavity-wall insulation and even a new central heating system or repairs.

For full details of the qualifying benefits and credits and to apply call the Warm Front team free on

0800 316 2817

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and Saturdays from 9am to 5pm.

MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE ASSOCIATION EAST SURREY BRANCH

The East Surrey Branch of the Motor Neurone Disease Association hold regular meetings on Sunday afternoons at St Marks Church Hall, Tattenham, and include a free cooked lunch in January and sandwich tea in April and July.

The Branch also holds informal meetings for MND patients and/or their carers from 2pm-4pm on the second Thursday of each month, at the Surrey Downs Golf Club in Outwood Lane Kingswood.

For further information contact Beryl Daniel on 01737 353281

Could you help this organisation?

The East Surrey Branch of the MND Association need people to help in various ways, including Transport to/from meetings, Fundraising and visiting people with MND.

If you feel you could spare a little time to help please call Simon Edmands on 01306 500153.

deaf PLUS

The mobile advisory service will be at the following venues to give advice and information on all aspects of hearing loss.

Friday 22nd Jan.

A.M. Longmead Day Centre, Sefton Road, Epsom

P.M. John Gale Court, West Street, Ewell.

Please ring the Farnborough Centre on 01252 510051 before attending

PARENT CARERS - REMINDER

If you are interested in attending the Partnership with Parents & Carers of Epsom Meeting, details of which we printed in the December Newsletter and are reprinted below, would you please contact Heidi in the office AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

Partnership with Parents has obtained funding to develop participation networks in Surrey, so that parents and carers can directly influence the development of services for disabled children and young people in the county.

Carers of Epsom would like to arrange an informal meeting for carers of disabled children with representatives from Partnership with Parents who would provide information about social services, eligibility criteria and the Surrey Children's Disability Register to give everyone who attends.

If you would like to attend a meeting with us and a Partnership with Parents representative please contact Heidi Dendy in the office on

01372 722269

INDEPENDENT LIVING FUND

The Independent Living Fund is designed to help you, if you are disabled, to live independently at home rather than in residential care. You can use payments from the Fund to employ people to give you personal and domestic care in your home.

Who is eligible

You can apply to the Independent Living Fund if you:

- Are over 16 and under 65
- Already get or are able to get social services support to the value of at least £320 a week
- Receive or are entitled to the care component of the Disability Living Allowance at the highest rate.
- Live alone or with people who cannot fully meet your care needs.
- Are at risk of entering residential care or are currently

in residential care and wish to leave and live independently.

- Are capable of living in the community for at least six months
- Have capital of less than £22,250 Have a care package that costs less than £785 per week (once your own income has been taken into account).

How much could you get?

£455 per week is the maximum payment.

For more information go to

www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits

Automatic Pension Credit

The Pension Service is currently piloting automatic Pension Credit awards by identifying potential claimants from State Pension data. Pension Credit is awarded for a provisional period of 13 weeks whilst the claimant is written to and asked if they would like to proceed with a continuing award.

Depending on how successful the pilot is, automatic awards may be in place as early as Spring 2010.

Former Carers Corner

Support

We are pleased to be able to continue to offer our support to newly bereaved former carers for the first year and welcome them to join carers at their monthly lunch meeting.

Outings/events

Former carers are welcome to apply to join trips and events, but priority for places will be given to carers. We may have to ask former carers for a contribution to the cost of the event/outing.

Moving on

There are numerous local clubs, societies and organisations offering a vast variety of activities, who are keen to attract new members and volunteer helpers.

With more time on your hands perhaps now would be a good time to consider exploring some new activities, or taking up something you have always wanted to do.