



choices

The newsletter of the Carers' Resource

Issue 73: Autumn 2010

'We invite, and want, carers to share their concerns and ideas'

CARERS IN THE RECESSION - WE ARE RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

The Carers' Resource has renewed its commitment to sustain its support for carers in the face of impending pressures on funding at national and local level. Chairman Glyn Owen Hughes said: "People in all walks of life and all sorts of roles will have to adjust to the effects of the economic downturn – and so will we.

"We have joined other charities in reminding Ministers they need to work with the voluntary sector to ensure the Spending Review takes account of the long term impact on carers and similarly vulnerable groups in local communities.

"Political leaders nationally and locally must surely realise there is a financial as well as a moral imperative to protect carers. Not to protect them risks the carer as well as the cared-for person becoming a burden on the state.

"There will be new opportunities to meet carers' needs and we, at Carers' Resource, are shaping up to deliver them. So in this issue of Choices you'll find us upbeat, optimistic and determined."

We're celebrating 15 years of service

Carers' Resource is celebrating its crystal anniversary after 15 years of supporting carers by holding a high-powered seminar in Harrogate on November 12.

The seminar is planned as a "crystal ball gazing" examination of the future of specialist services for carers. It will be addressed by Dame Philippa Russell, Chair of the Standing Commission on Carers, Imelda Redmond, Head of Carers UK, and Carolyn Heaney, Deputy Regional Director - Yorkshire & Humber - Social Care & Local Partnerships.

We're reassuring you that we can help

An open letter from Director Anne Smyth addresses the concerns which carers may have about services in the light of media reports of funding pressures, real or imagined.

She says: "We want to both reassure carers and invite them to get in touch with any of our staff. We need to hear their ideas, share their worries and learn from their experiences especially at a difficult time for everyone. We can then monitor and respond to their needs."

See 'We're here to help': page 3

We're acknowledging help in kind and in cash

For its own long-term future, Carers' Resource (as a charity) looks to funding from national government, local government and voluntary sources - with voluntary funding now becoming crucial.

Backing from a wide range of organisations and individuals is acknowledged elsewhere in Choices. And at Christmas, every card sold for the charity and every unwanted present donated to the cause is gratefully received.

Cards below are available at £3 per pack of ten from Carers' Resource offices and staff.



.. IN BRIEF .. IN BRIEF ..

www.buy.at/carersresource

If you are shopping online, you can access over 100 leading retailers using our webshop

www.buy.at/carersresource

And every time you use it, you'll automatically earn money for us without paying anything extra yourself.

Please bookmark the link in time for your online Christmas shopping!

The RSPCA's *Home for Life* is a free service which aims to provide a new home for pets whose owners have died.

For details phone 0300 123 0239, email: jcurtis@rspca.org.uk, or visit homeforlife.org.uk.

HOLIDAYS

From time to time the Carers' Resource is given the opportunity to offer free or reduced cost holidays to carers of all ages.

If you would like your name to be put on a list to be contacted as and when such opportunities arise please ring the Carers' Resource on 01756 700888 and speak to either Jean Maxwell or Anne Brennard.

Heart Matters is a FREE service from the British Heart Foundation. Join today and live with a healthy heart. Free magazine, helpline, personalised information, 5-a-day diet advice. Call the Heart Matters Helpline on 0300 330 3300 or join online at www.bhf.org.uk/heartmatters

When planning days out, make a point of contacting venues to ask if they offer special rates for disabled people and their carers. More details on carer concessions are in our leaflet *Is it free for me?* Call Carers' Resource for a copy.

Help for grandparents

Grandparents looking after children while their parents work will be credited with National Insurance contributions towards their State Pension. Benefits will apply to those looking after children under the age of 12 for at least 20 hours a week. The system is due to be implemented in April 2011.

Mencap Direct 0300 333 11 11 - new telephone helpline provides details of all Mencap services in England - support, housing, jobs and training.

Call the Home Heat Helpline (Freephone 0800 33 66 99) for help and advice on:

- special services from your energy supplier when someone has a disability or long-term health condition
- grants for home insulation
- benefits and help with paying bills

Log on to youthhealthtalk.org to see and hear young people talking about their own experiences of health, illness and lifestyle, from coping with a range of conditions such as cancer or diabetes, to their experiences of sexual health, relationships, smoking and drugs.

The Carers' Resource
 has a number of events both large and small throughout the year at which we could use raffle prizes (eg toiletries, bottles of wine, ornaments) to raise much needed funds. We should be very grateful for donations of unwanted gifts

Young Minds, the UK charity for improving the emotional well-being of children and young people, has a website called My Head Hurts, at www.youngminds.org.uk/my-head-hurts
YoungMinds also has a parents' helpline on **0800 018 2138** (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm; Wed 6-8pm)

Thinking about a stairlift?

Carers' Resource has produced a new list of stairlift providers. If you would like a copy along with the Disabled Living Foundation's advice on choosing a stairlift, contact your local Carers' Resource office. (We always recommend seeking advice from a health professional before buying special equipment. Be sure to compare prices, too).

Have you paid the wrong tax ?

If you are one of the 6 million people who have paid the wrong tax since 2008, you will receive a letter from HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, formerly Inland Revenue). If you receive an email, asking you to provide information online, including bank details, this is a scam and should be deleted immediately.



carers' resource

Carers' Resource gives tailored support and information to unpaid carers and vulnerable people.

It is an independent, award-winning Yorkshire charity which is open to everyone and offers emotional and practical help to enable them to cope.

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The Carers' Resource is a company limited by guarantee. Reg charity number 1049278.

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions (50 - 500 words) are welcomed but may be edited. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect policy of the Carers' Resource. Reference to any service does not imply recommendation.

The deadline for submissions for next issue is January 5, 2011

carers' resource



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AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR TO CARERS WHO WORRY ABOUT CUTS

Dear Carers

I write to invite any of you who may be worried about cuts to services, rumoured or actual, to contact us at Carers' Resource.

Media reports regarding the potential impact on carers from possible funding pressures may well cause concerns and we wish to reassure you that our unique carer-focused service is here to help.

By getting in touch, carers will be able to take full advantage of all our information and support services and it will enable us to build up a stronger picture of any local concerns.

We are all worried about the future but we want to ensure all carers take full advantage of our services and do not worry alone at home about the possible effects on the services for themselves and those they look after.

Nationally the importance of carers is increasingly being recognised. The Coalition Government has confirmed its commitment to the principles of the Carers Strategy (2008) and is refreshing it in time for the Autumn spending reviews.

The "refresh" has been an important opportunity to make carers views known and we master-minded a significant response to the Government's consultation, with the help of carers whom we could reach in the short time available.

We work with thousands of carers across the district and we are doing everything in our power to ensure you receive the best possible quality of service and support. You deserve nothing less.

Anne Smyth, Director, Carers' Resource

Landmark legislation protects carers

New laws to protect carers against discrimination are contained in the Equality Act which came into force at the beginning of October.

The Act broadens the concept of "associative discrimination" so that someone who is not old or disabled but cares for someone who is can claim for age or disability themselves if treated less favourably than others.

Employers cannot ask job applicants questions about disability or health before making a job offer so it gives further protection to disabled people.

Catching loan sharks

They may not have killer jaws but illegal moneylenders known as loan sharks are every bit as predatory as the name suggests.

Carers facing debt problems should guard against being exploited. Victims are often charged huge interest and sometimes face blackmail or violence if they fall behind with payments.

If you or someone you know becomes a victim, contact Trading Standards in strict confidence at any hour on 0300 555 2222 or e-mail: reportaloan shark@stoploansharks.gov.uk

Thank you to everyone who has made donations recently including

- **Belmont Grosvenor School PTA**, regular supporters, raised a wonderful £3,300 at their summer ball towards mentoring for young carers. Guests were entertained by Christian Lunn, himself a young carer.
- **Procter & Gamble** who have donated £4,500 for us to develop a website aimed at supporting young carers.
- To carers for their very welcome donations in memory of loved ones including Allan Drake, Bryan Whitfield, Mr Hunter and Sydney Aveyard.
- The **Ladies Fellowship at the Bilton Grange United Reformed Church** who held a coffee morning and raised £190.
- **Birstwith Luncheon Club** for their donation of £100
- **Our staff and volunteers** who helped raise £349 with the Street Collection in Harrogate Town Centre on Saturday 25th September.
- **Cardale Asset Management's** fundraiser during the World Cup raised £104 to finance a football tournament for young carers.
- **Pace Electronics plc** for their generous donation of £500
- **Pannal WI** for their donation of £110
- **Merlin Magic Wand Charity** for donating tickets to Alton Towers for young carers and for £380 to cover transport costs.
- **Carolyn Thornton** for organising a Bring and Buy sale and raising £110
- **Janet Kipling of Tidy Gardens** whose coffee mornings raised £130.
- The **Rotary Club of Ripon** who donated £264 to pay for two young carers to go on a much need residential break.
- Leslie Gore, President of the **Rotary Club of Bingley**, who chose us to benefit from a recent charity dinner and raised £1,300.
- Michael Wilkins, the outgoing President of the **Rotary Club of Knaresborough**, for choosing us to be his charity of the year and for their donation of £1,000
- **Rotary Club of Harrogate Brigantes'** Golf Day generated £6,617 for young carer mentoring, adding to previous years' support for us.
- John Lowrie Morrison, **Jolomo**, donated £1,400 from the sale of one of the paintings at his recent exhibition at the Walker Gallery in Harrogate. Thanks, too, to Ian Walker for waiving the gallery's normal fees.

Does your GP know you are a carer?

There are a number of reasons why it's important to tell GPs about your caring role

Your Health – there are some entitlements especially for carers including annual health checks and flu jabs. YOUR health matters.

Your Wealth – they might be able to support any benefits claims you are trying to make or other grant applications for identified needs

Your Wellbeing – they might be able to signpost you to other support services to help you stay well and comfortable in your caring role

For the benefit of others – if GPs and health professionals are aware of the numbers of carers in their area, it may encourage them to recognise the need for specialist carer support services and to use them more. This will be increasingly important as they become the budget holders for the health service in the future.

And if Carers' Resource has been of help to you, please tell your practice - it will help us to reach out to other carers.

Hospital stays and your benefits

Going into hospital can affect welfare benefits including **Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Attendance Allowance (AA), Incapacity Benefit or Employment Support Allowance and Carer's Allowance.**

Disability Living Allowance

If DLA is paid for someone aged 16 and over, it will usually stop after the person has been in hospital for **4 weeks.**

If DLA is paid for a child under 16, it will stop after the child has been in hospital for **12 weeks.**

Attendance Allowance will stop after someone has been in hospital for **4 weeks**

Tel: 0845 712 3456 Textphone: 0845 7 22 33 44

Employment and Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit will stop after someone has been in hospital for **52 weeks.**

Tel: 0800 055 6688 Textphone: 0800 023 4888

Carer's Allowance If a carer or the person they are caring for go into hospital, payment will continue for **12 weeks.** If a 'cared for' person, receiving DLA or AA has their allowance stopped whilst in hospital, the Carer's Allowance will stop at the same time.

Tel: 0845 608 4321 Textphone: 0800 023 4888

You must report hospital stays to the relevant benefits department – your local Carers' Resource can give details – our contact details are on page 3.

Is there an alcoholic in your life?

Call Alcoholics Anonymous to find out about local help:
0845 769 7555



BROKE AND BROKEN: CARERS BATTLE POVERTY AND DEPRESSION

More than one in three carers (37 per cent) do not want to wake up in the morning because of dire financial circumstances, according to new findings published by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers.

A survey of 800 who care unpaid for a sick or disabled family member found that more than half of working carers earn under £10,000 a year and spend all their savings supporting the person they care for. Many fear losing their homes after borrowing money from family or friends or taking expensive loans.

Carole Cochrane, PRTC's Chief

Executive commented: "The Comprehensive Spending Review must deliver improved community support to enable carers to combine work and care, as pledged by the Government in June. Six million carers will judge the coalition government by this."

New research issued by Carers UK to launch Carers' Week in June 2010 revealed that more than three-quarters of carers do not have a life outside of their caring role. Almost all carers questioned agreed a life of their own would be achievable if they received breaks, a decent income and were given support in times of crisis.

Kidz up North

Thursday 25 November 2010

(Reebok Stadium, Premier Suite, Middlebrook Exhibitions Centre, Burnden Way, Bolton BL6 6JW; Junction 6 off M61)

A major exhibition of equipment and products for disabled children. For further details and to book your FREE tickets, call 0161 214 5962; kidzupnorth.co.uk



The Dawson family donated a car via the Giveacar initiative which collects unwanted cars for charity – turning scrap into cash. Cars are collected free-of-charge by Giveacar and sold through an online auction, or disposed of at an authorised treatment facility. Proceeds are given to one of the Giveacar's partner charities – such as Carers' Resource. As well as being a recycling initiative, it also gives us access to an untapped source of cash. Each car donated raises an average £80 for us. If you want an easy and completely free way to get rid of your old car, contact www.giveacar.co.uk or visit www.carersresource.org

Caring with Confidence falls to Government axe

The Department of Health's Caring with Confidence programme was terminated by Ministers in the summer because of low numbers of carers participating nationally and increasing unit costs.

Expressing regret at the decision, Director Anne Smyth said: "As a charity which puts the needs of the carer at the heart of everything we do, we are delighted to have been part of this innovative programme which reached into the heart of the communities we serve.

"The many carers we worked with in Bradford and North Yorkshire, say they found Caring with Confidence invaluable. Training opportunities have made a big difference to them."

Anne continued: "We have redeployed our CwC staff but their skills and insights remain with us and we are seeking ways of delivering the sessions again. This is just one example of how public sector cuts will compel us to restructure our services."

Mealtimes made easy

Illness and infirmity can jeopardise our ability to eat well - it may be difficult to go out shopping, people with dementia may forget to eat or lose the ability to prepare a meal, swallowing can be difficult after a stroke, for example.

Carers' Resource could help with details of services which provide shopping or meal delivery. Maybe you would like to know about support organisations to advise on eating problems due to specific conditions such as cancer. We could tell you about special equipment suppliers, too. Give us a call and we'll do our best to help.

CASE NOTES

THE STORY OF GEORGE AND SUSAN G

As anyone who cares for someone 24 hours a day knows, you need integrated health, emotional and financial support. Especially if like George and Susan G (not their real names), you live on the edge of a Craven village where it's hard to get out and see visitors. Here are their case notes.

THE COUPLE: In their seventies with a son and daughter living away. Referred to Carers' Resource by a social worker. Susan attends day care once a week, which gives George a break.

THEIR SITUATION: Susan has poor mobility, diabetes, Parkinson's and memory loss. She needs 24 hours personal care including washing, dressing and dealing with incontinence. She doesn't like leaving home. They worry about the cost of running their home. George has arthritis and gets very tired yet sleeps badly. Worry about the future and feeling overwhelmed makes thinking and everyday tasks even harder.

THEIR HOPES: Moving somewhere more central would mean less isolation. Shopping

would be easier. George would be happier and more independent.

THE CARER SUPPORT OFFICER: Highly experienced from several years with Carers' Support, she called in and discussed potential improvements. Many contacts with GP, social worker, nurse and the couple's children led to an integrated package of support..

THE PACKAGE OF SUPPORT: Moving to a bungalow nearer to services has transformed life. The couple's council tax has been cut by 25 per cent for Susan's memory loss. Transport is laid on for a monthly lunch club and a volunteer takes them out for occasional jaunts.

Home respite care weekly lets

George shop, rest or garden and residential respite care is another godsend. Issues of incontinence pad provision were resolved between CSO and nurse, and junk mail and telephone calls which upset George have been stopped.

Both children had power of attorney. With George and Susan's agreement, the CSO spoke to both children and explained their parents' worries about managing finances. Direct debits have been set up to ease worries.

OUTCOME: George and Susan and their son and daughter know the couple have the ongoing support of a CSO. She can suggest (and action) practical ways to ease the strain of caring. And her support maintains the couple's emotional and physical help.

Happy Days Children's Charity offers funding for entertainment and holidays to children with special needs. 'Special needs' may apply to an illness or learning disability but also to children who have been subjected to abuse, domestic violence and other traumatic events. Apply in good time for 2011 breaks. Call 01582 755999 or visit: happydayscharity.org

Life is for living so it can go against our instinct to start planning for or talking about death. Lack of conversation around death or terminal illness can be distressing and isolating for all concerned. The **Dying Matters** organisation promotes openness and publishes a number of helpful leaflets. For more information call freephone 08000 21 44 66 or visit: dyingmatters.org



The Harrogate Racers (Darren, Andy, Craig, James, Paul, Stefan and Chloe) came 6th in the Knaresborough Bed Race during the summer and have so far raised £330 with more sponsor money due to come in.



David Ward, Liberal Democrat MP for Bradford East met Carers' Resource staff on a visit to Shipley office. He heard about the **Message in Bottle** scheme which directs emergency services to information kept in the fridge.



Another success story from our carer support officers

IT'S WHAT YOU KNOW AND WHERE YOU TURN TO GET A RESULT

Just one telephone call is what it took but the secret is in the expertise of knowing who to call and when and why.

The call was made on behalf of Lucy Craven whose five year old daughter Amelia has severe physical difficulties resulting from a rare Chromosome Disorder.

Lucy, who lives at Allerton near Bradford, had been allocated a wheelchair. It wasn't that she wasn't very grateful, but the wheelchair was very heavy for her to lift in and out of her car. The question was, what to do and who to turn to make life with a

dependent daughter just a little bit easier? The question was solved: straightaway Lucy got in touch with Carers' Resource.

Enter Kathryn Leakey and Lynsey Nicholson at the Carers' Resource Bradford office. What Lucy Craven particularly hoped was that she would be able to change the Motability-financed car earlier in order to get a car with a ramp facility. That would enable her to push the chair in and out of the car.

The request for expert, one-on-one information to help a caring mother went from Kathryn to Lynsey who called on her contacts

and knowhow and supplied the appropriate Motability Customer Services number to Lucy.

Well yes, it may have taken more than one telephone call but the magical one was that in which Lucy won agreement to change her car early to facilitate wheelchair access. On top of this she was promised a grant to cover the extra cost.

Kathryn says : "Lucy was very grateful for a result which will make her life so much easier, especially since she was also given information about access to an NHS dentist and has booked an appointment already."

Coalition Government – the story so far

Announced

Sourced from Carers UK

- New Commission on Funding of Social Care to report by 2011
- £1 billion cut from the Disability Living Allowance budget – about 25% of the total – through introduction from 2013 of a new medical assessment
- Refresh of Carers Strategy in England (but not including Carer's Allowance)
- VAT to rise to 20% from January 2011
- Pledge to extend flexible working rights to all employees
- Plan to restore the earnings link for the basic state pension

Scrapped

- Previous Government's plans for free personal care at home in England
- Savings Gateway scheme which would have given carers in receipt of Carers' Allowance an additional 50p for every £1 they were able to save
- Child Trust funds scrapped but £20m diverted to provide 8,000 week-long respite breaks for families of disabled children

Uncertain

- The Liberal Democrats' election pledge to offer a guaranteed break to anyone caring for more than 50 hours
- Review of carers' benefits

In the pipeline with significant implications (and new opportunities) for carers.

- Review of Public Law relating to Social Care
- Adult Social Care White Paper and *Vision of Social Care*.
- NHS and Public Health reforms
- Carers (Identification and Support) Bill - Private Member's Bill

Recent publications:

The leaflet *About arthritis*, provides information on the different forms of this illness, its effects and treatments. It's just one of the leaflets published by Arthritis Care – they're all available free of charge from your local Carers' Resource. Contact us for a full list of titles.

Help and Advice for living life well with a long term condition

– a leaflet from the Department of Health which outlines some of the support and care which may be available. Call Carers' Resource for a free copy.

A carer's guide to safer moving and handling of people

- to obtain the new edition of this popular guide from BackCare, visit www.backcare.org.uk or call 020 8977 5474. Cost £6.

(Carers' Resource can supply a list of local and national organisations which offer advice and support on back care and chronic pain.)

Fundraising to fire the imagination

'Brave soles' - we need you

When Anna Jackson was aged 12, she faced the toughest challenge of her young life - caring for her mother with terminal cancer.

Eighteen years on, she is tackling a very different challenge. Now Head of Development at Carers' Resource, Anna is raising funds for the charity and in memory of her Mum - by walking on fire.

Anna is hoping others aged over 16 will join her in the firewalk at HML building, Gargrave Road, Skipton, on Sunday November 20. Participants pay a £25 deposit and must pledge to raise a minimum of £125 in sponsorship.

Firewalking is walking across 20 feet of hot embers without burning the bare soles of one's feet or experiencing pain or injury. Two hours of training are provided, and friends and family are invited.

Anna said: "Anyone who has experienced caring knows it is a challenge. So is walking on fire. I



feel that if I can do both, I can tackle anything in life - as well as repaying Mum for the love and inspiration she gave me."

You can register for the firewalk by calling 01756 700888 or e-mailing awells@carersresource.org.

For Anna's own fundraising page, please visit www.justgiving.com/anna-jackson

It's Facebook fever and tweets galore as Carers' Resource goes live online

Modern technology offers new opportunities for organisations such as ours to interact with our carers and professional supporters. Our new facebook page is now live at www.facebook.com/carersresource. This gives anyone the chance to tell us their views or raise points of concern or value to other carers.

We have linked our facebook page to a Twitter feed as well so that instant updates can go to mobiles.

Our website also grows, offering up to date news and photographs of events and activities. Find us at www.carersresource.org - please tell us what you would find useful.

Whilst Choices will continue to be posted to all carers on our mailing list, we are also able to offer it, and any other mailings, by e-mail for anyone who would like to save paper and stamps. To join our circulation list, send your details to carer@carersresource.org

To mark our 15th anniversary here are 15 ways in which you could help

- 1) Become a Friend of the Carers' Resource and make regular donations to help us plan our services
- 2) Remember us in a legacy
- 3) Nominate us to benefit from fundraising activities at your school, church or sports club
- 4) Make a donation in lieu of flowers
- 5) Run a marathon or enter a sponsored walk
- 6) Let us know of celebrities you know who would open an event for us
- 7) Invite some friends round for a coffee morning
- 8) Organise a raffle for us or donate a raffle prize
- 9) Shop online via our webshop www.buy.at/carersresource
- 10) Make a donation to mark a special birthday or anniversary
- 11) Organise a fundraising event for us
- 12) Tell us of any companies who may support us
- 13) Buy or sell our Christmas cards for us
- 14) Join our 15th anniversary Firewalk or sponsor a brave firewalker
- 15) Make a donation and Gift Aid it

Please contact Anne Wells with your own fundraising ideas and offers of help: awells@carersresource.org or 01423 500555

Anne Smyth, Director of Carers' Resource, has been appointed a Deputy Chair of the national carers watchdog, the Standing Commission on Carers - to the "real pleasure" of its Chair, Dame Philippa Russell. "It's an immense privilege," said Anne. "I am taking to Whitehall all the experience of our work on the caring front line."

The Standing Commission on Carers is an independent advisory body, providing expert advice to Ministers and the Carers Strategy Cross-Government Programme Board on progress in delivering the strategic vision of the national Carers Strategy.