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| <p>Issue 56</p> <p>Dec - Jan 2005</p> <p>Special Points of interest in this issue</p> | <div data-bbox="592 174 1214 315" style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 100%; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Carers Newsletter</p> |
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or other organisations. Guides can be obtained by: Hotline 0208 880 8125 24hours a day Website www.carersuk.org the guide can be downloaded in PDF format Email carersrightsday@carersuk.org a guide can be ordered by e-mail and either sent by post or emailed back in PDF format

Mencap Breaking Point Campaign

The Mencap web site is also running a campaign entitled breaking point to help carers who cannot get respite breaks and are having to care 24 hours a day. There is a case of a mother of an autistic child with challenging behaviour who despite a carers assessment cannot get services as her son is not classed as having a severe learning disability. Again the lack of respite facilities in Preston for people with Learning Disabilities has been an issue for many years and more recently concerns have been expressed that facilities may no longer be available for those with mild/moderate learning disabilities. Again Mencap would like to hear your story so either contact the Mencap Website or send information to the Carers Information Centre.

Mencap - Homes Fit for Children Campaign

Thousands of severely disabled children live at home with their families. For them to live there, changes often need to be made e.g. putting in a stair lift or a downstairs bathroom. This can be very expensive. The disabled

facilities grant helps families to pay for these changes. But because it is means tested, parents often have to pay thousands of pounds towards the cost. This is unfair. This is an issue close to our hearts in Preston as Lancashire County Council have been discussing extending the means testing to include stair lifts and through floor lifts which were previously excluded. One in three families told to pay towards making their home accessible have not been able to afford it. This means the work has not been carried out. Carers in Preston have told us in the past of their anguish at being advised to borrow thousands of pounds to have essential alterations to their houses at a time when they may have lost one or even two wages. Mencap would like to hear your story and would like you to contact your MP. Mencap can be contacted at www.mencap.org.uk or send information to Peter or Zulekha at the Carers Information Centre.

LANCASHIRE COLLEGE COURSES

Lancashire College are running a 48-hour residential taking care of the carers 'recharge for mind & body' at Lancashire College Southport Rd Chorley on the following dates: 7th -9th February 2005 Reiki Therapy Level 1 8th - 10th March 2005 details later 8th -10th April 2005 details later For those caring for 20 hours or more the cost is £25. For enrolment forms and/or further information contact: Donna Galway or Lorraine Richardson at Lancashire College, Southport Road Chorley

Lancashire PR7 1NB Tel 01257 516325 or 01257 516303.

Vitalise

After 41 years the Winged Fellowship has changed its name to Vitalise. The new name, image and 'strapline 'Essential breaks for disabled people and carers'. will project a more modern and visionary organisation that is providing more choice and quality breaks tailored to individual need. The Sandpipers Centre at Southport which has been used by disabled people from Presto was reopened on 30th April 2004. The revamped centre now offers 14 new ensuite bedrooms to accommodate an extra 376 guests a year, an upgraded surgery and nurse call system. If you would like to know more about breaks at Sandpipers or one of the other centres or to offer your services as a volunteer telephone 0845 345 1970, email info@vitalise.org.uk or visit the web site www.vitalise.org.uk.

Scope Activities

Several carers have taken advantage of the carers activities held at the The Bridge Centre 179 Eldon St Preston. In January 2005 Scope are hoping to start a number of new events. These are: Gentle Exercise and Well Being, Aromatherapy, Digital Imaging and Tasters in Alternative Therapies. We have no actual dates yet but if you are interested please let Peter or Zulekha know 200173 and we send you a flyer with the dates as soon as we receive them.

Lancashire Asian Carers Forum

The Lancashire Asian Carers Forum (LACF) meets quarterly at various locations around Lancashire. Local members of the working group for the LACF are Yakub Gangat and Jaya Patel. The next meeting of the Lancashire Asian Carers Forum will be in Accrington in January 2005. For further details about the meetings or about transport to the meetings contact Zulekha Bangee on 01772 200173.

Preston Asian Carers Forum

The Forum meets on the first Tuesday of the month at the Ribblebank Resource Centre, Gerrard Street, Preston, between 1 - 2.30p.m. Future Meetings are 7th December University of Central Lancs Comensus Project, 11th January 2005 Carers Allowance 1st February Learn Direct, & 1st March Lancashire Care NHS Trust.

Lancashire Carers Forum

Lancashire Carers Forum (LCF) is a meeting whereby carers from all areas of Lancashire can discuss their problems and raise issues with members of the Social Services, representatives of Health Trusts (Primary & Acute) and elected members. Experts are invited to answer questions on issues of importance to carers. Meetings, which are held at the East Cliff Offices, Preston, last from 11.00a.m. - 2.00p.m. Including a buffet lunch. Two voting carers from each area are allowed but additional non-voting

carers can attend. The next meeting of the Forum is on Wednesday 19th January 2005. If you wish to attend please contact Peter or Zulekha on 200173 or call into the Carers Information Centre.

Preston Carers Support Group

The Preston Carers Support Group meets at the Moor Lane Resource Centre Moor Lane Preston at 7.00p.m. on the last Tuesday of every month. Future meetings are 25th January 2005 Community Nutrition Group, 22nd February Megabowl -bowling and socialising.

Preston Carers Strategy Group

This group which has representatives from Preston PCT, Social Services and Carers meets every two months and is making progress on raising awareness of carers in Health Centres and GP surgeries. If you have any carer's issues which you would like raising at the next meeting on 11th January please contact Peter on 200173. Remember if you are a carer let your GP know that you are a carer.

Preston Carers Web Site -Guest sign in facility

We announced in the August September newsletter that the A-Z Directory of Carers Services in Preston was available on the revamped website. This also includes the latest information on support group activities and the latest newsletters. Guests can now sign in and pass comments

on the web site. The site has proved very successful and we are now approaching 500 'hits' The website address is www.prestoncarers.org.uk

Cancer Voices

Cancer Voices is an independent UK wide network of people affected by cancer who are helping to shape the future of cancer care. It is a diverse network of people including patients and carers who want to make their voices heard. Training is available on confidence building, understanding the NHS, listening and working on committees. If you would like to be involved you can register at the web site www.cancervoices.org.uk. Or a registration form is available from Peter or Zulekha on 200173.

Carers Activities

The carers 'confidence building day at Alston Hall on Tuesday 23rd November 2004 was a great success. 30 carers enjoyed making an Advent Calendar and Reiki plus a lovely lunch. We cannot confirm future activities yet but we hope to do a five-week course on Watercolours starting in January, have a carer's day in February doing Tai Chi, Mosaic Tiling, Family History and Gardening. Have a 5 week course starting in March on Indian Head Massage & Reiki, a 5 week IT course starting in May and a carers day in week commencing 13th June 2005 for Carers Week. When details are finalised we will send out flyers for the

various events.

Elizabeth Finn Trust

The Trust's aim is to help British and Irish people who come from a professional or similar background and their immediate families regardless of religious denomination, political opinion, age or place of residence. The two main areas of activity are 1) the financial support and assistance to those of all ages still living at home or those living in other residential or nursing homes and 2) the care given to the residents in the Elizabeth Finn Trust homes. Help may be grants, regular allowances or one off gifts for specific needs. People living at home must capital below £16,000 and in a residential or nursing care home no more than £5000. If you or someone you know needs financial support an application form and guidance is available from Peter or Zulekha at the Carers Information Centre 01772 200173.

Longridge Carers Group

Although outside our area for Carers Project purposes we share the same Primary Care Trust and work together on the Preston Carers Strategy. The Longridge Carers Group meets on the first Wednesday of every month between 1.00 to 3.00p.m. in the Health Education Room at Longridge Community Hospital, St Wilfrids Terrace. For further information contact Kathleen Eastwood at Carers Link, Link House 23 King St Accrington BB5 1PR Tel 01254 387444.

Young Carers

The Carers Information Centre also embraces a young carers project whereby carers up to the age of 18 years who care for a family member can be provided with one to one support, advice on the illness of the person being cared for, breaks from caring and the chance to meet other young carers. Recent Outings for Young Carers have included Bowling; Cinema, Zap Zone and young carers are having a Christmas Party at the Mega Bowl on 23rd December 2004. If you know of any young carers in the area who may need help please discuss with Margaret on 01772 200173.