

Newsletter Items Dec/Jan 2006

Short break voucher scheme.

The Scheme provides support to carers by offering easy access to short periods of residential respite care or home care. Each voucher is worth a total of 4 hours home care or one night's stay in a residential home with a contribution of £10. Changes are being made in the way vouchers are issued to avoid the problem at the beginning of the financial year. They will be printed by the local finance teams (all yellow A4 perforated with terms and conditions on the back.) They will stress that they are valid from April to March. Carers have complained in the past about the delay waiting a few months for vouchers at the start of the year. If you would like a copy of the new Short break voucher scheme booklet please ring Peter on 200173.

Blue Badge Problems

Several carers have raised concerns over parking tickets received when using blue badges. We contacted Parkwise who have responsibility for enforcing parking policies in Preston. Parkwise referred to section 11 of the Blue Badge explanatory booklet which states that the blue badge must be displayed on top of the dashboard or fascia panel. People have been placing the card with the photo side facing forward and it should be the other side with the date of expiry, serial no and the wheelchair symbol. If the blue badge can be clearly seen and shows the wheelchair symbol side you should have no problems. The badge should only be displayed when using the parking benefits under the Scheme except if the vehicle is driven by someone other than the badge holder for the purpose of entering or leaving an area (which is accessible only to vehicles displaying a Blue Badge) in order to pick up or drop off the badge holder.

Carers UK 40 years offer

To celebrate their 40th anniversary Carers UK is offering free membership for carers who are unable to pay the £10 annual fee. Carers UK helps carers to speak with a stronger voice by campaigning at all levels of national and local government and with service providers to ensure that action is taken to support carers. Carers UK provides information and advice for carers and has a helpline dealing with over 20,000 queries a year. You can take advantage of this offer by contacting Carers UK 20-25 Glasshouse Yard London EC1A 4JT or ring Peter on 200173 for an application form.

Families Together

Families Together is a friendly support group for the families of children and young people who have a mental health problem. It can be a great help to talk to other parents who have experienced what you are facing. Future meetings and dates:
Wednesday 11th January 7pm at Carers Link, Link House, 23 King St Accrington
Saturday 21st January Family Social to be confirmed
Wednesday 8th February 7pm DR Ghorri's Surgery 104 Woodplumpton Rd Preston. Connexions will be speaking
Wednesday 8th March 7pm Blackburn Carers Centre Oakenhurst Rd Blackburn

Kiloran Trust –Caring for Carers

The Kiloran Trust based in West London has offered breaks to 1,000s of carers over the years. It is a particularly welcoming and friendly atmosphere for carers who are taking a break on their own. Kiloran offers full board, good transport facilities to the city centre and can even help to cover the cost for those on low benefits. If you would like a leaflet on the Kiloran Trust please ring Peter on 200173.

First National survey of people with learning disabilities

The Department of Health have just reported on the first national survey of people with a learning disability. 3000 people were interviewed some who are very independent and some who need a lot of support. The survey found:

- Fewer than 1 in 5 who are of working age have a job
- Half said that someone else decides how much money they could spend each week
- Half of all adults live with their parents
- 2 out of 3 living in residential care or supported living said they had no choice over where they lived or who with
- Just over half have an independent advocate
- 4 out of 10 said they have been bullied at school
- 1 in 20 adults have no friends and do not see any family

David Congdon head of campaigns and policy for Mencap said that the Valuing People policies should have had more impact. More needs to be done to get more people with a disability into employment. The drive towards allowing people to live more independently should not lead to further isolation.

Mental Health Service Users and Carers Questionnaire

The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health are conducting a service users and carers questionnaire based on the fact that Mental Health Services should become more focused on the hopes and experiences of the people who use them, their families and their carers. To complete a questionnaire on line go to <http://keypoint.scmh.org.uk/webform.htm> . Further information is available from Chris Naylor Research worker at the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health Borough High St, London SE1 1LB Tel 0207827 8303 E mail chris.Naylor@scmh.org.uk

Carers Activities 2006

Computer Course with laptop loan for Carers.

Monday 9th January 2006 until Monday 13th February 10.30 –12.30

Reiki Level 1 Wednesday 18th January 2006 10-12.30 8 weeks except half term

Emotional Freedom Technique one day Monday 13th March

Flyers will be sent to carers to complete and return.

Carers Activities –other Groups

Preston & District Scope 179 Eldon St Preston are starting the following Winter Activities in January 2006.

Watercolour for Beginners Monday 9th March 1-3pm 10 weeks except half term

Aromatherapy Tuesday 10th January 1-3p.m. 10 weeks except half term

Yoga Thursday 12th January 2005 1-3pm 10 weeks except half term

Alternative Therapies Friday 13th January 8 weeks except half term

Open to carers for further information please ring Cath on 01772 828000.

Carers Database

Thank you to the carers who returned the database form which was enclosed with the June/July newsletter. As we are required to produce statistics each month on the carers we help e.g. know who care for someone with learning disabilities, mental health, elderly etc it is essential that we have these details. As we are usually over subscribed for our popular outings and activities we will give first priority to carers on the database. We realise that some people are reluctant to provide certain information e.g. age. If so please complete the rest of the database form. In the next few months we will be contacting carers ,former carers and people interested in caring who have not completed a database form. If you require a database form please contact the Carers Information Centre or ring Peter on 01772 200173

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. Summer activities for 2005 include Megabowl, Cinema, Camelot, T Shirt Printing, Blue Planet Aquarium & Horse Riding. If you know of any young carers in the area who may need help please discuss with Margaret on 01772 200173.

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 will be in Accrington in February 2006 followed by a meeting in Preston in May 2006. For further details about the meetings or about transport to the meetings contact Peter 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. The next meeting will be on 10th January 2006 when Elizabeth Mathews PALS Lancs Care NHS Trust will speak. On 7th February 2006 the Infection Control Nurse will give a talk and show us how clean our hands really are.

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 To help carers meet other carers coffee is available from 10.15 a.m. and after the meeting. Two voting carers from each area are allowed but **additional non-voting carers can attend.** The meetings of the Forum for 2006 are Thursday 19th January. Wednesday 22nd March, Monday 22nd May, Tuesday 25th July and 23rd November. The popular Carers Conference will be held at the Woodlands Chorley on Tuesday 12th September

Preston Carers Support Group

The Preston Carers Support Group meets on the last Tuesday of every month at the Deepdale Resource Centre, Sir Tom Finney Way, Preston. Future meetings: 31st January Kath Derbyshire Preston Card Club (card making) 28th February Karen Blundell Sensory Impairment.

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 1st November please contact Peter on 200173.

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:

3rd –5th February First Aid, Picture Framing. Travel talk on India, Digital Photography
24th- 26th March Make a Garden Lantern,,Gardeners Question Time,Container Gardening, Decorate a Pot, Gentle keep Fit
7th –9th April –Taking Care of the Carer –crafts including silk painting and greeting cards

For those caring for 20 hours or more the cost is £30.

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

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 Julie Duerden at Carers Link, Ribble Valley Office, 38 Whalley Rd, Clitheroe. BB7 1AW Tel 01200 444899.

Preston Carers Web Site

We announced in the August September 2004 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 over 1700 'hits' The website address is www.prestoncarers.org.uk