

## HERE TO HELP CARERS

### WELCOME TO ISSUE THREE!

### Calling all GP Surgeries!!!



We are very pleased to say that the following GPs Surgeries have agreed to have a notice board installed dedicated to Carers. The following Surgeries were the first to agree to this;

**New Wokingham Surgery, Forest End Medical Centre, Heath Hill Road Surgery and Green Meadows Surgery.**

We would like to give you all a massive thank you for showing your support to Carers. We can't tell you how grateful we are. We will continue to work hard towards getting these notice boards in as many surgeries as we can.

### Success Story!!

New Wokingham Road Surgery placed an article about BFVA and the support that is being offered to Carers in their Newsletter. Very shortly after we had a new Carer come to us because she had seen it in the newsletter. Well done New Wokingham Road Surgery. Thank you for truly showing your support for Carers.



### Next Carers Information Support Network meetings:

**24th June 2009** at Priestwood Youth Centre to talk about Bracknell's New Health Space

**8th July 2009** at Morgan Centre to talk with the **Department of Work and Pensions** about benefits available.

Carers on the BFVA database will receive invites to these events shortly. If you are not on the Database and would like to come, please contact:

Melanie Randall– Adult Carer Support Worker  
Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action  
Telephone: 01344 383517  
E-mail: [Melanie.Randall@bfva.org](mailto:Melanie.Randall@bfva.org)



### Meeting held with GP's and Practice Mangers

To discuss the services they offer to Carers and how to access it  
Held 15th January 2009 at Coopers Hill

Firstly we would like to give a big thank you to those who came on the day to speak with Carers; *Dr Adam Grieg of Forest End Medical Practice and head of the Professional Executive Committee, Dr Keeling of Easthampstead Practice and Chris James the Practice Manger of Green Meadows Surgery.*

At this meeting Carers were asked to write questions for the GPs allowing the GPs and the practice manager some time to review them before answering them. Here are some of the questions and answers from on the day:

**Q. Difficulty with appointments at a time when the Carer can come along at the same time as the Cared for.**

**A.** (Dr K) Not difficult at this surgery. We hold two extra registers. Suggests anyone talk to their own Practice Manager if they have any concerns.

(CJ) This surgery has a major alert scheme. Once patient notes are brought up, the records show if they are a Carer and their needs are a priority for that appointment. This surgery also puts notes on the system to show the best times to get an appointment for a particular Carer patient that meet the needs of the Carer as well as the Cared for. He suggests that anyone highlight any concerns to their own surgery as all surgeries should have a system in place.



Please see next page for more questions and answers

## GP Meeting questions & answers cont.....



### **Q. Should Carers register with their Practice?**

A. Yes, all Carers should let their own Practice know they are a Carer.

(CJ) Ideally the Carer and Cared for should be registered at the same Practice.

### **Q. As a Carer it is important to know what happens if the Carer goes into hospital. Is there a process for this?**

A. (Sarah Rose) This is where The Carers Emergency Respite scheme would work. It is important for Sarah to work in partnership with surgeries, to meet with the Practices to make them aware of this scheme, and to get cover immediately in this situation.

(Dr G) This is an excellent scheme, which needs to be publicised well.

### **Q. The 'ring at 8am tomorrow morning' is a terrible thing to hear as a non-Carer patient, imagine how much worse it is for a Carer patient. Suggest that Practices should be more proactive in telling Carers what is out there to help Carers. Also if a patient cannot ring until, say, 8.10am appointments may already have gone. Do Practices have a designated person on staff to look after Carers' needs?**

A. (CJ) At this surgery staff are aware of Carers. Staff would hope that new Carers would make themselves known. Staff would love to change the '8 am appointment call', and have thought of different systems, but this is the one that seems to work for most patients.

(Dr K) At this surgery, patients can book online if they wish an appointment a few days in advance.

(Dr G) The real problem is that there are only a certain amount of hours in the day. Surgeries take between 60-100 calls in the mornings for appointments. Therefore surgeries cannot offer all those appointments on the same day. At the moment for all those who ring in between 8-11.30am will usually be seen the same day.

### **Q. How do you feel about having regular reviews with mental health patients and their Carers? Would this be helpful or not?**

A. (Dr G) As a GP there are no problems with this at all, and not just for patients with mental health issues. We should not discriminate.

(CJ) As an ideal, a patient should be able to have an appointment with her own GP, and so the GP gets to know about a patient's condition and may realise that not all the information is always given. The GP would then ask the Carer for information to fill in the gaps.

### **Q. My mum cares for my sister. How can she as a Carer get support for mental health issues? My sister prefers to see doctor on her own but the doctor does not always then get the full or correct story.**

A.(CJ) A doctor cannot discuss a patient with a third party. However, the Carer, or mum in this case, could make an appointment with her daughter's doctor, or write to the doctor, stating her concerns, the situation etc. The doctor cannot comment but would keep notes on file.

Clare Rebbeck-Carers Services Manager also commented that statistically there are *approximately 10,000* Carers across Bracknell Forest. Clare has visited 18 out of 23 surgeries in the borough and they all held a Carers Database. BFVA is working in partnership with all GP's and Practices to ensure they all hold an Information Pack. Four surgeries (listed on front page) have already agreed to have a dedicated Carers Notice board in their waiting rooms, and will help to inform Carers where they can get advice and support.

Jane Currie- Carers Information and Advice Worker funded by Big Lottery, continues to work with GP's and Berkshire East Primary Care Trust to get information into surgeries where it will reach Carers.

**Madeline Diver**- Chair of the Interim Coordination Group, Also informed Carers about LINKs. **How does LINKs work?** A LINK (Local Involvement Network) is a network of local people and groups. It listens to what people like you have to say about health and social care services in your area, and tells councils and the NHS what it has discovered. They are legally obliged to give the LINK any information it asks for and to respond to any recommendations the LINK makes.

**How can I have my say?** Your local LINK wants to hear from you what you think about you local health or social care services-good or bad. There are lots of different ways you can do this. For instance, you can talk to someone, fill in a questionnaire or online survey or attend a meeting.

If you want to make your voice heard, either:

- Register online at [www.makesachange.org.uk](http://www.makesachange.org.uk)
- Fill in a reply card on the back of a LINKs leaflet
- Call on 0300 111 0102
- Email [contact@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:contact@makesachange.org.uk)



Your voice on local health and social care

# Carers Emergency Respite Scheme

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With the spotlight on carers during Carers Week, 8<sup>th</sup> June to 14<sup>th</sup> June, The Princess Royal Trust Carers Service, in partnership with Bracknell Forest Council, are delighted to be launching the Carers Emergency Respite Scheme at a Carers Week lunch on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2009 being provided in partnership by Carers UK Bracknell Branch and Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action.

There is considerable evidence that one of the factors limiting carers' freedom is the worry about what would happen if they became ill or were involved in an accident. Many carers have told Carers UK they did not take unnecessary journeys and frequently missed out on attending family events because of the fear of not being able to get home on time. They were concerned about what would happen to the person they care for.

The Carers Emergency Respite Scheme aims to give carers peace of mind by enabling them to register for an Emergency Alert Card and to put together an emergency plan that ensures the person they care for will continue to receive the support and care needed.

For more information about the scheme, please contact the scheme co-ordinator, Sarah Rose on 01344 351263 or email [sarah.rose@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.rose@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Grateful thanks and appreciation go to Melanie Randall and Jane Currie at BFVA for all their help and support and to Barbara Briggs, of Carers UK, for kindly allowing us to launch the scheme at the Carers lunch.



## Carers Direct Helpline 0808 802 0202

Textphone on 0800 988 8657

Calls from UK landlines, Vodafone, T-Mobile and O2 mobile phone networks are free.

Or you can email your questions to:

[CarersDirect@nhschoices.nhs.uk](mailto:CarersDirect@nhschoices.nhs.uk)

The helpline is open from 8am-9pm Monday to Friday and from 11am-4pm at weekends.

The helpline advisers can give you information to help you make decisions about your personal support needs and the needs of the person you're looking after.

This information includes assessments, benefits, direct payments, individual budgets time off and maintaining, leaving or going back to work or education. Helpline advisers can put you in touch with specialist national or local sources of help, including social care, health and self-help networks and resources.

Find out more on: [www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect](http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect)



## Berkshire Autistic Society

SUPPORTING PEOPLE IMPROVING LIVES



Ground Floor 197 Oxford Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7UZ  
Help Line 0118 959 4594

Speaker Meetings in June and July 2009

### Thursday 18th June

Lynne Moxon on Adolescence, sexuality and related anxiety

### Thursday 16th July

Prof Rita Jordan on the nature of teaching and learning in autism

**Thanks to the Big Lottery Fund, we are able to keep our prices as last season!**

Members- £5 Parents/Carers etc. (concessions and children free)  
£10 Professionals

Non-Members

£10 Others

£15 Professionals

Please contact Berkshire Autistic Society for more information

## Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action Domestic Support Service

The Domestic Support Service is part of Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action, an organisation which aims to support the local community and voluntary sector. The Domestic Support Service assists frail, elderly and vulnerable people with basic domestic tasks in order to help them remain as independent as possible.

How can we help you?

- Housework
- Laundry
- Pension Collecting
- Shopping
- Rate is £9p/hr for people on Direct payment, £11p/hr for self referrals

Please telephone: 01344 383516

Diane Benford – Domestic Support Coordinator

email: [domsupport@bfva.org](mailto:domsupport@bfva.org)



We would like to give a big thank you to *Mary Oorloff, Senior Mental Health Promotion Officer of ReThink* who came along to speak to Carers about stress.

rethink

Here are some of the things we talked about on the day. The group was asked to write down what they thought was the definition of stress. We discussed our definitions, then Mary pointed out that we need a certain amount of stress/pressure in our lives to help us get on. Mary then passed around to everyone fresh strawberries and chocolates and emphasised to Carers how important it is to treat yourself without feeling guilty.

She told us

*“Think of it as a gift for your cared for. If you, as a Carer are happier and less stressed, then you are better able to help the person you care for.”*

When levels of stress become high there are several ways to cope. Below are some ideas from the literature on the day:

**B**e realistic about what you can achieve. Don't take too much on.

**E**at a balanced diet. Eat slowly and sit down allowing at least half an hour for each meal.

**A**ction plans – try to write down the problems in your life that may be causing stress, and as many possible solutions as you can. Make a plan to deal with each problem.

**T**ime management -plan your time, doing one thing at a time and building in breaks. Don't make too many changes in your life.

**S**et priorities– if you could only do one thing, what would it be?

**T**alk things over with a friend, family member or someone who you can trust.

**R**elaxation or leisure time each day is important. Try new ways to relax.

**E**xercise regularly. This is excellent for stress control. Walking is good – appreciate the countryside.

**S**ay no and don't feel guilty.

**S**eek professional help if you have tried these things and your stress is still a problem.



The magic of smiles and laughter. **Smiling is contagious!!**

The remarkable thing about a smile is that when you give one to someone, it causes them to reciprocate by returning the smile, even when you are both using false smiles.

Science has proven that the more you smile the more positive reaction others will give you. Professor Ruth Campbell of University College London: “mirror neurons” copy facial expressions we see i.e. a smile will receive a smile in return.

*Laughter stimulates the body's natural painkillers and “Feel Good” enhancers, known as endorphins, helping relieve stress and healing the body.*

If you would like a copy of some of the literature given out on the day, please contact Melanie Randall at Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action and I will be happy to provide you with it.

Melanie Randall  
Adult Carer Support Worker  
Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action  
5th Floor Fitzwilliam House  
Skimped Hill Lane  
Bracknell, Berkshire  
RG12 1BQ  
Tel: 01344 383 517

