

Wirral Carers Newsletter

Autumn 2009

Hi, Everyone welcome to the autumn edition of the Carers Newsletter. We, at the Carers Team, have been working hard to bring you some exciting activities to keep us all motivated in the coming winter months. We will be having Tai Chi and Yoga, the launch of the Wirral Carers Forum and a basic counselling skills course.

On further pages, you will find some photos of what happened in National Carers Week and details about the seasonal flu jab. We will, as usual, provide you with some other useful information and advice.

We would also like to remind everyone of the Carers Helpline number **0151 670 0777**. We are open Monday to Friday, 9am until 4.30pm. You will be able to speak to someone who let you take your time to talk and will try to help you with information, signposting and advice and guidance.

Great News – launch of the Wirral Carers Forum

Carers are experts in knowing what are the needs of the person for whom they care. When somebody becomes a carer, **they** have to find out about services and support to help the people they care for and for themselves.

We would like to invite you to come together with other carers and have your say on current and future services which you feel have an impact on you and Wirral carers in the future.

The first meeting will be on **Wednesday 21st October 2009 10am at Wallasey Town Hall**. We would like to open up the discussion and establish the common areas, concerns and start to identify what you, the carers, consider to be the priorities.

The Forum is where the Carers 'Voice' can be heard, using plain language. Carers can help to influence developments and shape future support services in the Borough. It will offer

an opportunity for you to ask about decisions that have been made. It will also give service development managers an opportunity to listen to your experiences and views.

Don't worry if you have never participated in a forum before. There will be plenty of other people just like you. The forum will be facilitated by the Carers Team at WIRED and supported by the Department of Adult Social Services.

Refreshments will be available. Please call the Carers Helpline on 670 0777 or email carers.support@wired.me.uk if you would like to attend or for further information. (Please let us know if you would like to attend but have a problem with transport or care support).

'Please note the first meeting will be to establish carer membership'.

We are re-building the Carers website www.wirralcarers.co.uk. We are hoping to make it easier to navigate and contain relevant information to carers. We would like to have it ready by Carers Rights Day in December. Would you like to be part of the group that decides what the contents are and how it will look? If you would and you could spare a couple of hours a month for approximately 3 months, then please give me a call, Jacqui Canning 670 1500 and I will give you more information.

What's coming up

As part of our Carers Health and Well being programme, we would like to invite you to join us for some gentle and stress relieving exercise in the form of Yoga (Chi -Gung) and Tai Chi (Chi-Kung). You don't have to be an expert (we're not!!!) just come along to either or both classes and enjoy some stress relief and good company...you may enjoy it more than you think! These classes are a follow-on to the Carers Distress to De-stress programme which many of you attended.

We will provide the mats and refreshments. You just bring yourself and wear some loose clothing.

Yoga & Chi -Gung



These classes provide a chance for you to relax and will give you tools to help you in your daily life to deal with stress. Participants

of these Yoga & Chi Gung classes often report feelings of stillness of being, calming of the mind, soothing of emotions and an increase in strength and flexibility. This class often leaves people with a feeling of happiness, contentment and calmness that lasts for up to a week for some. Many use these classes as a chance for 'me time', a one hour window for letting go of the pressures of life and centering the mind and body. The classes will consist of very gentle beginners Yoga postures and gentle flowing Chi Gung movements and is open to any age.

The classes will be delivered by Graeme Waterfield and held at St Saviours Church Hall, Bidston Road, Oxton (next to the Caernarvon Castle pub) every Wednesday starting 7th October 10.30 until 11.30am for 10 weeks

Tai- Chi Chi-Kung



A simplified version of 'tai-chi style' exercise – but easier to learn as each of the 18 exercises is done separately.

Therefore, this system of low-impact exercise is more accurately described as 'Chi-Kung' – which translates as 'breath or energy skill'. Simply put – they are gentle exercises suitable for all – that gently stretch, loosen and mobilise all the muscles and joints of the body, thereby promoting well-being and vitality!

These classes will be delivered by Mike Grant and held at Rock Ferry Library, 259 Old Chester Road, Rock Ferry, every Friday starting 2nd October 10am until 11.30am for 10 weeks

Please call the Carers Helpline to reserve your place 670 0777 or for further information about any of the activities listed (to avoid disappointment, please book early).

Would you like to learn some valuable skills?

**Do you have an interest in counselling?
Would you like an opportunity to expand your confidence?**



If you have answered yes to any of these questions, then you may be interested in attending a free training course.

The Carers Team at Wired and CTPDC Counselling Training Ltd in Liverpool are delivering a free basic Introduction to Counselling Skills. The training will run for 10 weeks consecutively on Thursdays from the 8th October 1-4pm. The course will be held at CTPDC offices in Liverpool. If you would like further information or to book a place, please call the Carers Helpline on 0151 670 0777.

Carers Week 2009 was quite an eventful time for us. Let us tell you about some of the activities that happened.....



We had a Carers Art Exhibition which kicked off the activities across the Wirral to mark National Carers Week and was open to the public. The exhibition was held at the

Birkenhead Park Pavilion and was viewed by over 100 people. We had a formal opening of the exhibition on Monday 8th June which was conducted by John Gorman - Director of Wirral Arts Academy. Guest speakers were John Webb - Director of Adult Social Services, Frances Street- Chair of Wirral NHS and Linda Roberts-CEO of WIRED.

All the speakers made reference to how important carers are in our society and paid tribute to the carers who designed and crafted the art on display.



During the exhibition, we asked visitors to select their favourite 12 pieces which described what being a carer was to them using art as the medium. We received 84 nomination forms. The now top 12 pieces will feature in a Carers Calendar for 2010



Working in partnership with the Wirral Globe, Roz Tranfield Beauty for Women and Men and Crossroads, we asked carers to send to us, in no more than 10 words, what caring means to them.

We received 18 entries. 'To love is to care...to care is to love' was the winner by Bev Bray, a parent carer from Moreton

Promoted in the May edition of the Carers Newsletter, we gave carers the chance to attend a Pamper Day. We were inundated by bookings and all slots were full within 2 days!! Over 20 carers benefited from a lovely day. We will be hopefully having this day again next year as asked by you all.

The Carers who enjoyed the Pamper Day told us how wonderful it was that we were doing something like this just for them and it made them feel so special.



To acknowledge the theme for National Carers Week 2009 which was 'Carers...the UK's Secret Service', the carers team coordinated a raffle for a 'Quantum of Chocolate' made especially by Sarjeants confectionery and the special edition DVD 'Quantum of Solace', signed by Daniel Craig were raffled and the winning ticket was drawn by a member of the carers team dressing up as James Bond and arriving at the confectionery shop to an audience of 15 people including carers, with a dramatic entrance in a chauffeur driven car. Nearly £1000 was raised. £150 was donated to Hoylake Cottage Hospital and the remainder of the funds will go towards developing a Carers Calendar for 2010



The Seasonal Flu Vaccine

Unlike pandemic flu, you can be vaccinated to protect yourself from suffering from seasonal flu.

Who should get vaccinated?

Each autumn, from September, the Health Service provides a free flu vaccine for the over 65s and everyone, including children over six months of age, in the following clinical risk groups:

- serious heart disease
- serious lung disease, like emphysema, bronchitis, cystic fibrosis or asthma
- serious kidney or liver disease
- a long-term health problem, like diabetes
- a weakened immune system - e.g. from chemotherapy, radiotherapy or steroid treatment or HIV/Aids

As the flu virus changes each year, the flu vaccine needs to match the latest version of the virus.

This means that people need to have the jab every year.

Recognising flu symptoms

If you've got flu, you're likely to develop the following symptoms:

- a sudden fever, with a high temperature (generally above 38°C/100°F)
- a chill
- a severe headache
- muscle aches and pains
- a sense of feeling weak and tired
- a dry cough
- a sore throat

If you are the main Carer for an older person or someone with a disability or long term health condition/chronic illness, then you should ask your GP whether you should be vaccinated, so that you can continue to look after them.

Carer Representative wanted....

NHS Wirral Patient and Public Involvement Committee are looking for a carer to represent carers interests at the committee meetings. You will have the chance to put forward the views

of carers gathered at the Wirral Carers Forum on developments within NHS Wirral that have an impact on the public. If you are interested, have some spare time every couple of months and would like more information about support etc, please call Jacqui Canning on the Carers Helpline 0151 670 0777.

Future things that may interest you...

- Carers Rights Day is Friday 4th December 2009
- Moving and Handling Course for Carers
- Carers 'drop in' sessions in Birkenhead and Wallasey
- The Care Quality Commission have asked DASS to survey the views of carers about support and services, November - February

For more information about the above and to find out what's happening locally on Carers Rights Day, call the Carers Helpline end of October 2009 – 0151 670 0777

Care Services Design and Viability Study

Over the past six months, Wirral's Department of Adult Social Services has been looking in detail at those Care Services provided directly by the Department, and specifically whether they are sustainable in their current form to meet the Personalisation agenda.

This research has now been completed and was presented to Cabinet on July 23rd, together with plans for wider consultation.

This consultation exercise will be carried out with all interested parties about the options and proposals contained within the strategy, and is taking place between August 10th and October 31st.

A series of staff briefings have been held over the last three weeks which gave the opportunity to explain this study in more detail and gave staff a chance to ask questions.

A further briefing has been arranged for all stakeholders on **Thursday 10th September at 2:00pm, Civic Hall, Wallasey Town Hall.** To reserve a place at

this briefing, please contact Donna Kilby on **0151 666 4866**

To access a copy of the consultation document, please visit

www.wirral.gov.uk/designandviability **or this can be accessed in easy read on**

http://www.wirral.gov.uk/LGCL/100010/Options_For_Change_-_Easy_Read.doc . **If you do not have access to the internet, please call 0151 666 4787 and we will arrange for the document to be sent to you.**

It is vital to the consultation process that as many people as possible contribute, so that we are able to gauge a true reflection of people's views on these matters. To that end, we will also be organising a series of focus groups with people who use these services. Dates of these groups are to be confirmed soon.

Until the consultation has been completed and considered by Cabinet, no decisions will be made about the future of any services, other than those which are part of the day-to-day business.

If you visit www.wirralcarers.co.uk and have any ideas or feedback, please contact us.

We do appreciate hearing from you. The views and suggestions in this newsletter are those of individual contributors and not necessarily supported by Wired. Wired cannot accept responsibility for goods and services mentioned in this newsletter.