



Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

October 2015

Welcome to our October Newsletter which I'm writing on the TGV train, travelling home via Paris, at the end of my holiday. I can't see much of the beautiful scenery because I'm on the sunny side of the train and SNCF don't clean their windows very well so I thought I might as well get started! Being on holiday again has been a bitter-sweet experience; it's a way of moving on but brings back so many memories. On my travels I have met a number of women in a similar situation to myself who all promise me that, while things will never be the same again, life will settle down. Please remember that in addition to those currently caring at home, we support former carers, as well as those whose loved one is now in residential care and pass the word on to anyone you know in this position.

'Passing the word on' is, of course, one of the best ways of advertising and our members are good at this. We benefit from being a small, friendly group and it's important we let others know how we can help; 'word of mouth' is the most effective way of doing this.

Last month we held an extra meeting requested by Claire Hall, the commissioner for carer support services in the county, to seek our views on what carers want from such services. Those present spoke freely about their needs and I left the meeting feeling that we had been listened to well and Claire has promised to keep us updated with progress.

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Carers4Carers' monthly meetings take place on the **fourth** Friday of the month at the Kineton Village Hall, Mill Street, Kineton, CV35 OLB between 10.30 and 12 noon. We start with time for coffee and chat and then, if we have a speaker or workshop this will begin at about 11 o'clock. Come when you can and stay for as long as you are able.

Friday 23rd October— There will be no speaker this month but we will have two informal visitors. Philip Maundrill, the manager of our local Home Instead Senior Care, will be coming to say 'hello' - and bringing birthday cake! Also joining us will

be Julia Everitt, a research assistant from the team working on the e-Treasure Chest project who would like to learn carers' thoughts on the project. There is further information about the project overleaf. Additionally there will be time for relaxation, talking and Anita's lovely massages

Friday 27th November—Steven Watkins from Warwickshire Welfare Rights Advice Service will talk about benefits that apply to both carers and cared-for. This will also be our third birthday, so there will be CAKE!

Friday 11th December— seasonal meeting with refreshments, music and relaxation.

Carers4Carers is one of a network of Omega Care for Life Meeting Point Support Groups

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An excerpt from a document describing the e-Treasure Chest Project produced by the research team

Despite the huge efforts from charities supporting the older population, many elderly informal caregivers say that they lack information, self-confidence and need extra support. Uncertainty and lack of knowledge may lead to deterioration in health, frequent GP visits and avoidable A&E attendances and hospital admissions. It may also result in carers becoming worn out and unable to cope.

A recent study found that nearly 65% of elderly care givers had health problems or a disability of their own. Only half of these felt confident lifting the person they care for.

According to Carers UK, carers' top worries include emotional strain and 'not knowing how'. At Warwick Medical School, Prof Jeremy Dale (Professor of Primary Care) and his team supported by South Warwickshire CCG, are working to develop a straightforward means of helping older people and their caregivers address this via a new online website. The number of people over 65 years old accessing the internet and using tablet computers is increasing rapidly, and we believe that an easy-access, interactive computer programme could be hugely beneficial for older patients and their informal carers.

Our idea is an 'e-treasure chest' that will be an online package containing resources adaptable to the needs of individual elderly carers and those that they care for. Topics that are of immediate relevance or interest will be available through a straightforward menu as well as links to local and national NHS and charity resources.

The needs that will be addressed are:

- ways of recognising early warning signs of deteriorating health, and advice on how to respond
- ways of gaining greater home support for the carer
- means to support the independence for the patient and the carer

This should help older patients and their caregivers:

- increase independence and confidence within the home
- improve communication between health and social care providers
- become more skilled in the carer role
- reduce stress and isolation
- reduce avoidable demands on the NHS

Carers Conference—3rd November

The aim of this conference being held in Coventry is to improve support across the health and social care system by looking at ways to reach out to carers and make sure they have access to the help they need at the right time and right place.

A flyer is attached to this newsletter giving details of the venue and how to book if you are interested.



Warwickshire
County Council

Carers4Carers is pleased to acknowledge

grant funding from a number of sources including from our County Councillor and Kineton Parish Council.