

CAREERS NEWS

Informing carers in Croydon

May/June 2010

Carers Week 2010 - A Life of My Own



feel taken for granted and this is a whole day of trying to show them how much they are appreciated.

Just some of the brilliant activities available on the day will be free complimentary therapy taster sessions (such as massage, manicure, beauty makeover, men's grooming, hair styling and lots more), painting and singing workshops, and a chance to try yoga and tai chi. Refreshments and lunch will also be provided free of charge and there will be a quiet area for those who want the opportunity to chat to other carers and just enjoy chilling out. Information and advice on caring will be available from organisations such as the Carers' Information Service, Rethink and the Alzheimer's Society throughout the day.

Places for this event must be booked in advance. Crèche facilities will be available on the day (booking essential) and we may be able to fund alternative care to enable you to attend. For more information about Look Good, Feel Good, or to book your place, call the Carers' Information Service on 020 8649 9339.

Look Good, Feel Good

To celebrate Carers Week 2010 Croydon is having a fabulous free day of pampering and activities for carers on Thursday 17 June, 10 am – 4 pm, at Folly's End Community Centre, 5-9 Surrey Street, Croydon CR0 1RG.

The day is organised and funded by Croydon Council, NHS Croydon and local voluntary organisations as a way of saying thank you to carers for the hugely important contribution they make to society and to the life of the person they care for. All too often carers can



Carers Week Survey

This year's survey focuses on what carers miss out on that most people in society take for granted, what support is crucial for carers, and what needs to be changed. You can complete the survey online at www.carersweek.org/carers, where you can also find the breakdown of the 2009 survey results.

We Have a New Website

We now have a new website, www.carersinfo.org.uk, which features all our publications, including a new, easier to access version of our *How To...A Guide for Carers in Croydon*. Our new website is full of information that carers need to know to get the best for themselves and the person they care for. Do you want to know how to get an assessment from social services? Would you like sources of possible funding to buy an essential piece of equipment? Do you want to be kept up to date with local events, and be informed about national news stories affecting carers? Do you want to have access to the most up to date versions of all our publications? Then our website is the place to go, so visit www.carersinfo.org.uk today.

Please feel free to contact us with any feedback you may have on any aspect of the website, including accessibility, as we are keen to ensure that our website is of benefit to the greatest number of people possible. This change of web address means that our email addresses have also changed (although you can still reach us on the old addresses) and are now as follows:

Manager

helenthompson@carersinfo.org.uk

Information Officer

jennyjones@carersinfo.org.uk

Volunteer and Training Coordinator

ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk

Advice Worker

angelawebb@carersinfo.org.uk

Young Carers Competition



Zoom! 2010 is a photography competition for young carers aged 18 and under. Young carers are invited to take a photo illustrating any aspect of their life, not just their caring role, and send it (along with an application form) to Zoom!, Carers Week, 20 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4LX or email the photo and form to zoom@carersweek.org. For more information and to download an application form visit www.carersweek.org/carers or call the Carers Week hotline on 0845 241 2582. Entries must be received by Monday 31 May 2010.

Make the Most of Spring/Summer 2010



Spring has arrived and we can but hope summer is on the way, so here are some ideas to help you and the person you care for make the most the great British weather.

Getting There

Stations Made Easy is designed to help passengers with disabilities plan their journeys and feel more confident about travelling by rail. The website includes step-by-step, photo-by-photo directories of most stations so people can make fully informed decisions about whether the journey is possible for them.

To access Stations Made Easy go to www.nationalrail.co.uk, scroll down to Plan Your Journey and click on Stations and Destinations, type in the name of the station you want to find out more about and click on Search, click on the Stations Made Easy (show route) button. If you don't have access to the internet you can call National Rail Enquiries on 08457 48 49 50 or 020 7068 0500.

The **Blue Badge Sat Nav** is available from a range of online and high street suppliers and provides all the usual benefits of a satellite navigation system. In addition it provides information on a range of things that a driver or passenger with limited mobility would find helpful such as the location of disabled parking bays, accessible carparks and other points of interest including accessible toilets, beaches and accommodation.

Queen Elizabeth's Foundation in Carshalton has some wheelchair accessible vehicles which are available for hire primarily to wheelchair users who have an immediate, but short to mid-term, need of such transport, for example people with motor neurone disease. Being able to take the person you care for out and about without having to transfer them in and out of their wheelchair can make a day trip much less effort and much more fun. For more information contact Mobility Services at the Foundation on 020 8770 1151 or email mobility@qef.org.uk.

Places to Go

The **National Trust** maintains over 350 historic houses, gardens and ancient monuments and gives free entry to all its properties to the necessary companion, or carer of a visitor who has a disability. The person with the disability still has to pay the normal membership or admission fee. To save having to request a carer's free entry an Admit One card can be issued (to National Trust members only). This card is made out in the name of the person with the disability, so they do not always have to take the same carer.

The National Trust also produces an *Access Guide* which gives detailed access information for each property - from the evenness of the floors to whether the gardens are especially scented. For further details, or to request an Admit One card or *Access Guide*, call 01793 817634 or visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

English Heritage manages over 400 historic properties and also has an *Access Guide* to their properties and allows 'assisting companions' in free of charge; call 0800 015 0516 or visit www.english-heritage.org.uk for more information.

Croydon Carers Centre (020 8688 7219) runs a range of day trips for carers every month (usually on Wednesdays). Some of the destinations over spring/summer 2010 include Hampton Court, Hastings, Chartwell and Brighton. There is a cost for these trips, but they are subsidised by funding from Croydon Council. Carers are welcome to bring the person they care for with them if they wish.

Croydon Accessible Transport (CAT) also runs trips for their members (it is free to join for individuals until the end of 2010, group membership costs £30 per year). Some forthcoming trips include Eastbourne, Rye and Bateman's House and Gardens (home of Rudyard Kipling). There is a cost for these trips, and they are not suitable for wheelchair users unless they can transfer. CAT also has a wheelchair accessible vehicle (Renault Kangoo) for hire. The Kangoo can accommodate a wheelchair user (without them needing to transfer), driver, and two passengers. For further information and costs on trips or hiring the Kangoo call CAT on 020 8683 1800.

Thinking of Going on Holiday?

Crossroads Care Croydon Carers Support Service (020 8667 9893, www.croydoncrossroads.org.uk) runs a

holiday grant scheme for carers that can offer financial support towards a holiday for a carer who meets the criteria. We, the **Carers' Information Service**, produce a factsheet called *Holidays* that lists other potential sources of funding for a holiday, as well as organisations that can advise on everything from accessible holidays to tips on taking medication abroad. We also run a grant scheme for carers that can offer up to £150 towards making a carer's wish come true. This does not include holidays, but could go towards an experience or day trip as part of a holiday.

People with a **Disabled Persons Railcard** can receive up to 35% off a weekend stay at over 400 participating Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn and Express by Holiday Inn hotels across the UK, Europe and Middle East. This offer is subject to availability and applies to participating hotels only. You can book online at www.ichotelsgroup.com or by phoning 0845 124 9973. For more information call the Central Reservations Office, InterContinental Hotels Group, on 0870 400 9097.

The **OpenBritain Guide 2010** reviews over 1000 bed and breakfasts, self-catering properties and caravan parks throughout England, Scotland and Wales; giving details of price, amenities and access features such as roll-in showers and hoists. The guide also provides information on how to get to your accommodation and what to see and do once you are there. The guide costs £9.99 (plus postage and packing) and can be ordered by calling 01603 813319 or from www.openbritain.net, where you can also do an online search for suitable accommodation and nearby attractions.



The **Summer Guide for Parent Carers** lists summer holiday activities in Croydon for children and young people with a disability. We aim to send a copy of this guide to every parent carer on our mailing list. If you are a parent carer and have not received your copy by mid-July then contact us and we will send you one either by post or email, or the guide can be downloaded from our website, www.carersinfo.org.uk.

Learn a New Skill While Having Fun - For Free



The Carers' Information Service holds free training sessions for carers; these sessions are very popular as they don't just provide a fantastic opportunity to learn a new skill (while enjoying a delicious free lunch), they are also a welcome opportunity to take a break from caring. Carers also get to meet new people and perhaps make contact with another carer in a similar situation. We may also be able to reimburse carers for the cost of alternative care, registered childcare and transport to enable you to attend without worrying about the person you look after or being out of pocket.

Here are some comments from carers who have attended past courses:

Multicultural Drumming Workshop,

Tuesday 13 July, 10 am – 3 pm

An opportunity to use sound to relax and recharge, and try out musical instruments from around the world.

Moving and Handling People,

Tuesday 10 August, 10 am – 4 pm

Learn how to move the person you care for without putting your own health in danger.

The Impact of Caring for a Disabled Child on Relationships,

Tuesday 14 September, 10 am - 3 pm

The Impact of Caring for an Adult Family Member on Relationships,

Tuesday 12 October, 10 am - 3 pm

Diabetes Awareness,

Tuesday 9 November, 10 am - 3 pm

A session for carers who have, or are caring for someone with, diabetes to find out more about living with diabetes, how best to look after yourself and how the health system should look after you.

"I think these courses are an excellent idea and invaluable to carers."

"A very enjoyable and positive day."

"Nice venue"

"Fantastic food."

"A very big thank you."

So join our growing group of satisfied customers and come to one of the sessions listed below.

For more information or to book a place on any of these courses contact Ruth Laws, Volunteer and Training Coordinator, on 020 8649 6280 or email ruthlaws@carerscontactline.co.uk.

Live Life Your Way

As mentioned in the January/February edition of *Carers News Croydon* is moving towards a new way of providing adult social care: Self Directed Support (SDS). SDS is more personal, flexible and creative than the current system and enables people to retain control over their lifestyle choices. From April 2010 SDS will be available to all people newly assessed as having eligible social care needs under Fair Access to Care, and to existing recipients at their review.

To help people through the SDS process the Croydon Independent Support Brokerage Service (CISBS) has been set up. CISBS is a partnership between Mind in Croydon, Age Concern (Croydon), Advocacy Partners and Disability Croydon. The four 'brokers' who make up the service aim to help people put together a support plan that will help them to get the most out of life. The service provided by CISBS is free of charge and available to anyone with social care needs living in Croydon – including self-funders.

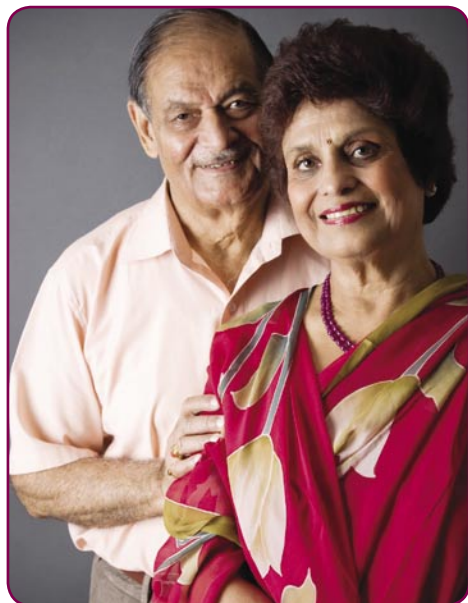
Brokers will meet with service users to discuss and research what care, support or equipment is needed to ensure they can live their lives as they wish, formulate this into a support plan and help to draw up a budget in order to get the plan agreed by Croydon Social Services. Brokers can also accompany their clients to places where they have expressed an interest in trying out new activities, education, or employment to further explore how well they meet their assessed needs.

Detailed information (and photos) about each broker is available on their website, and people can choose which broker they would like to work with, you do not automatically need to have the broker from Mind in Croydon just because you or the person you care for has a mental health condition.

If you would like more information on how CISBS could help you, or the person you care for, call 020 8253 8210 or visit www.cisbs.org.uk.

Did you know that *Carers News* is also available by email? If you have an email account please consider signing up to receive *Carers News* by email instead of post. This will mean that you will get to read *Carers News* before most people, save us money (and help the environment) and enable us to continue to support the carers of Croydon without having to worry about our enormous postal budget!

Local Information and Events



London Zoo is having a Special Children's Day for children and young people with special needs and their families on Saturday 12 June. There will be greatly reduced admission prices, as well as discount vouchers for retail outlets and the main cafeteria. For more information and a booking form contact Steve Marriott on 020 7449 6551 or email steve.marriott@zsl.org. For more information about London Zoo in general visit www.zsl.org.

Croydon Young Stroke Group is having a talk on Sign Language on Tuesday 20 July, 10.30 am – 12.30 pm, at Allington Court, Chart Close, Addiscombe CR0 7YF. On Tuesday 3 August the group is having a summer lunch at Coombe Lodge. Contact Sue Myers (020 8660 4270, susan.myers@blueyonder.co.uk) for more information or if you are interested in attending.

South London and Maudsley NHS Trust is holding a Family and Carers' Listening Day on Friday 25 June, 9.30 am – 4.30 pm, at Prospero House, 241 Borough High Street, SE1 1GA. The day is an opportunity to hear about any progress the trust has made since 2009 and to help it plan for the future by influencing its strategy. For more information or to register for the event contact Gill Charman (020 3228 2602, gill.charman@slam.nhs.uk).

Croydon Community Drug Agency offers non-judgemental support to those who want to address their drug use. It also runs a Family Matters group for family members, friends and carers of individuals affected by substance misuse who want to meet with others in a similar situation for information, advice and support. Family Matters meets every Saturday, 10.30 am, at Croydon Community Drug Agency, 100 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RD. For more information about the group or to find out more about the other services available call 020 8686 7500.

The Asian Resource Centre of Croydon (020 8684 3784, www.arcltd.com) in partnership with Croydon Social Services is providing free respite care for those caring for an elderly family member or friend who is of South Asian background. Contact the Centre for more information and to find out if you are eligible for a break.

Treetops Children's Centre is moving from its home of 13 years in Coombe Road to new premises in London Road, Thornton Heath. The new centre will have additional features such as a sensory soft play area, garden and a fully-equipped kitchen, and will be able to take up to 15 children, aged 6-12, with a range of disabilities and special needs. Croydon Mencap hopes that the centre will be open by late spring/early summer, and is currently compiling a waiting list of any interested families who will be contacted in due course. To put your child's name on the waiting list, or for more information, contact Croydon Mencap (020 8662 9201, croydonmencap@btconnect.com) or Treetops (020 8688 3263, treetopsistops@hotmail.co.uk).

There will be no Carers News over the summer, the next edition should be with you by mid-September. However we will continue to produce our monthly e-bulletin, What's New for Carers? which will keep carers up to date with all local and national news and events. If you would like to subscribe to What's New for Carers? email jenny_jones@carerscontactline.co.uk. The News and Events pages on our new website, www.carersinfo.org.uk, will also be great sources of information over the next few months (and beyond of course).

National Information

Home Access is a government grant-giving scheme to help low-income families who meet certain criteria to purchase a computer and/or a minimum of one year's internet access for their home. To be eligible for the scheme families must be in receipt of certain income-related benefits, have a child who is in school years 3-9 at a state-maintained school in England, and not have a computer or internet access at home already. Assistive technology packages are also available to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the support they need to access the internet. For more information on Home Access and to see if you are eligible call the helpline on 0333 200 1004 or visit www.homeaccess.org.uk.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) website has an enormous amount of information that is relevant to carers. For example updated guidance and information on Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) has just been added to the Resources and Publications section. FACS is a system for deciding how much support people with social care needs can expect. FACS applies to all local authorities in England and aims to ensure care managers make fair and consistent decisions about the level of support to offer, and whether the local council should pay for this. For more information on FACS and many other issues affecting carers and people with disabilities visit www.scie.org.uk.

Carers UK has updated several of their factsheets: *Coming out of hospital* (March 2010), *Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance* (April 2010) and *Carer's Allowance and the carer premium/addition* (February 2010). Carers can request one copy of each of these factsheets and other Carers UK publications (*Caring about your pension, Looking after someone and When caring comes to an end*) free of charge by calling 0845 241 0963 or visiting www.carersuk.org.

Carers' Information Service
Courtyard House, 1d Church Road, Croydon CR0 1SG
020 8649 9339 (option 1)
020 8686 3472 (Fax)
info@carersinfo.org.uk
www.carersinfo.org.uk

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