

What's New for Carers?



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Events at the Carers Support Centre

For a full list of April's events and activities at the Carers Support Centre visit

www.carersinfo.org.uk

What's On - April 2014	
<p>Carers Café Monday 10th, 10.30am - 12.30pm A time to relax, have a drink and enjoy some refreshments. No need to book, just drop in.</p> <p>Free Yoga for Carers Monday, 10th, 10.30 - 11.30am All equipment provided, and yoga mats provided. Contact Centre 020 8603 5608 and leave a message to book an appointment.</p> <p>IT Buddy Wednesday, 16th - 12 noon Free one-to-one IT guidance. Contact: Ruth and Paul 020 8603 5608, carersinfo@carersinfo.org.uk to book.</p> <p>Debt Advice Surgery Provided by Carers' Creditworthiness Service Friday 8 April, 10am - 1pm Advice on all aspects of debt. Call 020 8603 5608 and leave a message to book an appointment.</p> <p>Benefit Advice Surgery Provided by the Welfare Rights Team Wednesday 9 and 22 April, 1 - 4pm Monthly advice and benefit support. Call 020 8603 5608 and leave a message to book an appointment.</p>	<p>Mental Health Carers Advice Surgery Provided by Mind in Croydon Thursday 3 and 17 April, 10am - 1pm Call 020 8603 5608 and leave a message to book an appointment.</p> <p>Special Educational Needs (SEN) Drop-In Provided by Family Links Croydon Parent Partnership Service Friday 11 April, 10am - 12 noon No need to book, just drop in.</p> <p>Rushlink MME Mental Health Carers Support Group Tuesday 1 April, 6.30 - 8.30pm Call Pauline 020 8603 5608 to book.</p> <p>Parkinson's Society Carers Support Group Monday 14 April, 10 - 11.30am Call Marylene 020 8603 5608 to book.</p> <p>National Asthma Society Parents Support Group Tuesday 22 April, 10am - 12 noon No need to book, just turn up.</p> <p>Working Carers Support Group Wednesday 26 April, 6.30 - 8pm Contact Emma 020 8603 5608, emma@carersinfo.org.uk to book.</p>

Croydon POP Service

The Croydon POP Service is a mobile information service for any adult living in Croydon.

Visit

www.croydonpop.org.uk for the April timetable and find out when the POP Bus will be near you.



Course Cancelled

The Carers' Information Service is sorry to announce that the scheduled course, *Protect yourself from doorstep crime, fraud and internet scams* has had to be cancelled.

- **Online Counselling**
- **New NHS Charges**
- **CAB Opening Hours**
- **State of Caring Survey**
- **Alternative Formats at the DWP**



Our apologies for any disappointment this may cause.

As yet we are not sure if the course will be rescheduled, but if it is it will be advertised in the e-bulletin and our newsletter, *Carers News*.

Free First Aid Course for Young Carers

Young carers aged 16+ are invited to take part in a free first aid course on Tuesday 8 April, 10am - 3pm, at the Carers Support Centre.

For more information or to book a place call 020 8649 9339, option 2 or email

youngcarers@offtherecordcroydon.org.



Carers Befriending

Croydon Neighbourhood Care runs a carers telephone befriending service for carers who may be experiencing loneliness, isolation, or managing with little support from family or friends.



**Croydon
Neighbourhood
Care**

The service provides a weekly opportunity to connect and chat with a telephone befriender at a time that suits the carer.

On the second Tuesday of the month carers and befrienders meet to enjoy a relaxation session and afternoon tea. The next meeting will be on Tuesday 8 April, 2 - 4pm, at the Carers Support Centre.

For more information about the befriending service contact Donna Richmond on 020 8663 5630 or email donna@cnca.org.uk.

Safeguarding for Carers

There will be a talk on *Safeguarding for Carers* at Mind in Croydon, Fairfield House, 10 Altyre Road, Croydon CR0 5LA on Tuesday 8 April, 6 - 8pm. The speaker will be Vincent Docherty, Safeguarding Adults Coordinator for Croydon.



For more information or to book a place contact Angela Christinis on 020 8688 1210 or email angela@mindincroydon.org.uk.

Housing Services Forum

Are you a council tenant or leaseholder? Would you like an opportunity to speak with the people who provide your housing services.

The Housing Services Forum will be meeting on Wednesday 9 April, 7 - 9pm, at Community Space, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA.



Join other Croydon residents to speak to senior council officers about the housing services you receive from the council.

At this meeting you will find out more about:

- Service standards for Veolia and the caretaking service.
- Maintenance of highways and footpaths on housing land.

You will also be able to meet the new repairs contactor (Axis Europe).

A drop-in session will take place before the meeting (6 - 7pm) where you will be able to speak informally to officers from the housing services about issues relating to you or your property including caretaking, grounds maintenance, neighbourhood wardens, tenancy, leaseholder services, planned maintenance and responsive repairs.

For more information visit www.croydon.gov.uk/hsf, or contact the resident involvement team on 020 8726 6100 or email hsg-residentparticipation@croydon.gov.uk.

Free Food Tasting

Apetito provides meals for care homes, local authorities and hospitals. In Croydon, Apetito is contracted to deliver the Meals on Wheels service. Through its sister company, Wiltshire Farm Foods, Apetito also delivers meals to the public.



Apetito/Wiltshire Farm Foods will be coming to the Carers Café on Thursday 1 May, 11am - 12.30pm, and offering carers the opportunity to try some of their food and find out more about their services.

No need to book, just drop in to the Carers Café.

Managing Difficult Behaviour

The Carers' Information Service is running a training and information session for carers of a child with special needs, who would like support managing their child's difficult behaviour.



The training will be held on Thursday 8 May, 10am - 1pm, at the Carers Support Centre.

For more information or to book a place contact Ruth Laws (020 8649 6280, ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk).

First Aid for Parent Carers

The Carers' Information Service is offering carers of a child with a special need or disability the chance to attend a free first aid training day.



The training day will be held on Tuesday 13 May, 10am - 3pm, at the Carers Support Centre.

For more information or to book a place contact Ruth Laws (020 8649 6280, ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk).

Caring for Someone with Cancer

If you live in Croydon and are caring for someone with cancer you might want to join us at the Carers Support Centre on Thursday 22 May, 10am - 12 noon, for an information session led by Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service.



For more information or to book a place contact Ruth Laws (020 8649 6280, ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk).

Young Carers and Relationships

Young carers aged 16+ are invited to a training and information session looking at the impact being a young carer can have on relationships.

The session will be held on Thursday 29 May, 10am - 1pm, at the Carers

Support Centre.

For more information or to book a place call 020 8649 9339, option 2 or email youngcarers@offtherecordcroydon.org.

Increase in Earnings Limit

Following the increase in the minimum wage in October 2013 we reported that some carers were no longer entitled to Carer's Allowance as they would now earn over the earnings limit of £100 a week (for 16 hours a week paid at the minimum wage).



In the April 2014 Budget the earnings limit was raised to £102 to allow carers in this situation to regain their entitlement to Carer's Allowance.

This is a recurring problem - see www.carers.org for more details.

Pensions and Social Care

Another announcement in the 2014 Budget was that people would be given more flexibility when deciding how to access their defined contribution pension savings. For example people can now choose to take their pension savings as a lump sum, draw them down over time, or buy an annuity.



However, those who do choose to withdraw a lump sum may find themselves having to pay for their social care later in life, as it will be included in a financial assessment for care needs.

Some charities, including Age UK and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, have expressed concerns that pensioners without large assets, who choose to cash in a pension, may then have to pay care fees they would otherwise not have had to pay.

For more information visit www.ageuk.org.uk.

Free Health Checks

A bus and tram poster campaign is reminding Croydon residents that they could be eligible for a free NHS health check.

Anybody aged between 40 and 74 and registered with a GP in the borough, can get checked to help prevent heart disease, a stroke, diabetes, kidney disease and certain types of dementia later on in life.



The check-up usually takes 30 to 45 minutes and involves a few simple questions about lifestyle and medical history. Height, weight and blood pressure are measured, and a finger-prick blood test measures cholesterol. All results are given at the appointment.

Find out if you are eligible for a free NHS health check by visiting www.croydon.gov.uk/nhshealthchecks or emailing croccg.healthchecks@nhs.net.

Contact details of surgeries and pharmacies offering the checks can be viewed at www.croydon.gov.uk.

Share Your Story Around Crisis Care

Have you experienced a mental health crisis in the last two years?

Or have you cared for someone going through a crisis?



The Care Quality Commission (CQC) want to hear about your experiences of trying to get help, care or support from your local services.

Visit www.cqc.org.uk/mentalhealthcrisis by 30 April 2014 to complete a questionnaire and help the CQC to understand where crisis care works well and where it doesn't.

If you need a paper copy of the questionnaire please contact the CQC on enquiries@cqc.org.uk or phone 03000 61 61 61.

We often hear from carers that they have struggled to access support for someone experiencing a mental health crisis - this is an opportunity to share those experiences. If enough people from Croydon respond it might help change things for the better.

Terminal Illness and Claiming PIP

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has improved the process of claiming Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for people who are terminally ill, by introducing a dedicated phone service.



Department for Work & Pensions

Claimants still need to call the usual PIP claims number – 0800 917 2222 – but if they select option one, to make a new claim, and then option three, to claim under the Special Rules for people who are terminally ill, their call will be routed to a dedicated team so they can complete the claim process.

Online Counselling

Off the Record offers free, online counselling for young people aged 14-25 who live, study or work in Croydon.

The project is called Skyline and the website describes it as follows:

TALK TO US

**OFF
THE RECORD**

"Off the Record provides face to face counselling for young people in Croydon, helping you to help you find your own unique way through whatever difficulties you're facing by talking to a counsellor in a non-judgmental environment. However, SkyLine isn't like our other counselling services because everything happens online. That means you can talk to us online without having to make an appointment or come in for a session. We understand that when you need help, it can be hard to wait and with online counselling you can get things off your chest in your own time, on your own terms. You simply need to register, tell us a little bit about what's going on from you and then a trained counsellor will get back to you within 72 hours."

For more information visit <http://skyline.offtherecordcroydon.org>.

New NHS Charges



NHS prescription charges in England will increase by 20 pence from £7.85 to £8.05 for each quantity of a drug or appliance from 1 April 2014.

It is also intended that the single charge will increase by 20 pence to £8.25

in the following year.

However, for the next two years the cost of a prescription prepayment certificate (PPC) will remain at £29.10 for a 3 month certificate. The cost of the annual certificate will remain at £104.

For more information on NHS charges visit

www.gov.uk/government/news/nhs-charges-from-april-2014.

CAB Opening Hours

The Croydon Citizens Advice Bureau's Portland Road (South Norwood) office is now open to the public on Mondays, as well as Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

For more information on CAB services and opening times visit www.croydoncab.org.uk.



State of Caring Survey

Carers UK has launched its State of Caring survey 2014. This year's survey focuses on how caring affects your finances, health and ability to live your own life.

CARERS UK
the voice of carers

By sharing your views and experiences, you can help Carers UK expose how hard it can be to care and what needs to change to make carers' lives better.

To take part in the survey go to www.carersuk.org

Alternative Formats at the DWP

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) issues millions of written communications to claimants and customers each year. Most of this information is provided in standard publication formats (Internet and Print), however the DWP also has processes for arranging for information and leaflets to be provided in alternative formats such as Braille and Large Print.



Recent cases have highlighted to the DWP that despite these processes, they still get things wrong at times. Errors involving the provision of information in accessible formats can be upsetting and worrying for customers and there are costs attached to the DWP then having to put things right.

As a result of this the DWP is reviewing its procedures for providing information in alternative formats, and is asking any concerned organisations

and individuals to take part.

For more information visit www.disabilityrightsuk.

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