

November 2016
- January 2017



Carers News

Informing carers in Croydon

**Carers
Information
Service**

Missing out?

Know your rights this
Carers Rights Day

**25 November
10am - 4pm**



Many carers don't know what they should be getting and end up missing out. From benefits to Carer's Assessments, Carers Rights Day is your chance to find out what you are entitled to, so you can get the support you need.

To help carers find out more about their rights, we are giving away free information packs on Friday 25 November, 10am - 4pm at the Carers Support Centre. Your pack will include our updated *How To... A Guide for Carers in Croydon* factsheets, information about the centre and a copy of this year's Carers Rights Guide by Carers UK. You can also talk to one of our advice workers about your individual caring situation and find out what's on offer at the centre.

The Carers Support Centre is open to carers in Croydon Monday to Friday, 10am - 4pm. Why not drop in and see how we can help you?

Stay toasty this winter!



The Winter Fuel Payment helps older people born on or before 5 January 1953 (this date changes every year) with winter fuel bills. The amount you will be paid depends on your circumstances, and most payments are made automatically between November and December. New claims for 2016/17 must be made by 31 March 2017. Call the Winter Fuel Payment helpline on 03459 151 515 or visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment for details.

The Warm Home Discount Scheme also provides money off heating bills for older people on a low-income. To be eligible, your supplier must be part of the scheme, your name/partner's name must be on your energy bills and you must receive the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit. If you think you may be eligible and you do not receive a letter about the discount by late December, call 0345 603 9439.

Getting support over the Christmas period

The Carers Support Centre will close from 24 December 2016 and reopen on 3 January 2017. If you need support over the Christmas period, here are a list of useful numbers (call 999 in an emergency):

- Croydon Council 24-Hour Emergency Line - 020 8726 6000
- NHS Non-Emergency Care - 111
- Samaritans - 116 123
- South London and Maudsley Mental Health (SLaM) 24 Hour Support Line - 0800 731 2864



Planning for emergencies

When you are caring, having a plan for emergencies can help give you more peace of mind. Here are some things you can do to feel more prepared:

Carer's Assessment

You can raise any concerns about what would happen to the person you care for in an emergency during your Carer's Assessment. See our *Getting Support from Social Care* factsheet for details on Carer's Assessments. To request an assessment, contact Help for Carers on 020 8663 5664.

Carers emergency card

The Carers' Information Service produces an emergency card to show someone relies on you for care, along with who to contact in an emergency. Collect your card from the Carers Support Centre, 24 George Street, Croydon CR0 1PB or call 020 8649 9339, option 1.

Carers emergency plan

Carers UK, the national charity for carers, suggests that carers put together an emergency plan for themselves and the person they care for. The plan should include your details, details of the person you care for, who to contact in emergency and a list of any medication the person you care for is taking. Others involved in the person's care should be involved in the plan. For more information, visit Carers UK's website: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/practical-support/planning-for-emergencies

Croycare

Croycare provides up to two hours' replacement care for the person you support in an emergency. You will need a Croycare emergency alert card along with a registration number and an emergency contact number. Call 020 8654 7166 (CarelinePlus) or email careline@croydon.gov.uk to register.

Emergency contacts

Keep a list of emergency and urgent contact numbers in a place you can easily access e.g. stuck on your fridge. You can also put an ICE (in case of emergency) number in your phone and the phone of the person you care for. Add the details of the person you would like to be contacted in an emergency and save them under ICE.

Falls

If the person you care for has a fall and cannot get up again, even with your assistance, call 999 and make the person as comfortable as possible until help arrives. The Age UK Croydon Personal Safety Project aims to help older people who have fallen, or who are at risk of falling, in their own home. Call 020 8680 5450 or email personalsafetyproject@ageukcroydon.org.uk for more information.

Mental health emergency

If the person you care for is in touch with mental health services, they can contact the community mental health team and speak to their care coordinator. For urgent or out-of-hours help or advice, contact the SLaM 24-hour mental health support line on 0800 731 2864. If the person needs help immediately, go to your nearest hospital with an Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department, where the psychiatric liaison team can help you. If they may be at immediate risk of harming themselves or others, call 999.

Out-of-hours medical advice - NHS 111

In an emergency, always call 999. In a non-emergency but still urgent medical situation, call 111 for medical advice. The NHS 111 telephone service is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They can also provide details for out-of-hours dentists and pharmacies.

Telecare/Croydon Careline

Croydon Careline provides a range of telecare services, including:

- Careline button to alert a Careline operator if the person has a fall
- Fall detectors to reduce risk of falls
- Smoke, flood, gas and carbon monoxide detectors
- Automatically alerting a carer of a potential risk situation within the home

There is a one-off installation fee and a weekly or quarterly charge for this service. People who need support can also receive this service after a Needs Assessment by Croydon Adult Social Care and a financial assessment. To request telecare, contact Croydon Council Contact Centre (020 8726 6000) or call Careline directly (020 8654 7166, careline@croydon.gov.uk) for a demonstration.

Time off work in an emergency



Every employee has the right to take 'reasonable' time off work for an emergency that affects a dependant. A dependant includes a spouse, partner, parent, child or relative living with you. It may also include someone who relies on you for help in an emergency. The right to time off only applies in unexpected events that affect the dependant. Your employer is not obligated to pay you during your time off and the time off must be reasonable in the circumstances. Contact ACAS for more information (0300 123 1100, www.acas.org.uk).

Useful emergency contacts

- Croydon Council switchboard - 020 8726 6000
- Emergency services - 999
- Environment Agency Floodline - 0345 988 1188
- National Grid (gas emergency) - 0800 111 999
- NHS Non-Emergency Care - 111
- South London and Maudsley Mental Health 24-Hour Support Line - 0800 731 2864
- Sutton and East Surrey Water 24-hour Emergency Line - 01737 772 000
- Thames Water Leakline - 0800 714 614
- UK Power Cuts (power cut emergency) - 0800 316 3105

News and Views



Carers' visits to A&E are often preventable, according to Carers UK report

Four in ten unpaid carers would not have needed to take the person they care for to A&E if there had been better local support available, according to a Carers UK report. Visits to A&E are on the rise nationally, with over 500,000 more visits to A&E in the first quarter of 2016 than the same period in 2015. The report suggested that a lack of good community support is forcing carers to take the person they care for to already over-stretched A&E departments, putting pressure on health services.

As well as increasing A&E admissions, the report shows that an increasing number of people are being discharged from hospital before the right support is in place, leaving carers to pick up the pieces. Over half of carers said that the person they care for had been discharged from hospital too early, with 12% saying they had to be readmitted at a result.

If you are concerned that the person you care for is being discharged before the right support has been put in place, contact the Carers' Information Service on 020 8649 9339, option 1 or visit the Carers Support Centre. You can also read our factsheet *Hospital Services and Discharge* for more information.

Spotlight on... the benefits of massage for carers

Alison, our Administration and Facilities Officer, is a professional massage therapist. Here's what she has to say about the benefits of massage for carers:

"The many benefits of massage start with the simple but profound sensation of gentle touch. It is easy to forget how important touch can be to our general feeling of wellbeing! Various movements and pressures are applied to the upper body through the clothes while you sit in a comfortable chair and relax. Each treatment is tailored to the person receiving it, but a typical sequence would include the upper back, neck, shoulders and possibly the scalp.

Carers have reported the following benefits:

- alleviates stress
- releases muscle tension
- improves circulation
- relieves headaches
- creates a sense of wellbeing
- creates a relaxed state of mind

And finally, having a massage is one way of allowing yourself a short break from your caring role. Taking a little time for something you enjoy and to take care of yourself is well worth it."

Sessions are held monthly and need to be booked in advance. Look out for the next available dates in the New Year!



Latest from the Carers' Information Service

If Only I'd Known...: workshops for carers of someone with dementia

Caring for someone with dementia can feel overwhelming. To help carers feel more equipped, South London and Maudsley (SLaM) is running free workshops for carers of someone with dementia at the Carers Support Centre. Sessions provide practical advice and support to help you as a carer, covering a range of topics including: talking about dementia, physical health, emotional health, social care and looking after yourself.

Sessions will run weekly from Wednesday 2 November to Wednesday 14 December, 2pm - 4pm. The person you care for does not need to have a formal diagnosis for you to take part. To book your place on one, some or all of the sessions, email ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk or call 020 8649 6280.

Christmas craft and carols at the Carers Support Centre

Are you feeling Christmassy yet? To help you feel more festive, we have a range of Christmas-themed activities, including:

Christmas Carols at the Carers Support Centre

Thursday 22 December 11am

Join us for some wonderful Christmas carols sung by the Croydon Minster Singers. Just drop in and enjoy the singing!



Christmas Craft and Chatter

25 November and 16 December, 11am - 12.30pm

Why not make some winter-themed decorations or a homemade present for someone? There's no need to be an expert! Pens, paper and pictures are provided, but bring along any other craft materials you would like to use.

Gentlemen and Ladies' Christmas Lunch Club

Friday, 1pm - 2pm on: 9 December

Ladies Who Lunch and Gentlemen's Lunch Club join together for a well-deserved Christmas lunch. Booking essential - contact ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk or call 020 8649 6280.

Carers Support Group

We hope to run another carers support group in February 2017. If you are interested in finding out more about the group and what it involves, contact Ann Lee-Warren on annleewarren@carersinfo.org.uk or call 020 8649 6283.



What's On in Croydon



KIDS SEND Conference

KIDS is holding a conference for parents and carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and interested professionals on 16 November 9.20am - 5pm at Access Croydon Hall, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA. Talks will cover a range of hot topics including: *How parents can get involved in EHCP process?*, *Fit 2 Learn programme* and *SEN Support in Schools: What are the statutory duties?*

Attendees will have the opportunity to join interactive workshops with other local parents and carers, swap information and make new contacts. The conference is free for parents and carers and costs £25 for professionals. To book your place, please call KIDS office on 020 8663 5630 or email virginija.SL@kids.org.uk.

New group for siblings of people with a mental health problem



The new Rethink Croydon Sibling Support Group offers peer support to siblings of anyone with a mental health problem. The group provides an opportunity for people in similar circumstances to share their experiences and gain support from each other so as not to feel too overwhelmed.

Group sessions are held at 7pm – 9pm on the third Wednesday of every month at the Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) Centre, London Road, West Croydon (opposite Lidl). Just turn up – no need to call first! For more information, please contact Julie on 01823 365 308 or email groups@rethink.org.

Help for Carers respite service



Are you a carer in Croydon? If you are over 18, a Croydon resident and care for an adult living in Croydon, you may be entitled to 50 hours of free respite. To be eligible, the person you care for must not have received this free respite service before or receive any other funded care service from Croydon Council. To find out more, contact Help for Carers on 020 8648 9677 or email referrals@helpforcarers.org.uk.

Autism Family Carers group



Nicky shares her perspective on the Autism Family Carers group:

“Our Autism Family Carers group is a great place to meet other people who really understand what it’s like when someone you love has autism. Our family members cover a huge range of abilities and range in age from 17 to 50+. It’s a great place to pick up tips, enjoy good company and a laugh... but equally a safe and supportive space to vent when you need to.

Sometimes we have invited speakers and sometimes it’s strictly social. All our sessions are pretty informal and relaxed, with refreshments provided.

We meet on the second Monday of every month from 6.30pm - 8pm at Chatsworth Hall (the Autism Service) 1, Chatsworth Road CR0 1HE.

The next meetings are 14 November and 12 December. The group is run by and for family carers and facilitated by Paul Wallingford at the Autism Service.”

For more details, contact nickyselwyn@talktalk.net.

Parents in Partnership (PIP) Plus meetings and training



All the following PIP Plus meetings are open to parents/carers looking after a disabled child or child with special educational needs:

- **Tuesday 22 November, 7pm - 9pm:**
Becoming an adult/towards independence - how to access adult social services
- **Tuesday 13 December, 7pm - 9pm:**
How to survive the Christmas period
- **Tuesday 31 January, 7pm - 9pm:**
Direct payments and personal budgets - all you need to know!

PIP are also holding Makaton 2 Training on Wednesday 2 and 9 November 10am – 12.30pm. Participants must have completed Makaton 1. Contact PIP Office on office@pipcroydon.com or 020 8663 5626 to book a place.

What's On at the Carers Support Centre

Carers
Support
Centre

All of the following free activities are open to current carers in Croydon and take place at the Carers Support Centre, 24 George Street, Croydon CR0 1PB. Some activities must be booked in advance and dates and times may be subject to change, so please check before you attend.

The Carers Support Centre is a partnership between Croydon Council and The Whitgift Foundation and is run by the Carers' Information Service. The Centre is open Monday to Friday, 10am - 4pm, and carers are welcome to drop in for information and advice on their caring role. To keep up to date, join our mailing list via the contact details on the back page.

Training & Workshops

All of the following must be booked by calling 020 8649 6280, or emailing ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk.

IT Buddy

Alternate Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10.30am - 12.30pm
Carers can bring in their own laptop or tablet, or use ours and discuss any IT issues they are experiencing with one of our volunteer IT Buddies. Please be aware we cannot do repairs.

If Only I'd Known: Caring for Someone with Dementia

Wednesdays, 2pm - 4pm on: 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 Nov; 7 and 14 Dec
A series of workshops for carers of people who have received a recent diagnosis of dementia, or people who think the person they care for may have dementia. Each session covers a different topic. Carers can book one, some or all of the sessions.

Managing Sleep Difficulties

Tuesday 8 November, 10am - 3pm
Getting the right amount of sleep can be a real challenge when you are caring. This workshop will help you find practical techniques to get the good night's rest you need.

Moving and Handling People

Tuesday 15 November, 10am - 3.30pm
It's important to know how to move someone safely without injuring yourself. Learn how to move the person you care for in a safe way that prevents back strain.

Enabling Change

Tuesday 24 January, 10am - 3pm
Is there something in your life you would like to change, but not sure how? This course will help give you the tools and confidence to make realistic changes for the future.

What Does a Councillor Do?

Tuesday 14 February, 10.30am - 12noon
Find out what your local councillor can do for you at this information session.

Personal Safety

Wednesday 15 February, 10.30am - 12.30pm
Get advice from a local police officer on staying safe.

Health, Wellbeing & Social Activities

No need to book, just come along.

Carers Café

Monday to Friday, 10.30am - 12.30pm
Drop in to the Carers Café to relax, have a break and enjoy free refreshments, Wi-Fi, games, magazines and books. A laptop is also available. Enjoy a quiet sit down or have a chat to one of our friendly volunteers.

Carers Singing Group

Fortnightly on a Wednesday (monthly from 2017), 10.30am - 11.45am on: 16 and 30 November; 14 and 21 December; 25 January
Sing your heart out at the Carers Support Centre! This is a guided singing group, covering a wide range of musical styles from around the world. No experience necessary, just come along and join the fun.

Alzheimer's Society in the Carers Café

Monthly on a Thursday, 10.30am - 12.30pm on: 3 November, 1 December and 2 February
A dementia adviser is available to talk to any carer of someone who has or may have dementia. You may also bring the person you care for along to the Carers Café.

Carers Book Club in the Carers Café

Monthly on a Wednesday, 11am - 12noon on: 16 November, 14 December, 11 January and 8 February
Croydon Library will supply the books. Just collect each month's chosen book from us, then come along to discuss it the following month with like-minded readers.

Keep Dancing! Ballroom Dancing for Carers

Sessions on a Friday, 11am - 12noon on: 11, 18 and 25 November; 2, 9 and 16 December
Come and enjoy a fun and informal dancing session led by a professional dancer and friend of the Strictly stars! Sessions are suitable for all ages and abilities and are followed by tea/coffee and chat in the Carers Café.

Coffee with a Copper in the Carers Café

Monthly on a Wednesday, 10.30am - 12.30pm on: 23 November, 7 December, 18 January and 15 February
Opportunity for carers to meet and chat to a local police officer over a cup of tea/coffee.

Family Fund in the Carers Café

Monthly on a Thursday, 10.30am - 12.30pm on: 24 November and 9 February
For parents and carers of a disabled or seriously ill child or young person, up to the age of 17. Find out how a Family Fund grant could help and receive support making an application.

Christmas Craft and Chatter

Friday, 11am - 12.30pm on: 25 November and 16 December, followed by usual session on 27 January
Bring along some craft materials for our Christmas-themed Craft and Chatter sessions! Why not make some Christmas decorations or a homemade present for someone? There's no need to be an expert! Pens, paper and pictures are provided, but bring along any other craft materials you would like to use.

All of the following must be booked by calling 020 8649 6280, or emailing ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk.

Pilates for Carers

Weekly on a Thursday, 1pm - 2pm and 2.15pm - 3.15pm on: 3, 10, 17 and 24 November; 5, 12 and 19 December (FULLY BOOKED 2016); 16, 23 and 30 January (SPACES AVAILABLE)
Take care of your body and mind with our Pilates sessions for carers. Now fully booked for 2016. January 2017 onwards dates are available for booking.

Massage

Monthly on a Friday, 10.30am - 3pm on: 11 November (FULLY BOOKED); 9 December, 13 January and 10 February
A relaxing 25 minute hand and arm or neck and shoulder massage.

Ladies Who Lunch

Held every other month on a Friday, 1pm - 2pm on: 18 November (FULLY BOOKED); 10 February
An opportunity for female carers to get together to enjoy a nice lunch and make new friends.

Gentlemen and Ladies' Christmas Lunch Club

Friday, 1pm - 2pm on: 9 December
Ladies Who Lunch and Gentlemen's Lunch Club join together for a well-deserved Christmas lunch.

Gentlemen's Lunch Club

Held every other month on a Tuesday, 1pm - 2pm on: 31 January
An opportunity for male carers to get together to enjoy a nice lunch and good conversation.

Support Groups for Carers

Contact the organiser for details.

Diabetes Parent Support Group

Monthly on a Monday, 9.30am - 11.30am on: 14 November, 9 January and 13 February
A group for parents caring for a child with diabetes, with guest speakers. Email marian.drennan@nhs.net for details.

NAS Croydon Branch Parent Group

Monthly on a Tuesday, 10am - 12noon on: 22 November and 17 January 2017
Coffee morning providing an opportunity to meet other parents and carers who have received a diagnosis, or are waiting to receive a diagnosis of autism spectrum condition for a family member. For more information email croydon8@nas.org.uk.

For a large print copy of *Carers News* call us on 020 8649 9339, option 1

Advice Surgeries for Carers

No need to book, just turn up.

Disabled Parents and Carers Together (DPACT)

Weekly on a Tuesday, 1pm - 3pm
Advice, support, casework and advocacy for parents and carers who have a chronic illness or disability. Drop-ins welcome, but call 0800 689 7474 and leave a message.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Weekly on a Friday during term-time, 10am - 12noon on: 4, 11, 18 and 25 November; 2, 9 and 16 December; 6, 13, 20 and 27 January 2017
Advice on any SEN issues provided by Kids Croydon SENDIAS

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

Monthly on a Tuesday, 10am - 12noon on: 8 Nov, 6 Dec and 3 Jan 2017
Advice on issues around Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans for disabled children and young people. Provided by Family Lives Croydon.

All of the following must be booking by calling 020 8663 5608 or emailing appointments@carersinfo.org.uk

Legal Advice Surgery

Monthly on a Tuesday, 12noon - 4pm on: 1 November
Access free legal advice appointments on any subject (except conveyancing, probate, Power of Attorney and wills). Appointments provided by Duncan Lewis Solicitors.

Benefits Surgery

Weekly on a Wednesday, 2.30pm - 4pm on: 2, 9, 16 and 23 November; 7, 14 and 21 December; 4, 11 and 18 January 2017
Weekly appointments for carers to discuss any benefits issues. Offers a full benefits check. And support with form-filling.

Debt Clinic with South West London Law Centres (SWLLC)

Monthly on a Monday, 11am - 1pm on: 7 November, 5 December and 9 January 2017
Hour-long appointment with an SWLLC Thames Water Advisor who can look at current debt issues, income maximization and assess potential eligibility for a grant towards white goods and utility bill debts.

Mental Health Carers Advice Surgery

Fortnightly on a Thursday, 10.30am - 1.30pm on: 24 November; 8 and 22 December; 12 and 26 January 2017
Hour-long appointment with Mind in Croydon Mental Health Carers Support Service. Can discuss any issue or concern relating to caring for someone with a mental health problem.

Legal Clinic

Monthly on a Thursday, 12noon - 3.30pm on: 24 November, 22 December and 26 January 2017
30 minute appointment with a Mental Health Accredited solicitor from Bison Solicitors. Can discuss the following legal areas: mental health, Court of Protection, Power of Attorney, mental capacity, clinical negligence, family law, SEN law and immigration (not asylum).

Carers Support Centre, 24 George Street, Croydon CR0 1PB
Open Monday to Friday, 10am - 4pm

☎ 020 8649 9339, option 1
✉ info@carersinfo.org.uk
🏠 www.carersinfo.org.uk



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