

Carers News

Informing carers in Croydon

January - March 2015

Doing Things Differently

We are trialling a new, quarterly system for publishing *Carers News* this year. This edition covers January to March; future editions will be:

- April to June (published mid May).
- July to September (published early August).
- October to December (published mid November).

Each edition will be available on our website, and sent to anyone who receives our e-bulletin, a week or two before paper copies arrive on people's doormats.

What's New for Carers?

Did you know that as well as this newsletter, we also produce a monthly e-bulletin? Our e-bulletin is called *What's New for Carers?* and is sent out near the beginning of each month. It is a great way of staying up to date with events and activities at the Carers Support Centre, and other local and national news of interest to carers, in between editions of *Carers News*.

We Need Your Help

Postage costs for sending out paper copies of *Carers News* are spiralling and we are appealing to our readers to start receiving it via email.

We know not all of you have easy access to email, which is why we continue to publish paper copies at a time when many organisations have stopped, but for those of you who do, it would be a great help to us if you would make the switch.

And don't forget, anyone who signs up to receive *Carers News* via email will be informed of news, events and activities a week or two before those on the postage list, and also be sent our monthly e-bulletin.

To register for *Carers News* via email please contact Alison Brewster (020 8649 6290, alisonbrewster@carersinfo.org.uk).

Thank you in advance to those of you who do make the switch to email - we really appreciate it.

Care Act Update

As explored in our previous newsletter, the Care Act 2014 introduces major reforms to the social care system, including the strongest ever rights for carers.

In accordance with the Act, Croydon Council aims to have the following services in place by 1 April 2015:

- CarePlace: an online directory of care and support services available in the borough of Croydon. The directory will include voluntary and statutory (such as health and social support) services, and links to other organisations that can offer advice and support. The directory will be constantly updated.
- An updated charging policy, which will include arrangements for the 'deferred payment agreements' for care home fees brought in by the Act.
- Robust processes that are ready to deal with any increase in demand for information, advice and services from individuals and carers.
- Updated safeguarding procedures and provision of advocacy services.
- Publication of a Market Position Statement that will indicate the level of care and support services available in Croydon. This Statement should also encourage the care and support sector to create or expand services in under-developed areas.

Croydon has created a dedicated section on its website (www.croydon.gov.uk/careact) which will be regularly updated with the latest information on the Care Act. The section features a Frequently Asked Questions page, but if your question isn't answered there then people can email careact@croydon.gov.uk (after Monday 2 March) with any questions they may have about the Care Act and how it will affect them.

Self-Funders

The Care Act also introduces a cap on care costs of £72,000, with Local Authorities being responsible for keeping a Care Account for any appropriate adult, including self-funders, assessed as having eligible needs. However, this cap does not come into effect until 1 April 2016 (and no care costs incurred prior to that can be included).

Self-funders who are paying for care and support services privately are advised to contact social services and request an assessment of their care needs well before the introduction of the cap (from 1 October 2015 at the earliest).

People who meet the national eligibility criteria will be allocated a personal budget for their care needs, then, from April 2016 this will be credited to their Care Account and they will start building towards the cap.



Find Out More

Come to an information session at the Carers Support Centre to find out more about the Care Act and how it affects you:

Wednesday 11 March, 10am - 12 noon.

Wednesday 18 March, 10am - 12 noon.

There is no need to book for these sessions, carers are welcome to just turn up on the day.

Or if you can't come to one of these sessions you could contact Carers UK (0808 808 7777, www.carersuk.org) who have produced a range of excellent resources on the Care Act.

Carers Training Project



Any carer aged 16 or over who lives in Croydon can access free workshops at the Carers Support Centre. These workshops are a great opportunity to learn skills that will help you in your caring role and meet other people in a caring situation to chat to and share experiences with.

Workshop	Date	Time
Managing Stress	3 March	10-3
First Aid for Carers of a Child (under 16)	17 March	10.30-3
Impact of Caring on Relationships	24 March	10-3
Backcare Awareness & Wheelchair Handling	16 April	10.30-12.30
Laughter Workshop	23 April	10-1
Carers - how to cope with your sleep difficulties	30 April	10-1
Assertiveness & Building Confidence	5 May	10-3
Life After Caring	7 May	10-12
Diabetes - your questions answered	21 May	10.30-1

For more information on the Carers Training Project, or to book a place on a workshop, contact Ruth Laws (020 8649 6280, ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk).

A Little Encouragement

If you haven't come to one of our workshops before, then perhaps some feedback from carers who have will convince you to give it a go. Everyone who attended a workshop last year rated it as excellent and said that they would recommend it to other carers, but let's look at the feedback in a bit more detail.

1. Meeting other carers:

Great to share with other carers.

Good to hear from other carers about their different experiences.

It has been a great experience and a real eye opener meeting with other carers, brilliant.

2. How they feel after attending a session:

I feel more confident, thank you.

I am really happy, I learnt a lot. I feel much stronger now.

I feel more positive now I know that I am not alone.

3. What they learnt:

I can't change my situation but I can deal with it in a better way.

Not to feel guilty that I need time to myself to run my own life.

I learned how to be assertive in a kinder and caring way.

Please let us know if you can't come...

We would like to gently remind carers to give us as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend a workshop - we had an occasion towards the end of last year when only two out of an expected 13 carers turned up on the day.

If you cancel before the day of the workshop itself we can either try to offer your place to someone else, or, as a last resort cancel or re-schedule the course. Late cancellations or 'no-shows' mean that other carers do not get the opportunity to attend a course they were on a waiting list for, and we are not able to make the best use of our resources.

We appreciate that people, especially carers, are subject to events beyond their control, but when circumstances do allow, as much notice as possible of non-attendance for our workshops would be greatly appreciated.

Also on Offer at the Centre

Employability Skills

Have you taken time out from work due to your caring role?

Are you thinking of returning to paid employment?

Are you worried your job skills are out of date?

The National Careers Service (NCS) provides information, advice and guidance to help you find a job or career that suits your skills and personality.

Qualified careers advisers work with you to clarify what you would like to achieve in terms of employment, and explore how to make this a reality, including how to overcome barriers such as only being able to work part-time or having breaks in employment. Advisers can help with CV-writing, interview preparation, and pointers on how to broaden job search techniques. They also conduct Skills Health Checks to identify strengths and possible areas of suitable employment if you are unsure what sort of work you are looking for.

The NCS is offering 45-minute appointments at the Carers Support Centre on Tuesdays 24 February, 31 March and 28 April.

Singing

Our carers singing group is open to any carer, regardless of singing ability. Each session is 'stand-alone' so carers can come to one, some or all of them. The group is led by a professional singer who helps the members explore a wide range of music types.

Singing has a number of health benefits, including:

- Releasing endorphins, which make you happy.
- Releasing oxytocin, a natural stress reliever.
- Improves the heart rate.
- Boosts the immune system.
- Enhancing your mental awareness, concentration and memory.

If you enjoy singing but hate the thought of singing in public, don't worry: no one is ever picked on for a solo or reprimanded for missing a note! It is just about having fun, enjoying all those benefits listed above, and meeting other carers.

The group meets on a Wednesday, 11am - 12.15pm, and future dates are 11 and 25 February and 11 and 25 March.

There is no need to book a place, carers are welcome to just turn up on the day and join in.

Ballroom Dancing

We have a new batch of four ballroom dancing lessons starting on 27 February, 11am - 12 noon, and continuing on 6, 13 and 20 March.

This time carers will have the opportunity to learn Jive.

The lessons are suitable for absolute beginners, and will be taught by Lorraine Drolet who has experience as a Strictly and Disney choreographer.

IT Buddy

Our IT Buddy offers sessions on alternate Thursdays, 10.30am - 12.30pm. Carers can bring in their own laptop or tablet, or use our laptop, and spend time discussing any IT issues/problems they are having with a friendly volunteer who will try his best to help.

Massage

Every month we offer a day of free massage sessions.

Carers can book a 25-minute appointment for a hand and arm or neck and shoulder massage from one of our brilliant Red Cross volunteers.

Massage sessions are available on 12 March, 9 April and 14 May between 10.30am and 3pm.

To book for any of the activities in this section contact Ruth Laws: 020 8649 6280 ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk.

Don't miss out
Book your place today

Beyond Barriers

South Thames Crossroads is planning to launch a mentoring project for carers called Beyond Barriers. The project is aimed at carers and former carers from refugee, black and ethnic minority and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities.

Carers from these communities are traditionally harder to reach, and can be reluctant to engage with support services, or even to recognise that they are carers.

The mentoring service will be available in five London boroughs, including Croydon, and will be a source of valuable information, advice and emotional support to carers who may not be accessing help from anywhere else.

Any carers or former carers who think they would benefit from a Beyond Barriers volunteer mentor should contact Mary Rogan (020 8648 9677, ext 218 or mary@souththamescrossroads.org). If you are interested in becoming a volunteer mentor yourself contact Patricia Iwowo (020 8648 9677, ext 208 or patricia2@souththamescrossroads.org).

Final Reminder - Grant for Older Carers

If you are over 50 and caring for someone over 50 then you can apply to Crossroads Carers Support and Advocacy Service for a £250 grant (funded by Croydon Council) to pay for goods, services or activities that will help prevent a breakdown in your own health. Previous grants have been used for things such as a new mattress, help with house cleaning or massage therapy.

Call Ros Cox (Monday-Wednesday) on 020 8663 5624 or email ros@souththamescrossroads.org for more information or to request an application pack.

Funding is limited and will be awarded on a first come, first served basis.

Inaspectrum

Inaspectrum is a Croydon self-help community for any adult (18+) affected by their own or someone else's autism or asperger's. The group meets on the second Monday of the month, 6 - 7.45pm, in the Common Room at Friends Meeting House, 60 Park Lane, Croydon CR0 1JE.

Future dates include: 9 March, 13 April and 11 May.

Inaspectrum also meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month, 10 - 11.30am, at the Carers Centre, 12 Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX.

Future dates include: 18 February, 4 and 18 March, 1 and 15 April and 6 and 20 May.

For more information contact Paul (07900 990 292, inaspectrum@hotmail.com) or visit www.inaspectrum.com.

Carers Reading Group

Some of our marvellous carers have taken it upon themselves to set up a Carers Reading Group! The first meeting will be on Thursday 12 February, 11am - 12 noon, in the Carers Café; where carers can discuss how they would like to organise the group, and which book to read first.

If you can't make that meeting, but would like to know what book will be discussed at the next session on Thursday 12 March, contact Ruth Laws (020 8649 6280, ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk).

Carers are welcome to just turn up on the day if they have read the book for that month. Books chosen for the reading group will be announced in future e-bulletins and newsletters.

In Brief

Being Active: An every day guide for people living with an impairment or health condition is free to download from www.efds.co.uk, or to request a paper copy call The English Federation of Disability Sport on 01509 22 77 50.

The earnings limit for Carer's Allowance will increase to £110 a week after certain expenses such as tax and eligible care costs from April 2015.

SENDirect (www.sendirect.org.uk) is a new website created to help families find appropriate local special educational needs and disabilities services for their child.

Since 1 January 2015 it has been compulsory for all blue badge holders to display the new hologram style permits.

The New Medicine Service provides extra help and advice to people with certain long-term health conditions who have been prescribed a new medication. Take your new prescription to a pharmacy and ask for details of the scheme, or visit www.nhs.uk.

If you need help making a complaint about an NHS service, Voiceability NHS Complaints Advocacy Service might be able to help. Contact Voiceability on 0300 330 5454 or visit www.voiceability.org.

People on a low income or receiving certain benefits may be entitled to full or partial help with their NHS health costs. To find out more and see if you could be eligible call 0300 330 1343 or visit www.nhs.uk/healthcosts.



Housing Advice Sessions

Shelter is holding free housing advice sessions for Croydon residents at Mind in Croydon and Croydon Central Library. People will be given 20 minutes of advice, with follow up appointments arranged if necessary.

Mind in Croydon (Orchard House)

Future dates include: Thursdays 5 March, 2 April and 7 May, from 1.15pm.
To book an appointment contact Mind in Croydon on 020 8253 8211. *Please note these sessions are for any Croydon resident, not just people with mental health problems.*
You may be able to be seen without an appointment on the day but there are no guarantees of this and you would need to get to Orchard House by 1.15pm.

Central Library

Future dates include: Wednesdays 18 February, 18 March and 15 April, from 1.30pm.
These sessions are drop-in only. People are advised to turn up from 1pm on the day to secure one of the available appointments.

Brain Injury Support

Headway South West London holds two support groups in Croydon:

- Monthly meetings for adults who have experienced a brain injury. Carers are welcome to attend.
Meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month, 7.30 - 9pm, at Harris Academy Purley, Kendra Hall Road, South Croydon CR2 6DT.
Future dates: 18 February, 18 March and 15 April.
- Bi-monthly meetings for family, friends and carers of a person affected by brain injury.
Meetings are on the first Wednesday of alternate months, at different venues
Future dates: 1 April.

For more information call 07722 861 642 or visit www.headwayswLondon.org.

SEN Reform Updates

Croydon Council's Special Educational Needs (SEN) department is holding bitesize workshops on Croydon's implementation of SEN reforms and the introduction of Education Health and Care plans.

Workshop dates:

- Wednesday 25 February, 10am - 12 noon.
- Thursday 26 February, 11am - 1pm.
- Tuesday 3 March, 10am - 12 noon.
- Wednesday 4 March, 11am - 1pm.
- Thursday 12 March, 6.30 - 8pm.

To book a place contact Parents in Partnership (020 8663 5626, office@pipcroydon.com).

Access Council Training

The Council organises a programme of training for its employees, and is opening up some sessions to carers:

Food First

Learn about malnutrition and how to avoid it.
Thursday 26 February, 9.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30 - 4.30pm.

Pressure Ulcers

What pressure ulcers are, their causes and treatment and how to prevent them.
Wednesday 25 March, 9.30am - 1pm and 2 - 5pm.

For more information or to book a place email stephanie.cattermole@croydon.gov.uk (or if you don't have access to email, call 020 8686 4433, ext 47214). All sessions are held at the Carers Support Centre.

SEN Support

Family Lives is holding a new Special Educational Needs (SEN) advice and information drop in session on the first Tuesday of the month from 10am to 12 noon at the Carers Support Centre.
The next sessions are on 3 March, 7 April and 5 May.
These sessions are for parents/carers of children with SEN and for young people aged 16+, currently going through the process of transferring from a statement to an Education, Health and Care plan.

Family Lives SEND Support Service is holding a workshop on Personal Budgets on Wednesday 18 March, 10am - 12 noon, at East Croydon United Reformed Church.
To book a place email virginijas@familylives.org.uk.

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

Six free workshops for carers (aged 16 and over) 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 and carers can enrol on one, some or all of them. All workshops are held at the Carers Support Centre on a Monday, 11am - 1pm.

1. Signs to look for if you think someone may have dementia, 16 March.
2. How to get a diagnosis if you are worried someone may have dementia, 23 March.
3. Dealing with social care, 30 March.
4. Health of the person with dementia - physical and emotional, 13 April.
5. Care for the carer, 20 April.
6. The money side of things, 27 April.

To book for any of these workshops contact Ruth Laws (020 8649 6280, ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk).

Parent Carer Support

Parents in Partnership (PIP) supports parents and carers of children and young adults with special needs or disabilities. PIP Plus (for parents of children aged 14+) runs information and training sessions at the Carers Support Centre:

- **Overview of the new Education, Health and Care plans in Croydon**
Thursday 19 March, 10am - 1pm
- **Wills and Trusts**
Tuesday 19 May, 10am - 1pm

To book a place contact Parents in Partnership (020 8663 5626, office@pipcroydon.com).


Carer of the Year

The Croydon Community Civic Awards celebrates the borough's unsung heroes who go that extra mile to help others. One of the categories is Carer of the Year: someone who has made an exceptional contribution to caring and has championed the invaluable role of carers. This does not include paid care workers. For more information on the awards, or to nominate someone for Carer of the Year, go to www.croydon.gov.uk/community/civic-awards/register.
The closing date for nominations is Monday 23 March. Shortlisting will take place in April, and the awards ceremony will be in June.

What's On at the Carers Support Centre

Regular Events	Date	Time	Need to Book?
NHS Health Checks (for people aged 40-74)	Every Wednesday	10-4	No Carers are welcome to just turn up on the day
Carers Singing Group	Wednesdays 11 & 25 Feb 11 & 25 March	11-12.15	No Carers are welcome to just turn up on the day
Carers Reading Group	Thursdays 12 Feb 12 March	11-12	No Carers are welcome to just turn up on the day
Mental Health Carers Advice Surgery	Thursdays 19 Feb 19 March 2, 16 & 30 April 14 May	10-1	Yes Call 020 8663 5608 and leave a message or email appointments@carersinfo.org.uk
Special Educational Needs Drop In	Fridays 20 Feb 20 March 17 April 15 May	10-12	No Carers are welcome to just turn up on the day
National Autistic Society Parents Support Group	Tuesdays 24 Feb 24 March 19 May	10-12	No For more information call 07833 293 263 or email croydonbranch@nas.org.uk
Employability Skills (45-minute appointments)	Tuesdays 24 Feb 31 March 28 April	10.15-3.15	Yes Call 020 8649 6280 or email ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk
Benefits Advice Surgery	Wednesdays 25 Feb 11 & 25 March 8 & 22 April	1-4	Yes Call 020 8663 5608 and leave a message or email appointments@carersinfo.org.uk
Free Jive lessons <i>Carers need to be able to attend all four sessions</i>	Fridays 27 Feb 6, 13 & 20 March	10.30-11.30	Yes Call 020 8649 6280 or email ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk
SEN Drop In (specifically for support during transfer from statement to EHC plan)	Tuesdays 3 March 7 April 5 May	10-12	No Carers are welcome to just turn up on the day
Debt Advice Surgery	Fridays 6 March 27 March 1 May	10-1	Yes Call 020 8663 5608 and leave a message or email appointments@carersinfo.org.uk
Parkinson's Society Carers Support Group	Mondays 9 March 13 April 11 May	10-11.30	Yes Call Monique Martial on 020 8653 2179
Massage (25-minute appointments)	Thursdays 12 March 9 April 14 May	10.30-3.15	Yes Call 020 8649 6280 or email ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk
Croydon CAB	Thursdays 12 March 16 April 14 May	1-4	Yes Call 020 8663 5608 and leave a message or email appointments@carersinfo.org.uk
IT Buddy	Alternate Thursdays 2, 16 & 30 April	10.30-12.30	Yes Call 020 8649 6280 or email ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk

Regular Events	Date	Time	Need to Book?
Training & Information Sessions			
Managing Stress	3 March	10-3	Yes For all these training courses call 020 8649 6280 or email ruthlaws@carersinfo.org.uk
If Only I'd Known: Caring for someone with dementia	Mondays 16, 23 & 30 March 13, 20 & 27 April	11-1	
First Aid for Carers of a Child (under 16)	17 March	10.30-3	
Impact of Caring on Relationships	24 March	10-3	
Back Care Awareness & Wheelchair Handling	16 April	10.30-12.30	
Laughter Workshop	23 April	10-1	
Carers - how to cope with your sleep difficulties	30 April	10-1	
Assertiveness & Building Confidence	5 May	10-3	
Life After Caring	7 May	10-12	
Diabetes - your questions answered	21 May	10.30-1	
SEN Bitesize Workshops	Wed 25 Feb Thu 26 Feb Tue 3 March Wed 4 March Thu 12 March	10-12 11-1 10-12 11-1 6.30-8	Yes Call 020 8663 5626 or email office@pipcroydon.com
Food First (avoiding malnutrition) Workshops	Thursday 26 Feb	9.30-12.30 or 1.30-4.30	Yes Email Stephanie.cattermole@croydon.gov.uk (or if no access to email call 020 8686 4433 ext 47214)
Pressure Ulcer Workshops	Wednesday 25 March	9.30-1 or 1.30-5	Yes Call 020 8663 5626 or email office@pipcroydon.com
PIP Plus training (EHC plans)	Thursday 19 March	10-1	
PIP Plus training (Wills & Trusts)	Tuesday 19 May	10-1	
Care Act Information Sessions	Wednesdays 11 & 18 March	10-12	No Carers are welcome to just turn up on the day
The Carers Café is open Monday to Friday, 10.30am - 12.30pm for free refreshments, books, newspapers and magazines. Carers are welcome to just drop in.			
All details correct at time of going to press, but events are subject to change - for the most up to date information visit www.carersinfo.org.uk or call us on 020 8649 9339, option 1.			



Carers Information Day

Wednesday 3 June 2015
10am - 4pm
Arnhem Gallery, Fairfield Halls

More information to follow in the next newsletter

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

