

# CARERS NETWORK BULLETIN



THE NEWSLETTER FOR CARERS IN HIGHLAND

SPRING 2010

## CARERS WEEK

Stress busting, information drop-ins and a laughter workshop - this is just a sample of what's in store during Carers Week 2010 which begins week commencing 14th June.

Carers Week is a national celebration of carers' generous contribution to our society and an opportunity to provide some fun events along with focusing on serious issues.

This year's theme is **A Life of My Own** and throughout the UK, over 8,000 events and activities are being organised by local partners, such as Highland Community Care Forum.

Starting in **Dingwall** on Tue 15th June there will be a Carers Information drop-in hosted by Carol Summers, Local Development Worker from 11am - 3pm, attended by numerous organisations offering services and advice.

Carol is hosting a similar event in **Golspie** on Thur 17th



June from 1pm - 4pm. Please call Carol on tel: 07918 747 756 or email: [csummers@hccf.org.uk](mailto:csummers@hccf.org.uk) for booking details.

In **Inverness**, Tina Morrow is holding one of her Summer Stressbusters at Eden Court on Wed 16th June from 11am - 3.30pm. Details on how to book are available from Tina on tel: 01463 723573 or email: [tmorrow@hccf.org.uk](mailto:tmorrow@hccf.org.uk).

Also at Eden Court on Thur 17th June, Marion MacNeil is offering limited places at **'Time for You'**, to help carers explore the barriers to taking time for yourself, including a laughter workshop and lunch from 10am-2pm. Call: 01463 723561 for booking details.

## BENEFITS UPDATING



**2009/10**      **2010/11**

all weekly amounts

### ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE

	£	£
Higher rate	70.35	71.40
Lower rate	47.10	47.80

### CARER'S ALLOWANCE

	53.10	53.90
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### CARER'S PREMIUM

	29.50	30.05
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(payable as part of Income Support, Pension Credit, Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment & Support Allowance, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit)

### DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

#### Care Component

Higher	70.35	71.40
Middle	47.10	47.80
Lower	18.65	18.95

#### Mobility Component

Higher	49.10	49.85
Lower	18.65	18.95

### PENSION CREDIT

#### Standard Minimum Guarantee

Single	130.00	132.60
Couple	198.45	202.40

#### Additional amount for severe disability

Single	52.85	53.65
Couple (one qualifies)	52.85	53.65
Couple (both qualify)	105.70	107.30

#### Savings Credit

threshold - single	96.00	98.40
threshold - couple	153.40	157.25
maximum - single	20.40	20.52
maximum - couple	27.03	27.09



## CARERS CREDITS



New changes to the State Pension for carers means that some carers who cannot receive Carer's Allowance (CA) will now be able to protect their state pension.

From 6th April, Home Responsibilities Protection will be replaced by weekly credits for parents and carers. The credits are available to the following people:

- recipients of Child Benefit for a child under age 12 automatically get the credit
- those in receipt of Income Support because they are caring, but not getting CA, will automatically get the credit
- carers providing a total of 20 hours or more each week **need to apply** for 'Carer's Credit' from the Department for Work and Pensions.

To claim, carers must be caring for one or more people for a total of 20 hours or more a week, who is:

- in receipt of a qualifying benefit (any rate of Attendance Allowance or Constant Attendance Allowance within Industrial injuries or War Pension schemes, middle or highest DLA care component)

- or, if there is no qualifying benefit, the carer must have a Care Certificate from a health or social care professional to confirm that an appropriate level of care is being provided.

The new Carers Credit will help carers who may be struggling to protect their State Pension, may not be claiming CA and may not recognise themselves as carers, including:

- those who care for someone who due to their condition, cannot or does not wish to claim disability benefits
  - where more than one carer is looking after someone who is severely disabled
  - carers who are looking after several people but unable to claim CA because they don't care for any of them for 35 hours a week or more
  - carers who have lost CA because the person they care for keeps going into care or hospital, yet the carer continues to provide substantial amounts of care
  - where claiming CA would negatively affect the cared for person's benefits, e.g. Severe Disability Premium.
- Carers Line: 01463 723561.

## CARERS CAN

### May to October Courses

Carers Can has a new programme of training for the next 6 months. As well as running a second round of the courses 7 Tips to Manage Your Stress and 7 Tips for Building Confidence we have several new courses which will run between now and October.

The first is Summer Stressbusters, a day designed to help you relax in good company, enjoy some very gentle exercise and try your hand at some crafts. The day runs from 11am to 3.30pm with lunch provided.

We are also running a new course called Next Steps which is aimed at people who want to explore learning, volunteering or employment opportunities or who just want to find out a bit more about the options for trying something new. It is a two day course but people can attend one or both days as they prefer.

We will be sending out details of the courses that will take place between October and March later in the summer. Courses that will be running include Planning for the Future, a course on sleep and a course called Stocking fillers

which will give participants the opportunity to get together and try their hands at making some Christmas gifts.

Details of the training programme for the next 6 months are shown below. If you are interested in any of the sessions please contact Tina on 01463 723573 or tmorrow@hccf.org.uk.

### 7 Tips to Manage Stress

- Thursday 13th May  
Lochardil House Hotel,  
Inverness
- Thursday 26th August  
Ross County Football Club,  
Dingwall

### 7 Tips for Building Confidence

- Thursday 19th May  
Drumossie Hotel, Inverness
- Thursday 2nd September  
Mansfield Castle Hotel, Tain

### Next Steps

- Thursday 3rd June, Eden Court (day 1)
- Thursday 10th June, Eden Court (day 2)
- Thursday 19th August, Pentland Hotel, Thurso (day 1)
- Thursday 9th September Castletown Hotel (day 2)
- Thursday 16th September

Strathpeffer Community Centre (day 1)

- Thursday 23rd September Teaninich Castle Hotel, Alness (day 2)

### Summer Stressbusters

- Wednesday 9th June, Kincaig House Hotel, Invergordon
- Wednesday 16th June Eden Court
- Tuesday 22nd June Durness Hall, Durness
- Wednesday 23rd June Castletown Hotel

All of the courses are free to unpaid carers, respite and travel costs are available.



## CARERS CAN BEFRIENDING

Caring for someone can be a rewarding experience but sometimes you can find that YOU need some support and someone to talk to. Friends and family can be a good source of support but

sometimes we don't have that support and can feel like we are on our own.

If you sometimes feel like nobody is there for you and would like someone to talk to, we have a Befriender who can be there for you.

Befriending offers an opportunity to feel supported, have regular social contact and the knowledge that there is someone there for you to talk to.

A Befriender will encourage you to take time out for yourself and give you support and help you to feel that you are not on your own. Working with a Befriender can help you to build your confidence and take some time out for yourself.

If you feel that you would like to know more about Befrienders please contact Tina on 01463 723573 or email [tmorrow@hccf.org.uk](mailto:tmorrow@hccf.org.uk).

We are also looking for volunteer Befrienders, so if you have a couple of hours a week to offer and would like more information please contact Tina.



## RENAL FAMILY GROUP

The Managed Clinical Network (MCN) for children with kidney and bladder problems is having an open forum meeting on the 25th June at the Recreation Hall, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, 12–5pm (flexible and children are welcome).

The purpose of the meeting is to encourage families in having a say in how they wish to be involved in the network, their experiences within the NHS and how services can be planned for the future.

Members of the Scottish Paediatric Renal Urology Network will be there to give an overview on the role of the network and how you can help shape the future of kidney and bladder health care services in Scotland. The rest of the day will be an interesting blend of informal discussions exploring how you would like to see the family group in the Inverness area develop.

The event is free and the MCN will reimburse any expenses for travel incurred. Refreshments available on the day. Should you wish to attend, please tel: 0141 232 1851 or email: linda.watson3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk.

## FAMILY CONFERENCE

The National Centre for Young People with Epilepsy (NCYPE) is proud to host their third national conference for the parents and families of children and young people with epilepsy on Saturday 3rd July, Ramada Manchester Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester.

The event is designed to provide information and support for mums, dads and siblings of the 60,000 under 18s across the UK living with epilepsy as well as the young people themselves.

Talks and workshops will be delivered by a wide range of experienced professionals working in the field of epilepsy including Professor Helen Cross, epilepsy specialist nurses and psychologists.

Also, the conference will host the very popular Teens Workshop for young people to give them the opportunity to learn with each other and share experiences with their peers.

For more information please visit [www.ncype.org.uk/epilepsy](http://www.ncype.org.uk/epilepsy) or by calling 01342 832243 ext 296.



## ADULT PROTECTION

You've probably heard about the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act. Now there is a law to protect adults too.



that the adult is not treated less favourably than another adult in a comparable situation, and

- the adult's abilities, background and characteristics.

Adults at risk are adults aged 16 and over, who:

- are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests;
- are at risk of harm; and
- because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than other adults who are not so affected.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 deals with the protection of adults at risk of harm. It is a progressive step in responding to harm against those adults more at risk in society today.

The over arching principle is that any intervention in an individual's affairs should provide benefit to the individual, and should be the least restrictive option of those that are available, which will meet the purpose of the intervention. In addition to this, the following are some of the guiding principles, which must be taken account of:

- the wishes and feelings of the adult at risk (past and present)
- the views of other significant individuals, such as the nearest relative, carer, guardian or attorney
- providing the adult with the relevant information and support to enable them to participate as fully as possible
- the importance of ensuring

Working as part of the 'Safer Highland' partnership structure, the Highland Adult Support and Protection Committee has launched Inter-agency Procedures for the Implementation of the Act. Details are available at [www.highland.gov.uk/socialwork/adultsupportprotection.htm](http://www.highland.gov.uk/socialwork/adultsupportprotection.htm).

If you think an adult is being exploited or harmed, professional support is available. To find out more, visit [www.infoscotland.com/actagainstsharm](http://www.infoscotland.com/actagainstsharm) or contact your local Social Work office.

Kinship care is a term used to describe situations where a child's day to day care is taken over by a relative or friend, due to the birth parents being unable to care for the child for one reason or another.

The Scottish Government has contracted Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) to provide a service over 3 years to raise awareness of kinship care. They assist kinship carers with issues such as identifying their legal status and looking in to the financial implications and income maximisation as well as a range of other services which are available within their region. This initiative is part of Scottish Government's aim of putting in place an obligation on Local Authorities to provide financial assistance to kinship carers.

This project covers both "looked after" (where there is an obligation from social work to be involved e.g. under a supervision order) and "non looked after" children (where the arrangements are less formal e.g. a grandparent taking over care of a grandchild).

The financial and emotional implications of this situation

can be immense and the project is able to assist kinship carers in the following ways:

- By referring kinship carers to appropriate organisations who are able to provide emotional or practical support
- By identifying the legal status of the child and providing a comprehensive advice and assistance service in relation to the complex way in which allowances paid for kinship carers affect benefits, and looking into maximisation of kinship carer's income and avoiding problems with overpayments of benefits.
- Provide assistance with challenging decisions

CAS has put in place a dedicated Kinship Care Line and a network of 5 regional specialist support workers overseen by a National Coordinator in order to provide the best possible service for kinship carers.

This service can either be accessed by contacting the Kinship Care advice line on **0844 576 2955** or contacting your local Citizens Advice Bureau; or in the Highland region by contacting the Regional Specialist Support Officer on **0131 550 1097**.

## COMMUNITY CARE PLAN

The deadline for comments on The Highland Council and NHS Highland's plans for changing Community Care is Tuesday 15 June 2010.

The consultation document sets out the Partnership's approach to meeting the support needs of a range of people in the Highland community. This can include older people, people with learning disability, sensory impairment, mental health and/or substance misuse problems, and those who are homeless. A set of booklets has been produced highlighting the key issues for: older adults in need; younger adults in need (16yrs to 64yrs); mental health and/or substance misuse; and all adults in need. Carers are mentioned in each of the booklets so will be integral to the plan.

Chair of Highland Council's Housing and Social Work Committee, Councillor Margaret Davidson said: "It is important that the community care plan is understood and discussed in communities across the Highlands. The plan sets out how we intend to provide services in future years and it is vitally important that

those who will be affected by community care services make their opinions known to us."

Garry Coutts, Chair of NHS Highland said: "I urge members of the public to get their ideas across to us. This plan is our attempt to make sure they get the service they have told us they need. We are very keen to hear if they agree we are on the right lines or not."

Maureen Macmillan, Chair of Highland Community Care Forum said, "HCCF is pleased to be working with Highland Council and NHS Highland. It is our job to make sure that as many people as possible who need or might need community care services have the opportunity to comment and put their views across. In the next few weeks we will be talking to groups in all local communities and carrying out individual interviews with people who may not otherwise reply in writing to the consultation."

Consultation booklets can be found at Council service points and libraries, at pharmacies and GP surgeries or requested on tel: 01463 702807. People with access to the internet can make their comments known at [www.fhcommunities.org](http://www.fhcommunities.org).

## SHARED LIVES

A new project aims to promote 'Shared Lives', previously known as Adult Placement, so that this option can be considered in future planning to support older carers with sons/daughters who have a learning disability and/or autism.

Shared Lives Carers provide long-term accommodation and support, short breaks (respite) and/or daytime support.

Shared Lives is provided by individuals in their own home so that the person is included in the life and social networks of the Shared Lives Carers.

The evidence gathered by NAAPS shows how cost-effective Shared Lives schemes are, and with the current emphasis on personalised services and cutting costs, this would appear to be relevant for all local authorities to consider.

The project, funded by the Scottish Government, aims to encourage the development of Shared Lives schemes in all areas. Else Wilson, Project Worker would be happy to meet with carers groups or anyone interested in the work of the project. Tel: 07584211755 or email: [else@naaps.org.uk](mailto:else@naaps.org.uk).

## ADAPTED TROLLEYS



A mum from Devon has successfully persuaded her local Sainsbury's to purchase a specially adapted trolley seat for disabled toddlers. She is now calling for every supermarket to stock the adapted trolley.

Julie Evett said: "The experience of going shopping for my daughter Rose is really stimulating. She loves the sounds and smells and the experience helps her development. I think disabled children should be out and about with their parents enjoying life to the maximum, not hidden away and isolated. This trolley has given us a new lease of life and I'd like to see all the major supermarket chains stock at least one."

Julie has set up a Facebook petition group ***Every Supermarket needs this new disabled trolley***. If you want to support Julie's campaign, please sign up to the group to help all families get out and about doing everyday activities. Link to petition: <http://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/group.php?gid=180123000906>.

## SPINA BIFIDA SUPPORT



The SSBA is a registered Scottish charity which for over 40 years has been directly helping thousands of children, young people and adults, as well as their families and carers, affected by spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus. SSBA has a team of specialist staff who can offer support, advice and information to families and carers as well as running events and conferences for families, carers and professionals.

The team are based in Cumbernauld but recently got funding for a part-time Family Support Coordinator for North Scotland. Sophie Tear started in post in December 2009 and is based in Grantown on Spey but travels throughout North Scotland. If you have any issues relating to spina bifida/hydrocephalus you can contact Sophie by email via [sophie@ssba.org.uk](mailto:sophie@ssba.org.uk) or telephone the Lo-Call helpline 0845 11 11 12.

The best times to call

Sophie are Mondays to Thursdays between 10.00 and 2.30 although she is happy to arrange calls or visits at other times to suit families' commitments. For more general information you can look at the website [www.ssba.org.uk](http://www.ssba.org.uk) or phone 01236 794500.

Scottish Spina Bifida Association, Sophie Tear, Family Support Coordinator North, P.O.Box 7086, Grantown on Spey, PH26 9AD.

## PARENTS' BENEFITS

Money such as child maintenance, will no longer be taken into account when the DWP are calculating benefits, meaning more money going direct to supporting the child.

Currently parents are allowed to keep the first £20 of child maintenance per week (the disregard) before benefits are reduced. With the full disregard available since 12th April, the income from child maintenance will not affect benefits at all unless it increases their savings to over £6,000.



## STATE 2ND PENSION

An additional State Pension can give you extra money each week on top of your basic State Pension. You used to build up additional State Pension in the State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme (SERPS). You now do this using the State Second Pension (S2P). The State Second Pension is more generous for low and moderate earners, certain carers and people with a long-term illness or disability.

You can build up entitlement to additional State Pension if you are below State Pension age and you are:

- employed and earning over £4,940 (from any one job)
- looking after children under 12 years old and claiming child benefit
- caring for a sick or disabled person for more than 20 hours a week and claiming Carer's Credit
- a registered foster carer and claiming carer's credit
- receiving certain other benefits due to illness or disability

Your entitlement to State Pension is based on the number of 'qualifying years', which are tax years in which you have paid, are treated as



having paid or are credited with National Insurance contributions.

A person who has 30 qualifying years will be entitled to a full basic State Pension. Just one qualifying year will give entitlement to the basic State Pension worth 1/30th of the full basic State Pension.

You don't have to claim additional State Pension separately. The Pension Service should automatically send you a State Pension Information Booklet. You will also be invited to make a claim four months before you reach State Pension age.

Today, the State Pension age for men is 65, but this will rise in the future. Starting on 6th April, the State Pension age for women began to change from 60 to 65.

For more information call The Pension Service on 0800 731 7898 (open 8.00 am to 8.00 pm Monday to Friday and 9.00 am to 1.00 pm on Saturday).



Postural Care CIC is a Community Interest Company (not for profit) working to Protect Body Shape for people with movement difficulties, such as children with cerebral palsy. They provide quality assured, accredited training in therapeutic positioning and validated, non-invasive measurement of body symmetry.

People who find it hard to move are at risk of developing changes in their body shape. These changes can make life much more difficult for the person and for their carers; they are also preventable. Understanding the biomechanics of body shape distortion, including the predictable patterns associated with different lying postures, corrective forces can be applied. Objective and validated measurement of body symmetry ensure that they work to a robust evidence base.

Postural Care train people to protect body shape using therapeutic positioning, particularly at night. This

form of therapy is very gentle and based on common sense principles.

Night positioning involves using the long hours spent in bed, usually about a third of the year, to gently position the person to prevent stresses on joints or even to restore existing problems with body shape. The earlier you start to protect body shape the better – but it's never too late.

Courses provide you with practical skills that you can adapt and develop to suit your needs.

You can visit Postural Care in Tamworth, Staffordshire or they can come to your home, the following charges apply:

- £75 per hour
- Prior to a visit you will receive a quote which will be based on your requirements - this will not be exceeded
- Any additional training or support must be arranged beforehand and will be included in your quote
- Travel costs are charged at 42p per mile.

They accept referrals from self advocates and parent carers, as well as health and social care providers. For further information please tel: 01827 304938 or email: [info@posturalcareskills.com](mailto:info@posturalcareskills.com).

## PINES ASD TRAINING

The Pines is the new home of the Integrated Childrens' Services Autism Team (ICSAT). The Pines Foundation Training in ASD is a four part training course, designed and delivered by the National Autism Society, Speech & Language Therapy, Clinical Psychology and either Autism Outreach Education Service or Disability Social Work Services. It is delivered as either one whole day or four 90 minute sessions. It has been rolling out for education staff in The Pines, Inverness and in Aviemore.

Four twilight sessions will be delivered in Fort William between April and June.

Future plans are to offer this to NHS staff, parents/carers and voluntary services. Foundation 2 courses are being developed along with the specialist dietitian service, occupational therapy and social work on topics such as interventions in behaviour, selective eaters, etc. For further information telephone The Pines on 01463 720031.



## EDUCATION LAW

Govan Law Centre's Education Law Unit is Scotland's expert legal resource providing support to the voluntary sector in relation to the law for pupils with additional support needs and those facing discrimination at school.

They will be running FREE legal surgeries in Inverness during 2010. The surgeries will be held at the Civil Legal Assistance Office, 2nd Floor, 16 Union Street, Inverness on 19th May and 22nd September from 1pm - 4pm.

They can advise on **Discrimination** due to:

- Disability
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender, or

**School Issues:**

- Coordinated Support Plans
- Additional support needs
- Exclusions from school
- Placing requests
- Transport to school
- Bullying and the law
- Safety/supervision of pupils

To request an appointment  
Tel: 0141 445 1955 or email:  
admin@edlaw.org.uk.

## DISABLED LIVING FOUNDATION

The Disabled Living Foundation recently launched a new kitchen and household products section on its living made easy website, highlighting a selection of products to give a flavour of the wide range of gadgets available to help people in the kitchen.

DLF's factsheets also provide general advice about things to consider when choosing a wide range of daily living equipment, including bath lifts and bath seats, stairlifts, walk-in showers, household gadgets, communications aids and more. For more information go to [www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/kitchen](http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/kitchen).

## DOWN'S SYNDROME

The Down's Syndrome Medical Interest Group website provides information for healthcare professionals on "best practice" medical care for people with Down's Syndrome. They also include a small set of parent resources.

[www.dsmig.org.uk](http://www.dsmig.org.uk)



## CARERS POVERTY PROTEST



The Carers Poverty Alliance aims to keep up the pressure for financial and social freedom from poverty for carers.

They held another poverty protest on 3rd March in London, and handed their 1500 strong petition in to 10 Downing Street, asking for Carers Allowance to be paid at a decent level. MPs came to meet them during the protest to meet carers and take part in the question and answer session.

As there was no protest organised in Scotland this year, carers from across England and Wales vowed to represent all carers supporting the campaign, who couldn't be there. You can join the campaign on Facebook or visit their website at <http://carerspovertyalliance.com>. They are already planning next year's protest so add your voice to the campaign now.

Connecting Carers are now on Facebook and we've made loads of friends already! If you want to join us and see who we've connected with, you can find us on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)<sup>®</sup> – search for Connecting Carers then add us as a friend and you can enjoy chatting with lots of other carers. Alternatively, you can access Facebook from our website [www.hccf.org.uk](http://www.hccf.org.uk) – find the facebook button on our carers information page.



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