



The Carer

Issue 110 Winter 2024-25



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GWASANAETH CYNNAL GOFALWYR
CARERS OUTREACH SERVICE

Registered Charity No: 1203192



Welcome to our Winter issue

Have you heard about our support groups for unpaid carers?

Turn to the middle pages for details of local groups.

Did you know?

Our Brêc Bach fund can provide funding for repairs to leisure equipment, gym memberships and courses as well as overnight breaks and day trips.



Cost of living

Are you worried about paying your fuel bills this Winter? Carers Outreach Service has a new project that might be able to help you save some money.



More details inside



Translated into Welsh by
Angharad Edwards



Update from Carers Outreach

The rising cost of living means we could all be feeling the pinch this winter! So, we are delighted to tell you about our new project which focuses on

Carer Fuel Poverty Alleviation, Income Maximisation and related Money Matters. This could help you to reduce your utility bills by:

- Assisting you to claim all your entitlements and benefits.
- Informing you about cheaper tariffs such as Water Sure and HelpU.
- Suggesting practical solutions that you could use around your home.
- Helping you to be placed on the Priority Service Register (PSR)

Practical Solutions in the home

We can arrange for locking cooker valves to be fitted as an option for people who cannot operate their gas cooker safely. These free devices work by stopping the flow of gas to the cooker. A key is provided so that a carer or family member can turn the valve on to enable the appliance to be used under supervision.



Priority Services Register (PSR)

The PSR is a free UK wide service which provides extra advice and support, including when there is an interruption to your electricity, gas or water supply. If you or the person you care for are disabled, ill or elderly or vulnerable in any way it is advised that you are placed on the register.

Welsh Water Efficiency Home Visit

Welsh Water, along with Groundwork Wales, will carry out free water efficiency visits that could save you money.

Keeping Safe and Well at home

We have a limited number of carbon monoxide detectors to distribute. We can also refer you to the Fire Service for a free 'Safe and Well' check in your home which could lead to free installation of safety monitors.

Contact Delyth Kerr at Carers Outreach for more information about any of the above.



Christmas holidays



Phone lines close:

Monday 23 December, 2024

Re-open: Thursday 2 January, 2025

Wishing you all the best for 2025!



Update from Carers Outreach

Help in challenging times

If you are experiencing any difficulties in your caring role, or with your finances, contact Carers Outreach. We can help you to access your entitlements and put you in touch with other agencies that can help you.

We have some in-house grant funding which is open to all carers and we welcome applications from you all, especially those of you who have not previously applied.

The Carers Support Fund Wales

is there to help carers who are most affected by the cost-of-living crisis and who are experiencing financial difficulties. This fund is open to any carer who is experiencing hardship, even if they are employed.

It is important to note that this is not an entitlement but rather a discretionary fund that will be awarded to carers following assessment of needs by the grants panel.

Carers Wellbeing Funds including Brêc Bach

Carers can apply for funding for short breaks which can be for a day or overnight. We can fund trips to the cinema, or manicures, spa, and social events - whatever would give you, as a carer, a meaningful break.

We can also fund equipment for hobbies or fund repairs to hobby equipment.

Carers caravans

We have 2 caravans at **Hafan y Môr, Pwllheli** where carers can stay at a reduced rate.



This year over 72 carers and their families took advantage of this great opportunity.

Contact us from **20 January 2025** to book your stay for the 2025 season.

✉ caravan@carersoutreach.org.uk

☎ **01248 370797**

Contact our Carers Outreach hubs for information or support

Gwynedd and Anglesey

☎ **01248 370797**

Open weekdays 9 - 4

✉: help@carersoutreach.org.uk

🌐: www.carersoutreach.org.uk

Conwy County

☎ **01492 533714**

Open Tuesday and Friday 9 - 4

Join in our activities, turn to the middle pages for details.

‘Self-care is how you take your power back’ - L Delia



Living life

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales

has launched a new guide to help older people and their families better understand their rights when accessing their GP practice, and the kinds of services and support that should be available.



Versions of the guide are available in BSL, Audio and Easy Read formats, alongside summaries in other languages.

Copies available by request from:

✉ ask@olderpeople.wales

☎ 03442 640670

📄 <https://olderpeople.wales> (to download)

Free

Keep warm and well

Courtesy of Wales and West Utilities we have a limited number of **Winter Warmer Packs** to give away to carers.

Each Pack contains items such as hand warmers, a thermos flask, a pair of thermal socks, a travel mug, a hat and gloves, a hot water bottle and a large blanket.

Contact us for more information.



Looking for information?

Our **Padlet** has lots of useful information.



📄 www.carersoutreach.org.uk/information-board-and-padlets.html

Not online? Don't worry!

Phone your local carers' hub to request a copy of our free fact sheet, **'Useful phone numbers for carers.'**

Ask our staff about our full list of fact sheets for unpaid carers.

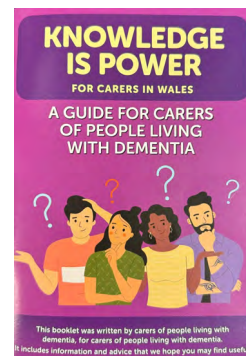
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

We have a few copies of Bangor University's booklet 'Knowledge is Power', to post out.

The booklet is full of helpful tips for people living with dementia and their carers.

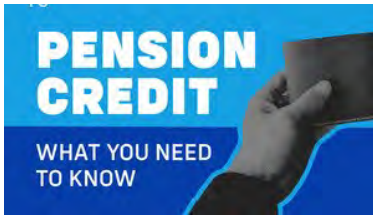
To request a copy contact our Bangor office.

☎ 01248 370797





Life tips



Pension Credit gives you extra money to help with your living costs if you're over State

Pension age and on a low income.

The average Pension Credit award is worth over £3,900 per year and it opens doors to other support, including the **Winter Fuel Payment**, help with housing costs, council tax and heating bills.

Many eligible households across the UK are yet to claim, and we are urging people to check whether they or their loved ones are eligible for this support.

You can claim Pension Credit if you're of State Pension age and on a low income. Pension Credit is separate from your

State Pension, and savings; a private pension or owning a home are not necessarily barriers to receiving it.

When you apply for Pension Credit your income is calculated. If you have a partner, your joint income is calculated. If your income is higher, you may still be eligible for Pension Credit if you have a disability, **care for someone**, or have housing costs.

You can start your application up to four months before you reach State Pension age or any time after you reach State Pension age, but your application can only be backdated by three months.

Telephone: 0800 99 1234

Textphone: 0800 169 0133

 www.gov.uk

(Above article adapted from gov.uk)

New webpage from Public Health Wales (PHW)

Carers play a vital role in ensuring that the people they care for can access screening appointments.

It is equally important that carers look after their own health. PHW understands that this may be difficult for carers and makes every effort to be as flexible as possible with appointment times, dates and screening locations.

<https://phw.nhs.wales/carers>

Tell Us Once

This UK government service, provided by local authorities on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions, lets people report a death to most government departments in one go.

The service can be used if the person who has died was living in England, Scotland or Wales, but only after a death has been registered.

A registrar will explain the Tell Us Once service when you register the death.

Contact Carers Outreach Service for information or support in your caring role



Carer's story

I'd known about Carers Outreach for some years before I became a carer. Then, when my husband had a stroke a friend handed me a leaflet and told me to phone them. But I felt I was coping alright and didn't really see myself as a carer, just a wife looking after her husband. My friend kept asking if I had registered with Carers Outreach yet and in the end I picked up the phone and registered and I am so glad I did!

During the Covid-19 pandemic my husband was admitted to hospital with a UTI (urinary tract infection) and whilst there he developed sepsis and covid. It was touch and go for a while and he was in hospital for 14 weeks in total. He was also diagnosed with vascular dementia during that time.

After a bumpy road he was eventually discharged home with a full care package and all the necessary aids and adaptations. I'd had experience of caring for my mum 24/7 years earlier but this time it was different. I was older now, my husband's condition was more complex and he was stranded upstairs. It became apparent to all concerned that he needed to be in a care home.

We are so lucky that he is now in a wonderful home nearby and I can visit him whenever I like. I'm a member of a local pop choir and we have visited the home to sing to the residents who all really enjoyed it. We are returning soon to sing Christmas songs. I will also be having Christmas dinner at the home with my husband. The home really is an integral part of the local community.

I've taken part in dementia training with Emma Quaeck from Dementia Actif and been on the virtual dementia tour bus. There is so much available now and it is good to be informed about dementia. Knowledge is power and it helps me to cope with my husband's condition.

Throughout all of this Carers Outreach has been a constant support. I was so grateful for the emotional support when I was making the difficult decision regarding moving my husband to the home. I know I can phone for support whenever I need to, but, what I really appreciate is that they will pick up the phone and ask me how I am. This means the world to me.

Caring can be so isolating, if I am having a down day I don't want to moan to my family and friends. It is good to have an objective, non-judgemental person to offload to if I feel the need. This support enables me to be happy and live my life as the upbeat person I want to be.

I applied to the Gwynedd carers wellbeing fund for a membership to my local swimming club. I feel this keeps the life in me, especially in the winter months when it is dark outside. I start with a swim and move on to the steam room; the hot bubbles of the jacuzzi is where I find the answers to all of life's problems! I enjoy chatting with the lovely staff and meeting people.

When I meet people who are caring for a loved one I always make sure I tell them about Carers Outreach.

~ Maureen, Gwynedd carer

Never give up on the things that make you smile