

The Carer

Issue 90 Summer 2019

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Carers Week 2019 June 10-14

Helping carers to stay connected



Have you heard about our carers' caravans?



GWASANAETH CYNNAL GOFALWYR
CARERS OUTREACH SERVICE

Read on to find out more!

Connected to information and support

Our Chief Officer reflects on...

Getting carers connected

I recently bought a notebook that bore the inscription, “Don’t just think outside the box, think like there is no box at all.” This got me thinking about how we can all fall victim of thinking in a boxed in kind of way. Sometimes, it takes a fresh pair of eyes to see a solution that has been staring us in the face the whole time.

This can be especially so for unpaid carers; they may be struggling to cope in their caring role and unable to see how things could get better, as the following example shows:

Josie was working full time and looking after her elderly mum who was becoming increasingly frail. Her mum needed help with the household chores, shopping and gardening.

Josie reluctantly decided she would have to give up the paid work she loved.

Then she spoke to Carers Outreach Service and was told she could request a carers assessment. This is an assessment of the carer’s needs and also looks at the bigger picture, seeing what services may be available for the cared for person, which would in turn benefit the carer.

Josie’s mum was fiercely proud and independent and would never agree to ‘charity’ – but she did agree to

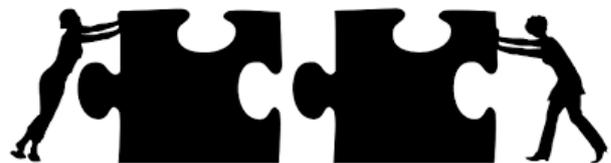
apply for Attendance Allowance, which she was subsequently awarded.

Mum was able to use the money from the Attendance Allowance to pay for a cleaner and a gardener, thus enabling Josie to stay in work.

Josie says, “It took an objective person to see what the answer to my dilemma was. I’m so glad I spoke to Carers Outreach about this, even though I was convinced there was nothing anyone could do to help – thank you!”

Not all situations can be resolved by a carers assessment, but sometimes just having a professional, non-judgemental and objective person to talk to can be incredibly therapeutic.

Our friendly and experienced staff are always happy to take your calls. We will do our best to help you to find innovative solutions and to keep you connected. ~ Llinos



A pessimist, they say, sees a glass as being half empty; an optimist sees the same glass as half full. But a carer sees a glass of water and looks for someone who might be thirsty.

Update from Carers Outreach

Join us to celebrate Carers Week 2019

This year we are celebrating Carers Week by inviting carers to join us at local attractions. We plan to explore the grounds and buildings and get together for a chat over afternoon tea.

Monday 10 June : Visit Glynllifon gardens with Gwyneth, plus afternoon tea at the Black Cat Café.

Wednesday 12 June: Join Bethan and Einir to explore Plas Newydd, plus afternoon tea at the café.

Thursday 13 June: Plas Tan y Bwlch and the Dwyryd Tea Room with Delyth.

Thursday 13 June: Bodnant gardens and tea rooms with Mair and Laura.

Free entry for carers!

We are negotiating to keep the price down to encourage more carers to attend. If you would like to attend more than one of these events and you are able to get to the venue, then you are welcome to do so. However, prior booking is essential, so we ask that you please telephone or email us to book your free entry by 3 June. We will provide details of meeting times and places when we have your booking.

Booking deadline: Monday 3 June

Good food, good company

Our carers' social groups are a great way for carers to keep in touch and also to learn more about services in the community.

We have several groups in the area and a strong volunteer presence which helps to keep the groups thriving.



We recently arranged a fundraiser at Venue at the Clock House in Colwyn Bay. It was heart-warming to see so many of the carers, volunteers, friends and family stepping out in the evening to support this event. And the feedback is that they enjoyed it! In fact they asked especially for a picture of the evening to be included in this newsletter.

Lovely evening, enjoyed food and company. Looking forward to visiting pancake house to enjoy my raffle prize.

Thank you to all who contributed to the above evening. A total of £295 was raised to help us to continue to support local unpaid carers.

Solution Slot

Q: I have recently stopped working to care for my elderly father. I'm worried about how this will affect my future state pension.

A: Carer's credit is a national insurance credit that helps with gaps in your national insurance record. It pays class 3 contributions that help protect state pension and bereavement benefits. You could get Carer's Credit if you're caring for someone for at least 20 hours a week. Your income, savings or investments won't affect eligibility for Carer's Credit. Carers who don't qualify for Carer's Allowance may qualify for Carer's Credit.

A freedom of information request showed that, in December 2018 only 17,388 out of a possible 200,000 people that the Department of Work & Pensions estimated could be eligible to claim Carers Credit, were in receipt of it!

This poor take-up could be explained by the fact that carers just don't know about Carer's credit; it is not a typical benefit, as you don't receive any money for it.

You can apply by downloading a form from gov.uk. Or for more information you can contact your local carers' hub. We have a specialist Financial Information Officer who oversees and deals with more complex financial queries.

Q: I've had a letter from the Local Authority that says I have to pay more towards my care package. Is this right?

A: From April this year the top limit for people to pay towards a care package is £90. The charging framework set by the Welsh Government seeks to ensure that people have enough money to meet their daily living requirements.

This charging policy applies to all adults who receive a care package in some shape or form. However, Local Authorities have a discretion in which services they charge for, so some services may be free where you live. Also, there are some instances where, for example, if the individual concerned is on an extremely low income, the charges can be waived.

Currently all children's care services are not charged for.

It is important to ensure that the Local Authority has your up to date financial details. It is possible to authorise the Department of Work and Pensions to provide the Local Authority with details of your income.

If you feel the decision about how much you must pay towards your care package is unfair then it is important to note that there is an appeal process.

You can contact your Local Authority to request a copy of its charging policy. Or contact Carers Outreach for more details.



Life tips

Carers caravan in Hafan y Mor

Helen has had a busy few months taking bookings for our caravan at Hafan y Mor, Pwllheli. The caravan is now fully booked and the bookings will re-open in January 2020. If you have been unsuccessful in booking this year we will give you priority next year. The caravan is so popular that we have a waiting list, so if you are unable to go for any reason please let us know in plenty of time so that we can offer it to another carer and their family.

Carers caravan in Bryn Morfa, Conwy



We still have vacancies at our Bryn Morfa caravan. This caravan offers a different type of break. There is no hustle and bustle here, but an excellent club house. If you like exploring the great outdoors, or just want to get away from it all, then this caravan would be a perfect break away. It is suitable for up to 4 people.

✉ caravan@carersoutreach.org.uk

Short breaks for carers

Gwynedd carers have been benefitting from extra funding that Carers Outreach received to ensure that carers can get a break from caring.

If you are a carer living in Gwynedd and you have not yet applied for a break, phone us for a chat about what is available. So far carers have enjoyed a variety of breaks including the following:

- A membership to a golf club
- A gym membership
- Therapy session with Donkeys
- A cleaning service
- Overnight respite
- A break in our caravan
- A visit to the hairdresser
- Various overnight breaks

Empowering Carers in Education and Employment - a free one day conference.

Bangor University and Carers Trust will mark Carers Week 2019 with a conference on Friday 14 June.

Keynote speakers and workshops.

Limited places available, reserve your place by registering now:

<https://cynhadleddgofalwyr-carersconference2019.eventbrite.co.uk>

The information in this newsletter is, as far as we are aware, accurate at the time of going to press. Carers Outreach Service can accept no liability for errors or omissions or for the quality of information provided by other organisations, nor can we recommend products or services.

Living life

Bangor University's Widening Access Centre works closely with Carers Outreach to support carers of all ages.

In partnership with local agencies and local authorities, we endeavour to tackle the barriers individuals face, in light of their caring responsibilities.

Each year, Bangor University welcomes young carers to a Residential Event, which gives 16-25 year-olds a taste of University life and the support offered to them here at Bangor. Through a varied programme of activities, the aim is to provide a meaningful taste of the academic and social life.

Annually, in addition to the £1000 Carer Bursary offered by the University centrally, an additional scholarship of £1,500 is offered to a carer coming to study at Bangor University.

In collaboration with the Students Union, the Widening Access Centre works with current students who are also carers in running a group for mutual support.

Bangor University produces a handbook for our current and prospective students detailing the support available, as well as telephone numbers and contact details that may be of help in any emergency.

The University's Widening Access Centre is constantly working to develop opportunities for carers, for example by hosting conferences and information events for carers themselves. See page 5 for details of our Carers Week conference.

~ Delyth Murphy, Head, Widening Access, Bangor University

Connected to education

Connected to our carers' hubs

Our telephone numbers:

Gwynedd and Anglesey: 01248 370797

Conwy: 01492 533714

Our email address: help@carersoutreach.org.uk

Our website: www.carersoutreach.org.uk

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