

From Trainees to Trainers

This article has been provided by Jobcentre Plus.

A group of carers from across the region are celebrating after successfully completing a training programme enabling them to become trainers themselves. Train The Trainer was promoted through Jobcentre Plus, local Carers' Centres, People Into Employment and other carer support organisations.

Enid Dalton, Care Partnership Manager from Jobcentre Plus said, "This is the first time that we have worked with Carers UK and I have to say it's been absolutely brilliant".

Comments from carers included "The learning experience was really good. The course was very informative and it helped build my confidence." and "Having been finished from work after 16 years my confidence was very low. Doing the course and meeting people in a similar situation to myself has been really rewarding. The information was excellent and really helpful".

Imelda Redmond, Chief Executive of Carers UK said "In order to give carers the higher profile they deserve, more trainers and facilitators are needed to get the message out there. Training carers to be facilitators is an excellent way of doing just that. They know exactly what it's like as they are dealing with the challenges of being a carer day in day out."

The course will run again in April. If you would like to know more about the Train The Trainer course and how Jobcentre Plus can support carers please contact your local office or contact Enid Dalton on 0191 382 4192.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this newsletter is correct. Sunderland Carers' Centre can accept no liability for errors and omissions and can not recommend products or services. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Sunderland Carers' Centre.

Washington Carers Consultation

On Wednesday 3rd November a group of carers from Washington met with local councillors to discuss issues affecting them as carers. The event, chaired by Councillor John Kelly, was the first event of its kind to be held in Washington for carers.

Carer, Pauline Dodds said "I thought this was a unique opportunity to meet with people who are in a position to listen to and carry forward ideas. Most importantly it gave carers a voice. I think it was generally agreed amongst most of us that lack of information or lack of direction was a main issue. If this can be rectified then it will be of immense value especially to those who find themselves in a caring position. I thought the credit card size information card was an excellent idea. It was also a good forum for information sharing and I for one found this of benefit."

Carers of Blind and Deaf People

Do you look after someone who is blind or visually impaired, or deaf or hearing impaired? Would you like to regularly meet up with other carers in a similar situation? If so, please contact the Carers' Centre on 567 3232. If there is enough interest, we will set up a carers' group.

Energy Social Tariffs

All energy suppliers have to offer their most vulnerable customers cheaper tariffs. These tariffs are called social tariffs and offer cheaper energy deals and extra free services to certain customers. You may qualify for a social tariff if you are over 60, on means tested benefits or are on a low income. If you think you qualify for a social tariff contact your energy supplier for more details.

The Carers' Centre is open
Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.

Tel: 0191 567 3232

(Answerphone after 5pm)

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This newsletter can be made available in large print,
braille, on audio cassette and in other languages.

Company limited by guarantee No. 5842011 Registered in England and Wales

Registered Charity No. 1118502

NEWSLETTER SPONSORED BY AZTEC COLOURPRINT. TEL: (0191) 417 8001

Newsletter

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January 2011

Caring with Confidence rolls into 2011!

2010 was our most successful year for Caring with Confidence sessions. More carers than ever took part and their feedback just got better and better! We are delighted the sessions will start again in February 2011 giving more carers the chance to take part.

Carer, Lynn Brettwood, took part in the last round of sessions in Sunderland and can't recommend them highly enough to other carers. Lynn said "At the time I received notice about the 'Caring with Confidence' sessions, within the Carers' Centre, I must admit my confidence and self-esteem were at their lowest ebb. I was going through an extremely challenging time in my life, but from the first session through to the last I gradually became aware that the wide range of activities and information delivered by some friendly and understanding people, were relieving some of the stress I was experiencing.

The Caring with Confidence sessions gave me a focus – goals in which to strive for, in order to get my life back on track. The time spent among other carers, as well as the facilitators restored my confidence and I would definitely recommend this programme to anyone in a caring role, which has provided me with the support and encouragement I needed to reach my goals. I would like to extend my appreciation to the facilitators and the new friends I made within the group for making my experience of 'Caring with Confidence' such a rewarding one."

If you want to find out more information about the sessions or want to register your interest to take part contact Sunderland Carers' Centre on 567 3232 or e-mail kevin@sunderlandcarers.co.uk.

Lynn is also a gifted poet and wrote this fantastic poem about her Caring with Confidence experience...

Communicating with carers to the highest degree

A service with a smile is a guarantee

Ready and willing to beat any stress

Invaluable information is surely addressed

New activities week after week

Gold standard tuition at its peak

Weaning carers from doom and gloom

Interesting topics to make them bloom

Tremendous support at the OK Corale

Holistically delivered to boost the morale

Consistency is the core of the sessions

On top of the world to create good impressions

Nothing is too much trouble, it's true

From the first day on, with food laid on too

If ever there was a team keen to please

Dealing an array of knowledge with ease

Every step of the way is a pleasure

Nice memories of friends to always treasure

Clarity, effectiveness, determination each day

Each carer looked after in the best possible way

“Recognised, valued and supported: Next steps for the Carers Strategy”

The refreshed Carers’ Strategy has been launched! Those carers who were at Sunderland Carers’ Centre Annual General Meeting will have heard Anne Smythe, Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Commission on Carers, give a preview of what was likely to be included so the actual contents are as expected, giving valuable recognition to carers and focusing on 4 priority areas:

1. Supporting those with caring responsibility to identify themselves as carers so that their contribution can be recognised and they can be involved from the outset in designing local care provision and planning individual packages of care

2. Enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential
3. Receiving personalised support both for carers and those they support, enabling them to have a family and community life
4. Supporting carers to remain mentally and physically well.

If you would like to know more, or to get involved in discussions about how the strategy should be implemented in Sunderland please call the Centre on 567 3232.

Pride of Wearside

Sunderland Carers’ Centre was surprised and delighted to win the Pride of Wearside Community Group award. A group of Board members and staff attended the dinner at the Stadium of Light as we knew we had been short-listed but we were amazed and humbled to win, receiving an engraved plaque and a cheque from the Managing Director of Sunderland ARC, which had sponsored the award.

The Carers’ Centre was nominated by a carer, without our knowledge. We will now have to work very hard indeed to live up to the kind things that were said about our service.

State of Caring Survey

Carers UK are carrying out a major new research survey to assess carers’ health, wellbeing and finances, and the support they receive from health and care services and their employers if they juggle work and care. To make headlines and make sure the media and politicians listen, they need a big response from carers.

To take part complete the survey online at www.surveymonkey.com/stateofcaring or contact the Carers’ Centre on 567 3232 for a copy.

Exciting Opportunity for Carers of People with Dementia

Do you care for someone who has dementia? Would you like to find out about the latest developments in the treatment and care of people with dementia and what services are available, as well as gaining confidence and skills that will help you with your caring role?

Sunderland Carers’ Centre have teamed up with experts in the dementia field, New Possibilities, to deliver a 2 day course to carers (free of charge to the carer) to be held on February 7th and February 14th in Sunderland.

If you are interested please contact Eibhlin Inglesby at the Carers’ Centre on 567 3232. We realise that carers in your situation often cannot leave their cared for person easily but if you are interested get in touch anyway and we will discuss ways we may be able to help you with replacement care.

Welfare Reform

This article has been provided by Sunderland City Council.

The new government is introducing a series of welfare reforms. The stated intentions are to reform the benefit system to make it fairer, more affordable and better able to tackle poverty, worklessness and welfare dependency. Many of the proposals are still to be introduced but the following changes will most directly impact on carers (and in some cases the people that they are caring for). Details of any changes will appear in the ‘News and events’ page of www.librasunderland.co.uk – you can also use this website to locate information and sources of further help or advice.

Universal Credit

The Universal Credit will replace most of the means-tested benefits and tax credits that are currently paid to people. It is due to be introduced from 2013 onwards. Although it is not intended to replace Carers Allowance, the Government is considering whether changes will be necessary to take account of the introduction of Universal Credit and provide clearer, more effective support for carers.

Incapacity Benefit - Employment and Support Allowance

These benefits are paid to people that are classed as being too sick to work. From October a new Work Capability Assessment is being piloted in 2 areas prior to national implementation. It is expected that the outcome of these reassessments will be more current Incapacity Benefit claimants being assessed as either being capable of work or obligated to engage with pathway to work advisers if assessed as having limited capability for work. In addition, contributory ESA (based on National Insurance contributions) will in future only be payable for one year rather than for an indefinite period.

Disability Living Allowance

DLA is a non-means-tested benefit paid to people with severe mobility problems or significant care or supervisory needs. The Government’s intention is to reassess everyone of working age on DLA, under a new “gateway”. People who receive DLA will not be affected by a number of the other welfare reforms. Recipients are not subject to housing benefit deductions when they

have non-dependants living with them, and it is also planned to exempt them from the planned Benefit Cap (which will limit households maximum weekly benefit income - including help with housing costs to about £500 per week).

Housing Benefit

While a number of changes from April 2011 onwards will affect some people’s Housing Benefit entitlements, the Government is also changing the rules to allow an extra room for a carer. This may apply when the person you care for is in receipt of housing benefit but need an extra room for a carer to stay in from time to time. This change will not affect the carers benefits so long as they are not away from their own homes for longer than is necessary. Details of how this scheme is to be implemented are still being determined.

Need help with benefits?

Sunderland Welfare Rights Service provides free advice sessions for carers at Sunderland Carers’ Centre every Wednesday afternoon. To arrange an appointment call the Centre on 567 3232.

Addiction Carers

The Carers’ Centre has two carers groups for people who care for or are concerned about a family member or friend with a drug or alcohol problem. One meets once a month on a Sunday, 12 noon – 2.30pm, at Washington Millennium Centre, Concord. The group was set up following feedback from carers who said they found it difficult to attend a group during the week due to work commitments. The other group meets every fortnight on a Monday evening, 6.30pm – 8.30pm, at Sunderland Carers’ Centre. Carers offer each other support and chat about issues around addiction. Carers can also find out about services and hear about changes. The Carers’ Centre also offers one-to-one support and home visits.

To find out more contact Corinne or Kate at the Carers’ Centre on 567 3232.