

# Newsletter

August 2015

## Caring and Social Isolation

**Sunderland Carers' Centre can reveal that 8 in 10 carers in Sunderland feel socially isolated.**

An online survey completed by 91 carers found that because of their caring role:

- 80% of carers feel alone, lonely or isolated
- 65% have lost touch with friends and family
- 76% of carers in a relationship have experienced relationship difficulties
- 61% of working carers have felt isolated from other people at work
- 61% of working carers had to give up work to care
- 80% have given up social activities, hobbies and interests
- 80% said their health and wellbeing had been affected

What would help carers?

When asked what would help them feel less isolated carers' responses included having a break; spending quality time with their family and friends; the opportunity to go out alone, to make new friends and meet other carers; to be able to study or work; and the time and money to spend on hobbies, interests and doing things with friends.

To read the full report visit

[www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/socialisolation](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/socialisolation)

The Carers' Centre will share the research findings with partner agencies to consider ways of reducing the social isolation experienced by carers.

Thank you to the carers who took part.



*Carers and their Canine Companions are pictured with the Mayor and Mayoress at our Canine Companions Dog Show to raise awareness about social isolation. More details inside.*

# Canine Companions

Carers cope with social isolation in different ways – for some carers owning a dog can make them feel less isolated. To help raise awareness in a fun, light-hearted way carers were invited to nominate their Canine Companions and the Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr Barry and Carol Curran, awarded rosettes to them at the Canine Companions Dog Show in Carers Week.

The overall winners were:

**Skye**, a 2 year old Border Collie, nominated by Wendy Hackles. Skye was the winner chosen by visitors to our website and facebook page. Wendy said "As a carer I became more and more isolated. I decided maybe a dog would be good for me. We now meet up with a group of friends every morning. I feel fitter and so much happier with my life."

**Mollie and Huey**, 10 and 8 year old West Highland White Terriers, nominated by Susan Todd. Mollie and Huey were the winners chosen by the Carers' Centre. Susan said "They ask for very little but give so much in return. I walk them every morning which is a great chance to exercise and chat to other dog owners."

Thank you to all the carers who nominated their dogs and everyone who voted.

The Psych Twins present...

## Monster Masquerade Ball

An evening of entertainment and fun!

**31st October 2015**

Sunderland Stadium of Light

In aid of Sunderland Carers' Centre

Standard Tickets £20 or VIP Tickets £35

The Psych Twins are two mature psychology students, both married with children. Between their two families there are a number of disabilities ranging from physical to mental. Their mission is to raise awareness and funds for various local charities and causes. We are delighted that The Psych Twins have chosen to support the work we do with carers and have organised this fantastic event to raise money for the Centre.

**For tickets or more information contact**

**07947648060 or visit**

**[www.jumblebee.co.uk/monstermasqueradeball](http://www.jumblebee.co.uk/monstermasqueradeball)**

# Carers Week 2015

Thank you to all the carers, individuals and organisations involved in making Carers Week 2015 such a success. It was an unforgettable week. As well as the Caring for Carers Awards and the Canine Companions Dog Show there was a regional conference for Chinese carers and carers enjoyed a day trip to Whitby.

Staff toured the city giving advice to carers with our Carers Week Information Roadshow and worked in partnership with a number of organisations to raise awareness including City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, Gentoo, and Dr Stephenson's and Partners GP Practice to name but a few.

A special thank you to Sainsbury's who supported the week in lots of ways including sponsoring the Canine Companions winners' prizes; providing afternoon tea for carers; and allowing us to meet carers in store as part of our roadshow.

We look forward to Carers Week 2016!





# Britain's Best Breakfast

Take part in Britain's Best Breakfast and help raise funds for Sunderland Carers' Centre.

There are various ways to get involved and donate:

- *Join us for brunch in our new kitchen at the Carers' Centre on Tuesday 15th September, from 10am until 12 noon. Book your place by Friday 11th September on 549 3768 and simply make a small donation on the day.*
- *Invite your colleagues, friends and family to join you for breakfast any time between 14th September and the end of October and make a donation.*
- *Have a virtual bacon buttie – send us a donation by text or online:*

Text **SUNC20** and the **amount** you would like to donate to **70070**

e.g. to donate £3 text **SUNC20 £3** to **70070**

or donate via <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/bestbreakfast>

Whatever you do... have fun, eat breakfast and raise a (piece of) toast to carers!

Britain's Best Breakfast is a fundraising campaign led by Carers Trust and Network Partners and is supported by Greggs.

## Taxi Card

The Taxi Card scheme can help people with mobility difficulties travel independently. It allows them to travel with an approved taxi company at a discounted price. Members get issued with a card which is credited with a set amount of money every year – they use the money on their card to help pay towards each journey they make. Taxi Card is an annual scheme and there are two opportunities to join each year. The current deadline for applications is August 2015 so do apply now. For more information and to see if you are eligible to apply please visit [www.nexus.org.uk/taxicard](http://www.nexus.org.uk/taxicard) or phone (0191) 20 20 747.

## Caring for Carers Awards

The Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr Barry and Carol Curran, presented this year's Caring for Carers Awards. Sponsored by Aztec Colour Print, the awards gave carers the chance to nominate workers who had supported them in their caring roles and made a real difference to their lives. 34 workers and teams were nominated. The winners were:

**Dr Carol Gray, Grangewood Surgery** – nominated by Mike Brewster and Christine Trotter. Mike said "Dr Gray has continually put carers and their problems at the forefront of her thinking." Christine said "Dr Gray has registered me as my father's carer and I have been seen twice now for a carer's review and health checks."

**Joy Medhurst, Care Worker, Care At Home Wearside** – nominated by Sophie Leonard. Sophie said "Joy has been an amazing support – there to give me a break. When she arrives on a morning she is happy and automatically brightens mam's day. To us, she is irreplaceable."

**Stacey Thompson, Personal Assistant** – nominated by Louise Henderson. Louise said "Stacey constantly makes a big difference to our life. She will go over and above her role and is there whenever we need her."

**Carers Improvement Scheme (CIS), Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group.** This is a new award and the winner is chosen by the Board of Sunderland Carers' Centre. The CIS aims to ensure that carers are identified and supported within GP practices earlier.



Pictured with the Mayor and Mayoress (from left to right) are Joy Medhurst, Dr Carol Gray, Stacey Thompson and Rachel Lumsdon (Sunderland CCG).

## Caring with Confidence

Would you as a carer like to become more assertive, lead a healthier lifestyle and gain more information which could help you in your caring role? Why not join us at our Caring with Confidence sessions. They start again in September and will be held at "The Place", Athenaeum Street, in Sunderland. The informal sessions are open to all carers whether they are new to their caring role or have been caring for some time.

These sessions take place each Wednesday from 9th September, 11am - 2pm. Each session includes a light lunch and refreshments. We can help with transport costs if required and help financially if you need a sitting service for the person you care for to enable you to attend.

If you care for someone with dementia we also offer four more sessions which start on Wednesday 4th November, 11am - 2pm.

If you are interested in taking part or would like more information please contact Carole at the Carers' Centre on 549 3768 or email [carole@sunderlandcarers.co.uk](mailto:carole@sunderlandcarers.co.uk)

## Well done Jim!

Congratulations to carer and Sunderland Carers' Centre volunteer Jim Robson on winning the national Carers Trust Marsh Award for Carers 2015. The Marsh Award recognises carers or former carers who have contributed to supporting other carers through volunteering. Jim has been a volunteer with the Carers' Centre for 12 years in particular supporting our work with young carers.

## Sunderland Carers' Centre

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## New Patron

We are delighted to announce that Baroness Hilary Armstrong has become a patron of Sunderland Carers' Centre. She returned back to her roots when she recently visited the Centre at Thompson Park – as a child Hilary attended the building when it was a nursery.

Hilary said "I am particularly impressed by the enthusiasm of the staff at Sunderland Carers' Centre who are involved in all aspects of carer support and also the valuable work being taken forward regarding the support of young carers in the city."

One of her roles in government had been to expand ways in which the Government could work with the voluntary sector and she hopes to use this experience in her new role as patron at the Carers' Centre.

## Essence Service Update

The Essence Service, based at The Sir Thomas Allen Centre, Mill Road, Doxford Park, provides support and information to those with a recent diagnosis of dementia (or in the early stages of dementia) and their carers. Sunderland Carers' Centre works as a partner of Age UK in providing the Essence Service. We now have two members of staff who form part of the Essence Team and the extended support to carers.

Last month saw the beginning of a new Carer Peer Support Coffee Afternoon. The group meets on the first Tuesday of every month from 1pm – 2.30pm at the Essence Centre and gives time and space for carers to come together for a chat and of course coffee! If you would like more information about the group, please contact Gillian Hawdon at the Essence Service on 522 1310 or Vera Maw at the Carers' Centre on 549 3768.

If you are caring for someone with dementia and would like to know more about the Essence Service and/or what Sunderland Carers' Centre can do to support you, please contact Vera Maw at the Carers' Centre.

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