

# Sunderland Carers' Centre

# Newsletter

January 2014

## Annual General Meeting

**The Annual General Meeting of Sunderland Carers' Centre took place on Friday 11th October at the Stadium of Light and was attended by 130 carers and friends from other agencies who were welcomed by the Centre's Chairperson, The Venerable Stuart Bain.**

Stuart outlined some of the work that had taken place in the last 12 months and expressed thanks to everyone who has supported us.

Following the business part of the meeting, there was a keynote speech by Graham Burt, Chief Executive Officer of Sunderland Carers' Centre. Graham spoke about the challenges that individual carers continue to face and gave reassurance that the Carers' Centre will continue to support all the carers we come into contact with. He also talked about the successful partnership working that takes place between the Carers' Centre and statutory agencies in health and social care, including the Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group, Sunderland City Council and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust.

Graham thanked all the staff for welcoming him into his role and the growing number of volunteers who support the work of the Carers' Centre. He also took the opportunity to thank last year's Mayor and Mayoress, Councillors Iain Kay and Barbara McClennan, for choosing the Carers' Centre as one of the Mayor's charities.

The meeting ended with a very entertaining presentation by young adult carers, Rachael Chapman and Becky Nelmes, who shared with us some special memories from their trip to Africa this summer. Rachael and Becky, along with Gabrielle Neale and David Harrison, were

given the opportunity of a lifetime when they went to Moshi in Tanzania as part of the Mount Kilimanjaro First Aid Community Programme where they helped in a local orphanage. Rachael and Becky (pictured) wished to say a massive thank you to everyone who had supported them in their fundraising efforts and making it possible for them to go on this journey in order to make a difference to other people's lives.

The full transcript and video of Graham's speech can be viewed on our website:

[www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/agm2013.html](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/agm2013.html)



Sunderland  
Clinical Commissioning Group



# Satisfaction Survey

Sunderland Carers' Centre wants to give as good a service as possible to carers and would like your views on the services we provide. We would like to know what we are doing well and what we are not doing so well so we can improve our service.

If you receive the newsletter by post please complete the enclosed survey and return it to us in the freepost envelope provided. If you receive the newsletter by email we will send you a separate on-line survey to complete.

The survey is anonymous. If you have any questions or concerns that you would like to discuss with us or need any help or advice in relation to your caring role please contact the Carers' Centre on 549 3768.

Please do take a few minutes to complete the survey. Your responses really matter to us. Thank you.

## Carers Have Talent!

As part of our Carers Week celebrations in June 2014 we are holding a special show called 'Carers Have Talent' to be held on the evening of Friday 13th June at Washington Arts Centre and we are looking for talented carers to take part.

Do you have a talent? For example, can you sing, dance or play a musical instrument? Are you perhaps a comedian or a magician?

Are you artistic or crafty? Do you paint, do needlework, write poetry or do photography? We would like to display some of your work on the night too.

We are looking for carers of all ages to take part, whether you are 6, 16 or 60.

Why not come along and show us your talent at our 'Carers Have Talent' Auditions on Friday 21st March, between 1pm – 6pm, at Washington Arts Centre, Biddick Lane, Fatfield, Washington NE38 8AB.

Please ring the Carers' Centre on 549 3768 by Monday 10th March and give us your name, phone number and what your talent is. We will ring you back and arrange an audition time that is convenient to you.

The 'Carers Have Talent' Show will be a night of celebration of carers and will have its very own after-show party and buffet.

# Thank you... and no more biscuits!

You may remember receiving an insert with our last newsletter where we asked carers to stop giving us chocolates and biscuits as Christmas and thank you gifts. We are delighted to say you heard us loud and clear and many of you made kind donations to the Carers' Centre instead! Your generosity has overwhelmed us, so much so, rather than thanking everyone individually we'll say a massive 'Thank you' here instead. This means we can make your kind donations go much further.

We have also just added another way to make donations to the Carers' Centre, the final piece of the jigsaw! As well as being able to make text donations you can now make donations on-line using the 'BT My donate' service.

To make on-line donations go to:  
**<https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/sunderlandcarerscentre>**

You can also raise funds for Sunderland Carers' Centre by setting up your own fundraising page on this service. This is a great way to raise funds for us if you are taking part in specific fundraising activities like the Great North Run or zip-wires across the River Wear! Think of this as an on-line sponsor form without the hassle! You don't even need to collect sponsor money; it is all done securely on-line.

We'll keep you updated in this newsletter and on our website of those brave souls undertaking such endeavours and we'll let you know how you can support them! Perhaps some of the Carers' Centre staff will be inspired to get even fitter and attempt the Great North Run following their biscuit-free lifestyle!

Thanks again for your continuing support to Sunderland Carers' Centre!

For more information about donating to Sunderland Carers' Centre go to:

**[www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/donate.html](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/donate.html)**

## Carers 'Feel Good'

It was wonderful to see so many carers at our 'Feel Good' Event at the Carers' Centre on Tuesday 8th October. The event was part of a week of events in Sunderland to celebrate World Mental Health Day. Our event was focused on the health and happiness of carers and the aim was to help carers to learn more about how to have and maintain good mental health.

There were a variety of activities that carers could take part in including learning hand massage techniques, potting herbs and making bird feeders for the garden, Chi Kung (a gentle meditative exercise), good mood food information and recipes, and pamper sessions (therapies and manicures). Carers were also given a 'Five-a-Day for Health and Happiness' goodie bag.

At the end of the event carers were asked to place their comments about the day on our 'Happy Tree' with carers saying "lovely and relaxing day with great people, "lovely morning, really enjoyed time out relaxing" and "had a lovely time today relaxing and mixing with friends – I'm going to try hand massage on my children. I'm sure they will love it."

Thank you to all the individuals and organisations who were involved in making the day such a success.



## Cash for Kids

We would like to say a great big thank you to Metro Radio's charity Cash for Kids who have donated £1,169 to the Carers' Centre so that we can get two new computers for the young carers to use. Not only will the young carers be able to access the internet during their weekly groups, they will also be able to create their own young carers newsletter, design young carers online resources and do their school homework if they do not have a computer at home. Becky Nelmes and her sister Nicola went to Metro Radio to be presented with a giant cheque. Becky is pictured here with presenters, Steve and Karen, and charity mascot, Courage the Cat.



## Find us on Facebook

Do you use Facebook? Have you visited our Facebook page? If not, then why not check it out and like us. Tell other carers you know about it too. We will keep you up-to-date with the latest news and events for carers. You can also follow us on Twitter. Visit our website [www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/facebook](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/facebook)

# Healthwatch Sunderland

The following article is provided by Healthwatch Sunderland.

Healthwatch Sunderland works with local people, patients, service users, carers, community groups, organisations, service providers and commissioners to get the best out of local health and social care services. This doesn't just mean improving services today but influencing and shaping services to meet the needs of the local communities tomorrow.

Healthwatch Sunderland is the new independent consumer champion for all of us who use health and social care services. It will ensure that everyone has a voice in the way that health and social care services are planned and delivered. Healthwatch works with communities across Sunderland to gather experiences of services both good and bad. We will use this information to influence service design and delivery.

Although not a statutory organisation, Healthwatch does have statutory powers which includes a statutory seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board; a right to Enter and View; and a right to a response within 20 days.

We offer an Information and Signposting service which you can contact on Freephone 0808 1729559. The service:

- Provides information on local health and social care services.

## Sunderland Carers' Centre

Thompson Park, Thompson Road, Sunderland SR5 1SF

**Tel:** 0191 549 3768

**Email:** [info@sunderlandcarers.co.uk](mailto:info@sunderlandcarers.co.uk)

**Website / Facebook / Twitter:**  
[www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk)

**Donate to us:**  
[www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/donate](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/donate)

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- Signposts people, when needed, to the most appropriate complaints process.
- Signposts people to professional advocacy services when they require support to make a complaint about a health care service.

Healthwatch Sunderland needs as many people, groups and organisations as possible to join us as members so we can help to make sure our local services meet your needs.

- Sign up to Sunderland Healthwatch today!
- Influence health and social care decisions in Sunderland
- Challenge existing service delivery

Come and talk to us. Your voice will make a difference. Contact us at:

Telephone: (0191) 514 7145

Email: [healthwatchesunderland@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchesunderland@pcp.uk.net)

Website: [www.sunderlandhealthwatch.com](http://www.sunderlandhealthwatch.com)

## Nurse Awards

Has a nurse made a real difference to your healthcare or that of a loved one's? Say thank you by nominating them for the Nursing Standard 'Patient's Choice Nurse Award 2014'. You can nominate nurses, health visitors, midwives and healthcare assistants. The closing date for nominations is Friday 31st January. Nominate at [www.patients-choice.co.uk](http://www.patients-choice.co.uk) or call 020 423 1066 for an entry form.

## Coffee Morning

The Carers' Centre holds a coffee morning for carers on the 3rd Monday of each month. The next coffee mornings are on Monday 20th January and Monday 17th February, 10.30am – 12 noon, at Sunderland Carers' Centre. All carers welcome. Come along for tea, coffee and a chat.

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.