

Sunderland Carers' Centre

Newsletter

March 2014

Caring for Carers Awards 2014

Has a worker from health, social services, a home care agency, a voluntary or community project or another organisation been of particular support to you in your caring role? For example a nurse, doctor, dentist, optician, pharmacist, consultant, social worker, care worker, or a voluntary or community worker.

If so, this is your chance to say thank you by nominating them for the Caring for Carers Awards 2014. The awards aim to recognise workers who have made a real difference to the lives of carers.

All workers who have been nominated will receive a certificate and the winners will be presented with their awards during Carers Week in June.

Carers on the mailing list will find a nomination form enclosed with this newsletter. Simply complete the form to nominate someone and return it to: 'Caring for Carers Awards', Sunderland Carers' Centre, Thompson Park, Thompson Road, Sunderland SR5 1SF.

If a nomination form is not enclosed please contact the Carers' Centre on 549 3768 or visit the website:
www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/awards.html

The closing date for nominations is **Tuesday 6th May**.

The award winners are not chosen by the Carers' Centre but by an independent panel of judges. It would be helpful to the judges if you could give as much information as possible about how the worker has helped you in your caring role and why you think they deserve an award.

Please note nominations must be from carers only and the person you nominate must be a worker (not a young carer or other family member/friend). We are also unable to accept nominations for workers from Sunderland Carers' Centre.

For more information about the Caring for Carers Awards please contact Sunderland Carers' Centre on 549 3768.



Sunderland
Clinical Commissioning Group



Staff Changes

The beginning of 2014 has seen some changes in the staff team here at Sunderland Carers' Centre. Some staff have moved on to new positions such as Sarann Valentine moving to the North East Autism Society.

Others have decided to move on as a result of options available through a proposed re-organisation of key functions within the Centre.

Beth Wayman, Lynda Irving and Allan Wallace all moved on in February. I know many of you will have benefited from their work over the years. I know staff here at the Centre wish all four of them the very best for the future, whatever their plans may be.

The Centre will of course continue to operate to support the many carers we know and will also continue to look to support those carers who have not either recognised their role or indeed are caring in isolation. Sunderland Carers' Centre will endeavour to ensure all carers know what support is available for them here in Sunderland.

Graham Burt
Chief Executive Officer

Carers Have Talent!

We are looking for talented carers who can sing, dance, play a musical instrument, do stand-up comedy, perform magic tricks etc. to take part in our 'Carers Have Talent' Show in Carers Week. You may do this alone or as part of a group or band. We would also like to display carers' craft and art work on the night, such as paintings, needlework, poems and photographs. Carers of any age can get involved. It is not a competition but a night of celebration with an after-show party and will take place on Friday 13th June, 6pm – 8pm, at Washington Arts Centre.

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.

Our Zip Wire Heroes!

Twenty brave volunteers will be zip-wiring across the River Wear to raise funds for Sunderland Carers' Centre on 3rd May. Not only are they all giving their time to gather vital sponsorship money, many are conquering their fear of heights! We wish them all the best of luck and we're sure they will enjoy the experience. Last year a smaller group of five volunteers took part and despite some knee trembling before the start they all wanted a second trip down the wire! We look forward to telling you all about the event in our July newsletter.

To sponsor the brave twenty you can do this online by going to their team page and selecting the member of the team you would like to sponsor: <http://mydonate.bt.com/teams/carerszipwire2014>

If you don't have access to the internet you can add your support on a paper sponsorship form at the Carers' Centre.

You can also text a donation to the Carers' Centre by our text donation service. For example to text £5 text SUNC20 £5 to 70070.

Thank you for your support!

Writing for Health

Creative writing can be therapeutic and can alleviate the effects of stress and anxiety. In May a new 10 week course of creative writing sessions will begin for carers, vulnerable and older people living in the Coalfields area.

Previous experience of creative writing is not necessary and it will suit all abilities. So if you're not the best at spelling etc. please don't be put off if you would like to come along and have a go!

Sessions will take place in The Community Room at Houghton Primary Care Centre beginning Tuesday 6th May and will continue every week (apart from 27th May as it is half term). Sessions will be 10.30am - 1.15pm with a light buffet lunch and refreshments available. Transport can be provided to and from the venue.

For more information please contact Gina Smith at the Carers' Centre on 549 3768.

Please note: due to the funding source of this project, these sessions are only open to carers, vulnerable and older people within the Coalfields area of the city.

Caring with Confidence

After a very successful run of Caring with Confidence sessions in Washington last year, 2014 sees the Spring / Summer sessions moving back to Sunderland and then on to Houghton-le-Spring in the Autumn. (We will tell you more about the Autumn sessions in our September newsletter).

To take part in the Sunderland sessions please sign up for the introduction session called 'Finding your way' taking place on **Thursday 24th April**. At the introduction session you can decide which of the other six sessions to take part in. All the Sunderland sessions will be at 'The Place', Athenaeum Street, Sunderland SR1 1QX, 11am - 2pm, lunch provided.

New for 2014! For the first time four new sessions will be added to the Caring with Confidence programme for carers of people living with dementia. These sessions will start on **Thursday 26th June**. Carers do not need to have taken part in the other Caring with Confidence sessions to get involved in these but we would encourage carers to take part in them all if they can.

To sign up for these introduction sessions please contact the Carers' Centre on 549 3768 or e-mail kevin@sunderlandcarers.co.uk. If you would find it difficult to attend, because of transport problems or you need to arrange alternative care, please let us know and we will see how we can help.

What do carers think about Caring with Confidence?

In 2014 we will have been running Caring with Confidence sessions for six years with hundreds of carers taking part. The sessions continue to be rated very highly by the carers who have taken part. One carer recently said...

"I attended the Caring with Confidence Course a couple of years ago. I found the sessions so useful, and I believe that they help to equip carers with the knowledge and confidence to make positive changes to their lives. The ladies running the course were all carers (past or current) - it really helped to know that they understood/empathised with our situations".

Carers often also say "I wish I had done these sessions years ago" so if you have thought about taking part in the past and have never booked your place make 2014 the year to do it!

Young Carers

Eight lucky young carers were given an early Christmas treat by the Mayor, Councillor Robert Heron, when he offered them a table at a Sunderland football match. Prior to kick off the group got to have a look around the stadium including the Players' Lounge where some of the Sunderland team were hanging out. Autographs and photos were collected then they had a three course Christmas dinner and received a gift bag. After the match, just when they thought it was all over, in came Santa with a signed football for them all!!! It really was a day to remember for these young carers.



Warming up your home

The following article has been provided by Sunderland City Council.

A package of measures is available to eligible households in Sunderland to help them warm up their homes. Warm Up North offers fully or partly funded home improvements to eligible home owners and tenants. Eligible householders:

- may live in a property that is not very energy efficient and hard to heat
- may live in an eligible area
- may be in receipt of a means tested state benefit.

Following a home visit to check eligibility, a Warm Up North assessor will recommend a tailored package of improvements to help make the property warmer and save money on energy bills. These may include a new central heating boiler, loft insulation, cavity wall or solid wall insulation, or renewable energy technologies.

To find out more about how Warm Up North could help make your home more energy efficient call the team on Freephone 0800 294 8073 or visit www.warmupnorth.com

Transition Streets

The following article has been provided by Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust.

If you have a child with learning disabilities aged 14 - 19, are you aware that we can provide support and advice in transition between child and adult health services.

The transition team is a small team of learning disabilities nurses and a support worker based at Hillview Clinic. We are available Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm but can offer flexible working outside these hours, depending on individual circumstances. We link into education, social and health services within Sunderland, to assist in your child's transition between child and adult health services. Support we can provide:

- Individual health assessment, towards the development of a health action plan and the completion of a health transition plan, as part of the person centred agenda.
- Collaboration with education, social and voluntary sectors towards the development of a person centred approach.
- Advice, support and guidance about the transition process.

For more information please contact us on (0191) 564 2600 (secretary).

Sunderland Carers' Centre

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Tel: 0191 549 3768

Email: info@sunderlandcarers.co.uk

Website / Facebook / Twitter:
www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk

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Carers knit for homeless

Some members of the Friday Open Door Group have been getting together to knit squares for a blanket which has been donated to the homeless. As well as contributing to a good cause, the carers have discovered that knitting has health benefits, making them feel good and improving their self-esteem. Carers have said "It stops me feeling anxious and helps me switch off" and "It gets me out into company and gives me the support I need."

The Open Door Group meetings are for people who care for or are concerned about a family member or friend with a drug or alcohol problem. If you are in this situation and would like help and support or want to find out about the group meetings please contact the Carers' Centre on 549 3768.



Satisfaction Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed and returned the Satisfaction Survey which was included in the last newsletter. Your comments are much appreciated and will help us improve our services to carers. If you have not returned the survey but would like to do so, please return it to the Carers' Centre as soon as possible.

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.