

Newsletter

November 2015

Carers' Rights Day 2015

21 years of campaigning for carers' rights

Carers Rights Day 2015 takes place on Friday 20th November and this year Sunderland Carers' Centre is celebrating 21 years of campaigning for carers' rights in Sunderland.

As part of our 21st Anniversary celebrations this Carers Rights Day we would like to invite carers and staff from other agencies to drop in to our Open Day at the Carers' Centre.

Carers Rights Day - Open Day
Friday 20th November
Drop-in between 11am - 2pm
Sunderland Carers' Centre

Come along and pick up the new national Carers' Rights Guide produced by Carers UK and other useful information, meet and chat to staff, have a tour of our building and find out more about the Carers' Centre.

You can also enjoy some tea, coffee and cake in our fantastic new "Kay's Kitchen" which has

been made possible thanks to a significant donation from Councillor Iain Kay from money raised during his Mayoral year.

No need to book, just drop in.

We look forward to seeing you there.



Pictured are some members of the Carers' Centre staff who you can meet at our Open Day. Seated left is Eibhlin Inglesby, our Partnership and Policy Manager, who retires in December. Find out more inside this newsletter.

Chief Executive Officer Update

I thought I would take the opportunity to update you all on some of the activity and changes within Sunderland Carers' Centre. It's hard to believe that I have now been in post for 3 years. In that time the Centre and indeed our partners in Health and the Local Authority have seen massive changes in the way that carers are supported in Sunderland.

Staff from the Centre has now been trained to deliver Carers Assessments on behalf of the Local Authority. This is in relation to the new duties placed on organisations following the implementation of the Care Act in April 2014. I am hoping soon that following all the training Carers' Centre staff will be equipped to fully support those carers wishing to undertake a carer's assessment.

Our work with GP's continues to flourish with increased carer referrals from local GP's, this is a fantastic opportunity for carers to be recognised by their GP for the activity they undertake and the potential for that activity to negatively impact on the carer's health. I would absolutely recommend that if you have not done so already, for you to let your GP know you are a carer.

As I said earlier it is amazing and frightening how quickly time passes. One of our key figures here at the Carers' Centre has announced her retirement. Eibhlin Inglesby has been with the Carers' Centre since January 2006. Eibhlin will be retiring at Christmas this year and I am sure many of you will want to wish her well for the future. Eibhlin has been an intelligent advocate for many carers over the years particularly in areas such as Learning Disabilities and work with our colleagues in City Hospitals. I will certainly miss Eibhlin and I wish her well for the future.

AGM

Carers are invited to the Sunderland Carers' Centre Annual General Meeting on Thursday 12th November in The Performance Room at The Place, Athenaeum Street, Sunderland SR1 1QX. 9.30am Registration and refreshments. 10am Business starts. Close by 12 noon. Places are limited. Please book by Friday 6th November on 549 3768 or email info@sunderlandcarers.co.uk

Christmas Closing Dates

Sunderland Carers' Centre will be closed from 5pm Wednesday 23rd December until 9am Monday 4th January. If you need support during this time you could ring the Mental Health Matters Helpline tel: 0800 013 0626 from 5pm – 9am weekdays and 24 hours at weekends and Bank Holidays, or The Samaritans tel: 116 123 (free from both landlines and mobiles) at any time. Please note we will be unable to respond to any messages or queries sent via facebook and twitter during this time.

Coffee Mornings

Our lovely new kitchen is available any time for you and others to make yourself a coffee and have a chat. However, we are suggesting the following dates to meet up with other carers for a coffee morning – Mondays 16th November, 21st December, 18th January, 15th February and 21st March. Staff will not be running these mornings but there will be someone available if you would like specific one to one support.

Young Carers

Thursday 28th January is Young Carers Awareness Day. Keep updated with our plans via our websites, facebook and twitter. To find out more about young carers visit www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk/youngcarers

Farewell from Eibhlin

I cannot believe that I have been a member of staff at Sunderland Carers' Centre for almost 10 years!

I joined the Centre in January 2006 as the Older Family Carer Development Worker. The role was to reach out to older carers who were caring for someone with a learning disability; to help them access services and to plan for the future. It was a new post within the organisation and certainly a new role for me as I had never worked in community development and knew very little about people with learning disabilities. However, almost as soon as I started, the role seemed to me to fit like a glove and whilst learning something new every day, I also felt I was somehow 'in the right place'.

Throughout the 10 years, my role has changed a number of times and certainly in the last 5 years become much more managerial, often liaising with other professionals and attending meetings but I have relished the contact I have been able to maintain with carers as it is grounding that always informs our work and keeps us being the organisation that we need to be.

The time has come, however, for me to have yet another change. I have decided to retire from the Centre in the middle of December and see where life takes me from there. These decisions are always made with mixed feelings: I have loved and been passionate about fighting for carers to receive the recognition and support they justly deserve. I have worked for an extraordinary organisation, had wonderful colleagues and met so many amazing carers. Life may have been challenging at times but certainly NEVER boring and I really believe that I have learnt something new every day of those 10 years and not just at the beginning of the role. On the other side of the coin I have always been one for new adventures and I feel some beckoning to me as I enter the next decade of my life.

Working for Sunderland Carers' Centre certainly changed my life in a way I never anticipated it would, walking through the doors of Toward Road all those years ago. I feel so privileged to have been part of it all and most importantly to have been touched by the lives

of so many carers. I am also very proud of all those carers (and staff) who took up the Irish dancing challenge I set them and who have publically celebrated their skills.

The Centre is holding a goodbye lunch for me between **12 noon and 1.30pm on Friday 4th December**. If you would like to pop along please do – it would be lovely to see you. If you are able to come can you please ring (0191) 549 3768 just to confirm for catering purposes. If you are not able to make that day I am working until 18th December.

My very best wishes to you all and rest assured, I will keep a close eye on carers' issues in the future no matter what adventure I am on!

Eibhlin Inglesby

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? Join us at our informal Caring with Confidence sessions which are open to all carers whether you are new to caring or have been caring for some time.

The sessions will take place each Thursday from 14th January, 11am – 2pm, at Washington Primary Care Centre with 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. To book a place or for more details please contact Carole at the Carers' Centre on 549 3768 or email carole@sunderlancarers.co.uk

If you are unable to take part this time our next sessions will be from Thursday 7th April, 11am – 2pm, at The Place, Sunderland. Please book as above.

Summer Streets

In July we welcomed the return of the award winning Summer Streets Festival to Thompson Park and the Carers' Centre garden. With thanks to The Cultural Spring and as part of our 21st Birthday celebrations a group of young carers and their families took part in the musical street procession through Southwick to Thompson Park launching the event.

Our Young Carers Samba Band, led by drummer Dave Harper from Frankie and the Heartstrings, were absolutely brilliant. Dave had worked with the young carers for six weeks leading up to the festival.



Garden Group

The "Carers Garden Group" is looking for new volunteers to join them. You don't have to be a Percy Thrower or Alan Titchmarsh. We are looking for people who would be able to give a little of their time when and if their caring role allows. In spring 2016 we will be starting a new venture – the makeover of the old Sensory Garden. Don't worry all of the ground works will be done by professionals so there will be no heavy work to do. We don't ask that you be green fingered, you may have other skills such as fundraising ideas, planning or an eye for design. If you like to be out in the fresh air, keeping active, enjoy company, a chat and a tea or coffee this could be for you. The Group have monthly meetings but many of the volunteers just pop in when they have some spare time and potter on with jobs which might need doing around the garden. If you are interested and would like to know more, we have a Group Meeting on Wednesday 25th November, 12 noon – 1.30pm, which you are welcome to attend or you can contact Carole on 537 5742.

Communicating with you

Due to increasing postage costs Sunderland Carers' Centre will now produce two editions of this newsletter per year. The next newsletter will be out in April 2016. To ensure you keep up to date with the very latest news and information please join us on facebook and twitter and visit our website.

You can help us save costs by receiving the newsletter by email. Please send an email to info@sunderlandcarers.co.uk including your name and postal address. To ensure our records are up to date please let us know if you change your email address.

The Carers' Centre is looking at additional new ways of communicating with carers such as offering a text messaging service where you can receive relevant updates direct to your mobile. If you would be interested in receiving information in this way once available please contact us with your mobile number.

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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