

Chief Executive Officer Update - October 2017

I am sure you will all have noticed the new look Newsletter and Logo. There are many reasons for the change some of which are about how logos are used by ourselves and our partners in the fast-moving world of Social Media. As you know our Facebook page and our Twitter Account are a well-used facility for those of you who can connect to Sunderland Carers Centre in that way. We are also acutely aware that many carers do not have access or skills to take up those opportunities. That is why we are offering help to those of you who want to get the skills to do so. Just contact the centre and we can have a chat to see how we can help.

Sunderland Carers Centre has been developing its services in line with what Carers are telling us what is important to them. We have undertaken our Annual Satisfaction Survey and we encourage all of you to complete the survey as it lets us know very clearly what we should be concentrating on. Our Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday 8th November at Bede Towers in Sunderland. Please feel free to join us where you can meet staff and Trustees who work together to ensure the growing number of carers are supported here in our city.

I know many of you will have noticed several changes to how we work with our key partners Sunderland City Council and Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group. These two organisations are key to ensuring carers are considered in the plans for the city in the future. Sunderland Carers Centre continues to have a great relationship with all our partners across the UK and here in the city.

We are also intending to launch our new Website in November which will have many features to assist carers and professionals. I know the staff here are fully committed to supporting all carers from some of our very young carers aged 5 years to some of our older carers who also need support advice and guidance.

On a personal note, I cannot believe how quickly the five years since I started here at the Carers Centre have flown by. I remain certain that Sunderland Carers Centre is one of the best in the UK. We will continue to work on behalf of you all.

Get crafty... and have a cuppa!

If you have visited the centre recently you may have caught a glance of some great craft work around the building. These are most likely the work of carers who have taken part in our 'Crafty Cuppa' sessions. The sessions were established by local artist Michelle Wall who worked with carers to share her crafty skills. Michelle has moved on to a new role and we wish her every success. Michelle's skills live on however and we are delighted that three carers in the first round of sessions are now running the group voluntarily, sharing their own skills with carers who are signing up to take part. If you are wondering what 'Crafty Cuppa' is all about it is a very informal group where carers learn a new craft based activity every week. It is a regular get together for carers of all abilities to get together, learn something new have a cuppa and just switch off for a while... it's amazing how doing any arts and craft can take you away from your daily routine and help you unwind. If you are interested in taking part or just want to know more about any future sessions please contact the centre on 0191 5493768 to register your interest. The sessions are free to carers.



*Pictured are our Crafty Cuppa Volunteers
- Left to right are
Victoria Guy, Rachel
Joyce and
Sandra Burt.*

Self-care in the city

How Sunderland Carers Centre is working with others to take people forward to better health and well being.

All Together Better (ATB) Sunderland is an NHS-funded 'vanguard' programme bringing health and social care services together, with other support organisations in the city, to provide better care for those who need it most, to keep them well and out of hospital if they don't need to be there.

Sunderland Carers Centre, working as part of a partnership being co-ordinated by ATB Sunderland is working to focus attention on the benefits of 'self-care' in order to help local people take control of their own good health and wellbeing better - whether that's managing a long term condition; trying to quit smoking, improve their diet or get more exercise. We know this can offer huge benefits to people and their families, as well as help reduce the pressure on over-stretched public services.

There is an abundance of expertise across the city supporting people to understand how to look after themselves and ATB want to join up those providers to improve and expand self care by sharing experiences and knowledge; exploring new techniques and technologies and avoiding duplication of work.

A key part of the plan is the introduction of the Patient Activation Measure (PAM) tool - which helps identify what level of support individuals or their carers might need to manage their health and well-being.

The PAM is being piloted across a range of specialism starting with volunteer GP practices; Age UK Sunderland's Essence Service and Hospital Discharge team and the council's Move To Improve programme.

As well as trialling the PAM, relevant front line staff will be offered direct training courses on core skills and self-care coaching skills; how to use the PAM tool or at least dealing with people based on their score; continuation and development of the clinical courses for carers and mapping what exactly is happening across the city in relation to self care.

Relevant resources for staff are available on the ATB website self care pages and will be added to as the project progresses.

You can also get lots of information to help you help the people you care for at www.wellbeinginfo.org.uk

Christmas Opening Times:

The centre will close for the festive period at 5pm on Friday 22nd December 2017.

We will re-open at 9am on Tuesday 2nd January 2018. If you call the centre during the festive closed period you will hear useful and emergency contact numbers.

If you need any contact numbers or information before then please contact our contact team on 0191 5493768.

Sunderland Carers Centre wishes all our readers a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Donations, Donations, Donations!

We are always very grateful for the donations we receive from individuals and organisations that want to support our work and carers. We have recently received some donations from individuals that have ensured about 60 carers have received a well-deserved break from their caring role. Lea Craggs made a donation in memory of her daughter Tracey and friend Shirley. Linda Dunville made another donation following a collection at her mother's funeral. These donations alone have allowed the Carers' Centre to subsidise trips to Minsteracres in Northumberland, a retreat that gave carers a chance to relax and take some time for themselves.

We were also lucky to have been chosen as Sainsbury's (Fulwell) Charity of the Year and this ended recently. The store raised an amazing £3184. Thank you to all the staff at the store for their dedication in organising fundraising events and hard work to raise this money...and of course all the Sainsbury's customers who gave so generously. Just think how many more carers will get an opportunity to take a break from their caring roles because of this latest donation!

Pictured are Sainsbury's Fulwell staff presenting their first instalment cheque from their fundraising efforts to Graham Burt



Parent Carers

- One Place, Your Space project:

Grace House is well known across Sunderland as providing a fantastic short break service for children with complex disabilities and life limiting conditions at their state of the art building in Southwick.

They have now secured funding from the Big Lottery Fund for the One Place, Your Space project. The project has been established to provide a range of much needed support services to parents and carers of children with complex disabilities. All services are free if the child is aged anywhere from birth to 25 and there are no geographical boundaries so it is open to anyone wherever they live.

There are four strands to the project and are all free to any parent of a disabled child aged 0-25:

- Free access to a range of holistic therapies (eg massage, Reiki, reflexology, aromatherapy,

sound therapy) held in their wonderful therapy room;

- Free and immediate access to an excellent counselling service;
- The opportunity to link in with others in a similar position in a support group, whether for general support or to learn more about things like mindfulness and stress management;
- Sibling support provided through their partnership with Sunderland Carers Centre.

They also have a superb sensory room which is available for hire, although there is no charge for children who are eligible to stay at Grace House.

If you would like more information about the project please contact Chris Pretty on 5252817.

**One place,
your space.**



**NATIONAL
LOTTERY FUNDED**

Rotary Club Dementia Cafe

Sunderland Rotary Club are running a Dementia Cafe here at Sunderland Carers Centre on the last Wednesday of each month from 2-4pm. Carers and the people they care for are welcome!

There is no need to prebook, you can just turn up on the day! A member of staff from the Carers Centre will also be at the cafe to offer any information and advice to carers if needed.

Remember Carers Rights Day 2017!

This year Carers Rights Day takes place on Friday 24th November. The Carers Centre's doors are always open for carers to come in and pick up information from our 'Carers Centrepoin't' area and chat with staff.

Carers Rights Day is no different but if you pop in between 10.30am to 3.00pm make sure you check out our wonderful kitchen and enjoy some cake, savouries and a cuppa!

Spotlight on the Sunderland Carers Group...

...or 'PAG' as it is affectionately known as because its usual base is at Pallion Action Group (taking place on the first Friday of every month from 10am – 12 noon). The group is open to all adult carers who look after another adult. The carers themselves decide their own programme of events for the year.

Andrea Lanaghan facilitates the group and says 'The group chose a great range of trips and guest speakers this year, everything from a guest speaker about the history of Sunderland, a backstage visit to Sunderland Empire to more practical topics like care home fees and Lasting Power of Attorney.

2018 will be no different, already we have planned amongst other things an information session fire safety in the home and a visit to St Anthony's for a day of emotional resilience.

Carers have said about the group...

"I can forget my caring role for 2 hours but Andrea is always there to ask for advice if I need to"

"I love the places we visit as there are different to where I'd normally go to"

"I've found out so much to help me stay healthier through the talks on oral health, mindfulness but I enjoyed laughing therapy the most, that was a hoot"

If you want to join the group please get in touch with our contact team on 0191 5493768.

*Pictured are
the PAG group
enjoying a relaxing
session of flower
arranging*

