



Angus Carers Centre

supporting carers

Newsletter



Spring Edition 2010

WELCOME...

How are we doing?

We hope you benefit from the service that Angus Carers Centre provides, but we do really want to hear what you think. I know questionnaires are not the most popular mail we receive, but this is very short and easy to complete, and you have a return freepost envelope and the prospect of an "Invitation to Tea" (see below), as well as winning a prize as the first completed questionnaire picked out. So please take a moment to complete and return it to us, we do value your feedback.

Invitation to Tea

It is almost two years since we invited all carers to attend a tea party. This was an opportunity for us to sit down together to hear what you think about Angus Carers Centre. We heard from you about what we do well, but we also received suggestions for improving our service. Angus Carers Centre was set up by carers, and carers continue to be at the heart of our service, so it is important that we hear what you think.

This time, rather than having one big meeting, we plan to have three meetings – in Arbroath, Forfar and Monifieth. This should make it easier for carers to attend. All those who complete and return the enclosed questionnaire, and who have ticked that they would like to attend, will receive a letter of invitation with further details. We do hope that you will come to meet with us.

If you have registered within the last six months, a Carer Support Worker will contact you shortly to conduct a more in depth review. However, if you would also like to complete the enclosed questionnaire and receive an "Invitation to Tea" we would be delighted to see you.

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Angus Carers Forum

The next meeting of the forum will take place on Tuesday, 16 February 2010 at the Guide Hall in Forfar, starting at 10.30 am and finishing with a buffet lunch at 12 noon. Susan Smillie, Communications and Engagement Officer, with Angus Council's Social Work and Health department will be present. Susan will discuss the various ways in which information is communicated and be very willing to answer any questions or receive helpful comments. Any person who looks after a family member or friend will be made very welcome.

Details for our meeting on 16 March have still to be finalised, but please put the date in your diary and all regular attendees at the forum will be sent details in due course.

Transitions Project – New Dawn Developments

Angus Carers Centre supports people during their caring role, but also when that role comes to an end.

There have been three main developments in the support for former carers since the last newsletter.

Firstly, as part of our update procedures, we have made telephone contact with all the former carers known to us. This has enabled us to catch up with how they are getting on and if they would like any support at this time.

Secondly, we have been working on a leaflet specifically designed to relate to former carers. This leaflet will explain to people exactly what services are on offer to them as part of the New Dawn Project. If you are a former carer, look out for this leaflet coming through the post sometime soon.

Thirdly, some really strong feedback that we have received from former carers is that they would like to start up a monthly social activity. A plan for this has now been put together and we are hoping to propose a couple of ideas to former carers to start in March. Again, watch your letterboxes for more information in due course.

Drug and Alcohol Support Group

The support group for those caring for someone with a drug or alcohol problem continues to meet every second Wednesday here at Angus Carers Centre. A further support group has started in Kirriemuir, also every second Wednesday. Any person who looks after someone with drug or alcohol problems will be made very welcome at the groups, for dates see back page.

Carers Christmas Party

Around 120 carers enjoyed the Christmas event at the Park Hotel in Montrose on 16 December. Carers reported that the lunch was excellent, particularly the swan dessert which tasted as good as it looked! Lorna Taylor and her friends provided the music and it was good to see everyone chatting together and making new friendships. How many sleeps till the next one?

Do you worry about moving the person you care for?

We are running a Moving and Handling training session on 29 March 2010 from 10.00 am – 3.00 pm. The venue is to be confirmed once we know the level of interest. The trainer will give you information about how to keep yourself and the person you care for safe from injury while moving, and lots of other tips to make it easier for you when assisting someone to move. If you are interested please tick the reply slip.

First Aid training.

This is a very popular training and we hope to repeat this in local areas sometime in early summer. This training is suitable for all and will give you a basic First Aid Certificate. To give us an indication of interest, please tick the reply slip and further information will be sent to you nearer the time.

Assertiveness Training

Would you like to improve your skills in:

- Being able to stand your ground?
- Putting over your point of view?
- Not feeling guilty when saying no?
- Being able to say how you feel?



If so, the half-day **Introduction to Assertiveness** training may be for you.

This morning session will be run here at the Centre in Arbroath on Thursday, 25 March 2010.

If you are interested, please tick the appropriate box on the reply slip and we will be in touch with you in due course.

The Garden Gang is showing it's shoots.

Spring is just around the corner, and we are pleased to say that we will be able to continue with the Gardening Group. If you came a long last time and would like to continue, or if you would like to join in or if you would just like more information, then please tick the Reply Slip and we will get in touch. You will be made very welcome.



Power of Attorney

A very interesting and informative workshop on Power of Attorney and Guardianship was well attended on Friday, 15 January 2010. All who attended found the information enlightening and helpful. Stuart Fowler from the Public Guardian's office delivered the workshop and is now wishing to provide individual sessions for carers and the cared for who are interested in knowing whether Power of Attorney is appropriate and if so he will assist in drawing up the document. There will be no charge for this assistance which will be a saving on solicitors' fees. There is the normal fee of £65 to the Public Guardian's office only if you go ahead with the Power of Attorney. All will be explained during the session. If you are interested please tick the reply slip and further information will be sent to you.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Group

The next meeting of the ASD group will take place at Angus Carers Centre on Wednesday, 17 February, 10.30 am to 12.00 noon. Any parent carer who has a child with a diagnosis of ASD is welcome to come along. The following month the meeting will be held on Wednesday, 17 March, at the Salvation Army Hall, Chapel St, Forfar.

If your child has a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and you would be interested in a group please tick the reply slip. This will let us know if there is sufficient interest to take this forward



Book Group



The Book Group is a small sociable group who have come together not only to suggest good books to read, but also to discuss their likes and dislikes in a particular book.

As a carer it can be difficult to find time to read, alternatively, you may enjoy the escapism of a good read. Either way the Book Group may be an ideal activity for you.

The Book Group's next read offers two options by the same author Jennifer Johnstone. These are "Not a Novel" or "The Railway Station Man". The group will read either or both of these books and then have a light discussion about them at its next meeting on Tuesday, 16 February. So if you enjoy reading why not try these titles and then choose whether or not to come along and chat about the books. For further details contact the office.

Carnoustie /Monifieth Group

The Monifieth Group has been running now for a year. We experimented with amalgamating the Carnoustie Group with Monifieth, as both areas had low take up. However, due to the very small numbers attending the group it is no longer viable. We will look at the possibility of arranging something later in the year in that area.

In the meantime thanks to those people who were regular attendees, supporting each other over the last year. Hopefully they will either join in other meetings or are welcome to contact the Carers Centre for further support.

Angus Young Carers

The young carers enjoyed a local pantomime at the end of 2009. We went to see Cowboy Joe!! at the Abbey Theatre. The Panto was such fun, everyone had a great time!

Now we are planning activities for this year including the Easter Holidays which are fast approaching. The Young Carers Groups have also started again after the Christmas break.



FUNDRAISING



Past events

Christmas was a busy time for everyone and especially carers. Over the season there were two opportunities to have fun and raise some funds for Angus Carers.

The first was the Christmas Party (see article on page 2) where people not only came along to share a meal but to have some fun. A huge thank you to every one who either brought or sent in raffle donations and also to those who bought raffle tickets on the day. As well as the fun of winning a prize a total of £291 was raised.

After all the turkey, chocolates, cake and a fantastic choice of TV entertainment (!!) a happy band of carers, volunteers and staff gave up some of their time on Wednesday, 30 December with our annual “Bag Pack” in Morrisons. Boy we were busy, packing, chatting, and laughing. One carer was even spotted “holding the baby” when a stressed out mum asked her to take the toddler while she unpacked her trolley. The day flew past and by 5.00 pm we had raised £1,039, a very worthwhile total. So thanks to everyone who helped and especially to John McCrank whose enthusiasm and energy kept everyone going and to Flo who counted all the money. Will we do it all again this year?

Present events

Loose Change boxes are an ongoing way to boost our funds and these are continuing to come in. To date from 1 April 2009, we have raised £250. So thanks to everyone who has donated this way. If you have a box needing replaced or would like to have a box, just pop into the office and pick one up, or give us a call, and we can arrange to get one to you.

Future events

Coffee Morning, a date for your diary.

This year we are planning a coffee morning and plant sale in Forfar on Saturday 18 April 2010 from 10 am—12 noon in the Guide Hall. It is great to have volunteers involved in this activity so if you can help out either in the planning or on the day please give June a call. All donations of items for sale are also welcome.

Carer Updates

Here at Angus Carers we are keen to keep in touch with all carers registered with us. Every month we make contact with carers who have not accessed our range of services over the past six months or so, just to see how they are getting on but more importantly to see if there is any support that they may be requiring.

As you can imagine, with the number of carers we have registered, it can take some time to work our way through our files. With this in mind, we are pleased to report that four volunteers have offered their services to help with this task. They will shortly be undertaking some training and are hoping to start making contact with carers in March during the early evenings.

We look forward to talking to you. Please remember though, that we are just at the end of the phone, so please do not hesitate to contact us in the meantime if there is anything we could do to support you in your caring role.

Jobcentre Plus Support for Carers

The UK Government's Carers Strategy was published in June 2008 and sets Jobcentre Plus specific commitments to support carers wishing to enter or re-enter the labour market.

From 7 December 2009, Work Focused Support for Carers (WFSC) and funding of Replacement Care will be introduced. WFSC is an entirely voluntary programme that will offer support and training opportunities to those carers looking to combine paid work with their caring responsibilities, or those looking to prepare for when their caring responsibility ends. WFSC will involve one-to-one adviser support, training opportunities and the accessing of funding for replacement care whilst carers engage in Jobcentre Plus approved activities.

As part of the Strategy a Care Partnership Manager has been put in place within each Jobcentre Plus district. The role of the Care Partnership Manager includes:

- Building and maintaining relationships with relevant carer support organisations
- Assessing local services available to carers and identifying gaps in provision
- Assessing local demand/support and encouraging local development of external services, such as replacement care, to support the demand
- Ensuring that Jobcentre Plus staff have information on local carer support and services.

To make an appointment to speak with one of these advisers please contact your local Jobcentre Plus office.

Swine Flu

Phase 2B of the swine flu vaccination programme will involve offering the vaccine to unpaid carers, defined as those in receipt of Carers Allowance, or those who are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill. If carers wish to have the swine flu vaccination, they should contact their GP practice.

Carer Holidays

Angus Carers Centre along with other carer centres receives occasional offers from organisations offering reduced or free holidays. Travel costs and any other costs are paid for by the carer. The holidays are for carers registered with the Princess Royal Trust for Carers. If you would be interested in receiving details of these offers as they come into Angus Carers Centre please tick the reply slip.

Help wanted!

The Aliss project (Access to Local Information to Support Self management) is working towards a web base of information for disabled people in Scotland. Vital sources of support exist in most local communities but how do you find out about them?

The project is looking for carers and people with long-term conditions to attend a workshop to discuss people's experiences of finding out about support that can help people live well with their conditions. The information received at this workshop will be taken forward to create the first version of a service that meets people's needs. Travel expenses and lunch will be provided.

It is to be held in McDiarmid Park, St Johnstone Football Club, Perth on 25 February 2010 from 10.30 am – 2.30 pm. If interested contact Jenny Dowswell 01312442774

e-mail Jennifer.Dowswell@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Free Electrical Home Safety Day



Angus Care and Repair are offering a Free Electrical Home Safety Day on 23 February 2010 in the Carnoustie Golf Hotel. Around 150 places will be available for older (over 60) or disabled people who live in Angus. The day will include workshops giving advice about staying safe in your own home and a two-course lunch. Buses will be available from Forfar, Kirriemuir, Brechin, Monifieth, Montrose and Arbroath.

If you are interested in attending this day please contact Kath or Helen at Angus Care and Repair on 01307 463232 to book your place.

Saga Respite for Carers Trust

This trust will fund a holiday for a carer over 50 and a companion over 40. This is not the person you care for but the trust will fund respite care for them if required. To be considered for one of these holidays you will need to complete an online nomination form at www.sagacarerstrust.org Applications need to be in by 31 August 2010. The awards will vary in value and are at the discretion of the trustees.

New Carers Strategy for Scotland – you are needed!

The Scottish Government is currently developing a new Carers Strategy for Scotland, building on progress since the Care 21 Report: The Future of Unpaid Care. The new Strategy will also include specific sections relating to young carers.

To help with the development of this, a series of meetings is planned. The meeting most convenient to Angus will be held in Dundee on Tuesday, 23 February 2010 at 10.00 am to 1.15 pm (followed by lunch). The venue is Central Baptist Church, 9a Ward Road, Dundee. It would be good to have carers from Angus attend this meeting. Please let us know if you are able to attend by ticking the reply slip and returning it by 12 February 2010, indicating if you require assistance either with transport or short break/respite care and any dietary requirements.

Citizens Advice Bureau Drop-in

A monthly drop-in, starting on Thursday, 4 February from 10.00 am – 12 noon is to be held at the Centre for carers who are registered with Angus Carers Centre. A member of staff from the Citizens Advice Bureau will be available to give a free confidential service, which can include advice on benefits, money, and debt. A Carer Support Worker will also be available to answer any queries carers may have. You are welcome to just drop in for a coffee and a chat or, to ensure you are seen at a convenient time, you can make an appointment by contacting the Centre on 01241 439157.

Your Call Counselling 0808 8010 362

This is a free telephone counselling service open to disabled people from all over Scotland. The counsellors are all disabled themselves with an understanding of what it is like to live with a disability. They are all trained to a professional standard. The service will help people who are trying to come to terms with painful events, manage difficult feelings or who are seeking direction and meaning in their lives and is totally confidential.

Just a little reminder that Angus Carers Centre provide a similar face to face service for carers. Our counsellor will deal with all these feelings. If you feel you would like counselling give the centre a phone on 01241 439157

Diary of Events

Date/Time

Event

Tuesday 16 February 2010	Carers Forum: 10.30 am—12 noon Guide Hall, Forfar
Tuesday 16 February 2010	Book Group: 10 am—12 pm Angus Carers Centre, Arbroath
Thursday 25 February 2010	Assertiveness Training: Angus Carers Centre, Arbroath
Tuesday 16 March 2010	Carers Forum (TBC)
Monday 29 March 2010	Moving and Handling Training
Saturday 17 April 2010	Coffee Morning and Plant Sale Guide Hall, Forfar
Tuesday 20 April 2010	Carers Forum (TBC)

Groups

ARBROATH 10.30 am at Angus Carers Centre. (Second Monday of the month)

Monday 8 March 2010
Monday 12 April 2010
Monday 10 May 2010
Monday 13 June 2010

MALE CARERS (Monifieth) 1.30 pm at Monifieth Health Centre. (Third Monday of the month)

Monday 18 February 2010
Monday 15 March 2010
Monday 19 April 2010
Monday 17 May 2010

DRUG & ALCOHOL GROUPS 10 am at Angus Carers Centre (fortnightly) and 6.30 pm—8.30 pm in Kirriemuir

Wednesday 24 February 2010
Wednesday 10 March 2010
Wednesday 24 March 2010
Wednesday 7 April 2010
Wednesday 21 April 2010
Wednesday 5 May 2010
Wednesday 19 May 2010

KIRRIEMUIR 10.00 am at Age Concern Hall. (Last Friday of the month)

Friday 26 February 2010
Friday 26 March 2010
Friday 23 April 2010
Friday 28 May 2010
Friday 25 June 2010

AUTISM GROUP 10.30 am at Angus Carers Centre, Arbroath and Salvation Army Hall, Chapel Street, Forfar

Wednesday 17 February 2010—Arbroath
Wednesday 17 March 2010—Forfar
Wednesday 21 April 2010—Arbroath
Wednesday 19 May 2010—Forfar

Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this newsletter is correct. Angus Carers Centre can accept no liability for errors and omissions and cannot recommend products or services. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Angus Carers Centre.

Please note ...

As an organisation that holds information, we are required by law to ask those who are on our mailing list if they still wish to receive regular mailings. If you do not wish to remain on our mailing list or if the information we hold on you is incorrect, please contact us so that we can make the necessary alterations.