



Angus Carers Centre

supporting carers

Newsletter



Winter Edition 2009

WELCOME...



Christmas



We may feel that over winter we live in a perpetually dark world, dark in the morning and dark by late afternoon, but even in winter there are some beautiful days of sunshine. We recognise that for some carers this can be a particularly difficult time with additional stresses and strains at a time when everyone else seems to be enjoying themselves. Carers may feel more isolated or less supported. The staff at the Centre understand these issues and are here to give you support. So please contact us if you need assistance. It would also be good to see you at our Christmas party to celebrate together and have a little time off.

As Christmas approaches all the staff team at the Centre wish you a very happy Christmas and good wishes for the New Year and we hope that you enjoy a few days of sunshine!



Christmas Lunch



Time to get your glad-rags out and get ready to party, party, party!

The Christmas lunch is booked at the Park Hotel, Montrose on Wednesday, 16 December. Arrivals from 12.00 noon for a 12.30 pm start till 3.00 pm.

We look forward to seeing you there and to book your place please tick the reply slip, send it back in the freepost envelope, along with a £5.00 donation per person towards the cost.

CONTENTS

Page 1	Christmas, Christmas Lunch, Carers Rights Day
Page 2	Carers Forum, Valuing your Experience
Page 3	Learning for Living, Changing Relationships, Power of Attorney
Page 4	Carnoustie joins Monifieth, Primary Care Project, Drug and Alcohol Group, Young Carers
Page 5	Pampering, Green Fingers, Transitions Project
Page 6	Letham Pharmacy, Switch to Digital TV, NSF Carer Support, Tayside Cancer Support
Page 7	Parents Corner, Fundraising, Telecare
Page 8	Diary of Events, Group Dates



Carers Rights Day



An Information Event is being held as part of Carer Rights Day on the 4 December at the Meadowbank Inn. It will be similar to last year's successful event and a flyer is enclosed to give details. If you wish to come along please tick the reply slip to give us an idea of numbers.

3 Fisheracre, Arbroath DD11 1EL Tel: 01241 439157 Fax: 01241 876903
Email: enquiries@anguscarers.org.uk Website: www.anguscarers.org.uk

Angus Carers Association Charity No. SC026052

Angus Carers Forum

In October, Susan Wilson, General Manager of the Community Health Partnership, gave an up-date on service developments and listened to comments, suggestions and questions from those carers who attended.

The next meeting is on Tuesday, 17 November. Please see article on the Carers Reference Forum for details. The December meeting is on 9 December which will also include our Christmas lunch. This meeting will be at the Meadowbank Inn.

Carers Reference Forum

Both carers and staff from health and social work are invited to attend the meeting of the Carers Reference Forum which will be held at the Links Hotel, Montrose on 17 November at 10.30 am. It is important that carers come to ensure that their views and comments on their experiences are heard. If you require respite care or help with transport to enable you to attend, contact the Centre. Please tick the reply slip if you plan to attend.

Valuing Your Experience – a course for carers and former carers

“I feel stuck in a rut and don’t know how to get out of it”

“Sometimes I know I want to do something for myself, but I just don’t know what”

“I want to do something I will enjoy and find satisfying”

“I feel I have lost my confidence to try something new”

Do any of the above quotes apply to you? If so why not come and join us in this new 10-week course which is due to start soon into the new year.

This course has been designed to help carers and former carers develop more confidence about the experiences they have had in their lives, and how these experiences can be used in a positive way in the future.

The course helps to build self-confidence and helps people to access the wide range of support they may need to make a change. Trying something new can mean taking up a new leisure interest or learning a new skill. It can also mean working out how your past experiences can help you feel confident about promoting your skills for training or employment reasons.

If you are interested, please complete the reply slip and more information will be sent out. If you have any questions please contact Lynne.

This is a joint venture between Angus Carers Centre and Community Learning and Development (Literacy).

Learning for Living – A City and Guilds course for carers

The first intake for this course started successfully in September and now there is a second opportunity with a further intake in January.

This innovative course recognises the many skills that carers have developed while looking after a family member or friend. It builds on existing skills and develops new ones in areas such as returning to learning, communicating well, the value of assertiveness, shaping your future, keeping healthy, coping with stress, understanding relationships and behaviours and managing finance (amongst many others).

This is an online course with much of the work completed on computer, either at home or at a Learning Centre in your area. Carers therefore need to be competent with basic computer skills (such as sending emails/accessing the internet, etc.). Plenty of support will be available to help you. It can be done in your own time and completion of the course will lead to the equivalent of two SVQ units, which can assist you to access other courses or highlight your skills on an application form. Last year thirteen carers in Angus benefited greatly from taking part in this course.

Respite and travel costs can also be considered. If you are interested, please tick the reply slip and we will contact you or speak to Lynne for further information.

This is a partnership between Angus College, Community Learning Team, Fife and Tayside Wider Access Forum and Angus Carers Centre.

‘Changing Relationships’ Training

Within every carer there is a mother, father, partner, son, daughter sister, or friend. We do not often embark on our relationship with our loved ones as their carer. We start out in a different relationship with them, and sometimes when we become a carer we lose some of that ‘other’ relationship.

This training, which will run over two morning sessions in February of next year, will explain the ‘rules of relationships’ and explore the changes that have happened with the onset of a caring role. We will discuss different ways to cope with the changes and losses that are occurring and look at how to care for yourself too.

Help with respite and transport may be available. If you are interested please tick the reply slip and we will get in touch.



Power of Attorney and Guardianship

Does Power of Attorney and Guardianship confuse you? Would you like to know more about what it is and what it entails?

On 15 January 2010 a workshop is taking place to provide information about Power of Attorney and Guardianship. This will take place at Angus Carers Centre. It is an all day workshop with a presentation in the morning and the opportunity for individual sessions in the afternoon. If you wish to attend respite can be provided to allow you to attend and possibly transport. Please tick the reply slip if you would like to attend and further information will be sent to you.

Carnoustie joins Monifieth!

For sometime now there have been two neighbouring carers' groups meeting, one in Carnoustie and another in Monifieth. As the numbers have been low in both these groups it has been decided to combine them as from January. The new joint group will meet in the Health Education Room of Monifieth Health Centre, dates and times are on the back page. This will be a good opportunity for any carer in the Carnoustie or Monifieth area to visit the group.

Both current members, and anyone else interested in coming, are invited to tick the reply slip, also letting us know what kind of format you would prefer, for example, speakers or just an informal chat. If you have any questions please contact Tessa.

In the meantime, the Monifieth group will meet as usual on 16 November at which there will be massage therapy and the Carnoustie group will meet on Thursday, 26 November.

Primary Care Project

This project, funded by NHS Tayside, is working to raise awareness of carers, and their need for information and support, within Health Centres, Pharmacies and GP Surgeries. The aim is to increase referrals of carers to the Centre from these sources.

Work will begin shortly with the pharmacies in Arbroath to identify carers. Once identified carers receive information and support from the project worker. To date 48 referrals have been made with 46 of these carers now receiving support.

When life is difficult ...

Those who take on the responsibility of caring for a family member can face profound changes in their lives and relationships. It may be that they find it difficult to come to terms with these changes.

The Carer Support Workers are always ready to lend a listening ear, but sometimes more specific help may be appropriate. Sue Black is a trained and experienced counsellor and is available to meet with carers either in Forfar or Arbroath. For further details please contact the Centre.

Young Carers

Great fun was had by all the young carers at their day outings during the October holidays. The Zapp Zone and bowling were the destinations of both age groups.

The Christmas outing to the panto at the Abbey Theatre in Arbroath is currently being planned.

The Count Me In Project is continuing the six-week block of sessions aimed at supporting young carers who care for a brother or sister. In addition to these groups, a reunion group is held once a term to allow all who have taken part in these groups the opportunity to meet up again.

A new venture is supporting some young carers to gain the Youth Achievement Award or the Dynamic Youth Award.

Drug and Alcohol Group

The support group for those caring for someone with an alcohol or drug problem continues to meet every second Wednesday here at Angus Carers Centre. Any person who looks after someone with drug or alcohol problems will be made very welcome at the group. For dates see the back page.



Pampering in March



We continue to run pampering events at Angus College throughout the winter and spring. This usually is a morning where you can opt to have your hair done or beauty treatments such as facials, manicures, etc. followed by lunch.

These are always popular events, and to ensure all have an opportunity, a place is offered first to those who have not been before and then spare places to those who have had a turn.

So if you are interested, either for the first time or for a return visit, please tick the reply slip and send it back to us.

The Garden Gang also known as Green fingers

We have all heard of James Bond and Gold Finger so read on and hear about Angus Carers and Green fingers!

A small group of carers, with the help of Jane Maguire from Angus College, have been meeting over the past few weeks to start sorting out the garden at Angus Carers Centre. The group are enjoying meeting together and in their own words “are enjoying fresh air, a change of scene, light exercise (at their own level), good company and some light refreshment”.

The group is working on a place to sit and relax, watch birds and wildlife and also to create a quiet corner. They have moved “loads of rubbish”, cut down some bushes and planted some spring bulbs. “On several of the mornings the weather has been very unkind (and we have pictures to prove this!). However we are really enjoying this different activity, rain, mud and all, say the group.

Any donations of any garden items, eg, bulbs, plants, gardening tools, a bench or even a gazebo would be appreciated. Any carers interested in coming along would be very welcome. For further information please contact June Dickson at Angus Carers Centre.

Big Lottery Funded Transitions Project

It has been a busy summer for the Transitions Project, which is funded by the Big Lottery Fund. New initiatives have started with carers taking up places on the Learning for Living course, mental wellbeing training, stress management and the Valuing Your Experience celebration.

Anyone who has been involved with the Centre through the Transitions project will have recently received a feedback questionnaire. Thank you to everyone who has sent a completed form back. If you have not had a chance to return it, it would be helpful if you could as your feedback helps us to improve the service we offer to carers.



Letham Pharmacy

This new pharmacy is due to open on 14 December 2009, and will be open 8.30 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Saturday.

Services offered include:

- Delivery of Compliance Pack directly to residents or clients' home
- Pharmacist trained to provide medication reviews for patients with complex medication regime.

Help Scheme is at hand for you to switch to digital TV

The Switchover Help Scheme is run by the BBC and has been designed around the needs of older and disabled people to make the changes to digital on one of their TV sets. People eligible for this scheme are:



- Aged 75 or over, or
- Have lived in a care home for six months or more, or
- Get (or could get) Disability Living Allowance, or Attendance or Constant Attendance Allowance, or mobility supplement, or
- Are registered blind or partially sighted.

For a one-off payment of £40, eligible people will be offered:

- easy-to-use digital equipment to convert one television set in their home;
- home delivery and installation if you wish;
- an aerial check and replacement if needed, where we can;
- a helpline and retuning advice;
- a 12 month digital TV aftercare service.

Eligible people will be written to directly with details about how to apply, with an explanation of all of the available options and prices that are clearly set out in the pack. Eligible people need to respond to get the help.

Most people will be asked to pay £40 towards the standard offer of help. For eligible people who are also on pension credit, income support, income based jobseeker's allowance or employment and support allowance, it's free.

For more information, please visit helpscheme.co.uk; or to find out when your area switches, log onto: www.digitaluk.co.uk/postcodechecker

NSF Carer Support

NSF Carer Support Angus branch runs a support group for any carer caring for someone with a severe and enduring mental health problem. This group takes place on the first Wednesday of each month, 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm. For more information and to find out the venue please telephone the NSF Support Worker, Georgina on 01241 437214.

Tayside Cancer Support

A support group has been launched in Forfar for people living with cancer. Carers and families are also welcome. This group will be held monthly at Whitehills Community Care Centre 6.00pm to 8.00pm. The first meeting is on Wednesday, 18 November. You will be made very welcome. If you wish any more information you can contact Anita Kay on 01382 229700

Parents Corner

Additional Housing and Council Tax Benefit for Families

From 2 November, Child Benefit will no longer be included as income in the calculation of Housing and Council Tax Benefit. If you are currently in receipt of these benefits the increase should be paid automatically from November. If you have previously applied for either benefit but were unsuccessful as your income was too high, this change could mean that you now qualify.

Help for family workers

The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) has produced a handbook aimed at helping those who work with children and families in Scotland. It covers welfare rights and benefits for disabled children and their families. An online version is available at www.cpag.org.uk

FUNDRAISING

Things past ...

On Friday, 9 October, around 100 people took part in this year's Snail Race. People were out, not only to boost our funds, but also to have fun. Brian Anderson arrived with flags and labels to celebrate the event, and also kindly donated a large ceramic snail. Most of the prizes were donated by carers or businesses from Angus and Dundee. A special mention to volunteer, John McCrank, who was our "runner and maths man". Thanks to our volunteer totes who were fantastic, and the enthusiastic young people who helped sell the raffle tickets. Finally a special thanks to Bill Strachan our compere, who kept us laughing, enthused the children and who also enjoyed himself. The final amount raised to date is £764.

Things ongoing ...

The Loose Change Appeal is still running and currently amounts to £177, thanks to everyone who has handed in a box. Just keep those pennies flowing!

Things to come ...

Following on from last year's very successful **Bag Pack** we are doing it all over again! This will take place on **Wednesday, 30 December from 10.00am till 4.00pm** in Morrisons, Arbroath. Many carers, volunteers and staff (around thirty) gave a couple of hours and helped us to keep a rota going all day. Those who helped all enjoyed themselves. This year we hope to have the same success but we need your help. If you are able to offer to help please tick the box on the reply slip and we will contact you. As a special treat on the day you also have the choice to wear one of our 'one size fits all', designer T-Shirts!



Amazed by Telecare



Carers had the opportunity to be amazed by the technology available to assist people to continue to live independently in their own homes. An invitation to visit Angus Council's telecare flats in Montrose and Kirriemuir was given in the last newsletter and 18 carers had a visit to the flats on 21 or 22 October.

From simple items such as useful cutlery and plate guards to blinds and curtains opening and closing at the touch of a remote control or to the much more sophisticated technology of using the TV to see and speak to family, friends or community alarm; all are used to assist a person to remain independent and safe in their own home.

If anyone missed these visits but would like to visit in the future please tick the Reply Slip and another visit can be arranged for the spring.

Diary of Events

Date/Time

Event

Tuesday 17 November 2009	Carers Reference Forum: 10.30 am—12 noon Venue to be confirmed
Friday 4 December 2009	Carers Rights Day: 10.00am—1.00pm Meadowbank Inn, Arbroath
Wednesday 9 December 2009	Angus Carers Forum: 10.30 am –12 noon Meadowbank Inn, Arbroath
Wednesday 16 December 2009	Carers Christmas Party: 12 pm—3 pm Park Hotel, Montrose

Groups

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

Monday 14 December 2009
Monday 11 January 2010
Monday 8 February 2010
Monday 8 March 2010

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

Friday 27 November 2009
Friday 29 January 2010
Friday 26 February 2010
Friday 26 March 2010

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

Monday 16 November 2009
Monday 21 December 2009
Monday 18 January 2010
Monday 18 February 2010
Monday 15 March 2010

DRUG & ALCOHOL GROUP 10am at Angus Carers Centre (fortnightly)

Wednesday 18 November 2009
Wednesday 2 December 2009
Wednesday 16 December 2009
Wednesday 13 January 2010
Wednesday 27 January 2010

CARNOUSTIE 2pm at Parkview Health Centre. (Last Thursday of the month)

Thursday 26 November 2009

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

Wednesday 18 November 2009 — Arbroath
No group in December
Wednesday 20 January 2010—Forfar
Wednesday 17 February 2010—Arbroath

MONIFIETH 10.30am at Monifieth Health Centre. (Third Monday of the month)

Monday 16 November 2009
Monday 21 December 2009
Monday 18 January 2010
Monday 18 February 2010
Monday 15 March 2010

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.