

# "Involving People"



charity registration number 1085491

The newsletter for learning disability carers

April 2016

For more information about anything in this newsletter, or to find out more about our support for carers of people with a learning disability, contact:

Sue Maskell,  
Involvement Worker for Learning Disabilities and Autism.

Or Roma Mills,  
Carers Involvement Manager.

Tel: 01992 58 69 69

@: [contact@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinherts.org.uk)

[www.carersinherts.org.uk](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk)

Carers in Hertfordshire,  
The Red House,  
119 Fore Street,  
Hertford,  
SG14 1AX

Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in England and Wales 4131036

*Making carers count*

## Welcome

Firstly, let me say hello as this is my first newsletter. My name is Sue Maskell and I joined Carers in Hertfordshire in January as the Involvement Worker for Learning Disabilities and Autism.



My predecessor Sue Haynes has retired, but you may still see her around as she has kindly agreed to Chair the C4A meetings (see the last page for all 2016 Forum dates).

I am hoping to see old and new faces at some of the next forums as we like you **to get involved, to hear your views and to give you a voice** on the development of health and care services in Hertfordshire. Issues and questions that arise from the forums are collated and taken to the **Learning Disabilities Partnership Board**.

One way you may be able to share your views at the moment is by getting involved with the county's two Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) review of Hertfordshire's wheelchair service. They are ensuring it meets the needs of service users and carers and as part of the review the CCGs want to seek the views of people who use the service, their carers and staff. If you would like to be involved in a service user group then please call 01707 367 210.

In this newsletter we have articles on the Purple Star Strategy, Annual Health Checks and the all-ability facilities and bikes at Stanborough Park, Welwyn Garden City. If you have ideas on what to include in the next issue, please email me. Sue Maskell  
[sue.maskell@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:sue.maskell@carersinherts.org.uk)

# Transforming Care for people with a Learning Disability

Adults and children in Hertfordshire with a learning disability and/or autism, who display behaviour that challenges services or have a mental health condition, are set to receive better support.

Last year, Hertfordshire was picked as one of six national Transforming Care Fast Track pilot sites. The programme is in response to the Winterbourne View abuse scandal.

The aim of the pilot is to develop high quality, community-based services for people with learning disabilities and a mental health condition or challenging behaviour, who require specialist support to help them lead more independent lives.

There are around 26,500 people in Hertfordshire with a learning disability. Fast track is about:

- The NHS and councils working together to get good health, community and housing support for people with learning disabilities and/or autism and behaviour that challenge services.
- Making sure people with any of these conditions and their families are involved in making choices;
- Ensuring that this group of people have advocates;
- Developing new services in the community to help people move out of hospital and stay out if they don't need to be there.

Roma Mills, our Carers Involvement Manager, said: "I welcome the programme and the intention to provide services that will enable people with learning disabilities and/or autism, who are regarded as having challenging behaviour, to remain safely and

comfortably in their communities, near to their families."

"Far too many people have been placed in hospital settings for assessment and treatment and simply left there because there have not been suitable services available."

As part of the programme, Herts Valley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have held two roadshows in Stevenage and Hemel Hempstead to share initial plans and get feedback from people with a learning disability, autism and their carers. We supported these roadshows by sharing details with carers and attending one of them.

Plans include piloting a range of crisis support services, to help people avoid being admitted to hospital or shorten their stay. People should also be able to purchase their own personalised packages of care.

East Herts CCG have some roadshows planned for people to share their ideas and views. Including one on:

- Thursday 28th April from 10am-1pm, at the Rhodes Centre, 1-3 South Road, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 3JG.

If you want to attend any roadshow call 01707 390855 or email [engagement@enhertscg.nhs.uk](mailto:engagement@enhertscg.nhs.uk)

## Don't forget about the Annual Health Check!

Some people with learning disabilities can have poorer physical and mental health than others. This doesn't need to be the case.

The Annual Health Check scheme is for adults and young people aged 14+ with learning disabilities who need more health support and have been assessed as having moderate, severe or profound learning disabilities, or a mild learning disability with other complex health needs.

You make an appointment for the Health Check with your GP or practice nurse. At the visit they will:

- Carry out a general physical exam of weight, heart rate,

blood pressure and take urine and blood samples;

- Assess the patient's behaviour asking questions about lifestyle and mental health;
- Discuss any prescribed medications the patient is taking;
- Check whether any chronic illnesses such as asthma or diabetes are being well managed;
- Review any arrangements with other health professionals such as physiotherapists or speech therapists.

The GP or nurse will then provide any advice that is needed.

## Have you heard about the Purple Star?

The Purple Star is a logo (brand) made by Hertfordshire County Council's Health Liaison Team together with people with learning disabilities, their carers and others. It was made to help people with learning disabilities get better health and community care.

The Purple Star recognises health providers such as Doctors, Dentists, Opticians and Pharmacists, who give people with learning disabilities a good service.

To be awarded a Purple Star they will have been taught about learning disabilities and agree to the Purple Star Promise, which is like a kite mark with a set of standards.

A pharmacy or GP surgery that has been awarded a Purple Star should be:

- Showing the Purple Star in their window;
- Giving expert health and advice and excellent customer care;
- Recognising individuals who may need reasonable adjustments;
- Offering longer appointments;
- Providing medication reviews and using Purple Folders;
- Appointing a Learning Disability Champion;
- Listening to and involving relatives and carers;
- Producing Easy Read information, signage and displays;
- Ensuring an accessible environment;
- Safeguarding individuals and reporting any concerns.

Since it was launched in December 2012 seven Purple Stars have been awarded.

The pharmacy at Asda in Hatfield received the latest Purple Star in February 2016 (pictured right).

Pharmacist Jayshree Gulabivala said: "By making reasonable adjustments, we are happy to be part of this important community service that highlights the specific needs of



**eQUALITY**

*for people with learning disabilities*

people with a learning disability. We are proud to have achieved the Purple Star Award for our services and commitment. We look forward to working with the Health Liaison Team and patients with a learning disability giving them the best possible care through reasonable adjustments, to ensure their particular needs are met."

When the Purple Star is awarded to health providers there will be a monitoring process to ensure the Purple Star standards are maintained. There will be opportunities for service users, carers and others to provide feedback about the quality of service received as part of an ongoing review process.

### Can you help?

We have an exciting opportunity for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers, to get involved with the Purple Star Strategy across Hertfordshire.

Your input will help improve health services for people with learning disabilities and you can meet new people and gain new skills and confidence.

To learn more about what is involved please contact Sue Maskell or Charlotte Gray at [charlotte.gray@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.gray@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

You can sign up to the mailing list for updates by calling 01438 844681 or email [purplestarstrategy@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:purplestarstrategy@hertfordshire.gov.uk)



## Fancy a day out?

If you're looking for something to do that is suitable for all abilities and ages why not think about spending some time at the beautiful Stanborough Park in Welwyn Garden City.

Covering 126-acres the park has a watersports Activity Centre, children's play area, nature trail, lakes, a restaurant and coffee shop.

The Hertfordshire Disability Sports Hub facilitates sporting activities for disabled participants at the park and want to remind people about the all-ability bike hire service. This enables adults and children with disabilities to enjoy riding together. The range includes trikes, side-by-side tandems, a front-loading wheelchair carrier, hand cycles and balance bikes.

You can also book archery, bell boats, easy riders and sailing. Sessions run 9am to 9pm Easter to September and 9am to 5pm September to Easter.

For more information or to book call 01707 379860 or visit [www.finesseleisure.com/watersports/disability-sports-hub](http://www.finesseleisure.com/watersports/disability-sports-hub)

To learn more about Stanborough Park, which has received the Green Flag Award, several times, visit [www.finesseleisure.com/outdoor-facilities/stanborough-park](http://www.finesseleisure.com/outdoor-facilities/stanborough-park)



## Future Forums and Groups

Our forums are open to carers of someone with a Learning Disability, Autism or Asperger Syndrome. They provide an opportunity to meet others, listen to speakers, get information, and have your say about caring issues and improving services.

Upcoming Learning Disability Carers Forums:

**Tuesday 7th June 2016** - This is part of Carer's Week

**Tuesday 2nd August 2016**

**Tuesday 4th October 2016**

**Tuesday 6th December 2016**

All the meetings take place from 10am to 12.30pm and are followed by a sandwich lunch.

At Birchwood Leisure Centre, Longmead, Hatfield, AL10 0AN.

Our upcoming C4A Carers Group for people caring for someone with high functioning Autism or Asperger Syndrome:

**Monday 9th May 2016**

**Monday 4th July 2016**

**Monday 5th September 2016**

**Monday 7th November 2016**

All of the meetings take place from 7.30pm to 9.30pm, At Oxlease House, Travellers Lane, Hatfield, AL10 8TJ.

**To book your place:**

 **01992 58 69 69**

 **[contact@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinherts.org.uk)**

 **[www.carersinherts.org.uk](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk)**

To receive information about either group, please contact us.

If you don't have your own transport and wish to attend please contact us to discuss travel arrangements. We can also cover the costs of alternative care.