

"Having a Voice"

The newsletter for Mental Health Carers



charity registration number 1085491

October 2016

For more information about anything in this newsletter, to have your say on mental health issues, or to find out more about our support for carers of people affected by mental illness, please contact a member of the Involvement Team:

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01992 58 69 69

For any other caring issues or to speak to someone in the office, who can get in touch with Deryn or Sarah to return your call please:

Call: 01992 58 69 69
Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk
Visit: www.carersinherts.org.uk

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

Welcome

It's been a busy few months since our last newsletter and we've held three forums. Following the July meeting where Simon Pattison spoke about the proposed refresh of



Hertfordshire's Mental Health Strategy we organised a small focus group to look at the draft strategy in more detail and forwarded our comments to the commissioning team to make sure that carers' views are included. We have requested feedback on how the carers' comments are used to inform the final Mental Health Strategy 2016/2021.

The Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) has been developing a Carers' Pathway. A group of carers, front line staff, managers and a Carers in Hertfordshire Involvement worker have all contributed to this and been involved from the outset and it feels like a good example of co-production. The Pathway is due to go live in October 2016 and should be implemented countywide early in 2017. Carers in Hertfordshire, alongside carers and HPFT staff will be part of a group looking at how this is moved forward and ensuring it is applied across Hertfordshire.

Carers in Hertfordshire has also been involved in co-producing a new service - **New Leaf - The Hertfordshire Wellbeing College**. You can learn more about this on page 2.

Also in this newsletter are details about our upcoming Mental Health Carer Forums and support groups.

If you would like any topics covered in future newsletters or forums or have any issues you want to discuss with us regarding your caring role please get in touch our details are on the left.

Making carers count

Update about Complex Needs Service

Turning Point, Hertfordshire Mind Network and Herts Young Homeless, working as partners, won the tender to deliver a new Complex Needs Service in Hertfordshire in February.

Hertfordshire's Complex Needs Service provides community support to people recovering from mental health issues and additional complex needs, including substance misuse and learning disabilities. They also support carers and relatives.

Support is provided for up to 12 weeks. The service can assist by providing emotional and practical support; advice about housing, debt or benefits; help completing forms and information about other relevant services.

To access the service you can refer yourself

or a family member/carer or someone from a health or social care organisation may make a referral.

Before the contract was awarded carer representatives that we support and service users supported by Viewpoint, worked with Hertfordshire County Council to prepare the questions that were put to applicants. They also sat on the panel awarding the contract.

We have organised for the Manager of the Complex Needs Service to come to our November Mental Health Forum to tell us more about the service (details on the back page).

In the meantime you can learn more or request help by calling the service on 020 7481 7627.

New college set to open

New Leaf – The Hertfordshire Wellbeing College is opening its doors in the next month. It will offer a range of courses to people in Hertfordshire to help support their wellbeing.

The college is built on the Recovery College model, which is in operation in many parts of the UK. This means it will run like any other further education college, where people opt to attend and select the educational programmes they want to take.

All the courses are designed and delivered in partnership with people who have experience of life events such as long-term health conditions and addiction. Course topics will include resilience and self-management. They will be delivered at different venues.

The college is operated by Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) in partnership with Druglink. A multi-agency curriculum board, including Carers in Hertfordshire, will oversee the college's performance and has been integral to getting it up and running.

Hertfordshire NightLight

01923 256391

If you are feeling distressed or in a crisis, Hertfordshire NightLight is an out of hour's crisis service providing safe, welcoming support.

Turning Point and Herts Mind Network provide this service with centres in Hertford, Ware, Watford and Stevenage. There are beds available if an overnight stay will help.

The centres are open Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday nights from 6pm-2am, every week of the year. To refer someone please call between 6pm and 7pm.

There is also a helpline that is staffed by a team of Crisis Support Workers and Peer Mentors. The helpline is open from 8pm to 12am (midnight) on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

You can refer yourself or be referred by a professional, family member or friend. To learn more please visit www.turning-point.co.uk/hertfordshire-nightlight

Spotlight on HPFT's Carer Team

As an unpaid carer you may be interested to learn that the Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) has a Carer Team. This article introduces the team.

The Carer Team came into being in November 2015 as a result of the implementation of the Care Act 2014. It is initially in place for two years. The team works alongside the community mental health teams to develop the service HPFT provides to carers.

It also offers support to staff and carers in the Wellbeing Service and HPFT's rehabilitation and in-patient units.

Melanie Stead, from HPFT, said: "Our overall aim is to improve the wellbeing of the carers we work with. Our mission is to listen to carers, which quite often is an emotional release for them as well as a source of information and support."



The team includes social workers, occupational therapists, carer peer support workers and senior carer support, time and recovery workers. Carer Team members can be found in the community teams for older adults, adults and CAMHS (children and adolescents).

A variety of support can be provided for carers and families including Carers Assessments, which focus on meeting the carer's needs and goals. They help to identify areas where support is most required such as financial support; welfare benefits, respite, housing, advocacy and information about carers legal rights under the Care Act.

In some areas HPFT also runs carers surgeries for advice, and drop-in sessions where carers can meet for tea and share their worries. These provide essential peer and emotional support and opportunities to share experiences and knowledge about how carers can remain well and prevent isolation.

HPFT work in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and signposts carers and their families to other local resources.

You can contact your local team member through your community mental health team or by email at CarerTeam@hpft.nhs.uk

Caring and Coping Course

If you are currently caring for someone experiencing mental illness this course is for YOU!

The free course with Rethink Mental Illness is held over six weeks and provides carers with skills and support to improve their health and wellbeing.

Learn about mental illness and its treatment, the mental health system, problem-solving, communication skills, dealing with challenges and looking after yourself.

If you wish to attend please call Jo Clack on 01920 463663 or email jonathan.clack@rethink.org

"The course was run in a relaxed setting and empowered us to explore and discover our rights as carers. It was an excellent opportunity to share experiences, have our questions answered and build on our caring role." *Carer feedback.*

Support groups for carers of someone with mental illness

Carers Support Group

Contact: Rod Cottrell 07794 633404
Meets: Bi-monthly various times and dates so please call.
Where: CHMS, St Paul's, Slippers Hill, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 5XY.

Dacorum & District Support Group

Contact: Dick Lovelace 01442 823712 or 07850 186210
Meets: First Thursday of the month 7.45pm – 10pm
Where: Herts Mind Network, 139 Leighton Buzzard Road, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1HN.

Depression Alliance St Albans Self-Help Group

Contact: Peter 07941 450 345
Meets: Third Friday of the month from 7.30pm
Where: St Albans
www.depressionalliance-stalbans.org.uk

Guideposts Trust Carers Support Group

Contact: Lin Fellows or Carol Williams on 01923 223554
Meets: Last Monday of the month 7pm - 9pm
Where: Guideposts Trust, Henry Smith House, 3-5 Estcourt Road, Watford, WD17 2PT.

OCD Carer Group

Contact: Jenny Robinson 07769 639186
Meets: Tuesday evening every four weeks.
Where: Stevenage - for more details visit www.feellighter.co.uk

Mind in Mid Herts

OCD groups in Stevenage and St Albans. Call 01438 369216 for Stevenage details and 01727 865070 for St Albans.
Personality Disorder Group that meets in Welwyn Garden City. Call Nicky Kuklys on 01438 369216 for details.
Carer Support Group that meets on the third Tuesday of the month in Stevenage. Call 01438 369216 for details.

Herts Mind Network - Carer Support Groups held at their wellbeing centres in **Bishop's Stortford, Hemel Hempstead, Ware and Watford.**
Contact: 02037 273600,
email: info@hertsmindnetwork.org
or visit www.hertsmindnetwork.org

Hertfordshire Partnership NHS

Foundation Trust (HPFT) Carers Group

Contact: Jo Edwards 01727 804700
Meets: Second Monday of the month 7- 9pm
Where: HPFT 99 Waverley Road, St Albans, AL3 5TL.

HPFT Eating Disorder Carer Group

Contact: Eating Disorder Team 01707 364006
Where: Welwyn Garden City and St Albans. Please call HPFT for details.

HPFT Personality Disorder Carer Group

Contact: Tracy Hamm 07833 381295
Meets: First Monday of the month (or second Monday for Bank Holidays) 10.30am - 12.30pm
Where: Watford Wellbeing Centre, Watford,
For more details about any of these visit www.hpft.nhs.uk

North Herts Mental Health Support Group

Contact: Us on 01992 58 69 69
Meets: Third Thursday of the month at 11am.
Where: The Care Community Hub, 19 - 29 Station Road, Letchworth, SG6 3BB.

Mental Health Carers' Forums

We hold bi-monthly forums where information and concerns about mental health services are shared. Forums enable carers to meet up, share their views to influence service development and agree responses to consultations. The next forums are on:

Thursday 17th November 2016

1pm - 3pm (a light sandwich lunch is served from 12.30pm).

Tuesday 17th January 2017

10am - 1pm (includes a light sandwich lunch).

At Oxlease House, Travellers Lane, Hatfield, AL10 8TJ.

To book your place

☎ 01992 58 69 69

@ contact@carersinherts.org.uk

We can cover the costs of alternative care to enable you to attend. Please get in touch to discuss this.