

"Family Matters"

The newsletter for carers affected by the drinking or drug use of a loved one or friend.



August 2016

For more information about anything in this newsletter, or to find out more about our support for carers whose lives are affected by someone's drug or alcohol use, contact:

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Worker, Drugs and Alcohol

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4131036

Making carers count

Welcome

It's been a busy time since the last newsletter and I wanted to share with you what Carers in Hertfordshire and myself, Su Bartlett, Family Carer Development Worker, Drugs and Alcohol, have been doing to support carers affected by someone's drug or alcohol use.



Over the year there have been four Family Carer Forums and subjects covered have included a drug and alcohol first aid session delivered by CGL Spectrum and a workshop on managing conflict.

We have also run focus groups and consultation sessions for carers on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council. Your voices have been listened to and we would like to say a **big thank you** to everyone involved for giving up their time.

I hope to see old and new faces at our future 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 raised are collated and taken to the Drugs and Alcohol Strategic Commissioning Group.

In this newsletter you can find out about our Annual Event for Carers, how to get involved in a survey about hospital services in West Herts and look back at our Family Matters and Carers Week events.

Details of upcoming forums and support groups are on the back page. If there is any topic you would like covered at a forum or if you have any issues about services then please get in touch with me, Su, on 01992 58 69 69 or email su.bartlett@carersinherts.org.uk

Event puts spotlight on supporting change resistant drinkers

The focus of our annual Family Matters event in March 2016 was 'Supporting the families of change resistant drinkers'.

It was a successful session and 31 carers attended. They heard from Mike Ward, Senior Consultant at Alcohol Concern, about the Blue Light Project.

The Project came about following a review after a male drinker, resistant to treatment, was murdered by his ex-wife, who had been abused by him for years.

The Project provides guidance on alternative approaches that can be taken by treatment services working with people who have significant alcohol problems but don't want to change and place a burden on health and other public services.

Carers and representatives from CGL Spectrum and Al-Anon were asked their views on whether the information in the guidance manual should be developed into a

toolkit carers can use in supporting their loved one.

Su Bartlett said: "The need for information, skills and strategies for carers came through clearly. Attendees at the event identified the positive potential of a supportive, harm-reduction and risk-management approach, but it would need to be developed by professionals."

Mike, co-author of the Blue Light Project good practice manual said: "Many people believe that if a problem drinker does not want to change, nothing can be done. This isn't true, research has demonstrated that families who are supported with skills and strategies to manage their dependent drinker become more resilient, better able to safeguard their own wellbeing and encourage the drinker towards treatment."

For tips about supporting your loved one, visit www.adfam.org.uk/families/what_should_i_do

The Annual Event for Carers

Thursday 29th September 2016

10am - 3.30pm

The Fielder Centre, Hatfield Avenue,
Hatfield, AL10 9TP.

If you are an unpaid carer please join us to:

- Get information and advice from us and other organisations that support carers.
- Meet other carers and have a say in workshops.
- Help us celebrate our 21st birthday (free prize draw).



Places must be booked by 9th September. Book via:

Phone: 01992 58 69 69

Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk

Online at: www.carersinherts.org.uk

Pampering and advice offered at Carers Week Forum

We were pleased to welcome 26 people to our Carers Week Family Carer Forum in June 2016.

Carers attending the event took advantage of 10 minute aromatherapy, reflexology and Indian head massage sessions and could also get information about services for carers.

Representatives from drug and alcohol treatment providers – Al-Anon, CGL Spectrum, Resolve and The Living Room - were on hand to answer questions and give advice.

Joy Watters, a Carer Practitioner from Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Community Services, spoke about Carer's Assessments and the Care Act 2014.

One carer who attended the event said: "It was my first time at a forum and I found the

speakers interesting. It was great to meet other carers in a similar situation to me and the massages on offer were a nice touch. I will go to another forum."

During Carers Week (June 6th – 12th) Carers in Hertfordshire was involved with 37 activities and our staff and volunteers spoke to at least 300 carers.

Details of the upcoming forums are on the back page.



Have your say about hospital services in West Hertfordshire

People living in West Hertfordshire are being urged by local NHS organisations and Hertfordshire County Council to have their say on how hospital services in the area should be provided in the future.

The survey is for people and organisations in Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Harpenden, Three Rivers and Watford, and is part of the 'Your Care, Your Future' review of health and care services.

The survey is running until Wednesday 21st September and it can be found at <https://app.citizenspace.com/yourcareyourfuture/survey>

Three key themes have been identified from engagement with patients, public and clinicians:

- A need to focus more on preventing ill health, such as supporting people to take more exercise, drink less alcohol and give up smoking. As well as a need to support

people who are unwell to look after themselves to prevent illnesses from becoming more serious.

- Simplifying things for patients who use services from several organisations, such as different NHS Trusts, to ensure care is coordinated and joined up
- Enabling people to get more care at home or closer to where they live, such as tests and specialist advice in GP surgeries and other community facilities.

Responses will be analysed by the Council and NHS organisations including Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group. They will form part of the findings that will be presented at a future meeting to consider the preferred option.

If you have any questions about the survey please call 020 3861 3818 or email info@yourcareyourfuture.org.uk

Family Carer Forums

Our Family Carer Forums are open to carers of someone who misuses drugs or alcohol. They provide an opportunity to meet others, listen to speakers, get information, and have your say about caring issues and improving services.

Upcoming Forums:

Tuesday 6th September 2016

6.30pm - 9pm

Tuesday 4th October 2016

10am - 1pm

Tuesday 6th December 2016

10am - 1pm

All of the meetings take place at Oxlease House, Travellers Lane, Hatfield, AL10 8TJ.

Refreshments are provided and there is a light sandwich lunch for the sessions that run from 10am - 1pm.

To book your place:

☎ **01992 58 69 69**

@ **contact@carersinherts.org.uk**

🌐 **www.carersinherts.org.uk**

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.

Carers' Passport update

A new Carers' Passport Offers Book is now ready for collection from your local Hertfordshire library.

All Hertfordshire libraries have stocks, just show the library staff your Carers' Passport discount card to pick up your copy.

We plan to have new and updated books available for collection every six months. However, in the interim we are developing a Latest Offers page in the Carers' Passport section of our website www.carersinherts.org.uk where you will be able to find out about fresh offers.

Groups and contacts

There are a number of groups across Hertfordshire that offer information, support and education to carers. These include **CGL Spectrum** groups at:

1 Yeoman's Court, Ware Road, **Hertford**, SG13 7HJ.
Monday 6.30pm – 8pm. Call 01992 500161

Solutions House, Dunhams Lane, **Letchworth**, SG6 1BE.
Monday 6pm – 7.30pm. Call 01462 480944

18 Station Road, **Watford**, WD17 1JU.
Monday 6pm – 7.30pm. Call 01928 222889

222 London Road, **St Albans**, AL1 1PN.
Tuesday 6pm – 7pm. Call 01727 847277

Wolsey House, Wolsey Road, **Hemel Hempstead**, HP2 4TU. Tuesday 6pm – 7pm. Call 01442 256520

Majestic House, 16 Shenley Road, **Borehamwood**, WD6 1DL. Tuesday 6.30pm – 7.30pm. Call 020 8953 1320

Armstrong House, Norton Road, **Stevenage**, SG1 2LX.
Wednesday 6pm – 7.30pm. Call 01438 364495

Hugill House, Swanfield Road, **Waltham Cross**, EN8 7JR.
Thursday 6.30pm – 7.30pm. Call 01992 626404

The Living Room, 8-10 The Glebe, Stevenage, SG2 0DJ.
Wednesdays and Thursdays 10.30am – 2.30pm.
Call 01438 355649

The Living Room, South West Treatment Centre, Rear of 156 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4JA.
Thursday 10.30am – 2.30pm. Call 01727 854479

Resolve, Mill Green Road, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 3XD.
One to one drop-in service on Tuesdays from 3pm – 4.45pm, followed by a support group from 5pm - 6.30pm.
Counselling for carers is also available on Tuesdays.

Resolve, Queensway House, Market Square, Hatfield, AL10 0LW.
Drop-in service 10am – 12pm noon on Thursdays
Acupuncture and evenings/days out can also be accessed by carers. Call 01707 690739

For details of Al-Anon groups visit www.al-anonuk.org.uk/meetings and type in your town or postcode.