

"Family Matters"

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



charity registration number 1085491

August 2017

In this newsletter you can find out about our Annual Event for Carers in September, some opportunities to learn new skills and about various support groups available across Hertfordshire.

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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Making carers count

Welcome

It has been a busy few months since the last Family Matters newsletter and I would like to share with you what Carers in Hertfordshire and I, Su Bartlett, Family Carer Development Worker Drugs and Alcohol, have been doing to support carers whose lives are affected by a loved one's drug or alcohol misuse.



We have held three Family Carers' Forums and the annual Family Matters Event, which focused on food and mood. There was a session about nutrition and diet and one about emotional wellbeing and the services provided by Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT's) Wellbeing Service. If you would like copies of the presentations please get in touch with me.

I have also delivered Carer Awareness Training to some of the county's GP Carer Champions and I hosted a focus group for carers of people with a dual diagnosis of mental ill health and a drug or alcohol problem. The focus group was held in response to a call for evidence by the All Party Parliamentary Group for Dual Diagnosis and Complex Needs. You can read about this on page two.

I hope to see familiar and new faces at our forums as we like **to hear your views** and **give you a voice** on the development of health and care services in Hertfordshire. Issues and questions raised are collated and taken to those who commission and provide health and social care services in Hertfordshire. Details of upcoming Forums are on page four.

If there is a 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

Improving services for people with a dual diagnosis and their carers

Carers of someone with co-existing mental health and substance misuse conditions – dual diagnosis - have helped us to provide evidence for a review into support for people with these complex needs.

The All Party Parliamentary (APPG) for Dual Diagnosis and Complex Needs is working with the Office for Civil Society to identify steps that will drive better services for people with dual diagnosis and their families and carers.

We held a focus group in May where carers of someone with a dual diagnosis discussed examples of best practice and developed a wish list for Hertfordshire. It covered what would need to be done and by whom.

Six carers and a service user attended the session and items on their wish list included:

a) Better training and education about dual diagnosis and complex needs, particularly for non specialists such as GP practice receptionists or nurses on wards.

b) Improved follow-up when someone is undergoing a detox, so that there is no gap between the end of the detox and a mental health intervention.

c) Consistency in care and not repeated changes in workers as this leads to disruption and anxiety amongst the individual with the dual diagnosis and also their family or carer(s).

Su Bartlett, our Family Carer Development Worker, Drugs and Alcohol, said: “The focus group provided insightful and considered opinions based on people’s experiences and I thank everyone who gave their time so we could submit evidence. We await the APPG report, which is due out later this year.”

The Annual Event for Carers

Tuesday 26th September 2017

10am - 3.30pm

Drop-in session from 4pm - 5.30pm.

**The Fielder Centre, Hatfield Avenue,
Hatfield, Herts, 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.**
- **Tell us about your experience of caring.**
- **Learn about what we have been doing over the last 12 months and our plans for the future.**



Places for the 10am - 3.30pm session are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment. Book via:

Phone: 01992 58 69 69

Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk

Online at: www.carersinherts.org.uk

Carers' Passport Update: An updated Carers' Passport Latest Offers Book is now available. You can collect a copy from your local Hertfordshire Library, just ask a member of staff and show them your Carers' Passport Discount Card. It is also on our website at www.carersinherts.org.uk

Do you want to work, learn or volunteer whilst still being a carer?

Carers and former carers are being offered intensive one to one tailored support to help them over the difficulties they have accessing learning or work opportunities because of their caring role.

The Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund awarded Hertfordshire County Council £5.5 million as part of the Building Better Opportunities programme in July 2016.

The aim of the programme is to tackle the causes of poverty and unemployment.

The three-year project brings together public, private and voluntary organisations and has three strands:

- **Herts Youth Futures** will support young people to improve employability and enter training or work.
- **Support and Transition Routes into Volunteering and Employment (STRIVE)** will support adults (19+) who have previously tried to find employment without success.
- **Money Information for better Living and Employment (MILE)** will support adults with general debt problems, who require support with transfer to Universal Credit and/or face issues with travel from employment opportunities.

The support for carers – STRIVE Project Mentors – is being provided by Crossroads Care Hertfordshire North.

Trained staff and volunteers can help with a range of things such as building confidence, securing work experience or volunteer placements and identifying skills and suitable jobs to fit around your caring role.

To find out more about this mentor project please contact Helen Holmes at Crossroads Care Hertfordshire North on 01462 455578 or email hholmes@crossroadshn.org.uk



Carers invited to new course to boost their caring skills

Carers affected by a loved one's drug or alcohol use are invited to join a course to give them techniques to help the individual change.

We are working with Living Future in Hertford, an independent addiction service, to run the CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training Intervention) course starting in September.

The course will be run over seven weekly sessions. CRAFT is a skills-based programme that teaches techniques that carers can use to encourage the person into treatment and reduce their substance use. This can improve the family situation.

On the CRAFT programme learn:

- What triggers a loved one's substance use;
- How to encourage them to seek treatment and recovery;
- Communications strategies;
- Self-care; and
- Responding safely to potential aggression or violence

The daytime course will run at Future Living, 43 Cowbridge, Hertford, on Wednesdays from 10am - 12pm noon starting on 27th September 2017. If you want to attend please register an interest by calling 01992 58 69 69 or email su.bartlett@carersinherts.org.uk

Family Carers' Forums

Our Family Carers' Forums are for 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 5th September 2017

Tuesday 5th December 2017

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

From 10am - 1pm.

Refreshments and a light sandwich lunch are provided

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.

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:

St Martin's House, 14 The Commons, **Hatfield**, AL10 0UR.
Tuesday 6pm - 7.30pm. Call 01707 256532.

1 Yeoman's Court, Ware Road, **Hertford**, SG13 7HJ.
Monday 5.30pm – 7pm. Call 01992 500161.

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

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

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, 3pm – 4.45pm,
followed by a support group from 5pm - 6.30pm.
Counselling for carers is also available on Tuesdays.
Call 01707 690739.

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

Adfam now offering discounted caravan breaks

Supporting someone with a drug or alcohol problem can be tiring and stressful and breaks are important – that's why Adfam has bought a static caravan to provide respite breaks.

The caravan is at Haven's Coombe Haven site near Hastings, Sussex, and has been bought thanks to funding from Public Health England and The Royal Borough of Greenwich.

Prices to rent the caravan are lowest for Greenwich residents – however a heavily discounted rate is available for all families affected by someone's substance misuse.

The caravan is modern, has three bedrooms and sleeps up to eight. It can be booked for a three night stay Friday – Monday, a four night stay Monday – Friday or 7 nights (Friday – Friday). It should be booked at least six weeks in advance.

If you would like to know more please contact Omar Amin at Adfam on o.amin@adfam.org.uk or call Adfam on 020 3817 9410. You can also visit www.adfam.org.uk