

“Recall”

The Newsletter for Dementia Carers



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

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Welcome

As this is my first newsletter of 2016 I wanted to share with you what Carers in Hertfordshire and myself, Sally Stratford, Involvement Worker for Dementia and Older People, have been doing over the last year.



We have helped carers to find out more information and ‘have a say’ about several topics affecting them and the people they care for. These have included:

- EMDASS (Early Memory Diagnosis and Support Service)
- Alzheimer’s Community Support Workers
- Hertfordshire’s Dementia Strategy
- Having a named Worker Pilot Scheme
- Emergency Planning
- Eating well with Dementia
- The commissioning of Dementia Community Services
- Dementia – The disease, how it progresses and difficult behaviour
- Carers Assessments and the Care Act
- A Consultant Psychiatrist question and answer session
- Assisted technology
- Community Dementia Nurses.

We have also run focus groups for carers on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council. Your voices have been listened to and we have helped to make changes to the way in which services are delivered. We would like to say a **big thank you** to everyone involved for giving up their time.

We continue to hold a Dementia Forum every two months (details of upcoming meetings are on the last 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, Sally on 01992 58 69 69 or email sally.stratford@carersinherts.org.uk

Making carers count

Dementia Services Update

Hertfordshire County Council is set to launch a tender process at the end of August for all the Dementia Community Services in Hertfordshire that they fund.

The tender will include groups, activities and the provision of Support Workers and Dementia Nurses.

We have been involving carers in this process by holding focus groups and inviting the commissioners to our Dementia Forums so they hear what is important for people with Dementia and their carers.

Some of our Carer Representatives will be involved in the interview process for the new services and contracts.

Sally Stratford, Involvement Worker for Dementia Carers, said: "The new contract should be ready to start in February 2017

and we will keep you updated with the progress of the tender."

Respite care in Hertfordshire is also being reviewed by the County Council, following a pilot of four nursing respite hubs – two in East Hertfordshire and two in West Hertfordshire.

The hubs were aimed at giving carers the chance to book short-stay or regular respite for the person they are looking after, in settings with the highest standards of care.

One hub in each area provided nursing respite for any condition and the other specialised in nursing Dementia respite.

We surveyed carers to find out their views and opinions on respite care and submitted our findings to the commissioners for them to consider when deciding on future provision.

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

A new **Carers' Passport Offers Book** is available for collection from your local Hertfordshire library. Just show the library staff your Carers' Passport discount card to pick up your copy.

The books will be updated every six months, but in the interim we are creating a Latest Offers page on our website www.carersinherts.org.uk where you will be able to find out about fresh offers.

Eating well with Dementia

Eating well with Dementia proved a popular topic at our most recent Dementia Forum held in July in Rickmansworth so we will be repeating the session.

The session was run by Hertfordshire Independent Living Service (HILS) and hosted by a Dietician. Carers were given tips about healthy eating as well as addressing challenges around eating and drinking.

People living with Dementia can experience problems eating and drinking due to difficulty using cutlery, recognising food, being distracted or changes in taste.

HILS explained that there are many ways they can provide support as they offer a range of meals, including options that are easier to chew, can be eaten without cutlery or offer more calories if the person has a small appetite.

Carers who attended the session received some free equipment such as specialist cutlery, drinking aids and placemats and fridge magnets.

A carer who attended the event said: "It was a helpful session and I learnt about the meals that you can get and that someone can come and heat the food up if the person would not remember to. The free equipment was useful, particularly the water jugs that means you can ensure the person you care for keeps hydrated as you can see how much they have drunk."

The session will be repeated at our Dementia Forum on Thursday 8th September 2016 at Stevenage Arts Centre (more details on the back page).

Alternatively, you can find out more on the website www.hertsindependentliving.org



Tips include

If the person is not hungry

- Offer small meals throughout the day;
- Make the most of nourishing drinks such as milky coffee or hot chocolate;
- Encourage the person to go for a short walk or do some gentle exercise as it could help improve appetite.

If taste has changed

- Offer fruit if the person likes sweet food;
- Try adding sweet chutneys to main meals;
- Offer a pudding even if the person hasn't finished the main meal.

Problems chewing or using cutlery

- Try offering finger foods such as sandwiches and muffins;
- Find out about specialist cutlery and utensils from HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044.

Being distracted

- Serve food on plain plates rather than ones with a pattern or design.

Diary Dates

Dementia Forums are open to all carers. They provide an opportunity to meet others, listen to speakers, get information, and have your say about caring issues. Your views at the forum will be passed onto the carers sub group which feeds into the National Dementia Strategy Implementation Group.

Our next forums are on:

Thursday 8th September 2016

Topic: Eating well with Dementia

Stevenage Community Arts Centre,
Roaring Meg Retail Park,
Stevenage, SG1 1XN.

Wednesday 16th November 2016

Wyllyotts Theatre, Wyllyotts Place,
Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, EN6 2HN.

All dates from 10am to 12.15pm,
followed by a sandwich lunch.

To book your place:

☎ **01992 58 69 69**

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

🌐 **www.carersinherts.org.uk**

To receive information about each forum, contact us and ask to be added to the Dementia Network. If you do not have your own transport and want to attend any forum please contact us to discuss travel arrangements. We can also cover the costs of alternative care.

Support for Dementia Carers

The Carers Dementia Service is now operating across Hertfordshire and the team provides practical and emotional support to carers of someone with Dementia.

The service is managed by Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust and is provided by an Occupational Therapist, two Carers Dementia Nurses and a Dementia Support Worker. There is a team covering East and North Herts and another for West Herts.

The team provides tailored support to meet each carer's needs. They assess a carer's physical and mental health and if they recognise symptoms of concern they refer the person for suitable support. They can also help educate the carer about managing difficult behaviour or deterioration in the person with Dementia.

Carers are supported for up to six months either face to face or over the phone. They can be re-referred after this if their situation changes and they could benefit from additional support.

To access the service you can:

- Make a self-referral by calling 0300 777 0707
- Ask your GP, another health professional or Social Worker to refer you;
- Request a referral via a voluntary organisation such as Carers in Hertfordshire.

Feedback from a carer who has used the service.

"I found this service extremely useful and supportive. I had one to one support in my home and without this service I may have ended up in a crisis or needing medical care myself."

Become a Carer Representative

If you like speaking up on behalf of others or want to help shape services in Hertfordshire for people with Dementia and their carers, why not become a Carer Representative?

Carers in Hertfordshire is looking for new Carer Representatives - carers who attend meetings, events and focus groups to represent carers and provide feedback or comments.

Training and support is provided and if you want to find out more or express an interest in the role please call Sally Stratford on 01992 58 69 69 or email her at sally.stratford@carersinherts.org.uk