

Renfrewshire Carers Centre • Unit 55 • Abbey Mill Business Centre • The Embroidery Mill
Seedhill • Paisley PA1 1TJ • 0141 887 3643 • www.renfrewshirecarers.com

*Peter McLeod
(Director of
Social Work at
Renfrewshire
Council) and carer
Helen McAleer
(far left) launch
the Emergency
and Future
Planning for
Older Carers
Project with
Diane Goodman
(Centre Manager)
and Centre staff.*



Emergency and Future Planning Service for Older Carers takes off

The Emergency and Future Planning Project for Older Carers was officially launched in October 2010 and is now up and running. This new project is being funded for three years by the Big Lottery and will enable carers over the age of 50 to plan for the future and for emergencies by devising individual care plans. The scheme will also raise awareness of additional services required by older carers and provide access to information about services to help them cope and make positive changes. The project will link carers to appropriate carer services and also identify future areas of need. Carers Centre Manager Diane Goodman says "this service will help carers over 50 to plan for the long term to give them peace of mind that things are in place for the person they care for when they are no longer able to care themselves". You can ask for this service yourself, or ask your health or social worker to call on your behalf. Please contact Emma or Martine on 0141 887 3643 if you would like to find out more or email oldercarers@renfrewshirecarers.co.uk

Remember your flu vaccine!

The seasonal flu vaccine campaign is now underway and carers are a priority group for the first time! This year's vaccine will protect against three strains of flu, including H1N1, the Swine Flu virus. Other groups who are eligible for the vaccine are:

- Those who are aged 65 and over
- Those with a mental health condition that puts them at risk
- NHS healthcare staff
- Pregnant women

If you haven't already had your jag, make an appointment at your surgery as soon as possible!!

Spending Review – Key Points

Below are the key points from the recent Spending Review that may impact on carers and those they are caring for. We will provide more information in future newsletters on how the Spending Review may impact on health and social work services.

- The pension age is to increase to 66 for men and women by 2020.

- There is to be a time limit of one year on the contributory element of the Employment and Support Allowance for those in work-related activity group. This will affect disabled people and those with long term conditions if they are in the Work Related activity group of ESA benefit as they will lose this element after one year.

- Changes to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) which will mean that the mobility element of DLA is removed for those in residential care as this will already be paid for by the state.

- A cap is to be put on benefits of £500 for couples and lone parent households, £350 for single adult households. However, DLA claimants, war widows and working families claiming working tax credits will be exempt from the cap. This will impact most on families unable to work, including those who are caring.

- Plans to remove older teenagers from child benefit have been abandoned. However households where families have one higher rate tax earner will lose out.

- Changes to tax credits mean that couples with children will have to work at least 24 hours with one working at least 16 hours a week. This will impact on carers who work part time to fit around caring responsibilities as they will need to work more hours in order to qualify.

- Pensioners are to retain free eye tests, bus passes, free TV licences, however the retirement age will be going up to 66 between now and 2020 so these will not be accessible till later.

If you would like further information or clarification on benefits issues and how the changes may affect you, please get in touch with Advice Works on **01505 381 055** or if you are retired the Financial Advice and Benefits team on **0141 842 5268**.



Inspection findings from the Royal Alexandra Hospital

The Royal Alexandra Hospital (RAH) was recently inspected by the independent Healthcare Environment Inspectorate. Overall the report was positive; cleanliness and infection control were good and communication between staff and hospital maintenance was described as strong. Inspectors noted a few areas for improvement, including more consistent completion of cleaning schedules by domestic and ward staff and a review of refurbishment plans in the A&E Department.

Carer Training for Spring 2011

The Carers Centre is already busy planning training courses for the Spring. Courses for 2011 include a re run of some popular courses and sessions on new topics have also been planned. From January – October 2010, the project trained 231 carers over 42 training courses ranging from sessions on specific conditions such as dementia, stroke and diabetes to stress management, relaxation and future planning. A big thanks to Louise and Liz for all their hard work! Remember to ask for the new Training Brochure for 2011 if you haven't already got one! (0141 887 3643).

Carers Finance Survey

If you feel you are struggling financially because of your caring role, you are not alone. Recent research carried out for the Princess Royal Trust for Carers in the early autumn revealed that the majority of carers in the UK were feeling the strain of their financial situation. Around a third of carers were fearful of the future and around the same proportion said they were worried about losing their home. In response the Department for Work and Pensions said "the Government recognises the valuable role that carers undertake and the importance of supporting them to stay mentally and physically well". If you want to find out more about the research contact the Carers Centre on **0141 887 3643**.

New Equalities Act

In October 2010, millions of people caring for disabled people gained new rights under the Equality Act 2010. This will mean that they cannot be directly discriminated against or harassed because they are caring for someone who is disabled. The new rights also protect carers where they are provided with a worse service than someone who isn't caring for a disabled person. It also includes protection where carers are discouraged or prevented from using a service because they are caring for a disabled person. Imelda Redmond CBE, Chief Executive of Carers UK, has welcomed the new legislation coming into force and said, "*this is a significant step forward that many carers have been waiting for*". For more information on what the Act means for carers, contact Amy at the Centre on **0141 847 1936**.

Carers and Employment

The Carers Centre, along with other organisations in Renfrewshire are looking at the issues around carers and employment. We hope to find out about the barriers that prevent carers going out to work and identify the things that employers can do to help carers continue working. We hope to consult with carers in the new year about some of these issues. Let us know if you have any views on these issues by contacting Amy on **0141 847 1936**.

Making decisions for the person you care for

If the person you care for has a condition that may affect their ability to make decisions for themselves in the future (such as dementia or stroke) it's a good idea to plan for the future. If the person is still able to, encourage them to set up a Power of Attorney.

This is when the person chooses a family member or friend/neighbour to take decisions on finances or welfare when the person is not able to do this for themselves. You could also encourage the person to make a Will, which will allow them to choose what happens to their money and possessions when they are no longer around. Additionally, there is a so called 'Living Will', where the person writes down their wishes about their future medical care, taking into account their likes and dislikes.

These measures are legal documents and the person will need the help of a solicitor to set them up. If you want further information on these issues, contact the Carers Centre on **0141 887 3643**.

Lifeline for Elderly People

Contact the Elderly is a national charity that changes the lives of people, including carers who are over 75 and who are socially isolated. There are groups all over Renfrewshire who meet up one Sunday afternoon every month for tea, cake and company. Volunteers drive guests to and from the meeting venues and hosts take it in turn to welcome you into their houses. It is a free service and offers a lifeline of friendship to many people over 75, so if you are a carer and don't get out, or if you know someone who is in this situation then this could be just what you/they need. For more information on groups in your local area get in touch with Margaret Oliver on 01389 605 915 or email her on margaret.oliver@contact-the-elderly.org.uk Visit www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk

Dates for 2011

Some support groups do not meet in January, please check with the person who runs the groups. If you are unsure please contact the Centre on **0141 887 3643**.

If you are a new carer, please call the centre to confirm your attendance.

Respite Sitting Service Inspection

And now for a piece of good news - Renfrewshire Carers' Centre Respite Sitting Service was recently inspected by the Care Commission for Scotland. The service maintained the high scoring of '5s' that it achieved last year, which means 'very good' across the board. Thanks to Maureen and Margaret and the Respite Workers for all their hard work.

Winter advice for Carers

Winter is upon us again. Here are a few tips from Age UK on how to keep healthy over the darker months.

- Have your repeat prescriptions ready at home, painkillers, indigestion relief, cough and cold remedies and medicines for an upset stomach.
- Remember you can get free advice from your pharmacist and you don't need to make an appointment to see him/her.
- If you haven't already, get your central heating boiler serviced by a Gas-Safe approved plumber. The Carers Centre can provide contact information on plumbers, although we don't recommend anyone in particular.
- Make sure you have a smoke alarm and a carbon monoxide alarm fitted in your house.
- It's still a good idea to keep active during the winter months, but watch out for icy paths and pavements.
- Dress warmly when you go outside, even if it's just for a few minutes. Wear your coat, stout shoes, a hat, gloves and scarf.
- If you have one, remember to keep your mobile phone with you outside or in the house. If you have a fall, it will be easier to call for help if the phone is in your pocket.
- Keep spare batteries, candles and matches at home in a place you can easily find them if there is a power cut.
- If the weather looks doubtful, don't drive if you don't have to and remember to put some blankets in the car in case you break down.

Care Commission Change

The Care Commission for Scotland is to merge into the new Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland. This new body will inspect, regulate and support improvements in social care and social work services across Scotland.

Your Feedback Wanted!

We often get asked at the Carers Centre about things like how to find a good value gardener, where to go for a good relaxation class, how to access specialist equipment etc. We'd like to have your feedback on any useful organisations you have used and have been pleased with, so get your thinking caps on and give Amy a call at the Centre on **0141 847 1936**.

Christmas and Hogmanay Closures

The Centre will close for Christmas on **Thursday 23rd December** at 4.45pm and will re open on **Thursday 6th January 2011**.

Social Work will be closed from **Friday 24th December** at 2.30pm until **Thursday 6th January** at 8.45am. GP Surgeries will close on Friday 24th December but will be open from **Wednesday 29th December** until **Friday 31st December** and will re open on **Wednesday 5th January 2011**. See the Meetings List for further information.

Renfrewshire Carers Centre

List of meetings for Winter 2010

Date	Group and Time	Venue
Monday 10 January 2011	Linwood Carers Group 1.15pm - 3.15pm	Linwood Health Centre
Tuesday 11 January 2011	Mental Health Carers Support Group 7.00pm - 9.00pm	Charleston Centre
Wednesday 12 January 2011	Parents Support Group 12.00pm - 2.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Thursday 13 January 2011	Carer Self Support Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Northcroft Medical Centre
Tuesday 18 January 2011	Paisley Carers Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Tuesday 18 January 2011	Glenburn Carers Support Group 10.30 - 12.30pm	Glenburn Community Centre
Thursday 20 January 2011	Parkinsons Support Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Northcroft Medical Centre
Tuesday 25 January 2011	Stroke Support Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Northcroft Medical Centre
Tuesday 25 January 2011	Grandparents Support Group 11.30am - 1.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Wednesday 26 January 2011	Tannahill Carers Support Group 11.00am - 12.30pm	Tannahill Centre
Tuesday 1 February 2011	Mental Health Carers Support Group 7.00pm - 9.00pm	Charleston Centre
Tuesday 1 February 2011	Dementia Carers Support Group from 7.30pm	Old Age Psychiatry Day Hospital RAH (Tel: 0141 314 7113)
Wednesday 2 February 2011	Parent Support Group 7.00pm - 9.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Thursday 3 February 2011	Alzheimer/Dementia Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Northcroft Medical Centre
Wednesday 9 February 2011	Parents Support Group 12.00pm - 2.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Thursday 10 February 2011	Carer Self Support Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Northcroft Medical Centre
Monday 14 February 2011	Linwood Carers Group 1.15pm - 3.15pm	Linwood Health Centre
Tuesday 15 February 2011	Paisley Carers Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Tuesday 15 February 2011	Glenburn Carers Support Group 10.30 - 12.30pm	Glenburn Community Centre
Thursday 17 February 2011	Parkinsons Support Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Northcroft Medical Centre
Tuesday 22 February 2011	Stroke Support Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Tuesday 22 February 2011	Grandparents Support Group 11.30am - 1.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Wednesday 23 February 2011	Tannahill Carers Support Group 11.00am - 12.30pm	Tannahill Centre
Tuesday 1 March 2011	Mental Health Carers Support Group 7.00pm - 9.00pm	Charleston Centre
Tuesday 1 March 2011	Dementia Carers Support Group from 7.30pm	Old Age Psychiatry Day Hospital RAH (Tel: 0141 314 7113)
Wednesday 2 March 2011	Parent Support Group 7.00pm - 9.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Thursday 3 March 2011	Alzheimer/Dementia Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Northcroft Medical Centre
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Tuesday 22 March 2011	Stroke Support Group 1.00pm - 3.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Tuesday 29 March 2011	Grandparents Support Group 11.30am - 1.00pm	Renfrewshire Carers Centre
Wednesday 30 March 2011	Tannahill Carers Support Group 11.00am - 12.30pm	Tannahill Centre

If you are new to the carer support groups, please call the centre to check that meetings are going ahead as planned on 0141 887 3643.

The Carers' Café takes place every Thursday at the Centre between 11am and 1pm - all carers are welcome

Benefits Surgery takes place every Tuesday - waiting list and appointment system in place

Lawyer Sessions are available on the first Wednesday of every month in the mornings

Stress Management Sessions will take place every Wednesday - waiting list and appointment system in place

The social evening will take place on the last Thursday of every month - check with the Centre

The centre will be closed from noon every Friday afternoon for staff training and administration

The Carers Centre will close for Christmas on Thursday 23rd December at 4.45pm and will re-open on Thursday 6th January 2011.

GP practices in Renfrewshire will close at normal time on Friday 24th December and will re-open on Wednesday 29th December. They will close again on Friday 31st December and re-open on Wednesday 5th January 2011.

Social work will close at 2.30pm on Friday 24th December and will re-open on Thursday 6th January 2011.

At the time of going to print we do not know opening times of pharmacies or stand-by social work services over Christmas and the New Year. This information should be available nearer to Christmas, so please contact us then if you would like this information.

Social Work Number 0141 207 7878

Renfrew Health & Social Work Centre

10 Ferry Road • Renfrew PA4 8RU

adultservicerequest.sw@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk

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