

# Medway Carers Newsletter



*for Carers*

*A Network Member*

## World Mental Health Day

### October 10th 2011

Statistics show that 1 in 4 people will suffer with a mental health problem. Every year there are 250,000 mental health related hospital admissions. The annual World Mental Health Day is held on October 10th to help raise the awareness of mental health issues around the world. The day hopes to promote open discussion on mental illness.

Carers of mentally ill people on a daily basis can struggle with the unpredictability of their loved ones condition. They feel isolated, tired, drained and unsupported. Medway Carers Centre run two support groups for carers of mentally ill people. The two groups meet once a month. Carers of mentally ill support group meets on the first Monday of every month and Hope in Caring group supports black and ethnic minority carers of mentally ill people. They meet on the second Wednesday of each month. Please see page 2 for exact dates and meeting times.

The Kent and Medway NHS & Social Care Partnership is made up of doctors, mental health nurses and social workers and other health professionals. They plan and run all the services and support for mentally ill people and their families. More information about what they do and mental illness can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.kmpt.nhs.uk>, [www.nhs.uk/livewell/Pages/Livewellhub.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/Pages/Livewellhub.aspx)

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### Free Parking Vouchers

Available for all events and training sessions at Medway Carers Centre.

Please call on

**01634 577340**

10 days prior to the event you are attending to get your voucher in good time.



## Free Day Trip to London Eye

### Saturday 15th October 2011

A Day trip to London Eye and London Eye Cruise has been organised on 15th October 2011. It has been funded by the Kent Community Fund so its free of charge but you need to bring your own refreshments. It is their condition that the trip is for carers only and not for the cared for. We will be leaving from Medway Park (Black Lion) 9am and leaving London 4pm. It seems like a really good day out.

If you would like to come on the trip, please contact Maya at the office on **01634 577340** and reserve your place. It will be on the basis of first come first served. So hurry to avoid disappointment.



## Carers Training/Activities

Month	Date	Speaker	Content of workshop/ presentation	Time
October	Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Sallyann Baxter	Safeguarding Workshop. This is the second of two workshops that help carers and a vulnerable person identify the risks present such as those from con artists and also what to consider when employing carers through the direct payment scheme.	10 - 12:30
November	Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> November	Robin Maxted	Medway Council Direct Payment Scheme	10 - 12pm
December	<b>All training and events to be confirmed.</b>			

***Due to health and safety we are only able to have a limited number of carers attend, in view of this can all carers please call the centre and confirm their attendance. Thank you.***

Date/Day/Time	Event	Location	Description	Respond to
Alternate Tuesdays (27th Sept. onwards) 11am - 1pm	Coffee Morning Drop In for Carers	Medway Carers Centre	Drop In for carers anyone welcome (Please ask if you need help from a member of staff)	01634 577340
1st Monday in the month 10:45am - 12:45pm	Support Group for carers of people with mental health issues	Medway Carers Centre	Drop In for those caring for someone with mental health issues	01634 577340
Monday & Tuesday 1 - 3pm	Yoga	Medway Carers Centre	Relaxation Anyone welcome	Maya 01634 577340
Meets every 3rd Friday of the month. 10 – 12am. Next meeting 21st October	Reading Group	Medway Carers Centre	Reading for pleasure Anyone welcome	Krishna 01634 577340
Walking Group				
Second Wednesday in each month 10—12 12th Oct, 9th Nov, 14th Dec	Hope in Caring	Medway Carers Centre	Support group for those from the BME communities caring for someone with mental health issues	01634 577340

## **University of Kent—Student Social Worker Selection Process**

For the past few years Medway Carers Centre has taken part in the development of the social workers degree programme. This opportunity has enabled carers to go into the classroom setting and share their caring experiences with students. Carers have tried to embed their experiences into the training programme, with the hope that when these students qualify they will have first hand insight into what it means to be a carer and how important it is to recognise the role of the carer when working with people who use services.

From 2012 the University will be directly involving carers and service users in selecting students for the degree programme. The selection process involves a written assignment, a group discussion and an interview. Carers and service users will be asked to observe the group discussion and will be expected to complete an 'assessment template' for each student taking part in the group discussion and share feedback with their 'partner' observers (a lecturer or practitioner and another carer or a service user). Any carer who is interested in being part of this selection process will be given training and support provided by Medway Carers Centre and the University.

If you are interested and would like to have a say on which students should train as future social workers or if you have any other questions then can you please contact Krishna on 01634 577340 or email [Krishna.Devi@medwaycarerscentre.org.uk](mailto:Krishna.Devi@medwaycarerscentre.org.uk).

## **Message from Angela Weaver— Carer**

I recently attended a meeting of parents and carers of adults with a learning disability. In the past I have always tried to attend the learning disability parent/carers forum meetings where the parent representative on the Partnership Board updated us on matters which may affect us. I must admit that attending a meeting was sometimes the very last thing I wanted to do at a particular time but I have always been so glad when I have made the effort. About a year ago I received a mailing just prior to a learning disability partnership board meeting and learned that the parent representative had resigned and that nominations were invited to fill the vacancy. An election would take place and if not enough people came forward self nomination was acceptable. I attended the meeting but never heard the result or anything else.

As a single carer I have felt overwhelmed at times and also isolated so was very pleased to be able to attend the recent meeting arranged by the ex parent representative. Those attending agreed that there seems to be little or no contact with the partnership board and that a separate group meeting of parent/carers would be valuable in enabling carers to get together, share experiences, raise issues and discuss problems if so desired. I have learned so much by attending meetings in the past, mainly from other carers. At this get together one carer gained information on council tax and another on wills. A list of dates will be agreed with the Carers Centre and sent out so please try to come and support this group, if not for your own benefit then maybe for others. Here is an opportunity. If we don't use it we will lose it!

## **National Institute for Health Research is looking for carer reviewers – fee paid.**

### **You could improve the quality of health research**

The National Institute for Health Research is looking for people across the UK who have first-hand experience of health conditions and/or health and social care services. They are particularly keen to hear from carers.

Join the NIHR's team of public contributors and you could review research briefing papers or proposals for Department of Health research funding. This work is done at home and at your own pace. Your views would add a 'real world' perspective to academic research and ensure that the patient and carer viewpoints are properly included in research that is funded with public money.

Reviewers get guidance and support and are paid a fee for all review work to acknowledge the valuable contribution of 'experts by experience'.

For more information about these opportunities visit the websites of the research funding centres:

[http://www.netscc.ac.uk/getting\\_involved/](http://www.netscc.ac.uk/getting_involved/)

## Carer

By Brian Blackman

*walk in the shadows of the one I love,  
In spirit form,  
I think to myself,  
Shall I shout aloud, am I here?  
Who will come and comfort me?  
Shall I cry?  
But who will come and wipe my tears,  
All who is here is men  
I'm sitting here writing these words,  
Of the heart  
While my wife sleeps  
Listening to the rain pattering  
On the window pain  
Waiting for someone to walk down  
The garden path  
but no one comes to talk to talk to me.  
When the so called professionals  
Come to see my wife  
I'm there but do they see me?  
I listen to their conversations  
And then at the end they walk away.  
I feel like a ghost looking in  
Or just a outer spirit,  
Oh well, I am on my own again.*

## Dyslexia

By Brian Blackman

I was born with the disorder dyslexia; it is abnormal difficulty in reading and spelling caused by a condition of the brain, I also have difficulty with my co-ordination. It also borders on autism. You are always scared and frightened to go out in case someone wanted to talk to you, or ask you for directions. When I was at school I was bullied everyday by the other children and sometimes by the teachers and sometimes by my own father when I was at home. I find catching a bus is very hard for me to do and also a train. And I find it hard to ask for a ticket to travel. I always love looking at books but I couldn't read them. Until about two and a half years ago when I joined an evening class my world opened up for reading and writing. I enjoy it very much. I can read now a little bit and I have learnt some words but I hope to be able to read everything I want one day. I look after my wife who has atypical autism a rare form and mental health illness I care for her, my wife helps me sometimes with spelling. I like writing poetry and little stories. When I am writing I feel I have found a place I want to be and when I read a book I have found another world. My one ambition with my writing is to write a book of my own and get it printed.

**For further support**



**National Helpline**

**Tel:** 0845 251 9002

**Email:** [helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk)

Our Helpline, staffed by volunteers, is open from 10:00a.m. until 4:00p.m. Wednesday from 5:00 - 7:00p.m.

**Living Well in Medway** is an information service for adults with low to moderate social care needs and their carers. This includes older people, people with learning or physical disabilities, mental

**WE PROVIDE INFORMATION FOR THOSE WISHING TO PURCHASE SERVICES  
DIRECTLY FOR THEMSELVES OR THEIR FAMILY**

We hold information on a wide range of services that will support people to remain in their own homes. Services include domestic services, support groups, leisure activities/facilities, personal care , meals services etc.

**CONTACT: 01634 582132**

**Email: [info@livingwellinmedway.org.uk](mailto:info@livingwellinmedway.org.uk)**

**[www.livingwellinmedway.org.uk](http://www.livingwellinmedway.org.uk)**

## **A free service for carers in Medway**

You talk, we listen, we help



Medway Council understands that carers often need to talk to someone outside their circle of friends and family about the pressure or stress involved in being a carer. Some carers may find it helpful to talk to someone who is independent, who can help them talk through a problem, consider new options and find solutions.

Many carers find they need support with the emotional aspect of caring as well as practical help. Carers often find that their own health can suffer as a result of carrying out their caring role.

To help carers, Medway Council has launched a free counselling service. Run by Care First, an independent organisation, Carers' line Medway offers a 24-hour service seven days a week.

Carers who want counselling support will be able to contact the Carers' line team of fully-trained counsellors in confidence. Carers can talk to a counsellor over the phone, through a web chat facility on the website and can also arrange to meet someone for up to six free sessions of face-to-face counselling, if they need to.

Carers living in Medway can access this free service by phoning **0800 197 4517** or by visiting [www.care-first.co.uk](http://www.care-first.co.uk). You will then be asked for a user name and password which will put you in contact with Care First web chat or online counselling.

To obtain your user name and password email [counsellingforcarers@medway.gov.uk](mailto:counsellingforcarers@medway.gov.uk)

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please let us know by completing the slip below and returning it to **Medway Carers Centre, 3 Canterbury Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 5TP**

Please tell us why you no longer want the newsletter (if due to bereavement, the date bereaved)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_



**Aiming High** in Medway supports families and children with disabilities to experience fun at home and in the community. By offering one to one support or help to join in group activities. Children and young people with disabilities aged 5—19 years old have time away from their carers and make new friends.

### Who Can Use This Service?

Children and young people with both ASD and other impairments.

Children and young people with complex health needs

Children and young people 11+ with moving and handling needs that will require equipment and adaptation

Children and young people where challenging behaviour is associated with other impairments (e.g. severe learning difficulties)

Young people 14+ who are severely disabled

To find out if you may be eligible please call Medway Carers Centre on **01634 577340**



### Aiming High News September 2011

Over the summer children supported by Aiming High in Medway have enjoyed the trip to Howletts Wild Animal Park, where as well as seeing all the animals children had the opportunity to let off steam in the many play areas around the park. Teenagers were supported to a day at Bewl Water where they took part in three Adrenaline activities, including the 3G swing, hydro-balling and the Bewl fan. We have also enjoyed a family day out to Leeds Castle, where the whole family could join in with the fun. Aiming High in Medway continues to succeed in supporting children to a variety of community activities. All children supported by Aiming High receive a short break on a 1:1 basis with a regular Community Care Worker to attend either organised group activities such as Drama, Karate, Dance and Gymnastics classes. Some choose to meet up with others who are being supported and enjoy cinema visits, bowling or even swimming together taking advantage of vital opportunities to forge social links and just as importantly having fun.

Service is provided by: Carers FIRST registered charity  
number 1085430

Registered company number 4144820 (England)

### Princess Royal Trust Medway Carers Centre

3 Canterbury Street Gillingham Kent ME7 5TP

**01634 577340** [www.medwaycarerscentre.org.uk](http://www.medwaycarerscentre.org.uk) Email : [info@medwaycarerscentre.org.uk](mailto:info@medwaycarerscentre.org.uk)

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Every care has been taken in the preparation of this newsletter, but neither Medway Carers Centre nor its employees can be held responsible for errors or omissions. Any opinions expressed are of their respective authors, and not necessarily those of the Medway Carers Centre or the Princess Royal Trust for Carers.

**The Princess Royal Trust for Carers (national): [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org) and [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)**

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