

Caring Matters

May 2024

Durham Tel: 0300 005 1213
Darlington Tel: 0300 030 1215
www.dccarers.org

Carers Week™

10th – 16th June 2024

Putting Carers
on the map!



Your local charity supporting carers



County Durham
& Darlington
carers support



DARLINGTON
Borough Council



North East and
North Cumbria

FINANCIAL SUPPORT | HINTS AND TIPS | COURSES | AND MUCH MORE INSIDE...

Contents

Universal Credit	2
Carers Week	3
New Hospital Discharge Team	4
The Carers Leave Act	5
Plastic Free July	6
Parent Carer News	7
Volunteer News	8
Fundraising	9
Darlington Carers Support	10 & 11
Carers Emergency Plan	12
Carer Training	13, 14 & 15
Support Groups	16

We would love to hear from you:

If you have any ideas/topics, share your caring story or top tips for future editions of Caring Matters that you would like us to include, please email Sophie Johnson at sophie.johnson@dccarers.org

How to access our services and refer to us:

- Call or email the office using the details below.
- For Carer Support visit: dccarers.org/sign-up-for-support/
- Ask your GP or social worker to refer you.

Contact us

Durham County Carers Support
Enterprise House
Enterprise City
Meadowfield Avenue
Spennymoor
DL16 6JF
T: 0300 005 1213

E: admin@dccarers.org
W: www.dccarers.org
Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and LinkedIn.

Darlington Carers Support
St Teresa's Hospice
91 Woodland Road
Darlington
DL3 7UA
T: 0300 030 1215

E: admin@darlingtoncarers.org
W: www.dccarers.org
Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and LinkedIn.



Don't miss out!

There are two main problems within Universal Credit that may lead to extra payments or "Elements" being missed on a Universal Credit (UC) claim.

Where a child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), the "Disabled Child" or "Severely Disabled Child" element is not always automatically added to the open UC claim as it may need the DWP to follow up and manually update the claim when something changes. If there is more than one child who is receiving a payment of DLA, a disabled or severely disabled element can be added for each child.

Use the UC journal "Report a change" to ensure that the message is seen as this is flagged to a DWP UC claim handler who will verify and add any elements to be included in the UC payment. Make sure to give the date the benefit was awarded from not the date on a decision letter to give the highest backdated payment.

The second widely missed payment is the "Carers Element".

A Carers element can be added where there is a caring responsibility of a person for 35 hours a week or more and the cared for person is in receipt of a disability benefit such as any rate of Attendance Allowance, the middle or high rate of the Care component of Disability Living Allowance or the Standard or Enhanced rate of the Daily Living component of Personal Independence Payment, and no one else is claiming Carers Allowance or Carers Element for them.

You do not have to claim Carers Allowance to have a Carers element added to your UC award. This is to allow anyone who is employed and earns more than Carers Allowance earnings limit to claim the Carers element.

If you are making a joint claim, you can get a Carers element each if you both qualify for it, but you cannot be caring for the same disabled person.

Use the UC journal to "Report a change" and give the date that caring responsibility started, or the date that the disability benefit giving entitlement started as the date of claim for the Carers element.

Durham Welfare Rights are currently supporting anyone who feels they have missing elements to challenge decisions. Call the Welfare Rights public advice line on **03000 268968** for Carers in the Darlington area call the CAB on **01325 266888** or contact your Carer Support Coordinator for advice.



Carers Week is an annual campaign across the UK to raise awareness of unpaid Carers and highlight the challenges they face and the massive contribution they make to our families, friends and communities. The theme this year is "Putting Carers on the Map" and Durham County Carers Support are working with hundreds of other Charities and organisations nationally and locally to do just that.

We know that many people don't see themselves as an unpaid Carer but they tell us they are "Just a Husband" "Just a Daughter" or "Just a friend" supporting someone who cannot manage without their help. During Carers Week we will work with our partners such as the local authorities, NHS, politicians, other charities and businesses such as supermarkets to shine a light on the contributions of Carers and ensure their voices are heard loud and clear.

During the week we will be going out into local communities across County Durham and Darlington with Information stands and our team of Carer Support Coordinators. They will be working to identify and get support to those who haven't recognised their need or found the right help yet. We know that by having conversations with people they will either be a Carer themselves or know a friend or relative that needs our help. We will also have some useful goodies for everyone who registers or comes for advice.

If you know someone who has a caring role and not yet getting support why not suggest they get in touch or visit <https://dccarers.org/sign-up-for-support/>

We haven't finalised our plans yet but please visit our website or keep an eye on our social media in early June for details. If you don't have digital access ring for details on **0300 005 1213**.



2024 Carer Survey Results

We recently asked Carers registered with us to tell us what they like about the service and asked what we could do better or differently in the future.

707 Carers filled this in and around 60 people attended some face-to-face sessions to give us more feedback in person. We haven't had time to analyse all the results but the whole team is looking at the feedback and will come up with a short action plan very soon. But here are some of the results.

Who responded? 559 female, 148 Male. 538 were aged between 25 and 64 years and 162 were 65 years plus.

Caring role? 41.5% caring for over 100 hours per week, 25% caring for 35-50 hours. 27% caring for 2 or more people. 43% caring for 10 years or more. 26% caring day and night.

Which services are most important to Carers? 399 said Practical information, 310 someone to listen to them, 246 knowing how to access other services, 352 funding to take a break, 283 the newsletter.

What else should we provide? More courses, more online, more out of hours support, local events to me.

How do you prefer to be supported? 282 by email, 210 by phone, 148 face to face, 80 by text.

How can we improve? More out of hours support, more contact, more local meetings, nothing it's a brilliant service.

Overall satisfaction out of 5. The average rating was 4.41 out of 5.

"Being a Carer can be very tiring. Having an organisation out there for me to contact when I have a problem is wonderful. You're doing a fine job, thank you."

"Thank you for being at the end of the phone or the other side of an email to help, listen and understand. Often, we become Carers without realising and people do not understand how hard it is to balance along with everything else."

Overall, there was lots of great feedback including suggestions for how to improve or do things to help make support more accessible. Our team are looking at this now and will be putting in place some changes over the next few months based on everything we have heard. A huge thank you to everyone who took part.

The lucky winners of the Carers Survey Prize draw of Amazon Vouchers were as follows:



Michelle Lawler



Dawn Donaldson



Moiria Tyas

Hello from the

New Hospital Discharge Team

The Hospital Discharge team will be working with ward staff and other health professionals to offer you the best support possible when the person you care for is being discharged from hospital.

We are on hand to discuss finances – as many benefits can be affected by a hospital stay. We understand that having someone in hospital is overwhelming and you may need someone to talk to. You may have lots of questions too. We can be your link in the hospital and then for those first few days or weeks be around to advise and sign post Carers to the relevant services.

We want Carers to be informed and involved, NOT overwhelmed and confused. Gill, Helen and Jan started work at the University Hospital of North Durham in November 2023 and they can be contacted via our main telephone number 0300 005 1213 or by emailing admin@dccarers.org.

We are also available on site at the hospital on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoon. (Please call our main telephone number to reach us). If required, Out of Hour appointments are available.

Ruth – (Darlington) started on the Hospital Discharge team in January 2024. Ruth will be around to support Carers in Darlington Memorial Hospital, Bishop Auckland Hospital, Sedgefield Community Hospital and The Richardson Hospital, Barnard Castle. Ruth can be contacted by calling 0300 030 1215 or email admin@darlingtoncarers.org

Meet your Hospital Discharge Team



Helen Olney Jan Burden Gill Taylor Ruth Sykes

Welcome to Vanessa

Local Lived Experience Lead

We would like to introduce Vanessa as our new Local Lived Experience Lead for the Derwentside and Claypath areas. Vanessa is part of a Countywide project which focuses on initiating conversations with local people to find out about their experiences of accessing mental health services. Vanessa is here to listen to people's stories, get an understanding of what supports them on their journey and ensure that the voice of lived experience shapes mental health services in the future. Vanessa will be meeting regularly with representatives from a wide range local organisations supporting people with mental health issues working together to improve services. She is looking forward to talking to Carers and hear about all their experience (the good, the bad, and the ugly). If you have something to share, please complete this very short form or scan the QR code. Vanessa would love to hear from you.



The Carers Leave Act:

What new rights will this give me as a Carer?
The Carer's Leave Act has opened up many more possibilities for carers who are employed. These new changes came into effect on the 6 April 2024.

- The Carer's Leave Act covers employees in England, Wales and Scotland.
- Employees are entitled to one week's unpaid leave per year if providing or arranging care for someone with a long-term care need.

- This leave can be taken flexibly (in half or full days) for planned and foreseen caring commitments.
- It is available from the first day of employment.
- It provides the same employment protections to employees as other forms of family-related leave, including protection from dismissal.
- More info about the Carers Leave act can be found here www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/work-and-career/the-carers-leave-act-2023

More support for working Carers can be found on our website www.dccarers.org/working-carers/



North East and North Cumbria



North East and Cumbria Learning Disability Network



ARE YOU SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE YOU CARE FOR BY ASKING FOR



REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS



DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY ARE?

Health and care services and staff have a legal duty to provide reasonable adjustments to people with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Find out more about why Reasonable Adjustments are beneficial to you and the people you care for by scanning the QR code or visiting www.necdnetwork.co.uk/work-programmes/reasonableadjustments



SCAN ME



REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

What are Reasonable Adjustments?

	The Equality Act 2010 says all health and care services must be accessible for people with disabilities. These are called reasonable adjustments.
	This includes people with a physical disability or a sensory disability, people with a learning disability or autistic people and people with a long term condition such as dementia.
	Reasonable adjustments can sometimes be small changes such as: • Providing information in an easy read format • Installing a ramp • Providing a quiet room for people to wait in • Providing a longer appointment time
	Reasonable adjustments can also be quite complicated to arrange and sometimes need lots of planning across health and care teams for people who have complex needs.
	Reasonable adjustments are individual and should be tailored to the person.
	It's really important to speak to your health and care professionals and tell them about the reasonable adjustments you or your loved one need.
	You can find more information and resources at www.necdnetwork.co.uk/work-programmes/reasonableadjustments

Keep us updated!

Have your details recently changed? Would you be happy to receive the newsletter by email? Would you like to be removed from our database?

Please let us know here or scan the QR code to complete the form online.

Current address details

Name:.....

Address:.....

Postcode:..... Telephone:..... Email:.....

Previous address:

Postcode:

Please tick as appropriate:

- ☐ I would like to receive all future "Caring Matters" via email.
- ☐ I no longer wish to receive the "Caring Matters" newsletter.
- ☐ Please remove my details from your database as I'm no longer a Carer.

Return this form to FREEPOST RTXA-HHGH-SAGE, Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House, Enterprise City, Meadowfield Avenue, Spennymoor, County Durham, DL16 6JF (no need to attach a stamp).



Embrace the Challenge:

Join Plastic-Free July and Transform Our Planet

Plastic pollution has become a pressing global issue, with detrimental effects on our environment, wildlife, and even our health. Fortunately, initiatives like Plastic-Free July offer us a chance to make a tangible difference. This July, we urge you to join the movement and embark on a journey towards a plastic-free lifestyle. Here are some easy ideas to get you started:

1. Reusable Shopping Bags:

Invest in reusable shopping bags and say goodbye to single-use plastic bags. Keep them handy in your car or by the front door to ensure you never forget them when heading out for groceries.

2. BYO (Bring Your Own) Bottle:

Ditch disposable plastic water bottles and opt for a reusable one instead.

3. Say No to Single-Use Cutlery and Plates:

When dining out or ordering takeout, politely decline plastic cutlery and opt to use your own reusable utensils.

4. Reusable Containers for Food Storage:

Instead of storing leftovers in disposable plastic containers, switch to glass or stainless-steel containers. Not only are they better for the environment, but they also keep your food fresh for longer.

5. Choose Plastic-Free Packaging:

When shopping, look for products with minimal or plastic-free packaging. Buying in bulk or choosing products packaged in glass, cardboard, or compostable materials can significantly reduce your plastic consumption.

6. DIY Cleaning Products:

Many conventional cleaning products come in plastic bottles. Make your own eco-friendly cleaners using simple ingredients like vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils. Not only are they effective, but they also reduce plastic waste.

By participating in Plastic-Free July, you're not only reducing your own plastic footprint but also contributing to a larger movement towards a cleaner, healthier planet. Every small change counts, and together, we can make a significant difference. So, let's embrace the challenge, inspire others to join us, and pave the way towards a plastic-free future. Are you ready to take the plunge?

Join Plastic-Free July today and be part of the solution!

I CARE! is an arts project by artist Sharon Bailey for carers to tell their stories, to celebrate and bring to public attention the amazing work you do. I've been collecting photographs, stories and audio recordings by connecting with carers to reveal the day to day experiences of those looking after people within our communities.

Working alongside a writer the stories and recordings is forming the basis for monologues, to be performed by actors as part of public events. Workshops using photography, printing and collage to produce I CARE! artworks are taking place, which will be carried by audiences as part of the final performance, to take place at Grainger Market in Newcastle for National Carer week. A touring and online exhibition will be shown across Durham later in the year.

For more information on the I CARE Project please visit www.sharonbailey.co.uk



Parent Carer News

Welcome Paula

Hiya, my name is Paula and I have recently joined Durham County Carers Support as the new Parent Carer Support Coordinator for Darlington. I previously worked as a volunteer counsellor with Durham County Carers Support, and I am really excited to be returning to the charity in my new role.

As a parent Carer myself, I understand the day-to-day challenges that can arise. Navigating the numerous services can be difficult and frustrating at times. I am looking forward to working within a Whole Family Approach to be able to give knowledge, support, and advice to fellow parent carers of children with additional needs and disabilities.

I look forward to meeting with you all soon.

Paula Stinson



Making Changes Together (MCT Durham PCF) are Durham's Official Parent Carer Forum. They are a registered charity and a group of parent carer volunteers who; together with other parent carers; work with professionals to influence and improve services to children and young people (0-25 yrs) with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) within the Durham local authority area. Through events, training / workshops, biannual parent carer conferences, coffee events, fun information events, surveys etc they ensure parent carers voices are heard and influence changes together. They also work together with other Parent Carer Forums and organisations locally and nationally to influence wider SEND legislation.

Their website has a wide range of local and national SEND information, guides, and links ~ www.mctdurham.co.uk and their Facebook page is updated daily with links, events, and the latest news. If you have any questions or wish to be added to their email mailing list to be sent events or information, email info@mctdurham.co.uk.



CIO CHARITY No 1202217
"MAKING CHANGES TOGETHER"

ARE YOU A CARER?

Have an idea about how to make support better?



We are looking for unpaid carers to join our Carer Research Group

Who and What? Carer group to support research, with up to 8 people who are also carers who provide informal (unpaid) care to someone.

Why? To make sure carers have a voice in research and be able to direct where research is needed.

How? Online discussions with the team and other carers 4 times per year, for 2 years.

Interested? Just scan the QR code for more info



NIHR | Newcastle Patient Safety Research Collaboration



QR code not working? Contact Matthew.Cooper2@ncl.ac.uk

Carers Allowance

Are you still eligible?

Carers are being asked to repay thousands of pounds after earning more than the limit for Carers Allowance.

Please check that you: -

- Do not earn more than £151 a week after tax, national insurance and some allowed expenses.
- Report any extra income such as overtime or an increase in contract hours to Carers Allowance Unit
- Continue to provide 35 hours a week of care to someone who has the right benefits in place.

Carers Allowance Unit Contact Numbers
Telephone: 0800 731 0297
Textphone: 0800 731 0317

- Read all letters from Carers Allowance and quickly report any changes, whenever they happen.
- Contact Carers Allowance Unit if you are worried you may be affected.

Scan here for further information or click on the link.

https://www.carersuk.org/media/3inh124t/carers-allowance_april_2024-25.pdf for full details.



Volunteer Opportunities

We need your help.

We are currently looking for volunteers to help us with:

- Admin/office tasks
- Counselling
- Groups and events
- Calling Carers to keep in touch
- Support at information stands

We also desperately need volunteers to help Carers complete benefit forms. This is telephone-based support and is a very rewarding role. We currently have the following training dates available:

Disability Living Allowance (TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS)

Friday 24th May
Friday 26th July
Friday 27th September
Friday 22nd November

Attendance Allowance (TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS)

Saturday 29th June
Friday 23rd August
Friday 25th October
Friday 13th December

For more information on any of volunteer opportunities please complete this form or scan the QR code <https://forms.office.com/e/E4UFgV8qwV>



Volunteer News

With over 100 current volunteers contributing to every part of the support we offer, now is the time to see if you could join our team.

We still have a number of vacancies in our Keeping in Touch team, our welfare benefits team and our admin team to name just a few. We provide training, induction, and ongoing support. You can gain new skills or just brush up on ones you already have, there is a role for you if you want to help us to help others. Over the last 2 years 5 volunteers have joined us for a paid position and many more got vital experience and a reference to get paid work elsewhere.

Support Durham County Carers Support with confidence

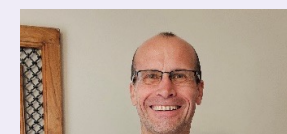
Your contributions will exclusively fund our FREE Counselling Service for Carers residing in County Durham & Darlington.

From April 2023 to March 2024, our counselling service received 539 referrals and our dedicated team of volunteer counsellors delivered an outstanding 4,801 hours of counselling.

Meet two amazing people currently raising funds for the Counselling Service:



Helen Swim's again for Carers
Our very own Helen Olney (Hospital Discharge Team) is taking on her biggest challenge yet, 15km over 6 swims around the Isles of Scilly.



Marathon man Tony Williams
Tony is a Darlington postman and is a registered Carer caring for his dad. He has just completed the Manchester Marathon to help raise funds for the Counselling Service.



To support Helen, Tony or our GNR team go to our website and click on the donate button or scan the QR Code.

Great North Run 2024

Run for Fun, Run for Us

We have 6 runners signed up to join 60,000 runners for the world's biggest and best half marathon from Newcastle to South Shields on Sunday 8th September 2024. We still have 4 places available, if you are interested, please visit our website for further information or scan the opposite QR Code.



Come along to

celebrate and meet up...



For National Volunteers week we want to recognise and celebrate the valuable contributions our fabulous team have made over the past year.

In the past year volunteers added over 10,000 hours of additional support from admin to fundraising, to trustees, to counsellors, to group support, to keeping in touch to welfare benefits. Its astonishing the dedication and commitment from an hour or 2 a week to 3 days a week every one of those has directly supported a Carer in one way or another.

With this in mind, we are hosting a slightly different Volunteer's week celebration this year. We are inviting all our current Volunteers, and anyone interested in knowing more about volunteering to come along to our celebration event. To be held at our offices at Enterprise House, Spennymoor on Tuesday 28th May from 4pm – 7pm. There will be cake and coffee, examples of the amazing work done over the last year and some of the current team to answer your questions or catch up with.



Come along and celebrate with us and meet the Volunteering team. To let us know you will be attending or for more information on anything you have read please call Andrea Emerson on 0191 500 6010 or email andrea.emerson@dccarers.org

50:50 Club Monthly Lottery

You could win 1 of 3 great cash prizes every month. As the name suggests, 50% of the money supports our Carers Wellbeing Fund and 50% is paid out in cash prizes. Club members pay £12.00 per year to be entered into 12 monthly draws. Winners are notified by post, announced on our Facebook page and in this newsletter.

To enter fill in and return the slip below or join online www.dccarers.org

Name:

Mobile Number:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:



I would like ____ numbers at £12.00 per year and enclose a cheque made payable to: Durham County Carers Support.

I would like ____ numbers and would like to pay by Standing Order (we will send you a form to complete).

Please cut out and send this completed form to: Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House, Meadowfield Avenue, Spennymoor, DL16 6JF.

50:50 CLUB WINNERS

January 2024	February 2024	March 2024	April 2024
1st T. Pennick	1st J. Pugh	1st G. Page	1st T. Hall
2nd A. Barron	2nd K. Dawson	2nd J. Cooper	2nd S. Kramer
3rd L. Ninham	3rd V. Barnett	3rd M. Jones	3rd S. Dixon

AVE
1st PRIZE
£113

AVE
2nd PRIZE
£75

AVE
3rd PRIZE
£37

Darlington Carers Support *Carer Testimonial*

I first came into contact with Darlington Carers Support around November 2022 when I was seeking avenues to find socially interactive spaces for my son. I was reluctant to interact at first because I did not consider myself to be a Carer.

The first contact was via the telephone and for what felt like the first time ever, I gave myself permission to admit that circumstances were challenging and thus parenting was difficult. What became an enquiry to find suitable activities for my son soon opened the door to a support system that acknowledged my need for assistance. Since registering with Darlington Carers the support I have received is far ranging. I was particularly grateful for their role in highlighting my son's right to claim Disability Living Allowance and also the assistance that was provided when I was completing the lengthy form. I was successful in my first application, and I attribute this to the guidance I received from Darlington Carers Support.

Another warming interaction with Darlington Carers Support is the often-needed reminder that carers are integral to the lives of the people who we care for! And with this, Darlington Carers Support facilitates thoughtful means that really bring my well-being back to focus. I am the very happy recipient of a sewing machine that has provided me with a means of exercising my textile-based creativity, which also serves as a way of relaxing, a delightful and much appreciated 2-birds situation! I have also attended afternoon tea with other carers, which is a much-welcomed opportunity to capture moments of the finer things. Caring is a full-time responsibility, but it is no longer overwhelming as it used to be since I have received support from Darlington Carers Support. To receive support from people who understand caring responsibilities soften the edges of duty burden. It has also heralded the chapter where I now allow myself to vocalize for help when needed, slowly evolving my life away from solitude to that of connection. I am very grateful that I am a parent who has come into contact with this remarkable organisation as the goodwill and support I have received has been overwhelmingly positive for myself and my son.

Aliya - Carer

Carers Afternoon Tea

We were extremely overjoyed that 20 Carers were able to join us recently for another successful Carers' Afternoon Tea at Bannatyne Hotel in Darlington. It was fantastic to hear from our Carers, the up lift it has given them to feel part of a group, taking time away from their caring role and having some vital 'me time'.

Here is some of the feedback received from our Carers:

"The food was delicious. I thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon with it being all about me."

"It was lovely to have a meal without any interruptions."

"Excellent food, good catering for different dietary needs, the catering staff were very helpful."

"It was lovely to meet others and share stories. I felt relaxed which I haven't felt in a long time."



"I was a little nervous as I didn't know anyone, but the afternoon was very relaxing and everyone was very welcoming."

Fun and Games for Carers

On the 8th of March Carers got together to have a games session with a twist. It was I.T bingo, with prizes! The group had a range of I.T abilities, but we all worked together to have some fun and learn a thing or two.

We all learnt that I.T can be fun and more useful than we expect. Being connected can reduce isolation and promote better well-being. Even basic IT can allow for more independence and reduce time- so you can have more time to yourself. We can lend out equipment including gadgets to get you accessing the internet safely in your home. We also have Free Sim cards if you are struggling with managing to run a phone.

To find out more about our fun and games session or what we may be able to do for you, please contact Darlington - 0300 0301215.



Young Carers *Darlington*

Young Carers Darlington works with young carers, young adult carers and their families, to provide individualised support where needed.

The service aims to help young carers and young adult carers to realise and reach their potential through protecting them from inappropriate caring and providing the support they need to enjoy positive childhoods, to learn, develop and thrive.

Using a whole-family approach, Young Carers Darlington work to ensure that young carers, young adult carers and their families receive an integrated, co-ordinated and solution-focused support package. Working closely with multi-agencies means that we can offer the right services, at the right time. Early intervention allows us to minimise the likelihood that needs will escalate and provide the young carer or young adult carer with the space and opportunities to succeed in life



Family Action – a national charity that has worked from the heart of local communities for over 150 years – is delivering the service as of the 1st of April. Rachel Smith, Operational Manager, says 'We are so excited to be working with Darlington's Young Carers – to help support families to flourish even when times are tough. We're looking forward to building relationships with partners in the local area to deliver a first-class service for the young carers'.

You can find out more about Young Carers Darlington referral process and Family Action's experience in supporting young carers by visiting Young Carers Services - Family Action (family-action.org.uk).

Address: St Teresa's Hospice, 91 Woodland Road, Darlington, DL3 7UA
Email address: darlingtonyoungcarers@family-action.org.uk
Opening times: Monday – Friday, 9 – 5pm Age ranges for each service: 5 – 24 years



Carers Emergency Plan

It is important to think about what would happen if you were unexpectedly and temporarily unable to provide care for your relative or friend. An emergency situation could be an unexpected childcare issue, a period of illness, travel disruption, or even a stay in hospital.

Taking the time to create an emergency plan now will give you confidence that, no matter what life throws at you, you've already planned for the best. Keep your plan somewhere safe and visible in your own home and give copies to the people who are most likely to need it in an emergency.

If you would like advice about your emergency plan, or additional support in other areas, please call Durham County Carers Support on: 0300 005 1213 or email admin@dccarers.org

Download your free Emergency plan [here](#) or scan the QR code opposite.

Tide - Together In Dementia Everyday is a great website for Carers living with someone with Dementia.

www.tide.uk.net



What they do_:

Connect - Carers who are members of tide have said meeting people, hearing and sharing stories helps with feelings of loneliness and isolation. You can join them at their friendly get-togethers by visiting their events page. They also have a closed Facebook group for unpaid carers to ask questions, share advice with one another and speak freely in a safe private space.

Confidence - They have developed with carers a series of online events that are designed to help you on your caring journey through their Carer Development Programme. From understanding your own emotional wellbeing to workshops on practical caring solutions

Influence - They believe in creating real change together. Whether it's having the right information at a Doctor's appointment, making changes locally, or influencing at a national level to create policy change. They will support you to make your voice heard.

Setting up your Emergency Plan



As well as having your Emergency Card, we recommend you set up an Emergency Plan



WE ARE PROUD TO SUPPORT ALL LGBTQ+ CARERS!

We are an inclusive Charity

We want to support all unpaid Carers in County Durham & Darlington. To do this we want to increase our visibility amongst marginalized groups and ensure that we appeal to all members of the communities we serve. We know that many LGBTQ+ Carers report feeling isolated and that they can struggle to access inclusive services.

Durham County Carers Support & Darlington Carers Support are inclusive, supportive organisations. We need to ensure that all Carers feel welcome to access our services and to highlight that we offer tailored support which is reflective of the fact that no two caring roles are identical. If you feel you would like to support us to increase our visibility across the LGBTQ+ community, please get in touch. Sign up for support [here](#)

Carer Training

The first quarter of our training program has been positively received by many Carers. Providing free sessions on awareness, well-being, and understanding the cared-for's illness. Carers play a crucial role in supporting their loved ones and the valuable resources and knowledge is essential to help them continue.

Taking time out for self-care is equally important, especially considering the demands of the caring role. Carers often neglect their own well-being while caring for others, so try to prioritise "me time".

If you receive the Caring Matters Newsletter via email and would like to attend any of the sessions simply click on the link provided below the information. If you receive your Caring Matters by post, you can call Alison Dixon on 0191 5006031 email alison.dixon@dccarers.org or use a digital device to scan the QR code at the bottom of this article to express your interest.

Training for Durham and Darlington Carers

An introduction to Anticipatory Grief

(A feeling of loss that occurs in a major change in your life).

Louise Johnson from St Cuthberts Hospice will be explaining what she will be covering in the Anticipatory grief session.

Thursday 4th July 2pm - 3pm via Zoom

<https://forms.office.com/e/qOy9rEnLaT>

Anticipatory Grief

Anticipatory grief is common among people facing loss and in particular the death of a loved one, possibly someone they are caring for. Most people expect to feel grief after a death, but a Carer could experience fear, anxiety, worry, anger and more, before the death of a loved one. This course will help Carers identify what Anticipatory Grief is and understand the impact it could have on them as a Carer and help them cope.

Friday 19th July 10am - 1pm via Zoom

<https://forms.office.com/e/9QexvL8Gi>

Everything in its Place 8 weekly sessions

For most of us thinking about death and dying isn't easy at all. Understandably, we shy away from the topic and change the subject. The Everything in Place project helps make talking about death and our own future wishes as easy as possible. We want to help break the taboos that surround death and dying and support these conversations. If we don't talk about these things with those close to us, it can make it more difficult to cope for the dying and also for those who will be bereaved once the time comes. Getting Everything in Place now can make it all a little bit easier when the time comes.

8 weekly sessions will take place at Bullion Hall, Chester le Street starting Monday 13th May 1pm - 3pm

8 weekly virtual session over Teams starting Wednesday 15th May 10am - 12 noon

<https://forms.office.com/e/WA1ebYM54u>

If you are unsure Everything in its Place will benefit you, you can contact Louise Johnson on Tel: 0191 374 6196

Mobile: 07889 258527

Louise.johnson@stcuthbertshospice.com

Making Sense of Caring

Making Sense of Caring helps you understand what help and support is available for all Carers who care for an adult in County Durham. It helps you find your way through the maze of services that make up the Health and Social Care system. Lunch will be provided on the face-to-face sessions, so it is essential you book your place. Places are limited.

Tuesday 11th June 2024 6pm - 7.30pm via Zoom

Thursday 12th September, 10am - 12noon at The Venue Stanley

<https://forms.office.com/e/8zr7kte8Gp>

Parent Carer – Making Sense of Caring

Making Sense of Caring for Parent Carers helps you understand what help and support is available for all Parent Carers who care for a child in County Durham. It helps you find your way through the maze of services including CAHMS and SENDIAS.

Thursday 26th September 10am - 12 noon

at Belmont Community Association

<https://forms.office.com/e/Aq2a1KuBvP>



Mental Health- Making Sense of Caring

Making Sense of Caring is for Carers looking after someone with mental health issues. It helps you understand what help and support is available for all Carers who care for someone in County Durham with a mental health issue. It helps you find your way through the maze of services including mental health services and health and social care. Lunch will be provided on the face-to-face sessions, so it is essential you book your place. Places are limited.

**Tuesday 17th September at 10am - 12noon
at Wingate and Station Town Family Centre**

<https://forms.office.com/e/s2Aj1ZMFKU>

Mindfulness

Mindfulness aims to help you become more self-aware, feel calmer and less stressed, feel more able to choose how to respond to your thoughts and feelings, cope with difficult or unhelpful thoughts, be kinder towards yourself.

Thursday 25th July 2024 11am-12noon Mindfulness Taster session with TEWV at Woodleigh, Barnard Castle

Wednesday 17th July 10am - 12 noon - Mindfulness with Lynn Moor at Enterprise House, Spennymoor, DL16 6JF

<https://forms.office.com/e/zMqJ35SqVH>

If you would like to know more about Mindfulness or other sessions available, click the link below

Mindfulness for health and social care staff - Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (tevv.nhs.uk) or call 01325 552017.

Pilates - Online

TAKE TIME OUT FOR YOURSELF. Pilates improves flexibility, builds strength, and develops control and endurance in the entire body. It emphasises alignment, breathing, core strength, improving coordination, and balance. This is a 6 week course.

**Thursday 6th June - Thursday 11th July 2024
6pm - 7pm via Zoom**

<https://forms.office.com/e/6nBH6VF1Rq>

Yoga – Online

TAKE TIME OUT FOR YOURSELF. Yoga is linking the body, the breath and the mind. Whatever your circumstances, yoga can help to reduce aches & pains, help you feel physically stronger, deal with stress and maybe even help you sleep better. This is a 6-week course.

**Monday 5th August - Monday 9th September 6pm - 7pm
via Zoom**

<https://forms.office.com/e/9ZardOQzuz>

POA, Wills and Trusts - Online

POA -Creating a Power of Attorney in advance ensures that if the worst were to happen, you can rest assured that both your financial affairs and personal welfare are in safe hands. Wills - Making a Will enables you to plan exactly what will happen to your property (estate) following your demise. This ensures that those you would like to benefit actually do so, in accordance with your wishes and also avoids disputes between relatives. Trusts - The strategic use of Trusts can ensure that your children and grandchildren are able to benefit completely from the inheritance you want them to receive and at the same time, protect the family home and other assets from being lost to the costs of Long-Term Care.

Tuesday 21st May 6pm - 7pm and

Monday 22nd July 6pm - 7pm via Zoom

<https://forms.office.com/e/dg347rFHu6>



North East Regional Special Operations Unit (NERSOU)

Awareness Sessions How to stay safe from Internet, Phone and doorstep criminal.

Andy Hampson from the Northeast Regional Organised Crime Unit will explain how to keep yourself safe from criminals and raise your awareness of the scams the criminals are using. This awareness session will last for 40 minutes.

**Friday 14th June 10am - 11am at Shotton Community Hub,
Bridge Road, Shotton Colliery, DH6 2PQ**

**Thursday 15th August at 10.30am at The Four Clocks
Bishop Auckland**

<https://forms.office.com/e/mR6qi7vqhG>

Computing for the terrified

**DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE BEEN LEFT ON THE WRONG
SIDE OF THE DIGITAL BRIDGE?**

We can offer help for Carer's who have limited knowledge of computing.

Don't worry if you do not have a device or the internet, we may be able to help you get connected to discover the digital world. We can show you how to email, attached documents, use apps, shop and bank online, internet safety and much more.

6-week course will take place at our Spennymoor office Enterprise House on **Thursday June 6th - Thursday 11th July**. Call Alison Dixon on 0191 500 6031 for more information or to book a place.

<https://forms.office.com/e/LisiqfYMnG>



Training for County Durham Carers Only

First Aid Training

This course will cover the most common accidents and medical emergencies and will give Carers the knowledge to be able to prioritise injuries, establish if something is seriously wrong and give immediate first aid.

**Wednesday 22nd May 2024 10am - 1pm at Blackhall
Community Centre**

**Friday 13th September 2024 10am - 1pm at Bowburn
Community Centre**

<https://forms.office.com/e/f8mBXqex5X>

Moving and Handling

Moving and Handling course will be tailored to meet the Carers needs. It will cover bed to chair and chair to chair transfers, wheelchair safety, falls prevention and much more.

**Monday 17th June 2024 10am - 1pm at Fane Ltd, Unit 12 &
13 Derwentside Business Centre, Consett**

<https://forms.office.com/e/1Aj4m9dff5>

Positive Behaviour Support

Do you support an adult with a learning Disability with behaviours you find challenging? These workshops will be delivered by qualified and experienced NHS staff and help you identify more about tools that could help you and the person you support live a better life. Lunch will be provided so book soon. This is a 3 week course.

**Tuesday 25th June - Tuesday 9th July 10am - 3pm
at The Four Clocks, Bishop Auckland**

<https://forms.office.com/e/4E6BaZrEds>

If the courses above are of interest and you wish to attend in the Darlington area, please contact Alison Donoghue alison.donoghue@darlingtoncarers.org

Use a digital device to scan the QR code at the bottom of this article and complete the form to express your interest in the training.



Support Groups

Pop along to one of our Carer support groups below where you can meet with other Carers in your community in a safe and supportive environment.

Bishop Auckland Carers Group

Where: Four Clocks, 154a Newgate Street Bishop Auckland County Durham DL14 7EH

When: 3rd Thursday of the month, 10.30am - 12noon

Contact: for further information contact Louisa Collin on 0191 500 6030 or email louisa.collin@dccarers.org

Chester le Street Support Group for Carers

Join us for a cuppa and a chat.

Where: Bullion Hall, South Approach, Bullion Lane, Chester-Le-Street County Durham, DH2 2DW

When: 1st Friday of the month, 10am - 12noon

Contact: for more information contact Steve Gillgallon on 0191 500 6013 or email steve.gillgallon@dccarers.org

Consett Carers Support Group

Join us for a cuppa and a chat.

Where: Masonic Hall, John Street, Consett, DH8 5AS

When: 2nd Tuesday of the month 10.30am - 12 noon

Contact: for more information contact Dawn Mallows on 01207 263491 or email dawn.mallows@dccarers.org

Darlington Carers Support Group (please note change of venue from May onwards)

Where: Well-Being Hub at St Teresa's Hospice, Woodland Road, Darlington, DL3 7UA (new venue)

When: 1st Wednesday of the month 1pm - 2.30pm

Contact: for more details contact a member of our team on 0300 030 1215 or email us at admin@darlingtoncarers.org

Horden and Easington District Carers Group

The group met for the first time in their new venue on the 12th of April 2024 and had a fabulous turn out of 25 people, some of whom were joining for the first time!

Come along and meet Carers for a coffee and natter. Our group Volunteers Jim and Claire Wilson said "We are so happy to see some familiar and new faces come through the door, its so good we can support Carers at these groups and we often become friends."

Where: Shotton Community Hub, Bridge Road, Hotton Colliery, DH6 2PQ (new venue)

When: 2nd Friday of the month, 10am - 12noon

Contact: for more information contact Adele Blair on 01388 439748 or email adele.blair@dccarers.org

Stanley Carers Group

Where: The Venue, Community Centre, Wear Road, Stanley, DH9 6AH

When: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10.30am - 12noon

Contact: for more information contact Janice Coulson on 01833 600577 or email janice.coulson@dccarers.org

Teesdale Carers Support Group

Join us for a cuppa and a chat.

Where: Woodleigh (Council Offices), Flatts Road, Barnard Castle, DL12 8AA

When: last Thursday of each month, 10am - 12noon.

Contact: for more information contact Gill Taylor on 0191 917 4708 or email gill.taylor@dccarers.org



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