

November / December 2011

3 year funding for Southwark Carers as we start celebrations for our 30th Birthday.

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For people supporting their disabled, frail or ill relatives and friends in Southwark

For the first time in its history Southwark Carers has managed to negotiate a contract with Southwark Council for 3 year funding.

The contract enables us to become the 'Carers Hub' in Southwark, a central organisation that will provide services for carers in the Borough. The contract has meant that direct benefits to carers, in terms of the amount of personal budgets that we are able to offer will remain at the same level as last year. All cost savings have been made by identifying duplicated services and reductions in staff.

The role of the hub will extend the services that we currently offer. One of the key changes will be that as the Carers Hub we will along with the Council and SLAM be responsible for carrying out carers assessments in the borough. We have along with the Council and SLAM managed to develop an assessment form that is currently being used by the Council and Southwark Carers. These assessments are vital as they will be used to calculate what money you are entitled to in your personal budget. Personal Budgets have been phased in to replace the old system of grants for carers e.g. Fix Yourself a Break and the Transport Grant. Personal budgets will also replace respite hours that you are eligible for. You will find enclosed an assessment form, please can you complete this form so that we can start the process for allocating your personal budget. If you need any assistance with the form, please do not hesitate to contact us in the office.

As the Hub we will continue to offer a wide range of activities and support groups. We are pleased to announce that as a direct result of your requests we have managed to convince the Council that there should be more activities that allow will allow the person you care for to attend as well. In addition, you will see our services expanded we will also be more available up for working carers and will be holding events outside of normal office opening hours in the evenings and at weekends. You will see us doing more events in partnership with other organisations, for example, Contact A Family and TAIFA.

30 Years

We will be celebrating our 30th Birthday by having 30 events throughout the next year. In addition we will be holding a fundraising ball to generate some additional income for Southwark Carers. Please check regularly on our website to see what events are coming up.



Southwark Carers are moving.
In December 2011 after many years at Cambridge House, we will be moving to new premises.

From 5th December we will be based at: 3rd Floor, Walworth Methodist Church Camberwell Road, London, SE50AN

Our telephone number will remain the same.

Welcome

Hi I am June, I am the Chair of Southwark Carers and have been in post since December 2010, when David Le Bon stepped down due to ill health. I am a carer for a friend and in the past was for many years a carer for my husband. I have been a member of the management committee since 2005. I am passionate about Carers and their rights and am always willing to listen to your concerns and issues, I can be contacted on june.hollands@southwarkcarers.org.uk

In some respects I have taken over at a time of great uncertainty, funding crisis, contracts coming to an end and the uncertainty over when building works at Cambridge House will be completed and whether we would be able to stay on at Cambridge House. It is fair to say that the last year has been challenging in the extreme and that I have had a steep learning curve. However, I have attended training sessions for Trustees at CAS and PRTC and am confident in my role.

It has been sometime since the last newsletter, May 2011. The delay in the newsletter has been due to a number of reasons firstly we were awaiting a decision from the Council about the future existence of Southwark Carers and in the interim period we had a largely reduced budget, for a short period of time we had no funding from the Council at all and had to rely on our reserves to operate. Therefore, we had to make a number of cutbacks, reducing the number of editions of the newsletter being one of our many cost saving exercises.

I am delighted to report that after many months of negotiations with the Council that we have secured a three year contract with the Council, the start date of the new contract was the 8th August 2011. In securing this contract we have taken over the work that was originally carried out by TAIFA and Ellen Mgbenwelu at SLAM. We were able to work with the council to ensure that the cost savings were identified from back office costs and that direct services

for Carers, for example, FYAB, Transport Grant, and respite grants were not affected, eligibility criteria for these grants will however change, also they will now be known as personal budgets.

I would like to thank you all for your patience over the last few months whilst we have been carrying out these negotiations. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the various organisations that support Southwark Carers in its single provider negotiations, Community Action Southwark, Cambridge House, Contact a Family, Repaying the Kindness, KIDS, PRTC, and TAIFA.

I would also like to thank you all for the support that you have provided Southwark Carers in the last year and for your patience whilst we have negotiated and finalised the details of the personal budgets with the Council. I look forward to working on your behalf in the future.

Some of you have raised concerns over the closure of surgery groups, what I would say to you is that it was necessary to cease some of the groups as at that stage we were fighting for our survival and had received 25% cuts across all services. Also the attendance at groups was decreasing steadily making them unviable. I note that carers wanted the groups to be reinstated as they felt that they did not cost anything to run, the groups actually cost approximately £10,000 per annum to run. These costs are hidden costs, staff time, cost of mail outs and it is these hidden costs that we have to cut back on.

For those of you that took part in the Thames Walk in July 2010 and raised the princely sum of £1115.65 you will be assured to know that this money was earmarked to purchase IT equipment for the Rainbow Room, as we now have an identified Rainbow Room we will be purchasing this equipment and it will be available for you to use. The Thames Walk this year so far has raised £218.00 and these monies will be used for a pamper day for carers.



We have been extremely innovative in these times of austerity and have just started a pilot of a social enterprise, our activity groups when they make jewellery, candles and other crafts will be asked to donate the items that they make so that we can sell them and the profits will be reinvested into Southwark Carers. We will use the £1000 left to Southwark Carers by Mary Marshall to launch this venture. Our activities are extending their reach, we now have regular events on every third Saturday of the month.

Our AGM is scheduled for 2nd December and will take place at the Walworth Methodist Church from midday onwards. You should have received paperwork about this recently if you have registered as member with us. It looks like it will be very interesting meeting we have Anna Raeburn opening the meeting, we also have in attendance Dora Dixon Fyle Council Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care and Simon Hughes MP. I look forward to seeing you there.

Whilst we have been at Cambridge House for a number of years we are now moving, we will be moving to the Walworth Methodist Church and will be based on the 3rd floor. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Cambridge House for hosting us for all these years and look forward to retaining close links with them. We would like to thank the Walworth Methodist Church for making us feel so welcome and hope to have a long association with them.

June Hollands, Chair

Value of carers' services put at £814m per year

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers has found that an investment of less than £5 million in services provided by five Carers' Centres resulted in at least £73 million worth of social gains in a year. The Trust has published its findings in a new report titled "Carers' Centres: What impact do they have."

The report written by Baker Tilly is a social return on investment analysis that evaluates the impact of the support given by five Carers' Centres over a number of years. Looking across the whole network of 144 Carers' Centres supported by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, the independent analysis estimated the gain based on total funding of £57m to be in the region of £814m per year.

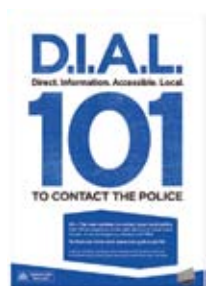
This gain in value arises from carers maintaining better physical and mental health by reducing stress and depression. In addition to this the person who is cared for is able to continue living at home while some carers may be able to continue working. The services targeting young carers play a crucial role in assisting young carers to continue education, find employment or receive training.

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers Director of Operations, Jane Burt, said: 'These services result in a real return to society, helping carers to continue to care confidently and safely. Carers provide support that is valued at £119bn a year. And services that help carers to continue caring are vital to society's ability to look after its increasing elderly and disabled population.'

One carer, John, explained what a lifeline the local Carers' Centre had been for him: 'Since making contact with my Carers' Centre, my life and my ability to provide the care needed by my wife has improved significantly. I have attended various modules of the Caring with Confidence Courses, these have all enabled me to learn how to manage myself better and thereby improve my health and my ability to support Linda.

'Through my Carers' Centre I have been given a one year subscription to a gym, where I am able to improve my overall fitness and health. It also gives me some time to myself, which helps reduce the stress and strain of caring. Without my Carers Centre I seriously doubt if I would still be caring for my wife.'

Reporting non-emergency crimes using 101



101 is the number to call when you want to contact your local police – when it's less urgent than 999. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

What you can report using 101

Call 101 to contact the police to report less urgent crime and disorder or to speak to your local officers.

For example, call 101:

- if your car has been stolen
- if your property has been damaged
- if you suspect drug use or dealing in your local area
- to report a minor traffic accident
- to give the police information about crime in your area
- to speak to the police about a general enquiry

When you should use 999 instead?

In an emergency always call 999.

- You should call 999 if:
- a crime is in progress
- someone suspected of a crime is nearby

- there is danger to life
- violence is being used or threatened

If you call 101 but are reporting an emergency, you will be directed to the 999 service.

Cost: what you will be charged if you call 101

Calls to 101 (from both landlines and mobiles) cost 15 pence per call no matter what time of day you call, or how long you are on the phone.

Who will answer my 101 call?

Calls to 101 are answered by police call handlers in the control room of your local police force.

When you call 101, the system will automatically connect you to your local police force. You will hear a recorded message telling you which force you are being connected to.

If you are on the boundary between two or more forces, you will have a choice of which force you are connected to.

Calling 101 if you have speech or hearing impairments
If you are in a 101 area and have a speech or hearing impairment, you can textphone 18001 101.

Southwark Carers in the News

Community Action Southwark interviewed Rob Danavell (Acting Deputy Chief Executive) regarding the changing role of Carers and the support that Southwark Carers provides. Here is a copy of the interview that appeared in their magazine Cascade.

Challenges Facing Carers

A study conducted by University of Leeds shows that the Government saves £119 billion through unpaid carers, Southwark Council saves £76 million. With an increasingly ageing population, 1 in 2 people will become carers at some point in their lives. Caring has a profound impact on the whole of society.

The face of Caring is changing. We are hearing more and more about Big Society and the provision of care on a voluntary basis. Southwark Carers are keen to point out that this already happens on a daily basis via the army of unpaid carers.

These Carers do not categorise themselves as Volunteers or as part of the Big Society, they merely perceive themselves as undertaking a role to support their loved one. Quite often they receive no support at all.

Carers often feel isolated, alone and receive very little financial support. Carers receive an average of £53.10 per week as payment for the invaluable service that they provide. The level of the payment is very low and stops when the person being cared for moves into care or passes away.

Who are Southwark Carers?

Southwark Carers is part of a nationwide network, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, the network delivers services across the UK. Southwark Carers provides advice and support to carers in relation to benefits, housing and other concerns that carers may have. We offer respite services for carers, providing up to 40 hours free care allowing carers to have free time to use as they wish.

Southwark Carers provides financial support to carers through holiday grants, energy grants and transport funding.

Holiday grants give carers the opportunity to take a break of their choice, this was an innovative project by Southwark Carers and is the precursor to personalised budgets.



We also host different activities throughout the year, health clubs, art groups and creative knitting where we produce blankets which are donated to a homeless charity. These activities give carers the opportunity to expand their peer support groups, and interact with people who can relate to their experiences.

We also provide one-to-one counselling services, giving the carer a confidential space to talk.

We are recognised for lobbying on Carers' behalf. You can find out more about our campaigns on our website www.southwarkcarers.org.uk.

We offer a wide range of support groups across the borough. We publicise our events through our website and magazine. People can sign up to receive this information by completing our registration which is free of charge. We have been planning our events around the needs of the Carers as identified by them.

We also work in partnership with local organisations, we are an accredited support planning group, we work closely with the PCT and the Maudsley Hospital, we also have close links with other carers organisations like Contact a Family and Southwark Young Carers Project our partnerships are an attempt to support carers in innovative ways. We are working hard for less funding and provide a greater service.

Southwark Carers has a close relationship with the Commissioning Team at Southwark Council, which helps us to articulate our carers views and concerns to key decision makers.



Scan hope for early Alzheimer's diagnosis



Doctors may be able to identify people in the earliest stages of Alzheimer's even if they have not yet displayed any symptoms, a new study suggests.

More than 300 people in their 70s and 80s had their brains scanned as part of a study published online in the journal *Neurology*.

The scans showed that the brains of a third of participants had significantly high levels of protein deposits that can be linked to Alzheimer's, and that these people also had abnormal levels of metabolic brain chemicals associated with mental decline.

Scientists have said that, while more research is needed, people with these high levels of protein deposits in their brain could be in the earliest stages of Alzheimer's. The ability to diagnose the disease at a very early stage would allow patients to receive the most appropriate advice and treatment from the start.

Lead researcher Dr Kejal Kantarci, from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, US, said: 'More research is needed that follows people over a period of years to determine which of these individuals will actually develop the disease and what the relationship is between the amyloid deposits and the metabolites.'

Just Can't Wait



If you struggle to find a toilet to use when you are out and about the Just Can't Wait toilet card may help.

The Bladder and Bowel Foundation can provide the card, which states that the card holder has a medical condition which requires the urgent need of a toilet. The card does not guarantee you access to a toilet but many places are willing to help.

As a national charity, the Bladder and Bowel Foundation do ask for a donation of £5 towards the cost of sending out a card.

To request a card please contact them on 01536 533255 or visit their website for more information www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org

Future of Carers

Care is a huge issue for the Government yet it has fallen off the agenda and funds set aside for carers services disappear into baseline budgets for PCTs.

We are told that Carers benefit will be combined into a universal benefit consequently making it harder for Carers to access this benefit. It is anticipated that there will be more benefit appeals as a consequence.

If carers gave up their unpaid support roles, the country would be on its knees as it would have to provide £119 billion worth of support. So without the invaluable support of carers the fabric of the nation would begin to crumble.

Southwark council currently have around 50 contracts for care provision in the borough, which we are told will be cut down to 10. With the consolidation of service providers, there is a level of anger and confusion amongst carers. Carers are concerned about how these cuts will affect services that they are receiving.

There is a real worry that suddenly services will stop with no alternatives being made available, this will leave carers even more isolated and vulnerable.

It is important to communicate clearly with service users ensuring that they are consulted and informed of any changes that will occur.

Budget reductions will be one of the Key challenges faced by the care sector in the next 3-5 years. All our budgets are being reduced, yet there is a growing need for support for carers.

Southwark Carers are trying to move with the times and help people to understand and apply for personalised support.

Carers should be more recognised, supported and helped, services for carers need to be developed to ensure that the system of caring at home for your loved ones does not disintegrate under the pressure that caring places on unpaid carers.

Having Carers Rights Day (2 December) is one of the ways we can continue to make society aware of the frontline issues affecting carers.

You can find out more information about Southwark Carers and its work in the community via their website, www.southwarkcarers.org.uk or contact Rob and the team on 020 7708 4497 or info@southwarkcarers.org.uk

Senior Illnesses And What They Mean To The Care Giver

These days we can expect to live longer than any of our ancestors before us. For example, in the UK, women live to 82 years of age on average, while men live to 78. It's a sad fact of life that as we get older, our bodies become more susceptible to diseases and conditions that affect our lives and the way we function.

These include Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, osteoporosis, strokes, cancer and heart disease. Some of these diseases are curable, some are manageable, and others are terminal. As a carer to an elderly person, it is advisable to gain some background knowledge to the common diseases and conditions of old age.

Looking after an elderly person who is ill

Watching a loved one who is affected by a serious illness is extremely distressing. Carers are faced with many issues ranging from the day-to-day concerns such as whether or not the person you are caring for has taken their medicine, to much larger, lifestyle affecting decisions such as whether or not you should bring elderly parents to live with you or if a care home or a nursing home would be a better option.



Common old age illnesses

Here is a beginners guide to the most common old age ailments.

CANCER

Over two thirds of elderly people are affected by cancer at some point in their lives. Cancer is an umbrella term for many manifestations of the disease. Some forms of cancer are more common than others. For example, lung and breast cancer are the most common forms as found in elderly people. Skin cancer is also common although often these are slow growing cancers that rarely cause death.

Cancer is by no means a death sentence these days, and there are many treatments and cures available. Many of these treatments are aggressive chemotherapies and often the elderly are not able to recover quickly from this type of cure.

So how can a carer help? Well any form of cancer must be caught early if a patient is to stand any chance of recovery. So carers, especially those concerned with managing an individual's personal hygiene, will be in a good position to spot abnormalities such as lumps and sores that could be more sinister than they see. If you notice anything unusual, or some change in form, you must get it checked out by a medical professional as soon as possible.



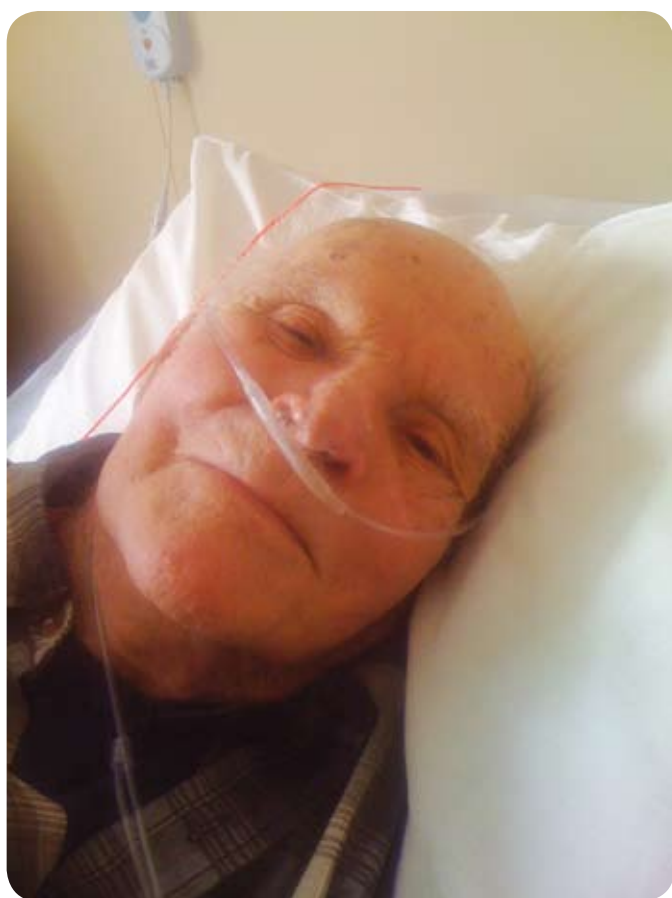
DIABETES

Diabetes is considered by many in the medical profession to be a lifestyle disease as it is often caused by high sugar and fat intakes. However, diabetes in old age is a condition that is caused by the body's inability to secrete enough insulin to keep their blood sugar levels under control. Diabetes is an incurable illness, but it can be effectively treated either by diet or medication in tablet or injection form.



Diabetes itself does not cause death. However, it can promote a number of other conditions that can be fatal. For example, particular attention has to be paid to wounds in a diabetic, as they tend to take longer to heal and can be a source of infection. Diabetes can also have an adverse effect on the functioning of the heart.

If you are caring for an elderly person with diabetes, the main issue is diet. Diabetics should not eat excessive amounts of sweet food but elderly people tend to ignore this, or not realise what they are eating could cause problems.



DEMENTIA

Dementia is a very common condition amongst the elderly. Dementia stems from decreasing brain activity caused by degradation and resulting damage to the connections between the brain and nerve endings in the body. The most common of the 100 or so types of dementia are Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia and dementia with Lewy bodies, caused by the destruction of nerve cells in the brain.

What causes the disease is not known, and there is very little that can be done to treat it once it has taken hold. However, some drugs do hold off the symptoms for a while. The most common form of

dementia is known as Alzheimer's Disease. This tends to be the most serious version of dementia and can be extremely frustrating for sufferers because they gradually become more confused. A particularly sad and distressing aspect of the disease is that in the early stages, the victims will know what is happening to them. It can take years for the disease to fully develop (although it can be months), but in the end, it is unlikely that the sufferer will know who you are.

Dealing with an elderly person with dementia requires dedication and patience. They are often prone to wandering behaviour. It's important to treat the person concerned with kindness and respect. However, often, carers of elderly people with dementia have to resort to professional care.

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Like dementia, this is a disease that affects the nerve cells leading to the brain and like dementia. Its cause is unknown but it is the subject of much scientific research. Dementia tends to affect a sufferer's ability to process information whereas Parkinson's primarily disables the body. In its later stages, it can also affect the mind. Parkinson's is characterised by uncontrollable shaking. Like dementia, there is no known cure and drugs only work for a relatively short period of time before the illness takes hold for good.

Support Organisations

Macmillan Cancer Support	0808 808 00 00
Cancer Research UK	0300 123 1861
Age UK	0800 169 6565
Alzheimer's Society	020 7423 3500
Parkinsons UK	0808 800 03 03
Diabetes UK	020 7424 1000
Carers Direct	0808 802 02 02
WRVS	0845 600 5885
Independent Age	020 7605 4200



Have your say at:
www.southwarkcarers.org.uk

Events & Groups

November and December Events

If you are interested in any of the support groups and activities detailed here we recommend you call the office on 020 7708 4497 and speak with a member of staff who will be able to register you for the event and provide more information.

Nov 01 **Arts Group - Ghost Tour 13:00 - 16:00**
A trip through Dulwich Picture Gallery's more spooky exhibits.

Nov 03 **Gardens Surgery Group 14:00 - 15:30**
A chance to take a break from caring and meet new friends.
Lew Evans House, 188 Underhill Road SE22 0QH

Nov 04 **Knitting and Nattering 15:00 - 17:30**
We provide the wool, needles and tuition for beginners.
Inspire at the Crypt St Peters, Liverpool Grove SE17

Nov 08 **Bermondsey Surgery Group 14:00 - 15:30**
A chance to take a break from caring and meet new friends.
Artesian Branch, 138 Grange Road SE1

Nov 09 **Peckham / Alzheimers Group 14:00 - 13:30**
A group run in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Society.
Peckham Library, 122 Peckham Hill Street SE15 5JR

Nov 14 **Carers Activity Group 11:00 - 14:30**
A visit to Leadenhall Market to see the Christmas lights switch on and festive market open.
48-52 Leadenhall Market City of London EC3V 1LT

Nov 17 **Health Club 11:00 - 12:00**
Polly from Mrs Miggin's Middle will be leading the group in a belly dancing workshop.
St Peter's Church, Liverpool Grove, Walworth, SE17

Nov 19 **Weekend Activity Group 10:30 - 13:30**
A trained herbalist will be helping us make our own cosmetics, including pine bath soak and christmas pudding bathbombs.

Nov 23 **Carers Outing - Spitalfields Market 11:00**
London's oldest market, the stalls range from contemporary and vintage fashion, music, bespoke children's toys, jewellery and accessories.
Liverpool Street Stn Exit 1 Bishopsgate West

Nov 24 **Arts and Crafts Group 14:00 - 15:30**
In this group we will be learning how to create our own jewellery, bracelets, necklaces and brooches.

Dec 02 **Southwark Carers AGM / Christmas Party 11:00**
A chance for members to vote in the management board who provide the strategic direction for Southwark Carers followed by an Xmas party.
Walworth Methodist Church, Camberwell Road SE5 0AN
For details: Call Rob on 020 7708 4497

Dec 08 **Wallace and Gromit's Tea Party 10:00 - 13:00**
Wallace & Gromit are calling on people across the country to join The Great British Tea Party to raise money for sick children in hospitals and hospices.
See below for more details

Dec 12 **Carers Activity Group 11:00 - 14:30**
A visit to Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park. WW is a huge christmas market with traditional craft stalls, an ice rink, circus and fairground.
Meet at Apsley Gate (Hyde Park Corner Tube)

Dec 20 **Arts Group Outing - Carol Service 12:30**
A visit to Southwark Cathedral to hear a festive carol service.
Southwark Cathedral, London Bridge, SE1 9DA



On Thursday 8th December we will be holding a tea party. Come and play some parlour games, enjoy home made cakes and share a drink with us.

All guests will be asked to make a donation to the Wallace and Gromit Children's Foundation.

Unless otherwise stated all events take place at Cambridge House, 1 Addington Square, Camberwell SE5 0HF

Upcoming Events & Consultations

Southwark Carers AGM

Southwark Carers AGM will be held on Carers Rights Day - Friday 2nd December at the Walworth Methodist Church, Camberwell Road.

The event will start with a review of the year and a report from the Chair, an overview of the finances before the election of trustees and the discussion of any special resolutions raised by the committee or membership.

In order to vote in the elections you must be a member of Southwark Carers.

We will post nomination forms, and proxy voting forms to members on the 7th November.

Our special guest at this years AGM is Anna Raeburn.

Known for her 'no nonsense' approach, Anna established herself as a radio presenter responding to listener's health and relationship problems on London's Capital Radio during the 1970s and 80s.

She subsequently worked across a range of BBC and commercial stations, picking up a string of Sony Radio Academy Awards.



A prolific writer, she outlined her experiences in a comedy television series Agony that she co-wrote for Maureen Lipman.

Strictly Gershwin



Strictly Gershwin, a dazzling celebration of George Gershwin and the sparkling age of Hollywood, comes to the London Coliseum for the very first time.

Gershwin's sassy tunes, most famously Rhapsody in Blue, An American in Paris and Summertime, combine with Derek Deane's sensational choreography to conjure up the Silver Screen genius of Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers and Gene Kelly.

Strictly Gershwin recreates the razzmatazz of the big band, Hollywood musicals era. This glittering production features a journey in dance from ballet to tap, ballroom to jazz that builds to a breathtaking finale.

Strictly Gershwin is guaranteed to get your toes tapping and your spirits soaring.

We have 15 tickets available to carers for a performance on Tuesday 10th January 2012 at 19:30.

Please contact the office on 020 7708 4497 if you would like to attend.

Bookings will be on a first come first served basis but preference will be given to carers who have never had a chance to go on a Southwark Carers outing before.

Southwark Carers new website



Southwark Carers have launched a new website which we hope will provide you with more information and resources to aid your caring role.

Our new site features several new sections which we have highlighted below. The site is designed to be more interactive, to guide you through the benefits system, personalisation and the new support available to carers.

Visit our site at www.southwarkcarers.org.uk and tell us what you think.

Service guides

The site follows the carers pathway from carers assessment, through personal budgets and support planning process to the kinds of support available to you.

The site features links to other local support agencies that can help on the carer journey, each page also features a downloadable fact sheet which provides more in depth information on each subject area.



Local service directory

On our site you will be able to use two new ways to find support to help you as a carer. Once you or the person you care for have received a personal budget you will be able to spend this in the way that best suits you.

To provide some support in this process we have developed a comprehensive service directory. To make this easier to navigate we have also developed an interactive map that allows you to find a service provider by location.

Events calendar, activities, news and forums

On the new site we have enhanced the way that we share information with you. The site features a calendar which details events from service providers across the borough. The forum also allows you to have your say on caring matters, whether those highlighted in the newsletter or website or concerns you have as a carer.

The site is also the best place to keep abreast of new consultations and questionnaires for carers, we often get asked to seek out carers views on subjects and encourage you to have your say.



Online advice and support and counselling

We know that many carers combine work with caring and finding the time to visit the Carer's centre isn't practical. To counter this, we have created a secure online portal to allow you discuss with an expert or counsellor your needs.

The portal combines instant messaging software to allow you write directly to one of our trained staff. This service will be offered during office hours, some weekends and evenings.

Caring at a Distance: bridging the gap

The results of the first ever research survey into the impacts on employers and employees of managing caring at a distance, an issue that affects millions of families were published in June.

Launching the survey research report, 'Caring at a Distance: bridging the gap', Caroline Waters OBE, Chair of Employers for Carers and Director of People and Policy for BT Group said: "With our ageing population and workforce – and increasing mobility through employment – managing caring at a distance is clearly moving centre stage as a business issue. Findings from this groundbreaking research - conducted by Employers for Carers and Carers UK, in association with leading global investment bank, Nomura - have given us some new and unique insights into the impact of this increasingly important issue both on employees and on business."

Key findings from the survey include:

1. Impact of caring on mental and emotional health – it is not just the physical aspect of caring that is important but also its effect on employees' emotional health:
 - Nearly half (43%) of respondents indicated that their work had been negatively affected by caring and that they felt tired, stressed and anxious.
 - One in three (33%) were also worried that caring might have an impact on their capacity to work in the future.
 - Pressure on the 'sandwich generation' – a clear majority of employees needing support (60%) were age 40-54 and combining care for an older relative with other responsibilities including looking after their own children.
2. Accessing external sources of support - this was the top priority for both employees and employers, including signposting to help at local and national level and practical assistance with caring.
3. Line manager support - while most employers offered support such as flexible working, only 17% provided training or support for line managers to support carers. Charlotte Sweeney, Head of Diversity and Inclusion, EMEA, Nomura commented: "There is clearly much that employers need to do to support distance carers. However, what the report also highlights is that caring touches every aspect of our lives; it cannot be supported by only one party but demands an integrated response."

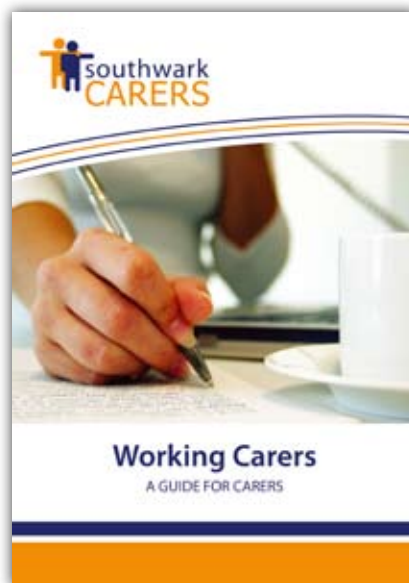
Imelda Redmond CBE, Chief Executive of Carers UK added: "Supporting distance caring is about supporting 21st century families and 21st century

workplaces. As the report clearly shows, families and workplaces today are mobile – people don't always live, or work, as close to each other as they used to. What we know is that caring can have a devastating impact on families' lives, throwing many people into lasting poverty and ill health while employers also lose valued and skilled employees. The reality of life today is that working and caring at a distance is here to stay – caring is everybody's business."

Key recommendations from the report include:

- Information about external sources of care and support which is clear and easy to navigate must be provided at national and local level.
- Better promotion of supportive technologies is needed to help both the person who is being cared for and the distance carer.
- More practical support for line managers in the workplace to help bridge the gap between policy and practice.

Working Carers



Southwark Carers have produced a booklet to help working carers balance their working lives and caring.

Juggling work and care can be a challenge in the life of many carers. As a carer, you have rights at work that can make your caring role easier and there is support available

to help you continue both working and caring.

You have a right to request flexible working and you will find information on how to apply for this and how to challenge decisions if you are not happy with the outcome. You may also have rights to various forms of time off from work.

Your employer may offer other forms of support such as unpaid leave or telephone access to the person you're looking after during your working hours.

Mental Health Carers

Enhancing the Mental Health Carers' Contribution to Healing

We know from various research studies that mental health carers play a pivotal role in the recovery of service users and also aid with health promotion and prevention of relapse.

Unfortunately, studies also highlight that carers and particularly those from the black minority groups are poorly served by mental health providers. Many carers also feel that they are working in the dark as they are not included in communication sharing related to their loved ones due to concerns of confidentiality. Also, they are unable to access the more normal support pathways from family and friends due to stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness. So carers become isolated and alienated and can become mentally distressed themselves.

For the past year the South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust has been consulting with carers and widening the door to participation. There have been a number of family and carer events held at various Trust sites to welcome carers and to provide information and address their issues and concerns. These events are hosted by the Service User involvement in Training and Education team.

I won a Mary Seacole leadership award in October 2010. The awards are named after the Jamaican nurse who provided care to British soldiers in the Crimean war. I received funding to carry out a project and I chose to focus on carers.

The aim of my project is to develop carers as informed partners and peer supporters. The main objectives are:

- Enhance carer contribution to healing
- Develop a model of carer peer support
- Provide an educational programme
- Develop and strengthen carer social networks
- Empower carer to role model health seeking behaviours

I offered a series of eight workshops of two hours each for carers based on the peer support model. The first workshop was in November 2010 and the last was in May 2011 so they worked out as monthly sessions.

On the 2 June 2011 we had a celebration lunch and also invited the various workshop speakers. Peer support centres on a buddying framework where carers support each other in an enabling and positive way. To make each workshop viable and productive I recruited 15 carers but eventually had 10 core carers. The attendance at each workshop averaged at fifty to seventy percent. Each workshop was integral but was part of a rolling programme too. This method was to



support each workshop even if the participants were fewer than expected so that it did not disadvantage them.

My initial focus was to provide an education and support programme for the carers. The content of the workshop was negotiated with the carers and broadly covered:

- Carers as experts –working in partnership with professionals
- Peer support/buddying
- Carers' well being & Coping strategies

I co-ordinated and facilitated the groups but invited expert speakers to some of the sessions. The speakers included health professionals, peer support experts, carers and individuals from self groups e.g. Cares of Life service. We always started the session with a reminder of the ground rules particularly addressing confidentiality and a round of introductions. Each member also had a chance to update the rest of us of what was happening for them.

Carers have to be prepared for the peer supporter role so that it can be both effective and sustainable and it is a longer term undertaking. So I am now considering phase 2 of the project to work with the carers taking on the peer supporter role. In the workshops we also share information and a number of carers have volunteered to be carer representatives and attended other events and functions.

We have started on a journey and we hope to continue on that path together as the learning from these workshops has been two way. It is very rewarding to see carers who are very committed to their role but who see themselves as ordinary individuals who have risen to a role that shows resilience, talent and love.

Esther Craddock, Education and Training Adviser, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

New films for mentalhealthcare.org.uk made with British Psychological Society support



Forty new short films showing experts talking about different aspects of psychosis, treatment, care and support, have been added to mentalhealthcare.org.uk, the website for family members and friends of people with psychosis.

- psychosis and post traumatic stress disorder; psychologist and professor of forensic psychology Gisli Gudjonsson, talking about forensic mental health services;
- professor of psychiatric nursing Len Bowers, talking about the role of a mental health nurse on the ward and in the community;
- social worker Nikki Smith, talking about what a social worker does, the role of an Approved Mental Health Professional and the role of a care coordinator;
- Dr Nick Hervey, head of social care in the integrated mental health service run by SLaM in Southwark, talking about support available for carers of people with psychosis.

The films have been made with the support of a public engagement grant from the British Psychological Society and include interviews with:

- psychologist Dr Juliana Onwumere, giving advice to relatives;
- psychiatrist and professor of community and social psychiatry Professor Tom Craig, talking about schizophrenia;
- Claire Price, employment and social inclusion manager at South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM), talking about support a vocational specialist can offer;
- psychologist Dr Brock Chisholm, talking about

The filmed clips complement the evidence-based written information on the site, compiled with the help of researchers at the IoP and mental health professionals working at SLaM.

In September 2010, the site was awarded the Information Standard: developed by the Department of Health, the Information Standard 'quality mark' aims to help members of the public easily identify trustworthy information, and give them confidence in what they read.

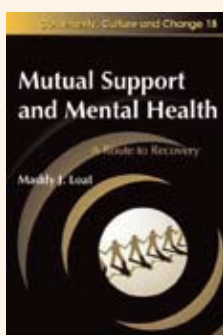
MH Support groups

1st Thur Maroons Group - 18:00 - 20:00
 Service for Afro-Caribbean Mental Health Users.
 Unit 3 and 5 Addington Lofts
 1 Bethwin Road, SE5 0HF
 For details: Call Lucky on 020 7708 1524

Last Wed Lordship Lane Group - 17:00 - 19:00
 Service for people aged 18-65 with a mental health diagnosis.
 Top Room, Dulwich Library, 368 Lordship Lane
 SE22 8NA
 For details: Call Vishnu on 020 3228 2767

1st Thur Chaucer Group - 18:30 - 20:30
 Service for people aged 18-65 with a mental health diagnosis.
 13 Ann Moss Way (off Lower Road), Rotherhithe,
 SE16 2TH
 For details: Call Judith on 020 3228 9800

Books for Mental Health Carers



Mutual Support and Mental Health
 Maddy J Loat

This accessible book combines theory with practice to provide both mental health professionals and those experiencing mental health difficulties with valuable information on mutual support and how this can

be implemented to make a positive difference to people's lives. "Community, Culture and Change" encompasses a wide range of ideas and theoretical models related to communities and cultures as a whole, embracing key Therapeutic Community concepts such as collective responsibility, citizenship and empowerment, as well as multidisciplinary ways of working and the social origins of distress. The ways in which our social and therapeutic worlds are changing are illustrated by the innovative and creative work described in these books.

Rebuilding your life after caring

The ending of your caring role may take some time to adjust to. Having more time to yourself may give you the opportunity for a much needed rest, but it can also leave you with a lot of time to fill.

If you are used to always having things to do, it can be hard to stop and think about what you would like to do, and to be able to make choices for yourself.

Some people find that once they are no longer caring, exhaustion – both physical and emotional – catches up with them and they may feel unwell for a while.

Having spent time caring for someone else and putting their needs first, it is really important to look after yourself and let other people look after you.

When caring ends, some practical matters will have to be dealt with fairly quickly, for example, benefits and housing, but you do not need to rush into making decisions about what you do next straight away. The following information outlines some of the issues you may need or want to think about.

Benefits

If you are under pension age and your ability to work is limited due to illness or disability, you may be able to claim Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

You may also be entitled to Disability Living Allowance (if under 65) or Attendance Allowance (if 65 or over) if you need help to look after yourself or with getting around.

If your income is relatively low, you may be able to claim one or more of the following means tested benefits:

- Income Support – for people aged under 60 who do not have to look for work, e.g. single parents of young children and carers.
- Employment Support Allowance (ESA) If you have an illness or disability and your ability to work is limited due to this.
- Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) – for people aged under 60 who are available for and actively seeking work. It is important to sign on if you want to continue to get National Insurance Contribution Credits and you can sign on even if you will not be paid any JSA.
- Pension Credit – for people of pensionable age or over.
- Housing Benefit – help to pay the rent.
- Council Tax Benefit – help to pay your Council Tax (rate rebate in Northern Ireland). N.B. If you were

getting a Council Tax discount because of your caring responsibilities, remember to let your local council know that your caring responsibilities have ended. If you are living alone, you may still be entitled to a single occupant's discount (25%) on your bill.

Finding new challenges

It can take time to come to terms with the loss of your caring role, but there will come a time when you are ready to think about what to do next. Keeping in touch with friends, family and your local community can be difficult when you do not have much time for yourself.

You may feel isolated after many years of caring and you may feel that this has knocked your confidence. You could start by finding out what help or services your local carers' organisation or group offers to people whose caring role has come to an end.

Volunteering

If you have time to spare, you could consider volunteering. As well as offering much needed help to local people or organisations, volunteering can be a very social activity, and can be a good way to meet new people. Volunteering opportunities can range from befriending older or disabled people, offering your skills (e.g. administration, fundraising, legal advice, etc.) to a local charity, to helping out on a local conservation project.

Learn something new

You may feel that you would like to refresh skills that you have not used for a while, or learn something completely new. You might have gained new skills or interests from your caring role that you also want to pursue. Taking a course can also be a great way to meet new people. Contact your local library or adult education centres to find out about courses in your area.

Returning to work

If you have given up work (or not worked at all) because of your caring responsibilities, you may want to work or return to work once your caring role ends.

Helping to improve support for carers

Many former carers go on to become great campaigners. They have the experience of knowing what it is like to be at the sharp end of caring and they often have more time than those who are still caring.

Associated services

KIDS Southwark Siblings Project

KIDS is a national charity providing a wide range of services for disabled children, young people and their families across seven English regions. KIDS' vision is a world in which all disabled children and young people realise their aspirations and their right to an inclusive community which supports them and their families.



The Southwark Sibling Project provides support for children and young people, 6-14 years old, who have a disabled brother or sister. The siblings have significant caring responsibilities for the disabled child that is over and above what is usually expected of a brother or sister.

'Siblings' can become isolated, in general and even within their own family as parents do not always have time to dedicate to the sibling.

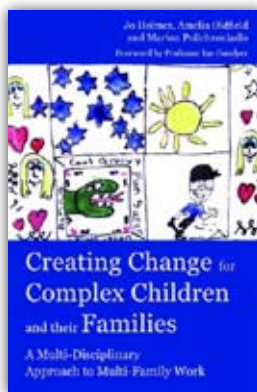
Kids Southwark Sibling Project can help provide support to siblings by providing opportunities to meet other siblings in a safe environment, to share feelings and common concerns, with an aim of reducing social isolation by having the contact with other siblings who are also young carers.

They are provided with an environment in which they can learn how others deal with difficult situations, learn about disability and its effects whilst benefiting from fun and everyday experiences often denied to them. We can do this by providing Small Group Sessions, Regular Meetings and continuous contact through the Newsletter / mail outs / initial visits. Trained staff are available to share or raise concerns both individually or in a group setting. Most importantly, these young people can have fun by taking part in the activities and outings. The project works with parents and can, if needed, liaise with other professional services to support the Sibling.

There is currently no cost to the family for this service. Siblings will occasionally be asked to provide a packed lunch for days out.

- Families are welcome to refer direct
- Professionals can refer children with parent/carer consent either by phone or using the referral forms.

Books for carers



Creating change for Complex Children and their Families

Jo Holmes

The Croft Child and Family Unit is a residential psychiatric unit in Cambridgeshire, UK, that provides intensive assessment and treatment for children with mental health problems and their families. This book describes a multi-disciplinary,

multi-family model of care that the Croft team have developed, and offers information and suggestions for all professionals working with children with complex needs.

Using detailed case studies to illustrate the model, this book focuses on the needs of children with a wide range of developmental, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and explores the complicated interactions between these children, their families and their communities. Based on the clinical experiences of working intensively with groups of families the team examines how to integrate multi-disciplinary interventions and how to use the powerful relationships that develop to enable families to achieve positive, lasting changes.



Understanding Your Young Child with Special Needs

Pamela Bartram

This book explores the developmental impact of disability on normal stages of child development, and examines the complex nature of the emotional bonds between parents and their children with special needs.

Placing the child and his or her personality, family life, feelings and behaviours in the foreground, Bartram addresses all the 'ordinary' challenges and tasks of parenting, such as sibling relationships, nursery and school, toilet training, and healthy aggression, as well as those that are of particular relevance to the parents of young children with special needs.

This book will provide a wealth of information to help parents of a child with special needs understand his or her development and their own relationship with the child.

Contact Us

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020 7708 4497

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Finance

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Communications / Grants

Rob Danavell
rob.danavell@southwarkcarers.org.uk

Useful numbers

Southwark Carers	020 7708 4497
British Gas General Enquiries	0800 070 1122
Age Concern helpline	0800 00 99 66
Southwark Health & Social Care	020 7525 3838
Carers Direct helpline	0808 802 0202

NHS Direct	0845 4647
Mental Health Crisis line	0800 028 8000
Victim Support Southwark	020 7277 1433
Samaritans	08457 90 90 90
Salvation Army	020 7367 4500

If you have any compliments, comments or complaints about your services please contact:



Verinder Mander
verinder.mander@southwarkcarers.org.uk

Do you have some news for us?

If you have any news about events, information or offers that would be of use to carers please let us know and we'll try to include it in future newsletters



Please note we are moving in December 2011 to
3rd Floor, Walworth Methodist Church,
Camberwell Road, London, SE5 0AN



Southwark Carers is a member of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers national network of carers centres

Registered Company: 4146495 Registered Charity: 1085300

