

Spring 2013

Universal Credit: Disabled people 'to lose out'

Up to half a million disabled people and their families stand to lose out under the government's proposed Universal Credit, a report says.

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

The Children's Society, Citizens Advice and Disability Rights UK say 100,000 households with children could have incomes reduced by up to £28 a week.

They are urging ministers to reconsider their plans.

But the government called the report "highly selective" and said it could lead to "irresponsible scaremongering".

The Universal Credit will replace Jobseeker's allowance, tax credits, income support, employment and support allowance - formerly known as incapacity benefit - and housing benefits with a single payment.

The system will be "piloted" in parts of north-east England from April and will come into force across Britain for new claimants from October 2013.

Existing claimants will be transferred to the new system in stages until 2017.

Universal Credit will be capped at £26,000 per household.

The report argues that the changes will mean 230,000 severely disabled people who do not have another adult to assist them will receive between £28 and £58 less in benefits every week.

It also states that around 116,000 disabled people who work will be at risk of losing around £40 per week.



The report says the impact of the cuts in support for disabled children could be "extremely severe" for families currently receiving the mid-rate "care component" of the Disability Living Allowance, a payment made where a child can be severely disabled but does not need care overnight.

Of those families affected, one in 10 expressed fears that they could no longer afford their own home, while two thirds said they would have to cut back on food, and more than a half said it would lead them into debt.

Some families said the changes to support for disabled children could result in their children having to be placed in full-time residential care.

The report says 83% of those eligible for the severe disability premium, which will be abolished under the changes, reported that a reduction in benefit levels would mean they would have to cut back on food and 80% said they would have to cut the amount they spent on heating.

The changes start to come into force from October this year and current benefit claimants who move on to Universal Credit will not see an immediate reduction in their payments.

But they will have their level of benefit frozen, with no increases to take into account rising prices, campaigners say, and they may see their

Welcome

Hello and welcome to our latest newsletter. Since our last newsletter there have been a number of changes in the organisation, we lost valued members of the team through a restructuring process.

I would like this opportunity to say thank you to Vivien, Irene and Dawn for all their efforts for Carers over the years.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new staff team. One member of the new staff team Dan Taylor has left us to pursue his PHD. I would like to thank Dan for his support over the last few months and to wish him well for the future.

We have been applying for funding from a variety of different trusts and have been successful in securing additional funding of £11,200 for a variety of different projects.

Please look out for details of new groups on the website and in future newsletters.



Age UK guide to Keeping Warm this winter

Cold homes have a significant impact on people's health. One of the best ways of keeping yourself well during winter is to stay warm. Cold weather can lead to serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

Every winter in the UK, 25,000–30,000 deaths are linked to the cold weather. Approximately four million households in the UK are in fuel poverty.

Download a copy from our website

support cut immediately if their household circumstances change.

Welfare reform minister Lord Freud told BBC Radio 4's Today programme that the "transitional protection" the government had put in place would mean existing claimants would not be out of pocket.

"Existing levels of support will be maintained in a cash sense for families with disabled children or who are disabled themselves.

"That will be maintained indefinitely on a cash basis," he said.

On the loss of the severe disability premium, he said there was a "compensating factor" because the government was increasing the general level of support for the most disabled.

"It's misleading just to look at one element going. You have to look at the whole picture," he said.

The Universal Credit package "as a whole is one of the best things for people with disabilities" and would be "massively helpful" for those who are working because it allows greater flexibility, Lord Freud said.

Independent peer Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, who shares the title of Great Britain's most successful female Paralympian with cyclist Sarah Storey, said the findings of the report did not make "easy reading".

She told the BBC: "Under the new system it is going to be difficult for a number of disabled people. The government say people are protected but it's only for current benefit claimants.

"What we want to do is ask the government to think again. We are in a situation where the regulations of the Welfare Reform Bill are coming to us quite soon and we can make changes.

"I think we can improve the system to help disabled people lead better lives."



A Department for Work and Pensions spokeswoman said savings from abolishing the adult disability premiums and changes in the child rate would be "recycled" into higher payments for more severely disabled people.

She added that Universal Credit would provide greater incentives for people - including disabled people - to try out work and would reduce the financial and administrative barriers to work that exist in the current system.

She said: "The report is highly selective and could result in irresponsible scaremongering.

"The truth is we inherited a system of disability support which is a tangled mess of elements, premiums and add-ons which is highly prone to error and baffling for disabled people themselves.

"Our reforms will create a simpler and fairer system with aligned levels of support for adults and children. More importantly, there will be no cash losers in the rollout of Universal Credit.

"In fact, hundreds of thousands of disabled adults and children will actually receive more support than now, including paying a higher rate of support for all children who are registered blind."

The report summarises the findings from three research reports based on evidence from surveys of almost 3,500 disabled people and their families, as well as a parliamentary evidence session.

Free travel restored for 60-year-olds in London

Londoners aged 60 will be entitled to free travel on the capital's transport system again.

The government raised the eligibility age for free travel in line with the state retirement age for women from 2010.

This meant people had to be at least 61 to qualify. But Mayor Boris Johnson pledged to lower the age of eligibility for all Londoners to 60.



Transport for London (TfL) is introducing the new 60+ Oyster Photocard scheme.

It allows free travel on all TfL services and some national rail services

24 hours a day, seven days a week, from the user's 60th birthday.

Like the existing Freedom Pass, it will also allow passengers free travel outside of morning peak hours on other national rail services in the capital.

Application for the 60+ Oyster Photocard begins on 17 October and more than 100,000 applications are expected. There is a £10 fee.

A further 10,000 Londoners are expected to become eligible for the scheme each month.

Mr Johnson said: "Londoners who have grafted all their lives and expected to receive free travel on retirement just as those before them quite rightly felt cheated when the age escalator removed the Freedom Pass from their grasp.

"I promised to restore this right to travel for free on the capital's transport network for every Londoner from their 60th birthday.

"From November, this will be the case when hundreds of thousands of people will be armed with their 60+ London Oyster card, enjoying all our great city can offer."

The Freedom Pass is funded by London boroughs. For 2012-13, for example, local authorities are paying £317m. The 60+ Oyster Photocard will be funded with £20m from TfL's budget in its first year, a spokeswoman said.

Once people reach the age to qualify for a Freedom Pass, they will need to make a fresh application.

The cost is anticipated to increase as more people become eligible.

People living in England are entitled to a bus pass giving free off-peak travel on local buses once they reach the eligible age.

The Freedom Pass for people living in Greater London goes further, allowing free travel on the entire TfL network.

The Freedom Pass can also be used England-wide, but only during off-peak times outside of London.

People can apply for the 60+ Oyster Photocard online. Those that cannot complete the form online can call TfL's Customer Contact Centre for help.

Concessions on public transport

If you or the person you look after have mobility problems, getting around can be more costly. There are several schemes that give transport discounts for carers and people with disabilities.

On the buses

Older people and people with disabilities can travel free on local buses anywhere in England between 9.30am and 11pm Monday to Friday, and at any time during the weekend and on bank holidays. Older people and people with disabilities should apply for a free bus pass from the local authority. Some authorities offer free travel for longer periods, and some allow a companion to travel with the pass holder for free.

Trains

The person you care for may be eligible for a Disabled Person's Railcard, which allows them up to a third off the price of rail tickets. A carer, or anyone else who travels with the disabled person, will also get this discount. The Railcard is issued for either a one-year or three-year period.

Children aged five to 16 with disabilities are eligible for a Disabled Person's Railcard, allowing an adult to travel with them for a third of the cost of an adult fare while the child pays the normal child fare.

Other rail concessions

There are also rail concessions for people with disabilities who do not have a Disabled Person's Railcard if they are registered as blind or visually impaired and you or another companion are travelling with them. The discount only applies if they are travelling with a sighted person. A document confirming sight impairment must be presented at the ticket office when buying the ticket. People who are registered as blind or visually impaired can also buy an adult season ticket that allows a carer or another adult to travel with them for free. A document confirming sight impairment must be presented at the ticket office when buying the ticket.

Wheelchair users who remain in their wheelchair throughout the journey are eligible for discounts for themselves and one other person travelling with them.

London Underground

If you or the person you're caring for are aged 60 or older or have a disability and live in London, you can apply for a Freedom Pass. Freedom Pass holders can travel around the capital for free on the Underground, overground trains, trams and Docklands Light Railway.

Big Changes to Council Tax in 2013

The Government is abolishing Council Tax Benefit from April 2013 and requiring local authorities to deliver their own schemes, as part of its wide-ranging changes to the welfare state which also includes changes to housing benefit.

In line with other local authorities across the country, Southwark Council has been made to take on the responsibility for devising a new council tax support scheme for residents on low incomes, whilst managing the Government's decision to cut the funding provided by 10 per cent. In Southwark this equates to at least £2.8 million.

Given that the money Southwark Council gets from the government has decreased substantially since May 2010 and is set to decrease significantly further in future years, Southwark Council is unable to cover the estimated shortfall in funding of any new scheme of at least £2.8m without impacting on other services or the level of Council Tax.

The Government has also stated that pensioners must be protected from any changes, which means the real cut in funding is estimated at 15 per cent in Southwark.

Whilst pensioners will be protected from any reduction in entitlement, the Council has faced some difficult decisions around how to design a suitable scheme that apportions the funding shortfall fairly across the remaining working age (aged 18 to pensionable age) benefit recipients.

Thank you to everyone who took part in this consultation, which closed on 12 September 2012. We received a range of responses from members of the public and representative groups and are now considering how they can contribute towards the development of Southwark's Council Tax reduction scheme.

The council have looked at a number of proposals which include all Southwark residents under pensionable age receiving benefits paying 15% towards Council Tax. Other options include the amount of council tax support awarded be determined through means testing.

How these changes affect you

The following scenarios are real examples of how the working age groups will be affected by our proposed scheme.

Scenario 1 - Single working claimant with two children

Current Council Tax Benefit entitlement - £711 per year / £13.64 per week

Miss A is a single woman, aged 39 with two children and lives in a privately rented flat. She earns £118.98 per week and receives £390.74 per week in Tax Credits.

Miss A also receives £33.70 per week in Child Benefit. Miss A has child care costs which partly reduce her income in the calculation of her Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit entitlement.



Miss A receives full Housing Benefit of £169 per week to cover her rent.

Miss A lives in a Council Tax band B property and receives a single person discount which reduces her annual Council Tax by 25 per cent. The remaining £711 in Council Tax is paid for in full with Council Tax Benefit.

Proposed Council Tax Support entitlement in 2013/14 - £604.35 / £11.59 per week

If Miss A's circumstances remain the same she will receive £604.35 in council tax support in 2013/14.

Assuming that council tax levels remain the same, Miss A will have to pay £106.65 in 2013/14, which is £2.05 per week.

Scenario 2 - Couple with two children and disability in the household

Current Council Tax Benefit entitlement - £1020.96 / £19.58 per week

Mr B is aged 40, married with two children and living in a council rented house. Mr B does not work. Mrs B is unable to work and receives an occupational pension of £135.53 per week as well as Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Disability Living Allowance. Mr and Mrs B's child is disabled.

The total weekly income for Mr and Mrs B is £488.32. Mr and Mrs B receive Housing Benefit of £91.37 per week towards their rent.

Mr and Mrs B live in a Council Tax band D property. They receive partial Council Tax Benefit of £1020.96 towards their annual Council Tax bill of £1218.86. They currently pay £197.90 for the year or £3.80 per week in Council Tax. Proposed Council Tax Support entitlement in 2013/14 - £867.81 / £16.64 per week

If Mr and Mrs B's circumstances remain the same, they will receive £867.81 in council tax support in 2013/4. This amount is £153.14 per year less than their current council tax benefit entitlement.

Assuming that council tax levels remain the same, Mr and Mrs B will have to pay £351.04 in 2013/14, which is £6.73 per week.

General health check-ups 'offer no benefit'

Visiting a doctor for a general check-up is unlikely to lead to a condition needing treatment being identified, but may cause undue stress, say experts.

The Danish researchers that carried out the latest review, which involved more than 180,000 patients, say doctors should stop offering such check-ups.

Health MoTs did not reduce deaths overall or deaths from cancer and heart disease, according to their review. In England, people aged 40-74 are offered a free health check.

The initiative, launched in 2009, is designed to spot conditions such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes by looking for silent risk factors such as high blood pressure and cholesterol.

Ministers have said the scheme could save 650 lives a year. But the latest findings suggest routine checks may be a waste of time.

This could be because of the types of people who take up the offer of screening, say the researchers.

It may be the "worried well" - people who are fit and take an interest in their own health - who attend while those who are at high risk of serious illness keep away.

Or it might be that genuine health problems are spotted at other times - when patients present with symptoms, for example.

Lead researcher Lasse Krogsboll, of the Nordic Cochrane Centre in Denmark, said: "A likely explanation is that physicians are doing a good job of preventing illness anyway.

"From the evidence we've seen, inviting patients to general health checks is unlikely to be beneficial.

"We're not saying that doctors should stop carrying out tests or offering treatment when they suspect that there may be a problem.

"But we do think that public healthcare initiatives that are systematically offering general health checks should be resisted."

He said any screening programme should be able to prove the benefits outweighed any potential harm, such as anxiety or over-treatment.

A Department of Health representative told BBC News: "By spotting people who are at risk of heart attacks, diabetes, stroke and kidney disease we can help prevent them.

"The NHS Health Check programme is based on expert guidance. Everyone having a health check is offered tailored advice and support to manage or reduce their risk of



developing serious health conditions."

The review looked at health checks offered in a number of countries, including some pilot trials in the UK a decade or more ago.

Census reveals major rise in numbers of unpaid family carers



The number of people providing unpaid care for disabled, sick or elderly relatives and loved ones has risen substantially in the last decade.

Census data released on 11/12/12 by the government reveals that the number of carers increased from 5.2 million to 5.8 million in England and Wales between 2001 and 2011.

The greatest rise has been among those providing over 20 hours care – the point at which caring starts to significantly impact on the health and wellbeing of the carer, and their ability to hold down paid employment alongside their caring responsibilities.

Across England and Wales there are now a staggering 2.1 million people providing over 20 hours a week - a rise of almost half a million people in the last 10 years. Those providing the most number of hours of care – over 50 hours a week and very often caring round-the-clock - has in itself risen by 270,000 and is up from 1,088,000 to 1,360,000.

The 2011 Census reveals Wales still has the highest percentage of residents who are providing care compared with any other region in England.

An increase of 11% in carer numbers is a really significant rise. We are going to see many more families struggling and becoming physically, emotionally and financially overwhelmed by caring as their health suffers, as they fall out of employment and as their relationships are pushed to breaking point because they cannot get the right support.

Welfare Reform: small details with big consequences

2013 will mark one of the biggest changes to disability benefits since the introduction of Disability Living Allowance in 1992. On April 8th 2013 the Government will introduce the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), the replacement benefit for Disability Living Allowance.

PIP will have many similarities with DLA. In particular it will have two components: a daily living component (which has similarities to the current care component) and a mobility component.

Despite the similarities to disability living allowance Disability Rights UK believes that the main intention behind PIP is to save money and that the tests, as laid out in the draft regulations, are more strict.

What are the rules?

To get the personal independence payment you must:

- be age 16-64
- satisfy the daily living and/or mobility activities test for 3 months prior to claiming and be likely to continue to satisfy this test for a period of at least 9 months after claiming (this 9 month period is called the prospective test). You will not necessarily have to wait 3 months from your date of claim before getting PIP as the qualifying period starts from when your eligible needs arise and not from when you make a claim.
- pass the residence and presence test
- pass the habitual residence test

You will not be able to claim PIP once you are 65 years old but you will be able to stay on PIP if you claimed or received it before you reached the age of 65.

You can receive PIP whether you are in or out of work.

How much is PIP?

The amounts of PIP have not been set yet but the personal independence payment will have two components, each with two rates:

Daily living component

1. standard rate – If you have a limited ability to carry out daily living activities
2. enhanced rate – If you have a severely limited ability to carry out daily living activities

Mobility component

1. standard rate – If you have a limited mobility
2. enhanced rate - If you have a severely limited mobility

If you have a terminal illness (that is if you are suffering from a progressive disease where death can be expected within 6 months) you will automatically receive the daily living component enhanced rate. You will also be able to apply for the mobility component and receive it immediately if you qualify.

If you are in a care home you will be entitled to the mobility component so long as you satisfy the qualifying conditions.



If you are paid PIP you are free to spend the money in the way that suits you best.

The Activities tests

In order to qualify for PIP you will have score a certain number of points in relation to 11 activities. These are:

1. Preparing food and drink
2. Taking nutrition
3. Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition
4. Bathing and grooming
5. Managing toilet needs or incontinence
6. Dressing and undressing
7. Communicating
8. Engaging socially
9. Making financial decisions
10. Planning and following a journey (used in the test for the mobility component)
11. Moving around (used in the test for the mobility component)

Each activity has a set of descriptors. Points are awarded for each activity that you cannot do "repeatedly" or "reliably" or "safely" or "in a timely fashion" (which means longer than twice the time it would take a person without your limitation). If you can show that a descriptor applies to you for 6 months within a 12 month period you will be awarded the appropriate points.

If you have a fluctuating condition the most appropriate descriptor will be the one which is likely to apply for the greatest proportion of that time.

If you are waiting for further treatment, the descriptor that applies to you will be based on your existing situation rather than based on assumptions about any future improvement in your health.

The proposed entitlement thresholds for the rates and components of the PIP are:

Daily Living component (activities 1 to 9)

Standard rate: 8 points
Enhanced rate: 12 points

Mobility component (activities 10 to 11)

Standard rate: 8 points
Enhanced rate: 12 points

How will the activities tests be applied?

An independent healthcare professional will look at your claim and any medical evidence from your GP or consultant, if you have one.

You may have to attend a face-to-face consultation with the independent healthcare professional. If so you will be able to take someone with you such as a family member or carer.

The independent healthcare professional will then advise a benefit decision maker at the Department for Work and Pensions who will be the one who actually decides if you are entitled to PIP and which component applies.

The decision maker will also decide the length of your award and the date when it will be reviewed, based on the likelihood of your health condition or impairment changing.

Depending on your circumstances you may get a short award of up to 2 years or a longer award lasting up to 5 or 10 years. If you are given a longer award you may still be contacted, during this time, to see if your needs have changed.

Residence tests

The tests for residence and presence will probably combine the existing test for DLA with the habitual residence test used in means tested benefits such as income support and housing benefit. This will be subject to the results of a Government consultation which closed on 30 June 2012.

PIP and DLA

If you are currently receiving disability living allowance (DLA) and you are between the ages of 16 and 64 you will be moved/migrated onto PIP if you satisfy the rules for the new benefit. You will also be expected to make a claim for PIP. The DWP will write to you about this. This process will take place for all working age claimants between April 2013 and 31 March 2016.

If you pass the PIP test you will be awarded it straight away. You will not have to meet the PIP 3 month qualifying period but you will have to satisfy the 9 month prospective test.

Children under 16, who are on DLA, may be migrated onto PIP at a later date but there will be another consultation before this happens.

There are currently no proposals to migrate you onto PIP if you are on attendance allowance or over 65 and claiming DLA.

PIP and carer's allowance

The Government intends that both the daily living components of PIP will act as a passport to carer's allowance in the same way as the middle and higher rate care component of disability living allowance.

PIP and Motability

It is intended that you will be able to qualify for Motability Scheme help if you are receiving the enhanced mobility component of PIP.

PIP and transport

The Department for Work and Pensions will be working with the Department for Transport (DfT) and the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales to decide how people on PIP will be "passport" to help with transport needs and costs. Currently the higher rate mobility component of DLA is a passport to:

- automatic qualification for a Blue Badge
- eligibility for concessionary travel (free off-peak travel on local buses)
- exemption from Vehicle Excise Duty
- the age at which a driver licence can be issued (16 instead of 17)
- exemption from payment for a medical examination for the purpose of obtaining an exemption from wearing seat belts

Timetable for the introduction of PIP

The timetable for PIP is as follows:

- April 2013 – An initial pilot of a few thousand new PIP claims
- June 2013 – All new claims will be for PIP.
- October 2013 - If you are on working age DLA and you report a change in your condition, or your award is due to be renewed, you will be reassessed under PIP. A few thousand other cases will be reassessed using random national selection.
- January 2014 - full reassessment as part of rolling schedule using a random national selection.

You will be told when your reassessment is due. It is intended that all existing DLA claimants will have been given the opportunity to claim personal independence payment by March 2016.

Southwark Carers have been working with Rightfully Yours the Benefits Maximisation Agency for Southwark and would recommend that anybody receiving DLA Low Rate Care should ask for a review as there is a good chance they will lose their disability entitlements once PIP starts for DLA recipients.

To contact Rightfully Yours on 020 7525 7434 or email rightfullyyours@southwark.gov.uk

Rightfully Yours also run drop in clinics at One Stop Shops around the borough.

Alternatively, if you are over 60, housebound, vulnerable or unable to visit, Rightfully Yours can visit you at home to help with your claims, and offer advice about all of the extra income and services you may be entitled to.



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

Staff News

Since taking over the role of the Carers Hub, Southwark Carers have had to make a number of changes to the services we provide and the help that we offer to carers. To fall in line with the services expected of us by Southwark Council we have undertaken a staff restructure and we a number of staff have moved on and new faces have joined the team. Below you can find out a little more about each of them.

Following the merger of Southwark Carer and Southwark Bereavement Care we are delighted to introduce Andy Langford as our new counselling manager.



My name is Andy Langford, and I am the new Counselling Manager for Southwark Carers, working one day per week in order to coordinate the counselling service we provide.

I just want to start by saying a big 'Thank you' so all the staff and volunteers at Southwark Carers, for making me feel so welcome since I moved into the office on Camberwell Road.

The role of carers has always been one that is close to my heart, as I was a young carer myself – quite a few years ago. I believe that it is imperative that people are supported fully in their caring roles, and counselling can play an important part in this.

Prior to starting at Southwark Carers, I have been working at Southwark Bereavement Care. I started there in 2004, as a volunteer counsellor – completing my post graduate diploma in integrative counselling. I have since then qualified in cognitive behavioural therapy and life coaching. I then moved into my current role in April 2011. Alongside this, I work with homeless people for a voluntary sector organisation, and I have a wife and 2 young boys, who keep me happy and active.

I look forward to the opportunity to further develop the counselling service at Southwark Carers. If you have ever wondered what it would be like to receive counselling, please do call, and we can have a chat about it.

We would like to say a huge thanks to Alan Corbett and Jo Baker who have decided to leave the service.

Alan and Jo have been supervisors with the counselling team since 2009 and helped with the development and training of a number of volunteer counsellors. They have been very supportive during the merger and helped to shape the counselling service for many years to come.

Rob Danavell



Operations Manager

I have been with Southwark Carers for just over 3 years and I am keen to help the service develop and improve. Southwark Carers have a huge role to support people in the borough

and I am keen to widen the support that we offer to existing carers and the hidden carers in the borough who are not yet receiving our support.

My role is to make sure that the charity functions to its full capacity, supporting the staff and volunteers to make sure we offer the best possible support and attention to all carers in the borough.



Sheena Sedani

Information and Support Officer - Mental Health

My name is Sheena, I am the Mental Health Information and Support Carers' Officer, for Southwark Carers and will also be working very closely with the South London and Maudsley Hospital, (SLaM), being based there once a week. I have a background in Mental Health, with a Dual Diagnosis, (Drugs and Alcohol), speciality.

I have worked with children, young people and adolescents from as young as 14 years old. My most recent Mental Health posting, was at a Young People and Adolescent Unit, at an NHS hospital, for a Crisis Recovery Unit.

I also hold qualifications as a First Aider, Dual Diagnosis Officer, Control and Restraint (CNR)/Prevention and Management of Violence and Anger Management (PMVAM) Team Leader. Outside work I enjoy reading, writing Poetry (published poet, international), taking walks, Photography, Acting, Make-Up & Beauty and communicating with people. I look forward to working at Southwark Carers and South London and Maudsley Hospital, (SLaM), over the years to come.



Joseph Bates

Information and Support Officer

I'm Joe, one of the new Information and Support Officers. I come from Middlesbrough in the Northeast of England, and since being in London I've got very used to people not understanding my accent, so please ask me to repeat anything unclear!

I was drawn to Southwark Carers because of the great support it gives to a group whose hard work and struggles can be overlooked by society. In my spare time, I DJ and produce for local radio station Resonance FM and also write music reviews, so if you need any recommendations you could give me a try!



Dan Taylor

Community Engagement Worker

My name is Dan and I'm the new Community Engagement Officer here. My work background is in organising activities and start-up campaigns for community charities, be it a brain injury centre in Hackney or a men's mental health campaign in inner London.

I was born and bred in Camberwell too, and I've helped with personal care myself, so I'm passionate about helping local carers. Over the coming months I'll be working hard to raise awareness of all the good things Southwark Carers does and reach hidden carers in the borough, and I'd love to talk to anyone who can help spread the word.



Rachel Ball
Volunteer Coordinator

I originally come from a village in Cheshire, but have lived in London for over 7 years now. I've been a volunteer coordinator for three years in a London museum, and this year I won the Supporting, Managing and Encouraging Volunteers from the London Volunteers in Museum Awards. I'm excited to bring my expertise to a new sector and create some exciting volunteering opportunities.

I'm a film fan (I'm not the type of fan that knows all the facts there are to know about films... I just love watching films) and for the last 3 years I have made an annual pilgrimage to the London Film Festival. I'm such a fan, I even got married in a cinema!



Neelam Hasmukh
Resources Assistant

My name is Neelam Hasmukh, 'Has Mukh' means smile in Indian. I graduated in March 2012 and this is my first ever job. I work as a Resource Assistant at the Southwark Resource Centre and thank Southwark Carers for giving me this opportunity to work for carers.

My job is to work with people at the Southwark Resource Centre and help with the administration of the charity processing carers assessment forms onto the database and overseeing flexi-respite bookings.

When my grandmother fell ill, I helped my mother to look after her, which included work I had never done and this gave me an understanding of the care and support a carer needs.



Jackie Olding
Financial / Personal Budget Administrator

My name is Jackie and I have been at Southwark Carers since January 1996, but I have been working in Southwark since September 1978.

When I started Southwark Carers was part of the Carers National Association which went on to become Carers UK. In 1996 there were just 3 members of staff, 2 of us were part time and we occupied one room in Cambridge House.

At this time we were helping around 600 carers with advice and support but the benefits system was a little bit easier then.

I remember Southwark Carers first forum in February 1996 at Dulwich Leisure Centre where the Southwark Charter for Carers was signed in front of dozens of carers.

I also remember when Southwark Carers went independent from the Carers National Association which was also when we became a registered charity. Due to the size of the team we all had to be very adaptable, but over the years I have taken control of the finances and administration.

I have worked under 8 Chief Executives at Southwark Carers who have each helped the charity develop and move forwards.

Southwark Carers team have changed completely in my time, but I have enjoyed working with them all, as have the carers who appreciate all their efforts.

I know that we still work with many of the carers that I first started helping in 1996 to this day.

I look forward to working with the new team.



James Thorpe
Trainee Financial / Personal Budget Administrator

I am an accounting graduate with a masters in Business Administration.

My passion in life is to be in the position where I can be able to help and influence the lives of others positively and that's the main reason why I applied to be part of a wonderful team and an organisation as a whole.

I am currently the Trainee finance/personal budget administrator at Southwark Carers. I am also the treasurer for Battersea Central Methodist Mission and a property community member for the Walworth Methodist Church. I am currently the Assistant Choirmaster/organist of the Walworth Methodist Church.

Learn new skills with 'Southwark Cares'

Are you good with working with other people? Do you want to see an idea turned into a self-sustaining enterprise?

Southwark Carers has been given funding to launch a new work skills training programme for carers. We're calling it 'Southwark Cares'. We plan to roll out a programme of training, talks and activities from March 2013 for carers wanting to transform hidden talents and hobbies into practical work skills for developing a small business or social enterprise

With specially arranged teachers and training, we'll be offering key social enterprise skills training, including:



computer literacy, producing a business plan, brand development, marketing, book-keeping, fundraising and more.

To be part of this project, you will need to be able to commit to attending one session a month, starting early April 2013 and lasting 10 months (and hopefully beyond!)

Places are very limited, so please contact us now to express your interest. Contact Rachel Ball on 020 7708 4497 or email rachel.ball@southwarkcarers.org.uk

Board News

At the AGM in November 2012 a new management committee was appointed to help guide the strategic direction of Southwark Carers. Please find below a list of the new board members. If you have any questions you would like to raise to the board please contact June Hollands on june.hollands@southwarkcarers.org.uk

Wondwossen Befikadu

I am the main carer for a disabled child, and I am a family man. I joined Southwark Carers last year and they have been a big help for me. I am originally from Ethiopia and I've lived in the borough of Southwark for the last 10 years.

Alex Cannon

I've always been caring by nature. In my life I've looked after nine people first hand – my first experience was caring for a man with emphysema, and I looked after my dad in his final two years. I used to make brake parts, so in a way I've looked after thousands of people. Caring is what my dad taught me to do, and responsibility and understanding are what now inspire me to help others.

June Hollands

I am the Chair of Southwark Carers and have been in post since December 2010. 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.

Grace Hurd

I'm a carer myself, and I'm very interested in Southwark Carers and being able to input my ideas and experience into the organisation. I've been living in the

borough of Southwark for over 15 years, and care for my disabled son. I enjoy helping out and am already a volunteer on the Southwark Carers reception.

Yvonne Najair-Bellinfante

As a carer for family members and friends in the borough, caring has been a big part of my life. With my background in community engagement and education, I feel I could offer my skills and abilities to Southwark Carers. I've been very fortunate with being able to access services in Southwark, and I now want to give something back.

Mary Jacob

I've been a young carer for my father, who died when I was 15, and who was ill for most of my childhood. I'm a carer now for my mother, who has a number of different health problems, and have cared for other relatives. From my experiences, I know what issues affect carers, and I have passion and empathy for carers rights, and the challenges carers face. My background is in education, occupational therapy and community work.

Carol Vincent

Carol is a member of Southwark Pensioners and has been a long-term resident on the Aylesbury Estate, where she is actively involved in the community. A carer for over 15 years.

Events & Groups

Mar

25

Carers Catch Up - Paralympic Memories

One of our carers will be talking to the group to tell them all about her experiences as a performer and dancer in the Paralympic opening ceremony at London 2012. At the talk she will be joined by two other performers who can also pass on their experiences, show some of the props and costumes they were asked to use.

Alongside the talk we will also be showing sections from the opening ceremony on the big screen in the Carers Resource Room.

Please book your place for this session as it is sure to be a popular talk.



Events & Groups

March 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.

Fri 01	Knitting and Nattering - 14:00 - 16:30 This year we will be knitting and crocheting a range of woollen goods to help raise funds for the carer's centre.
Sat 02	Film Club / The Golden Girls & The Mysteries of Edgar Wallace - 12:00 - 13:30 A chance to watch some very special US comedy and a classic 60's British crime drama starring Bernard Lee.
Thur 07	Gardens Surgery Group - 14:00 - 15:30 @ Lew Evans House, 188 Underhill Road SE22 0QH Share your experiences with other carers and help to build your support networks with friends in similar situations.
Fri 08	Community Yoga - Southwark Resource Centre 10 Bradenham Close SE17 - 11:00 - 12:00 Chair Yoga is one of the gentlest forms of yoga available, come have fun and increase your suppleness.
Mon 11	Belly Dancing - 11:00 - 12:00 A chance to get healthy and have a lot of fun at the same time with coin belts, cymbals and music.
Tues 12	Bermondsey Group - 11:00 - 12:30 @Artesian Health Centre, 138 Grange Road SE1 3GF A chance to meet new friends and share stories and coping strategies with others in a similar situation.
Tues 12	Sewing Group - 13:30 - 15:30 We will be making, cutting and sewing clothes and keepsakes to sell in our gift shop and donate to charities.
Wed 13	ADDitude Group - 11:00 - 12:30 A group for carers with children with autism and behavioural problems.
Fri 15	Film Club / Easter Parade (1948) - 13:00 - 14:30 The happiest musical ever made a classic Irving Berlin dance number featuring Judy Garland and Fred Astaire.
Sat 16	Weekend Activity Group - 11:00 - 13:30 This weekend we will be hosting a herbal tea party - trying many different teas.
Tue 19	Flower Arranging - 15:00 - 16:30 A professional florist will be showing the group how to make their own arrangements and the tricks of the trade.
Wed 20	Beauty Business - 12:00 - 14:00 A make up artist will be teaching you how to make the most of your products and create a range of stunning effects.
Thur 21	Arts Group - Mosaics and sculpture 11:00 - 13:00 The group will be creating tiles for the Carers Centre mural and masks, paintings and plates to add to the ensemble.
Thur 21	Carers Outing - Aladdin @ English National Opera 14:00 (outing departs from WMC at 12:00) A run-in with Palace guards leads young tearaway Aladdin into a whirlwind of adventure and romance.
Fri 22	Community Yoga - Southwark Resource Centre 10 Bradenham Close SE17 - 11:00 - 12:00 Chair Yoga is one of the gentlest forms of yoga available, come have fun and increase your suppleness.
Mon 25	Carers Catch Up - 12:00 - 13:30 A carers will tell the group about their experiences as they performed in the paralympics 2012 opening ceremony.
Thur 28	Book Club / The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry - Rachel Joyce - 17:00 - 18:30 Harold Fry pops out to post a letter and unexpectedly walks the length of the country to save someone else's life.

Unless otherwise stated all events take place at 3rd Floor WMC, 54 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0EN

Events & Groups

April Events

To receive a reminder of the events that Southwark Carers organise please let us know your email address and we will add you to our weekly email list which goes out every Friday afternoon. Send us an email to info@southwarkcarers.org.uk with the subject line 'sign up to weekly email'.

Thur 04	Gardens Surgery Group - 14:00 - 15:30 @ Lew Evans House, 188 Underhill Road SE22 0QH Share your experiences with other carers and help to build your support networks with friends in similar situations.
Fri 05	Knitting and Nattering - 14:00 - 16:00 This year we will be knitting and crocheting a range of woollen goods to help raise funds for the carer's centre.
Sat 06	Film Club / Where Do We Go Now? (2011) Funny and heartwarming Lebanese film looking at conflict resolution starring and directed by Nadine Labaki.
Mon 08	Belly Dancing - 11:00 - 12:00 A chance to get healthy and have a lot of fun at the same time with coin belts, cymbals and music.
Tues 09	Bermondsey Group - 11:00 - 12:30 @ Artesian Health Centre, 138 Grange Road SE1 3GF A chance to meet new friends and share stories and coping strategies with others in a similar situation.
Tues 09	Sewing Group - 13:30 - 15:30 We will be making, cutting and sewing clothes and keepsakes to sell in our gift shop and donate to charities.
Wed 10	ADDitude Group - 11:00 - 12:30 A new group for carers with children with autism and behavioural problems.
Fri 12	Community Yoga - Southwark Resource Centre 10 Bradenham Close SE17 - 11:00 - 12:00 Chair Yoga is one of the gentlest forms of yoga available, come have fun and increase your suppleness.
Mon 15	Carers Catch Up - 12:00 - 13:30 Alongside the chance to meet other carers the group will be making their own jewellery.
Tues 16	Flower Arranging - 15:00 - 16:30 A professional florist will be showing the group how to make their own arrangements and the tricks of the trade.
Wed 17	Beauty Business - 12:00 - 14:00 A make up artist will be teaching you how to make the most of your products and create a range of stunning effects.
Thur 18	Arts Group - Photography 10:30 - 13:00 What captures the spirit of your community? Using your own camera or a disposable from Southwark Carers, we are asking you to take a picture which puts your community in focus.
Fri 19	Film Club / Skin (1998) - 13:00 - 14:00 Based on the true story of a black girl who was born to two white Afrikaner parents in South Africa during apartheid.
Sat 20	Weekend Activity Group - 10:30 - 13:30 We will be learning to make our own origami birds, animals, simple boxes, flowers and other treats.
Wed 24	Carers Outing - V&A Museum of Childhood - 14:30 Cambridge Heath Road London E2 9PA Childhood Past and Present looks at ten iconic objects related to British childhood, spanning 300 years.
Thur 25	Book Club / The Fault in Our Stars - John Green - SRC 10 Bradenham Close SE17 - 17:00 - 18:30 A novel of life and death and the people caught in between. You laugh, you cry, and then you come back for more.
Fri 26	Community Yoga - Southwark Resource Centre 10 Bradenham Close SE17 - 11:00 - 12:00 Chair Yoga is one of the gentlest forms of yoga available, come have fun and increase your suppleness.

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.

Unless otherwise stated all events take place at 3rd Floor WMC, 54 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0EN

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to socialise, hone new skills, make new friends and perhaps rediscover a forgotten talent.

Southwark Carers is expanding their volunteering opportunities, and you may be interested in taking part.

Our aim over the next year is to create opportunities that are enjoyable and give volunteers the chance to try something new. We also want to get the word out about Southwark Carers and how we can help carers.

This is where you can have a real impact.

We are looking for people who can give a few hours a week (or a month) in the following roles:

- Receptionists (school holiday cover)
- Support Group Coordinators
- Carers Champions
- Support Planners

Receptionist (school holiday cover)

Could you provide a warm welcome to visitors and callers? Do you understand the pressures and strains a carer could be under? Would you be able to provide a calming, reassuring approach and take accurate messages?

If so, we want to hear from you!

We are looking for a couple of people who can take this role on and would be able to provide cover during school holidays, working on our reception.

Full training and additional support will be given.



Support Group Coordinator

Have you been to one of our Support Groups? Could you help to keep them running and encourage people to attend?

We are looking for people who are willing to take an active role in attending and promoting the three support groups we currently run.

It is anticipated that the volunteers undertaking this role will need to commit to up to 6 hours a month.



Southwark Carers Champions

Outreach Engagement is a fancy way of saying attending events and talking about the organisation. You will be raising our profile and letting carers know how we can support them, by attending meetings and community events across the borough.

We estimate there are 18,000 hidden carers in the borough of Southwark who may not know they're a carer, or that they're entitled to support and advice. We'd like to recruit a small team of champions who can help us reach carers across the community, helping at events and spreading information. This is an exciting new voluntary role where you can have a real impact, hone new skills, and meet other people.

If you have an understanding of caring and carers' issues, and would like to help us spread the word to the wider community, we'd love to hear from you!

This role is a little more ad hoc, so there won't be fixed days, but would need a commitment of 3 hours per event. Attending an event would be done by agreement.

Support Planners

We are looking for volunteers who are able to provide information and advice to cared for people about how best to spend their personal budgets from the council.

After a visit by social services people are allocated a sum of money with which to purchase care to allow them to live independently, a support planner helps make sure that you can access the best possible care for your money.

Full training and additional support will be given.

It is anticipated that the volunteers undertaking this role will need to commit to up to 6 hours a month.

Do any of these roles sound of interest?

Would you like to know more about a particular role? If so, find out more about each role visit our website: www.southwarkcarers.org.uk

To express your interest in a role, please download our Volunteering Interest Form and send it, along with Education and Work History form or your CV to volunteering@southwarkcarers.org.uk

If you have any questions, contact Rachel Ball, Volunteer Coordinator on 020 7708 4497 or by email volunteering@southwarkcarers.org.uk

Recycle old phones to support carers



Carers Trust have teamed up with ShP for Charity to recycle unwanted phones and raise money for carers.

The service is free, quick, simple and environmentally friendly. With over an estimated 80 million old phones in the UK, there's never been a better time to recycle your old phone to help Carers Trust.

If you or anyone you know have old and unwanted mobile phones please send them freepost to:

Carers Trust
FREEPOST
ShP Solutions
Lancaster

Can you help us reach out to new carers on the radio?



At Southwark Carers, we are always aiming to find the many hidden carers who are still struggling without help in the Southwark area. And we need you to help us reach them.

We're publicising our efforts in a short radio advert for Resonance FM, a local station, and we'd love two carers to appear in it. Please contact joseph.bates@southwarkcarers.org.uk for more details.

Mobility Aid Card Launched

People who use mobility aids such as wheelchairs, mobility walkers and scooters could benefit from a new card to help them travel more freely on public transport.

Transport for London's (TFL's) Mobility Aid recognition card will identify which mobility aids can be safely used on the capital's buses.

TFL hopes the card will remove confusion from passengers and bus drivers over which can be taken onto a bus, giving people more confidence when travelling. Just under 90 models scooter have already been approved.

To apply for a card call 020 3054 4361 or email travelmentor@tfl.gov.uk



Do you enjoy the Cinema?



Anyone in receipt of DLA or AA can get a free ticket for the person accompanying them through the CEA Card.

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association run a national scheme that allows carers to accompany the person they care for to the cinema free of charge.

To apply for the card you will need submit proof to show that you meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance.
2. Be a registered blind person.

Printed application forms are available from cinemas across the UK supporting this card, or, you can download an application form at this address:

<http://www.ceacard.co.uk/downloads/CEACard%20Application%20Form%20REV008.pdf>

You will also need to supply a passport-sized photo with your application to appear on the card.

A processing fee of £5.50 is chargeable per card. This is to be sent along with the completed application.

Carers wanted to explore role of technology in caring

Carers wanted to explore role of technology in caring
From smart phones to sensors, from alarm systems to remote health checks, technology is changing the way we care.

Carers UK, the University of Westminster and the London School of Economics are embarking on new research into the use of technology by carers and the people they support. The project is funded by the Technology Strategy Board's Assisted Living Innovation Platform with the aim of exploring the role technology can play in caring.

We're inviting carers to participate in focus groups between February – April 2013. Each session will be an interactive discussion about how technology can assist carers and the people they support, and will introduce the participants to new and emerging technologies.

If you would like to participate in this exciting new research project please submit your details online at:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/technologyfocusgroups>

Mental Health Carers

Mental health patients to be given new rights

Patients with mental health problems are to be given new rights over which consultant psychiatrist they see under new plans to end institutional bias against them in the NHS.

The move, to be announced on 13th December 2012 by the Department of Health, will allow people with conditions such as depression to choose which specialist they go to for treatment from 2014.

Nick Clegg, the deputy prime minister, who has been instrumental in securing the change, said that giving patients with mental health conditions more choice and control over their treatment would increase the chances of their making a good recovery and help to give them parity with those with physical health problems.

“It does not make any sense that some of the most vulnerable members of our society have little control about how their condition is treated. If any group of patients could benefit from being empowered by taking control of their own care, it is people with mental illness”, Clegg said.

“My overriding priority is to ensure that mental health is finally considered in all aspects of NHS care, so that it no longer suffers from the institutional bias that has existed for so long”, he added.

The change “will strike a clear symbolic blow” in ministers’ efforts to ensure that patients with mental health problems get the same rights and access to NHS treatment as those with physical ailments, Whitehall sources said. It will help end what is too often a “like it or lump it health service” for mental health patients who currently cannot decide which psychiatrist they see.

The move will also address what Clegg and care services minister Norman Lamb see as a significant flaw in the last Labour government’s extension of patient rights, which in 2008 saw those with physical health conditions allowed to choose which hospital they visited for their first appointment with a consultant. From April 2014 any patient in England referred by their GP for treatment for a mental health problem such as anxiety will have the same choice.

The change is the latest initiative by Liberal Democrat ministers to ensure parity from the NHS for the one in four people suffer from mental ill-health at some point in their lifetime. Lamb recently announced plans to introduce “access standards” - waiting times, in effect - to ensure patients do not have to wait too long for mental health treatment, to match those that already exist for physical conditions.

It will also allow such patients referred by their GP to choose to go to a private provider of mental health treatment, not just an NHS hospital.

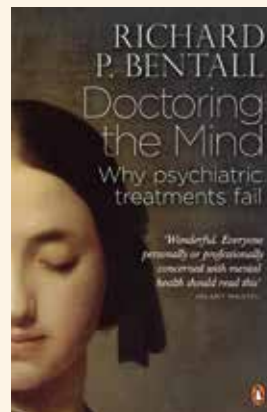


Norman Lamb, Care Services Minister

Paul Farmer, chief executive of the mental health charity Mind, welcomed the move. “This is a real step forward in making the government’s commitment to giving mental health parity of esteem with physical health a reality. Many people tell Mind that too often they feel they aren’t listened to or respected by their mental health professional, so allowing people to choose their consultant should improve quality of care.”

Choice over what treatment a patient receives and involvement in planning their care are critical to a patient’s recovery, Farmer added.

Books for MH Carers



Why is the Western world’s treatment of mental illness so flawed? Who really benefits from psychiatry? And why would a patient in Nigeria have a much greater chance of recovery than one in the UK?

In *Doctoring the Mind*, leading clinical psychologist Richard Bentall reveals the shocking truths behind the system of mental health care in the West.

With a heavy dependence on pills and the profit they bring, psychiatry has been relying on myths and misunderstandings of madness for too long, and builds on methods which can often hinder rather than help the patient.

Bentall argues passionately for a new future of mental health, one that considers the patient as an individual and redefines our understanding and treatment of madness for the twenty-first century.

Available from £7.69 on amazon.co.uk

Spinach Could Help Beat Dementia

Researchers have discovered a link between low vitamin C, beta-carotene levels and dementia, meaning antioxidant rich fruit and veg – such as spinach, carrots and apricots – could help fight the disease’s devastating symptoms.

German scientists looked at the differences between 74 people with mild Alzheimer’s disease and 158 healthy subjects.

The participants, between 65 and 90 years of age, underwent neuropsychological testing, answered questions about their lifestyle and had their blood examined and their body mass index calculated.

The team including epidemiologist Professor Gabriele Nagel and neurologist Professor Christine von Arnim found the serum-concentration of the antioxidants vitamin C and beta-carotene were significantly lower in patients with mild dementia than in control group.

There was no such difference between the groups in levels of other antioxidants including vitamin E, lycopene, coenzyme Q10.

Dr Nagel said although more studies were needed to confirm the results, the findings suggested fruits and vegetables could play a role in fighting the disease.

“Longitudinal studies with more participants are necessary to confirm the result that vitamin C and beta-carotene might prevent the onset and development of Alzheimer’s disease”, said Dr Nagel, of the University of Ulm.

“Vitamin C can for example be found in citrus fruits; beta-carotene in carrots, spinach or apricots.”

Alzheimer’s disease symptoms including forgetfulness, lack of orientation and cognitive decline are caused by alterations in the brain including amyloid-beta-plaques, degeneration of fibrillae and a loss of synapses.

However, oxidative stress, which constrains the exploitation of oxygen in the human body, is also suspected to promote the development of the disease.

This led scientists to investigate whether antioxidants might protect against neurodegeneration.



The study – supported by the German Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg and the European Union – was published in the Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease.

Exercising in your 70s ‘may stop brain shrinkage’

Exercising in your 70s may stop your brain from shrinking and showing the signs of ageing linked to dementia, say experts from Edinburgh University.

Brain scans of 638 people past the age of retirement showed those who were most physically active had less brain shrinkage over a three-year period.

Exercise did not have to be strenuous - going for a walk several times a week sufficed, the journal Neurology says.

But giving the mind a workout by doing a tricky crossword had little impact.

The study found no real brain-size benefit from mentally challenging activities, such as reading a book, or other pastimes such as socialising with friends and family. More research is also needed to tease out how physical activity might be having a beneficial effect”

When the researchers examined the brain’s white matter - the wiring that transmits messages round the brain - they found that the people over the age of 70 who were more physically active had fewer damaged areas than those who did little exercise.

MH Support groups

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

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

Can Counselling help?

Bereavement and grief can affect adults in a number of ways because everyone reacts differently to the experience of losing a loved one. Dr Ann Dent outlines the symptoms you may have and explains how various difficult factors may complicate the healing process.

All grief is different

There's no right or wrong way to grieve. We all have different personalities, ways of coping and past experiences. No two people's grief will be the same. Each of us is likely to experience a wide range of feelings, which may vary from day to day.

Physical symptoms may include: hollowness in the stomach, over-sensitivity to noise, tightness in the chest or throat, weakness in muscles, lack of energy, a dry mouth, fatigue and breathlessness.

Feelings may include: sadness, anger, guilt, self-reproach, anxiety, loneliness, helplessness, hopelessness, shock, emancipation, relief, numbness and yearning for the dead person.

Behavioural changes may include: insomnia and sleep interruption, appetite disturbances, absent-minded behaviour, social withdrawal, dreams of the deceased, avoiding reminders of the deceased, sighing, restless overactivity, crying, visiting places or treasuring objects that are reminders of the lost loved one.

Thoughts may include: disbelief, confusion, preoccupation with the deceased, a sense of presence of the deceased, auditory and visual hallucinations.

After the funeral

The first week or so after a death is a busy time: telling others, registering the death and making funeral arrangements. The full reality of the death may not hit you until after this time, when friends and family may have moved away and the real pain of grief begins.

After the initial impact, you may find that you're up one minute and down the next. This is normal. Confusion, disorganisation, anger and guilt are common feelings which may fluctuate over the coming months, giving way to apathy, sadness and depression as time goes on.

The following comments were all expressed by bereaved people and show the variety of feelings that can be experienced:

- Guilt - "If only we hadn't rowed just before the accident. I feel so guilty that I gave him a hard time before he died."
- Anger - "I was so angry, I wanted to hit out at God and the world. I wanted to hurt everyone just like I'd been hurt. I wanted to destroy. He'd left me and I hated him for it."
- Longing - "My whole being ached for her. I could think of nothing else. Every minute I thought she'd come through the door again. Again and again I'd hear her

voice, see her in the crowd. Each time I thought of her it was like a knife in my heart."

- Exhaustion - "I'd been feeling restless and couldn't sleep. I paced and ranted. Now, I have an opposite reaction. I sleep a lot but still feel worn out. I don't even want to see the friends who've kept me going. I sit and stare, too exhausted to move."

Do men and women grieve differently?

Women tend to have more intense reactions than men and find it easier to talk to others about their feelings. For this reason, they may have more available support than men. Sometimes men may 'act strong', which may not reveal their true emotions. Men feel as deeply as women but may feel it's wrong to show their vulnerability. Many try to keep busy and avoid talking about the death. This is their way of coping and should be respected, but it's not wrong or weak for men to seek help.

If you aren't there at the death

Most of us would want to be present when a loved one dies. It's the last thing you'll do for the dying person and for many it seems right to be with them until the end of their life. Being present may help to confirm the reality of the death and assist you in your grieving.

Sometimes this isn't possible, however, and you may be left feeling guilty, angry or cheated - particularly when someone's died after a long illness. You'll want to know that your loved one died peacefully, free of pain and not alone. In the case of sudden death, where you haven't been present, you may want to know that everything was done to save the life of your loved one. You'll want to know what has happened, or who or what's to blame. It's natural to seek causes for the death and ways of making sense of it.

Emotional effects of identifying the body

To have to identify someone who we've loved can be frightening, distressing and stressful, especially when there's been injury to the body. Many of us won't have seen a dead body and therefore have no idea what to expect.

Personnel in the mortuary should be able to guide and help you. Whenever possible, ensure that you're accompanied by a close and trusted friend or relation, who can then take you home afterwards. Recognising the body as your loved one may cause great shock either at the time or some time later. You may feel numb for a few hours or even days until the reality sinks in.

It's advisable that you seek help to talk through your feelings and to assist you through the grieving process. Southwark Carers Counselling Service offers help to the bereaved.



Wallace and Gromit Foundation Update

In December 2011 Southwark Carers ran a tea party on behalf of the Wallace and Gromit Children's Foundation.

Here's Harry's story to show how some of the money you raised from the event has benefitted a young persons life.

Harry is one of the many children cared for by Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice. Chestnut Tree House cares for children and young adults from 0-19 years of age with progressive life-limiting and life-threatening illnesses from all over the county. The children who visit Chestnut Tree House have very complex health needs, meaning that the vast majority require the use of a wheelchair at all times and may have difficulty in communicating through speech, have a hearing impairment or be visually impaired. Very often they have a combination of conditions that makes "normal" interaction impossible.



This year Wallace & Gromit's Children's Foundation supported Chestnut Tree House by giving them a grant to pay for 200 sessions in their Multi-Sensory Room.

The Multi-Sensory Room provides the children with somewhere to relax away from the confines of their wheelchair, whilst enjoying the range of sensory equipment available to them. Harry loves music and movement, in the sensory room he has the option of having any kind of music to move or chill out to and the soft mats surround the walls and the floor support full expression without leaving him at risk.

Having a safe space to explore and move has also helped Harry to learn to interact with others and really focus on the other person, or concentrate on the toy he is playing with. On the ceiling there are fibre optic lights which stimulate Harry's sense of sight, Harry sometimes enjoys lying back and just watching as the colours change shade slowly. The water bed in the middle of the sensory area is heated and again Harry finds this a relaxing place to quietly watch as colours change shade in the bubble tubes. Chestnut House Hospice also have interactive story times in the sensory room which Harry has enjoys with the addition of playing a selection of instruments from the music room.

The sessions that Wallace & Gromit's Children's Foundation provided have allowed hundreds of children to benefit from this wonderful experience. Harry has been through many challenging experiences in his short life which have not been pleasant. Having a space at the hospice where he can feel safe and relaxed like this can really help him to maintain his ability to trust his environment enough to explore and play, which will support his self confidence and development.

Help Us Identify Hidden Carers

Do you belong to a community group, or attend a church, mosque, temple or other place of worship or faith group?



Staff from Southwark Carers can come and talk to groups about:

- What is meant by the term 'carer', to help reach more people in the community who are in a caring role
- The role of the Carers' Centre and the services we offer
- The impact of mental illness on families
- How families are affected by someone's drug or alcohol use

We can also respond to requests to come and talk on other topics, where appropriate. Please speak with any member of staff if you think that the group you attend would be interested in one or more of us coming along to speak to the members.

Alternatively, we can give you some of our leaflets to take to your group or out the group on our mailing list to receive the Southwark Carers' Newsletter on a regular basis. Please call the office and ask for Rob.



Did you know the term 'carer' was not recognised until the 1980s?

Spell-checks in Microsoft still don't recognise 'carer' as a term



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

Associated services

Independent Age



Independent Age provide an information and advice service for older people, their families and carers, focusing on social care, welfare benefits and befriending services. This is integrated with local support, including one-to-one and group befriending schemes.

Independent Age offer advice and information on care and support to older people, their families and carers:

- Paying for care home fees and choosing a care home
- top-up fees and if they should be paid
- your rights and what help to expect from social services and the NHS
- your housing options
- coping with worsening health and getting help with things you struggle to do
- managing your money and affairs if you become too ill to do this yourself
- entitlement to benefits

Independent Age produce up to date information guides about the most common issues affecting older people. You can download them free from www.independentage.org or order by phone Monday to Friday 10:00 - 16:00 on 0845 262 1863.

Independent Age are setting up a new bereavement support service for Southwark and Lambeth called Late Spring.

Late Spring is looking to build a network of support groups for anyone aged 70+ who has recently been bereaved. Meeting twice a month, the groups are aimed to be relaxed, warm and friendly, and all are welcome. Anyone aged under 70 can still contact as they can discuss alternative support available.

Late Spring groups will start from January 2013 with funding for 3 years.

To find out more about Late Spring please contact Kerry on 07525 767 526 or email kerry@latespring.org
Website: www.latespring.org.uk

New group for Parent Carers



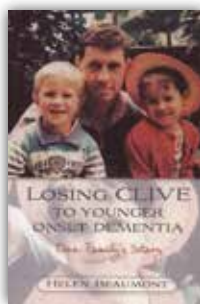
From January 2013 Southwark Carers have been running a new peer support group for carers of children with behavioural problems and autism.

Come along and share your experiences and together we can collectively work out coping strategies.

The ADDitude group will be held at the Carers Centre Camberwell Road on the Second Wednesday of every month.

As the group develops we hope to invite relevant speakers to the group and put together a guide for parents of children diagnosed with behavioural problems to help new carers to cope with the condition.

Books for carers



Losing Clive to Younger Onset Dementia

Helen Beaumont

Clive Beaumont was diagnosed with Younger Onset Dementia at age 45, when his children were aged just 3 and 4. He had become less and less able to do his job properly and had been made redundant from the Army the year before. Clive's wife, Helen, tells of how she and the rest of the family made it through the next six years until Clive died: the challenge of continually adapting to his progressive deterioration; having to address the legal implications of the illness; applying for benefit payments; finding nursing homes; and juggling her responsibilities as a wife, a mother and an employee.

She also describes the successful founding and development of The Clive Project, a registered charity set up by Helen and others in a bid to establish support services for people with Younger Onset Dementia.

Younger Onset Dementia is comparatively rare, but not that rare. This story is for the family and friends of people with the condition, for the people themselves, and for the professionals working with them

Contact Us

Main Contact Number:

020 7708 4497

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London
SE5 0EN

Website: www.southwarkcarers.org.uk

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Registered Company: 4146495

Registered Charity: 1085300

How To Contact Each Service:



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Community Engagement Officer

Dan Taylor
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Finance Assistant

James Thorpe
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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

