

Carers of East Lothian



The Princess Royal Trust
for Carers

News Update January 2009

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2009. The staff would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for the many cards and gifts received over the festive season.

The Carers Centre has gone through several changes in recent months. Claire Thomas (formerly our Moffat Project worker) has moved into the new position of Mental Health Carer Support Worker. Claire will specialise in supporting those who care for people with mental health issues and she will be based with the Community Mental Health Team in Haddington. Claire can be contacted on 0131 536 8522 or by email at claire@coel.org.uk

We are delighted to welcome Graham Bennett to the team in the Moffat Project post, and also Lynne Gordon to the new Administration Assistant post.

The Annual General Meeting took place on 31st October and was well attended by both carers and professionals. Our annual report is now available and if you would like a copy please call or email the centre (contact details on back page) and we will send this out to you.

Our annual Christmas Social was held in the Maitlandfield House Hotel, Haddington. Also all of our support groups enjoyed festive events during December.

Caring for someone with Mental Health Problems?

A new two day course to help you cope with confidence.

Thursday 5th March and Thursday 19th March 9.30 – 3.00pm

**Tynepark Resource Centre
Tynepark House
Poldrate, Haddington**

This is a free course open to anybody who is caring for a friend or relative with mental health problems.

Come along to both days or drop into one of the sessions.

For more information or to book a place contact the centre on
0131 665 0135



Carers Surgery at Roodlands

The pilot project to reach carers of patients of Roodlands Hospital has been extended until at least the end of March 2009.

Our Carer Support Worker will hold a surgery giving information, advice and help with forms etc. in Ward 1A sitting room between 3.30pm and 5pm on the following dates:

Wednesday 14th & 28th January
Wednesday 4th, 11th, & 25th February
Wednesday 11th & 18th March

Information Day for Carers Wednesday 18th February 2009

E.L. Co-op Bowling Club

Tranent

9.30- 3pm

Are you looking after someone you love?
Don't know where to turn for help?
Here's all you need to know in one fell swoop!

This session will give you the information you need to Care with Confidence.

Over the day, we will cover:

- What help Social Work can offer.
- Aids and adaptations that make your loved one's life easier.
- Information on benefits for carers
 - Acting on the person's behalf (Power of Attorney).
 - Changing Relationships.

There will also be a chance to talk to other carers as nobody understands like someone who has been through it themselves.

The course is free and includes a light lunch. We can help with transport or sitter costs if required.

Contact the centre if you would like more information or to book a place.

This course is guaranteed to give you confidence.

Carers' Page

SOMETIMES I SIT AND THINK, OTHER TIMES I JUST SIT. By William D Miller, Laird of Glencairn

Do you ever ruminate? On occasions there is just a window of opportunity in my life to sit. No television, no music, no demands of the workplace, nothing to disturb the tranquil moment. It is then I sometimes ruminate.

The other day I had such a moment. My mind went back to some dark days post heart bypass surgery when I was in intensive care. Florence Nightingale passed by with her torch in the early morning. "Not sleeping", she enquired. "No nurse, I replied quietly, "I'm just ruminating".

She left quietly and another Florence came, drew up a chair, took my hand in hers and began to gently stroke it. "Are you worried about anything" she asked, stroking away at my hand. "No nurse I'm just ruminating". "What's in your thoughts?" she enquired. Now I thought to myself, I'm on to a good thing here, knowing that they sometimes expected reactions from the patient to the drugs administered during surgery.

"Did you know that these were the most expensive pyjamas in Edinburgh?"

"What makes you say that, Mr Miller?"

"Well I replied, "When my wife discovered that I had gone through the four pairs of pyjamas I had brought into hospital, she drove down to the city and bought a new pair, parking her car at the side of the road. When she got back, she had a parking ticket and that fine, together with the cost of the pyjamas makes these the most expensive pyjamas in Edinburgh".

Stroking my hand further she asked quietly if there was anything else.

"Well, I said "While driving to hospital I suggested she might get the car oil checked at the garage, but when she got there she didn't know where the car bonnet release was and neither did the mechanic. Several people all came to help but no one could find the release lever.

A gentleman eventually appeared who had the same make of car and he quickly released the bonnet.

By this time there was a queue of traffic out the forecourt and down the road, all waiting for petrol!"

Stroking my hand further, and I really was enjoying it, she asked if there was anything else on my mind.

"Yes", I replied. "The woman in the next bed has been hearing the sound of pages being ripped from a book during the night and the noise is coming from the bed opposite. She thinks the reason is that the man finds the book too heavy to handle and each time he reads a page he tears it out to make the book lighter to handle but when she looks across under his bed in the morning, there are no pages lying about and she wonders what he is doing with them. I don't hear the noise of pages being torn out nor do I see any difference to the thickness of the book".

"The noise she hears" said the nurse "is the micro belt around his chest. He is a heavy smoker and when he needs to cough he tightens the micro belt so that he doesn't burst the inner stitches. That's all it is."

"Good" I said, "I'll tell her that in the morning"

"Now, is there anything else", she said, Stroking gently at my hand. "No", I replied, "I think I'm ready to sleep now, thank you nurse".

Sometimes I sit and think.....

**Do you have a short story to tell?
Maybe you have a poem or some other
piece of writing?
If you have, we are waiting to hear from
you. This page is the Carers' page so -
it's over to you!**

Carers Information

Deaf Action “Including You” Project

It is estimated that as many as 15,000 people experience some degree of hearing loss throughout East Lothian. Debbie Gibson is an Information Advice and Guidance worker with Deaf Action working on the ‘Including You’ project. Debbie is based at Deaf Action’s Head Office in Edinburgh and she also covers East, West and Midlothian and is able to carry out home visits in any area covered by the project. Support will include advice about hearing aids, benefits available, community and support groups that can help increase peoples’ confidence.

If you would like further information, or to make an appointment to meet with Debbie, please contact her on 0131 550 0995 or email debbie.gibson@deafaction.org



Affected by another person’s drug use?

MELD family support is available to people living in East Lothian. The service is free and offers one to one support, family support groups and self help groups for anyone affected by another person’s drug use. For more information or to access the service please contact Sarah Wall at MELD on 0131 660 3566.

Help for Parents of a Child with Autism

The National Autistic Society’s “Help!” family support programme provides information, support and advice for parents/carers, family members and people with an autism spectrum disorder. They will be running a three-day programme on 17, 18 and 24 March in Edinburgh. This programme is for parents/carers of children aged between 5 and 12 years who have received a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder within the last two years or so. The course is free and, if your child gets DLA, you may be entitled to unpaid leave from work to attend. Further information from Lauren Jarvis on 0141 285 7114 or email: laurenjarvis@nas.org.uk



Carer Poverty Campaign

Carer groups, supported by national and local carer organisations, are preparing a UK wide protest on 22nd April 2009.



Carers are angry that the government was able to find billions of pounds for the 2008 bank bail-out, but yet again failed to make funds available for carers in last year’s UK Carers Strategy. New evidence, published on Carers Rights’ Day in December, shows that carers are falling into poverty faster than other groups. The alarming statistics reveal 73% of carers in fuel poverty and over half in debt and cutting back on essentials like food or heating to make ends meet, although they continue to provide vital support and make a contribution worth £7.6 billion a year to the Scottish economy. In Scotland there will be a march (subject to police approval) starting from Edinburgh Castle at 1pm then walking right down the Royal Mile to Holyrood, led by a pipe band. People who are unable to march can join outside the Scottish Parliament from around 1.45 pm. Following the march a Rally will be held outside the Scottish Parliament with celebrity speakers, followed by a lobby of MSPs. If you are interested in joining the march and/or rally, Carers of East Lothian will post new information on our website or you can contact the centre for up-to-date information.

Patients’ Participation Group

The manager of the West Wing medical practice in Musselburgh requested that Carers of East Lothian establish a carers’ group to meet with practice staff. We have a few people who attend the meetings but would welcome more if anyone using the West Wing Practice is interested in taking part. The meetings are roughly once every two months on a Tuesday afternoon. If you cannot attend we would still welcome any comments or suggestions for discussion at these meetings. Any concerns or points you would like to raise will go on the meeting agenda and will be discussed. This is a good and a rare opportunity for you to have a say in how the practice is run, so please use it. For further information please contact Ingrid on 0131 665 0135.

Carers Support Groups

Our support groups offer information, peer support and the opportunity to share experiences. They are informal and welcoming. If you are interested in learning more about our groups or coming along please call the Carers Centre and we will be happy to discuss this with you.

We currently run groups in the following areas:

Dunbar - second Wednesday of each month 10.30am 12noon.

East Linton – first Thursday of each month 10.30am – 12noon

Haddington – last Wednesday of each month 1pm – 2.30pm

Dirleton – first Tuesday of each month 10.30am – 12noon

Musselburgh – every three months (Thursday) 10.30am – 12noon

North Berwick – second Tuesday of each month 10.30am – 12noon

In addition to the above groups we hold a **Drop-in group** at the Centre on the third Tuesday morning of each month. We also run the **Long Term Care Group** which is specifically for those carers whose loved ones are in long term care. This group meets on the second Thursday of each month from 1.30pm – 3pm in Musselburgh.

For full details of all our groups and activities please contact the centre as detailed below.

Dates for Your Diary

February 2009

3rd Dirleton Group
5th East Linton Group
10th North Berwick Group
11th Dunbar Group
12th Long Term Care Group
17th Drop-in Group
18th Information Day (Tranent)
25th Haddington Group

March 2009

3rd Dirleton Group
5th East Linton Group
5th Mental Health Training
10th North Berwick Group
11th Dunbar Group
12th Long Term Care Group
17th Drop-in Group
19th Mental Health Training
25th Haddington Group

April 2009

2nd East Linton Group
7th Dirleton Group
8th Dunbar Group
9th Long Term Care Group
14th North Berwick Group
21st Drop-in Group
22nd Carers Poverty Protest
29th Haddington Group

Have your details changed?

We try to ensure that our mailing list details are correct. If your details have changed please let us know and we will update our database or remove you from our list if you no longer wish to receive information from us. Thanks for your help.

Remember though, that you do not have to come off our mailing list if your caring role has ended and you still feel in need of support.

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