

Carer Centre News

Carers Question Time

Maitlandfield House Hotel
Wednesday 30th March 2011
11.00am – 12.30pm

In the run up to the Holyrood elections in May, we have arranged a Carers Question Time to give an opportunity to hear what four Prospective Parliamentary Candidates propose in support for carers.

The panel will consist of

- Councillor David Berry - East Lothian Scottish National Party
- Derek Brownlee, MSP – East Lothian Conservative & Unionist Association
- Iain Gray MSP – East Lothian Labour Party
- Ettie Spencer – East Lothian Liberal Democrats

If you have a question on carers' issues that you would like to ask or would like to book a place, please let us know by **Wednesday 23rd March 2011.**



By Royal Approval!

On 10th February HRH The Princess Royal officially opened the new Carers Centre. The Princess arrived at the centre at midday and spent an hour in the building, chatting with staff, Board members, volunteers and carers and unveiling a commemorative plaque to mark the occasion.



Training for Carers

If you're caring for someone with a mental health problem it can be hard to know what to say or how to help.

The following courses are designed to help you cope better.

Understanding Depression.

**Herdmanflat Hospital, Haddington
Tuesday 5th April 2011 1pm - 3pm**

Dr. Abraham from the Intensive Home Treatment Team will talk about Depression and how you can help someone who's depressed.

The following **three week course** is for families caring for someone with a long term mental health and /or substance use problem. What can you do when they're not ready to change? This course will help you to manage and give you ideas for looking after yourself.

Managing to Cope

**(With Sarah Walls from MELD)
Port Seton Community Centre**

1st, 8th & 15th June 2011, 4.30 -6.30pm.

Claire Thomas, CoEL's Mental Health Carer Support Worker, will also be contacting carers to ask what day services you want for your relative and what the NHS should be providing over the next five years for people with mental health problems – your views could help to improve mental health services in East Lothian. For more information, or to book a place on either course, please contact the centre.

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In this issue of the Newsletter, a newer Board member - Ian Walker - talks about his role within the organisation.

Q. Why did you become a Board member?

A. I was unprepared when faced with all of the care issues posed by the failing health of my parents. This difficult time led me into contact with Carers of East Lothian whose help, advice and support proved invaluable. My dad sadly died and my mother is in a care home - now that I am retired, I felt that "I wanted to give something back"

Q. How did you become a Board member?

A. I was involved with the North Berwick Carers Support Group; Kathleen the facilitator suggested that I could consider a role with COEL. I attended a few Management Board meetings as an observer and eventually agreed to be co-opted as a Board member - this was formalised at the COEL AGM in September 2010.

Q. What is it like being a Board member?

A. Interesting and rewarding but with responsibilities. Upon retiring from the Scottish Government I wanted to use my experience and knowledge to help others; now, as a Board member, I feel I am playing a part in making a difference to the lives of carers and their loved ones.

Q. What does a Board member do?

A. I am still finding out! COEL is a registered charity but also a company limited by guarantee - the Board looks after the business and running of the organisation so we must act in a professional and business-like way. There is a good team spirit and our meetings can often be light hearted, The Board meets monthly and typically might discuss:

- The impact of political and policy issues - national and local - on COEL
- Priorities for the future
- Staffing issues - workload, new projects, updates from staff
- Funding - resources, funding bids and their outcomes, reviews of the project budget

I feel I am doing something worthwhile, but the role is challenging - especially at a time of severe budget cuts. Looking to the future, we will need to be even more imaginative, creative and resourceful in our approach.

Q. Who can be a Board member?

A. Anyone with an interest in carers' issues, preferably an East Lothian resident.

Q. Are there any special qualities, qualifications or experience required to be a Board member?

A. Each person brings their own qualities and experience - professional or personal - the essential thing is a commitment to the aims and ideals of COEL. It would also be preferable to have an understanding or experience of what it means to be a carer.

Q. How could someone become a Board member?

A. We will be looking for Board members in the near future. Anyone interested should first speak to Tony Segall the Centre Manager who will be happy to explain the role of the Board in more detail and answer any questions. The next step would be filling in a short application form before coming in for an interview with the Centre Manager and Board members. The role of Board member is voluntary and unpaid although expenses are met.

Social Group

Carers of East Lothian Social Group meets on the third Thursday of each month and is open to new, existing and past carers who would like the opportunity to join in social activities and outings to places of local interest.

Anyone who is interested in joining should come along to the Tranmere Hotel at 1.00pm on Thursday March 10th for lunch followed by a meeting to plan activities for the months of April, May and June. Phone Linda Noble on 0131 653 1057 to book a place.

SPARKLE LEISURE

Sparkle Leisure is a non profit making service which offers:

- Holidays and leisure activities for people requiring support and assistance.
- Real choice and personalised alternatives to respite care.
- Affordable holidays and activities to suit a variety of budgets.

Sparkle Leisure is part of Crossreach Eskmills Project which has 12 years experience facilitating holidays and short breaks for people with learning disabilities. They aim to provide a range of holidays and short breaks to suit a variety of budgets, offering real choice and alternatives to people who receive respite care, and for those who need support to go on holiday.

All guests are treated as individuals whose needs and preferences will be respected at all times by friendly professional staff. They plan to arrange for guests to meet up before and after their holidays to support and maintain holiday friendships.

If you would like to read about their 2011 holidays or would like to find out more please visit the website www.sparkleleisure.co.uk, or contact Susan MacDonald on 0131 454 4331 for more information or to request the 2011 brochure.

North Berwick Surgery

Every Monday morning between 9.30am and 11.30am, Kathleen Jack, Carer Support Worker, is available at North Berwick Health Centre. Kathleen can provide advice, information and support to all adult carers.



Useful Websites

www.carers.org – The Princess Royal Trust for Carers website has information and advice for carers on a wide range of issues.

www.ageuk.org.uk – The website with information and advice for older people.

www.eastlothian.gov.uk – Information on East Lothian Council's services.

www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk – The website with information on respite and short breaks available for carers.

You can get help to convert your TV to digital if you:

are aged 75 or over; or get or could get Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Constant Attendance Allowance or mobility supplement; or have lived in a care home for six months or more; or are registered blind or partially sighted. If you would like more information, for yourself or for someone you know, please call **0800 40 85 900** or visit the website at www.helpscheme.co.uk



Shaping the future of East Lothian

2011 will see something take place which happens only once every ten years: a census of the Scottish population. And carers can play a vital role in ensuring that everyone is included.

Sunday 27th March is the date for this official population survey with census questionnaires delivered to all of Scotland's 2.5 million households. While personal details from the census are safeguarded by law and kept confidential for 100 years, the anonymous statistical results will play a vital role in helping shape East Lothian's future.

Morag Readman, census regional manager, said: "It's very important that everyone is counted in the census because the results help national government and local councils to assess the demand for services. In these times when every penny counts, it's more important than ever that spending decisions are based on good information."

Morag is keen to make sure people are aware of the assistance that is available for anyone who needs it. "If you, or someone you care for, need help to fill in the forms, we can assist. The website can answer most questions and there is also a helpline. Contact details for these are on the census forms being delivered in March. The forms will be delivered by an enumerator (census taker) and you can also ask them for assistance."

For further information on the census visit www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk



Carers Wellbeing Group

This group is aimed at those carers who are unable to attend our regular support groups due to their caring role.

The group welcomes both the carer and the person they are caring for in more of a social setting.

The group will meet from **12.30 – 2.30pm** in the Carers Centre on the following dates

Wednesday 23rd March, Wednesday 20th April, Wednesday 18th May & Wednesday 22nd June 2011.

For more information, or if you would like to attend any of these sessions, please contact Elaine or Marilyn at the Centre, on **0131 665 0135.**

WANTED

Feedback on the work to redesign respite and short breaks for people in East Lothian.

Come along to hear news of progress at:

"Breaking Through?"

The Gothenburg

227-229 High Street

Prestonpans

Tuesday 5th April 2010

11am – 12.30

Followed by a light lunch.

If you would like to find out more or book a place at this event please contact **East Lothian Community Care Forum on 01620 822212**

Carer 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

Tranent

last Friday of each month in Tranent Co-op Bowling Club 11am -1pm

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 **Wellbeing Group**, which is for carers (and those they care for) who are unable to attend regular support groups because of their caring role.

If you would like further information on either of these groups please contact the centre.

Are you reading someone else's copy?

If you would like to join our mailing list and receive our newsletters and information about free training courses and events for carers, please send this slip back to us at:

Carers of East Lothian
FREEPOST RSLK-SUTR-LHYX
Musselburgh
East Lothian EH21 7EA

You do **not** need a stamp.

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Your personal information will be treated in confidence and will not be passed on to other organisations.

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.

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.

Thanks for your help.

Carers of East Lothian
94 High Street
Musselburgh

East Lothian EH21 7EA

Tel: 0131 665 0135

Email: centre@coel.org.uk

www.coel.org.uk

Dates for Your Diary

March 2011

1st Dirleton Group
3rd East Linton Group
9th Dunbar Group
8th North Berwick Group
15th Drop-in Group
23rd Wellbeing Group
25th Tranent Group
30th Haddington Group
30th Carers Question Time

May 2011

3rd Dirleton Group
5th East Linton Group
10th North Berwick Group
11th Dunbar Group
17th Drop-in Group
18th Wellbeing Group
25th Haddington Group
27th Tranent Group

April 2011

5th Breaking Through Event
5th Dirleton Group
7th East Linton Group
12th North Berwick Group
13th Dunbar Group
19th Drop-in Group
20th Well being Group
21st Musselburgh Group
27th Haddington Group
29th Tranent Group

June 2011

2nd East Linton Group
7th Dirleton Group
8th Dunbar Group
14th North Berwick Group
21st Drop-in Group
22nd Wellbeing Group
24th Tranent Group
29th Haddington Group