

January 2012

As a direct response to the views you expressed at our recent Carers' Forums, some important work has been happening in Adult Social Care at Surrey County Council. Many of you raised concerns about the continuing inability of Social Care staff to recognise carers, offer a carer's assessment and conduct the process satisfactorily to ensure a positive outcome for you, the carer.

As a result of the continual feedback of your views, an officers group was set up to address the issues raised and in particular to try and increase the number of carers' assessments offered. Work has been going on with local Social Care teams to both improve their understanding of carer issues and increase the number of carers identified and the number of carers' assessments offered. In November, a staff conference was held to raise understanding of carer rights and issues. In addition to this, a number of training and information sessions have been undertaken with local teams and new comprehensive guidance has been issued to Social Care staff on working with carers. A lot of work has also been done on improving basic recording on the council's new computer system. Alongside this group, a Member (Councillors) Reference group, to which I was co-opted, was set up to monitor this work because the Adult Social Care Select committee were keen to ensure that real progress was being made for carers.

You will be pleased to know that overall performance has increased, with some teams making a real effort to improve the service they are offering carers. We will be watching the figures closely over the following months and getting feedback from you at our forums. We want to make sure that there has been a real positive change for carers in relation to this across all areas in Surrey. We will be looking to see better outcomes for carers such as more direct payments as well as an increase in the number of carer's assessments.

Jane Thornton, Chief Executive

SW Carers Forum

The Giving Carers a Voice South West Forum will be held on:

**Thursday 1st March
10am-2:30pm
at The Holiday Inn
Guildford**

Topics will include:

- Results of the Carers Health Survey.
- New Carers Breaks Initiatives.

With workshops on:

- Carers' Assessments.
- Hospital Discharge.
- Local issues.

If you would like to attend please contact us:
01483 302748
ACS@actionforcarers.org.uk

Paul Burstow visits Guildford

On the 1st December, Paul Burstow, The Minister of State for Care Services, visited Guildford to hear about developments in support for carers in the South East. We helped gather a focus group of 6 carers for him to meet and he answered questions and listened to their views. Our Vice Chair Sandra Pinole asked him about the withdrawal of mobility allowance to parents with children in residential care and he told her that the proposal to withdraw is now to be scrapped. Feedback from carers who attended was that the Minister listened to what they said and promised to follow up on some specific issues.

Earlier that day The Minister posted a blog entitled 'Give Carers a Break not a Breakdown'. He wrote "Whenever I meet a carer I am humbled by their dedication and touched by the love they show in the face of daily adversity. To be a carer you have to be a pretty special person. It is also likely that you feel your tireless efforts to care for a family member or friend generally go unnoticed." You can read the full article at <http://paulburstow.org.uk/en/article/2011/538453/give-carers-a-break-not-a-breakdown>



E-mail is a cost effective way for us to provide you with relevant and timely information. If you would like ACS to contact you in this way, please provide us with your email address.



Action for Carers and Employment (ACE)

What we do: ACE Surrey provides specialist support, information and advocacy for carers and former carers in relation to employment, training and leisure activities. You can contact us on **01483 565874** or email ace@actionforcarers.org.uk. Or visit our website - www.acesurrey.org.uk

John Bale Memorial Bursary—nominate a former carer

John Bale was a tireless champion of carers' rights. He had a huge grasp of the issues facing carers and was determined to improve recognition and support for carers. He also felt passionately that carers should not be forgotten when their caring role ends. In recognition of this - and thanks to the generosity of his family, friends, colleagues, The Surrey LINK and Action for Carers (Surrey)- we are delighted to launch the **John Bale Memorial Bursary**.

This will be an annual award **for adult former carers** - generally, but not exclusively, those who have ceased caring in the last year - to help them take the next step towards learning, training, volunteering or work. Nominations can be made for any amount up to a maximum of £250 per individual bursary; however, smaller amounts would be welcomed as this will allow us to support more former carers.

Nominations will be accepted until the 28th February 2012. To make a decision we will need to know how caring has impacted on the carer's life and what they would like to achieve now their caring role has ended. To request a nomination form please contact Sandra Bolton, Manager Action for Carers and Employment - Tel: 01483 565874 or email: Sandra.ace@actionforcarers.org.uk

ACE workshops

ACE run workshops specifically for carers. These workshops are free and are tailored to meet the needs of carers and former carers who would like to increase their confidence, learn presentation skills or want to improve their IT or administrative skills.

"I am more positive and confident and can now look to the future with hope."

Forthcoming workshops:

- Stress Awareness— 1st or 2nd February, Redhill.
- Confidence and Assertiveness (2 days) —7th and 8th February, Guildford.
- Presentation Skills (2 days) —28th and 29th March, Guildford.

To enquire about a workshop contact yvonne.ace@actionforcarers.org.uk tel: **01483 565874**.

Visit www.acesurrey.org.uk for a full list of training.

Meet Karen Holdsworth-Cannon our new Chair

How did you first become involved with ACS?

I phoned up in 2006 in a distressed state and spoke to someone. I became a member after realising that after 13 years I was a carer. My next involvement was with Action for Carers and Employment, I attended a self-esteem and confidence building workshop. I then became a trustee.

What do you find most challenging and rewarding about being the new Chair?

The most challenging aspects about being the new Chair are the number of meetings to attend and the volume of paperwork to read and digest. The rewarding aspects are trying to fit all the pieces of the jigsaw together and make sense of what is going on for carers and services. I haven't got to the bottom of that yet, it's a work in progress and seems to be constantly moving and changing.

What do you think will change at Action for Carers Surrey over the next three years?

ACS will have to focus on delivering services as well as carrying on with the lobbying and championing role. The changes will be subtle rather than major.

What might someone be surprised to know about you?

I originally trained as a paediatric nurse and then retrained as a research psychologist. But my passions in life are foil fencing, crown green bowling, running, walking my dog and growing vegetables.

And finally – who or what inspires you?

Life inspires me, every carer's story I hear, every service user's story I hear. And on a bad day – double espresso for a good caffeine kick.

House of Lords clarify Carers Allowance eligibility

In December, The Government confirmed that the eligibility for Carer's Allowance would not be tightened with the introduction of the new disability benefit, the Personal Independence Payment (PIP). The clarification came after Peers from all sides of the House raised their concerns that the Welfare Reform Bill left the future of Carer's Allowance unclear. The Welfare Reform Bill will replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with a new benefit the Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Several elements of the benefit will change and the number of care components will fall from three in DLA to two daily living components in PIP. In a response the Government stated that both rates of the daily living component of the new Personal Independence Payment would be used as a criterion to determine the entitlement to Carer's Allowance.

Carer Ambassadors

We're looking for carers to become 'Carer Ambassadors'. This involves helping us to deliver messages to the wider public on carer awareness. Becoming a Carer Ambassador helps to give carers a voice and raise awareness of carers' needs and concerns. This helps support us in trying to achieve equitable services and support for carers throughout Surrey.

To sign up phone 01483 302748 or e-mail acs@actionforcarers.org.uk

New NHS Operating Framework prioritises carers

New NHS Operating Framework makes supporting carers a top priority for 2012/13 with greatly increased reporting requirements. The Operating Framework states "PCT clusters need to agree policies, plans and budgets with local authorities and voluntary groups to support carers" and that plans should:

- Be explicitly agreed and signed off by both local authorities and PCT clusters;
- Identify the financial contribution made to support carers by both local authorities and PCT clusters and that any transfer of funds from the NHS to local authorities is through a section 256 agreement;
- Identify how much of the total is being spent on carers' breaks;
- Identify an indicative number of breaks that should be available within that funding; and be published on the PCT or PCT cluster's website by 30 September 2012 at the latest.

The new 101 non-emergency number

101 is now the telephone number to call when you want to contact the police to report an incident, report a crime, contact an officer or for any other matter apart from when it is an emergency.

Remember, in an emergency always call 999. For example this is when you need an immediate response because a crime is in progress; someone suspected of a crime is nearby; when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

You can call 101 to contact your local police force at anytime and when you call 101 you will hear a message telling you which force you are being connected to. If you are on the boundary between two or more forces, you will have a choice of which force you are connected to.



Can I call 101 if I'm deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired, or if English is not my first language? Yes, If you are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired you can textphone 18001 101. If you have difficulty speaking English, your local police can access interpreters who can translate your call.



Surrey Young Carers (SYC)

What we do: SYC advocates for young carers under the age of 18 to achieve their full potential by providing support and time out from their caring role. We promote the needs of young carers within Surrey and offer training to Health, Social Care and Education professionals. If you know a young carer who you think might benefit from our services please contact us on **01483 568269** or email syc@actionforcarers.org.uk or visit our website www.surrey-youngcarers.org.uk

New GP Carers Breaks Pilot launched

Earlier this year the NHS Surrey Board announced plans to invest £1.9 million to help carers. As part of this planned investment, two new initiatives have been launched. This pilot is an exciting initiative that will directly involve GPs in a positive way; however, GPs will make a clinical decision to refer a carer for a break because they feel it will result in a direct health benefit for the carer.

Debbie Hustings, Partnership Manager for Carers at NHS Surrey explains: "Carers told us that the thing they felt would most improve their health would be better access to more breaks so this new pilot scheme will enable GPs to directly refer carers for a health break. The scheme will be hosted by Surrey Independent Living Council and will be paid in the form of a carer's direct payment which can be used to buy care while they are on their break.

The second initiative will support carers who look after people with a life limiting condition. Hosted by Crossroads Care Surrey, the service will give us a trained member of staff in palliative care that can support carers in their own homes at this very difficult time."

Action for Carers (Surrey) is delighted that NHS Surrey is committed to investing all its allocated funding of £1.9 million to support unpaid carers – one of the few PCTs in England to do so. NHS Surrey has involved both ourselves and Surrey County Council in the early development of proposals to offer carers' breaks. Carers will now have access to a break to meet their health needs after identification by their GP.

Does your GP know you're a carer?

Local GP surgeries are compiling a register of all patients in their practice who are carers. This is in order to ensure carers are offered the help and advice that is available to assist and support them in their caring role.

So please fill out a registration form and hand it to the reception staff at your practice.

Being registered as a carer with your GP will ensure that you are eligible for the new GP carers' breaks scheme.

Back Care Advisors

Our free service can provide information, advice, training and support for carers who undertake lifting, moving and handling as part of their caring role. Our Back Care Advisors can visit you in your own home.

Guildford Office: 01483 533645
Reigate Office: 01737 226586
Email: bca@actionforcarers.org.uk

"I received the support I needed, at a pace that enabled me to feel safe and confident."

Social Media



You can now follow us on Twitter—

<http://twitter.com/CarersSurrey>



Find us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/ActionForCarersSurrey

Online Equipment Assessment Tool

Surrey's Adult Social Care Services have set up a new online self assessment tool to help people identify and order the equipment they need to live more independent lives. The assessment is easy to access and to use: Visit www.surreycc.gov.uk/equipyourself.

Alternatively you can visit or contact one of the Hubs in Epsom and Redhill High Streets where the volunteers will be able to help you complete the assessment, or contact the Adult Social Care Helpline for help in completing it.

Tel: 0300 200 1005, SMS: 07527 182 861 or email: contactcentre.adults@surreycc.gov.uk

To contact Action for Carers (Surrey) please call 01483 302748 or email acs@actionforcarers.org.uk