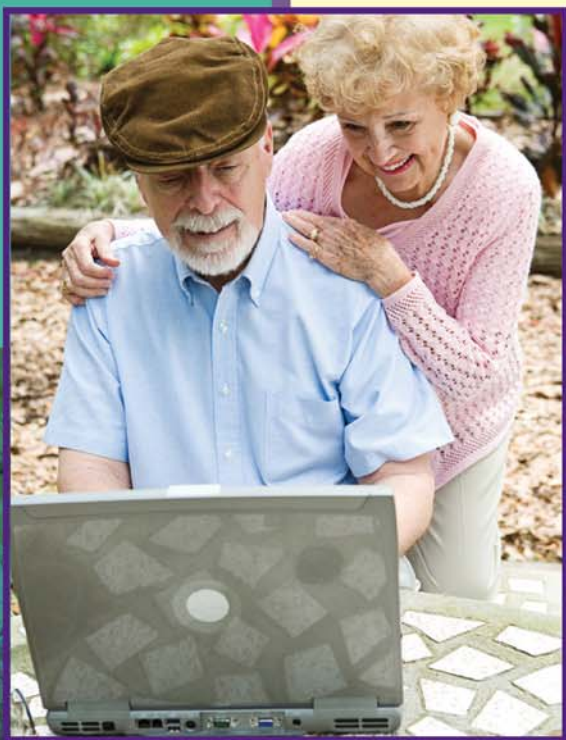
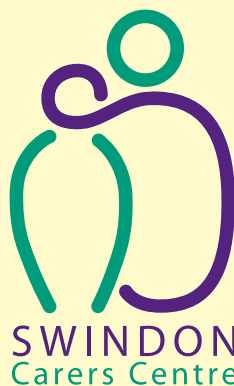


Caring Matters

Newsletter

Spring 2013



Meet new staff at SCC **page 4**

How technology can help **page 8**

Update on Benefits Advice **page 10**

Supporting Family Carers of All Ages

The autumn and winter have been a time of rapid development at Swindon Carers Centre as we have been implementing many new ways of working. These changes have been partly driven by the need to deliver on our new contract with Swindon Borough Council, but really we wanted to improve our working practices anyway, so this has provided us with a good reason for a thorough review.

The main changes are to do with how we register people who contact us for the first time. Before, the registration process was reliant on carers filling in a form, and this was really acting as a barrier to many of the people who need our support the most. The new registration process is therefore telephone based. From 10.00am to 3.30pm every weekday, and up until 7pm on Wednesdays, carers ringing in will be able to talk to someone on our Carers Support Line, and the first conversation we have with the carer will involve our taking all the personal details we need to register the carer on our database and to gain a good understanding of how things are for that carer. So far the feedback we're getting is good, and we've already registered more than 40 carers since the new registration process came in on 1st January. The other changes concern the Emergency Card scheme and Carers' Assessments. All our support workers have now been trained on

creating emergency card plans and doing carers' assessments. (Please note that if the carer or the person they care for is receiving a service from another provider, that provider will generally do the carer's assessment rather than Swindon Carers Centre). This will eliminate some of the delays that used to happen as carers were passed between different members of the team. It will also save time, as in one meeting we can get the information we need to fill in all the various plans, assessments etc., rather than having to arrange separate meetings for each piece of work.

We have one other really good piece of news. Zurich Community Trust has kindly donated £7,000 so that we can get back to providing some benefits advice to carers. The new service is much more limited than our old service, as the funding only covers about one day per week of staff time – about a fifth of the staff time we used to have – so we won't be able to fill out forms with carers or take on

tribunal cases. But we will be able to do benefits checks and give advice on how to fill in forms. As you will see later in the newsletter, Tim is busy trying to recruit volunteers to help him to deliver the new service, and we're continuing to fundraise, so in the future, hopefully our capacity on giving benefits advice will grow again.

So, things are moving in a very positive direction at Swindon Carers Centre, and we're looking forward to the year ahead with optimism and confidence!

Kind regards
Diana Finch
Chief Executive



Carers Week 10th-16th June 2013



The 2013 Carers Week campaign is called

Prepared to Care? *It will focus on how the UK's current carer population is coping, how effectively Government is supporting the growing numbers of carers, and whether the wider population is prepared for future caring responsibilities.*

Through Prepared to Care? *Carers Week will highlight the impact of caring on daily life and, with an ageing population and higher incidence of disability and serious illness, encourage the public to think about whether they could manage a caring role.*

Prepared to Care? *will also help those already caring to make sure they are accessing all the practical and emotional support they need to care safely and look after themselves.*

There will be more details on how Swindon Carers Centre will be highlighting Carers Week in our next newsletter.

Swindon Carers Centre Facebook page



Don't forget that you can keep up to date with all the latest news from Swindon Carers Centre online at Facebook. You can search for Swindon Carers Centre and click on the 'Like' button or find us by using the following link:

www.facebook.com/swindoncarerscentre



You can now also find us on twitter too!
[@swindoncarers](https://twitter.com/swindoncarers)

Kidz in the Middle

Families and carers with a disabled child can access a range of advice and information by attending one of the three regional Kidz exhibitions. Kidz in the Middle is on March 21st at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. There is a program of seminars designed for parents and professionals, as well as more than 120 exhibitors with advice and information on everything from beds and seating to education and how to get funding. You can register for free tickets on their website: <http://www.disabledliving.co.uk/Kidz/Middle>.



Empire Cinema at Greenbridge puts on regular Autism Friendly screenings

The Empire Cinema at Greenbridge puts on regular Autism Friendly screenings (lights up a little and slightly quieter, can move around, people more tolerant etc.) These are shown on the first Sunday of the month, usually around 2pm. They are normally available to book on the Monday before.



Meet our New Staff!



Maxine O'Brien
GP Outreach Worker

I have started on a new exciting project to work with GP surgeries to assist existing and new carers in their role. Most carers will come into contact with their doctor, either through the person they care for, or if their own health is affected. I will be able to register carers with the centre, so that they can use the full range of services we have, plus provide advice and information. Not only will many more carers find out about us, but doctors may find that they have lower demand if we can help with some of the stresses and practical problems that caring provides. The project will run for three years to start with and we aim to have monthly advice sessions in each surgery taking part. We also aim for the information that is useful to carers to be available in surgeries, such as up to date notice boards and leaflets.



Diane Barkham
Adult Carer Support Team Manager

I started with Swindon Carers Centre back in December. My general background is in nursing and I have spent most of my adult life moving around with my husband and family with the Royal Air Force, and we have now settled in Calne. I have spent 10 years working as a Carers Support Worker and for the last 20 months I was the Service Delivery Manager for Carers Support Wiltshire. I have been a carer myself and I also help support my daughter as my grandson is on the Autistic Spectrum. I'm looking forward to meeting with some of you in the not too distant future.



Fiona Harpum
Adult Carer Support Worker

I started working with Carers Support in December as an Adult Carer Support Worker. My background is nursing and I was also a carer for my daughter Jennifer. I have worked for Carers Wiltshire in the past as a Development worker, and have recently returned from 3 years of living in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia.



John Beale
Adult Carer Support Worker

Having been a volunteer for Swindon Carers Centre for just over a year, I was delighted when I was given the opportunity to cover for one of our support workers who is on maternity leave. Often knowing where to gain access to information is one of biggest problems for carers. This is an area in which we excel, and in addition Swindon Carers Centre also has expertise in offering emotional and practical support including therapies, caring related courses and even trips and clubs, all designed to provide relaxation and time for carers away from their vital caring roles.



Rebecca Lancaster
Student Placement

I am currently studying MSc in Social Work at the University of Bristol. I started my placement with Carers Support in January as a Parent Carer Support Worker and Young Carers Support Worker with the aim of working holistically with whole families. My background is in education and learning disabilities, and I was also a carer for my Grandmother.

Update on Swindon Borough Council's Adult Care Strategy

As commissioners Swindon Borough Council (SBC) know, the current position of increasing demand and limited resources means both the way in which they provide services and the level of service provision is unsustainable. There is a need to transform the service.

SBC are working with the voluntary sector, including Swindon Carers Centre, as well as health and social services in order to understand the nature of the problem and develop a strategy to reshape the current offer of services:

- **Three multi agency workshops have taken place to define the context and issues facing Swindon, develop the responding Strategy and draft Implementation Plan**
- **Consultation with voluntary, third sector and community organisations on the support offered to vulnerable adults and older people as well as those experiencing mental illness. The feedback from this consultation has been incorporated into the Strategy and draft Implementation Plan**

SBC are pursuing three priorities which focus on prevention, targeted intervention and specialist support for the most vulnerable so that:

- **People lead more fulfilling lives through increased personal choice and independence whilst taking personal responsibility for using their own resources where possible (prevention and personalisation for all)**
- **They build the capabilities and skills of communities, service users, carers and the workforce so people are able to live as independently as possible and they make the most of our shared resources (targeted support/reablement/ recovery)**
- **They ensure they continue to protect the most vulnerable people in Swindon treatment/specialist support)**

As part of the Implementation Plan eight work streams have been identified:

- **Transition from children to adult services**
- **Dementia**
- **Supported Housing and re-ablement (not including children and families supported housing schemes)**
- **Reshaping of voluntary sector provision and supported employment**
- **Workforce development**
- **Advice, information and advocacy**
- **Communication**
- **Volunteering & Community networks**

Project teams are now in place for each work stream, with voluntary/3rd sector representation, to develop the business cases required to re-shape services.

A new benefit for disabled people is being introduced – This is a very brief overview

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will replace DLA for eligible claimants aged 16 to 64 from October 2015. This includes all new claims and existing DLA claimants aged 16 to 64 on the day PIP is introduced.

- PIP is to help towards some of the extra costs arising from ill health or disability
- It is based on how a claimant's condition affects them not on what condition they have
- There is a three month qualifying period (the time a condition or ill health has existed before a claim is made) and a nine month prospective test (the amount of time a condition or ill health is expected to last when a claim is made)
- Awards will be reviewed to make sure the assessment continues to reflect the claimant's needs
- Reviews will be at appropriate intervals depending on how likely it is for the condition or impairment to change

There are 5 key stages to claiming PIP

1. Thinking about claiming Information about PIP will available from a range of sources, including online, via leaflets and through support organisations. **Existing DLA claimants will be contacted individually to ask if they want to claim PIP.**

2. Making a Claim Claimants (or those supporting them) phone Department for Work and Pensions to make a claim to PIP. A 'How your disability affects you' form is then posted to the claimant.

3. Telling your story Claimant completes the 'How your disability affects you' form to explain how their condition affects their daily life, both on good and bad days and over a range of activities. They return to DWP by post.

4. Assessment Claim details, form and supporting evidence are passed to the health professional. Most people will be asked to attend a face to face consultation unless a decision can be reached on the basis of written evidence. Claimants can take someone along for support. Home visits will be available when necessary. The health professional reviews the claim against a set of clear descriptors to assess the challenges faced by the individual.

5. Decision A DWP Case Manager will use all the information in the claim form, from the health professional and anything else that has been provided. They will make a reasoned decision on entitlement, including the level and length of award.

- The PIP assessment will involve **health professionals** who consider the evidence provided by the claimant, along with any further medical evidence
- Most people will be asked to a **face to face consultation** with this health professional as part of the claim process
- Claimants can **take somebody with them** to the consultation
- **Home visits** will be available when necessary
- People with **severe health conditions** or those who are **terminally ill** are unlikely to be asked to go to a face to face consultation
- The health professional will provide **advice to a DWP benefit Case Manager**. The DWP Case Manager will then **use all of this information** to decide entitlement to PIP

More detailed information on PIP for claimants can be found on the Gov.uk internet site: www.gov.uk/pip

How technology can help

More and more families are taking on caring responsibilities for older or disabled loved ones. Many give up work to care, but do not realise there is support out there - we know millions of pounds of carers' benefits go unclaimed each year as families are not given the advice they need to access support.

It is important that anyone with caring responsibilities checks that they are not missing out on hands-on support with caring or vital benefits to help make ends meet. But as families' needs are changing, alongside practical and financial support, we also need to help them access the technology available to help carers.

Telecare is a system of sensors in the home which can detect risks for the person being cared for, like falls, leaving the house alone, floods or fires. If a sensor is activated it will alert a 24/7 monitoring centre and contact family members, care professionals or the emergency services. For more information: <http://www.telecare.org.uk/>

Telehealth manages a person's health condition at home by relaying vital signs to monitoring centres. These services can give carers the peace of mind they need, to get out of the house for a while or even just get a good night's sleep. Local councils are increasingly providing this kind of support to families and it can make a real



difference. If carers are caring for someone with a long-term condition and feel they could benefit from telehealth then they should speak to their GP, specialist nurse or hospital consultant to see whether a telehealth service is available.

Online advice and information – with advice services struggling to cope with demand, local support groups struggling to stay open and many carers unable to ring or attend during office hours, the internet can be a key source of information.

Time saving – online shopping and banking can help save carers vital time. Many supermarkets do home delivery and their websites can save your shopping preferences so that each time you come to do your shop your usual order is ready to go and might just need a few small changes. Online banking means that families can organise and monitor payments and check their balance at any time of the day. Carers should check which supermarkets deliver to their area and ask their bank how to access online banking. Even if they do not

have their own computer they may be able to do their shopping and banking at a local library or community centre where computers are available.

Carer-to-carer support – talking to someone who understands what caring is like can make all the difference, but many carers struggle to find the time to attend local carers centres or support groups. Online forums can enable carers to share their stories and seek support from other carers 24/7 – someone on the other side of the country who is caring for a child with the same disability, or a carer dealing with the same behaviour from a parent with dementia might understand exactly what you are

going through and be able to offer support and advice. You can access the Carers Trust discussion forums, chatrooms and blogs: <http://www.carers.org/carers-chat>

Using technology to support work and care

Technology can be a real enabler when time is tight and employers can benefit from a wide range of online resources to get the right information at the right time to employees and their managers. Employers can also contribute to a carer-friendly workplace culture by using technology to support working carers in their professional development, offering flexible training opportunities such as online training or webinars.

DIRECTORY

We have decided to introduce a handy new directory which, to start with, will be in the middle pages of Caring Matters so it can be easily accessed by those of us looking for a phone number! This is the first time we've done

something like this and are hoping it will grow quickly to become a real resource for you. If you would like to advertise your services in our directory, please contact melanie.stanbury@swindoncarers.org.uk

Chiropody & Podiatry



Steven Ayre

D.Pod Med, D.S. Ch, MSSCh, MBChA

Home Visiting Chiropodist

07769 736364

Opticians



VisionVisit

Home Visiting Optician

www.visionvisit.co.uk

01793 232588

Fundraising Update

SunBeat Music Festival Sunday 26 May 2013 12pm - 11pm at The Sun Inn at Coate

This great fundraiser is in its second year and we have some great acoustic acts already committed to the cause!!

- Josie & The Outlaw
- Jim Blair
- Bateleurs
- Sam Eden
- Sloe Jam
- The Real Raj
- Dylan Qioniwasa
- Nick Felix
- Louise Latham
- Benji Clements
- Faye Rogers
- Coach
- Missin' Rosie
- Arron Heap



For more information contact melanie.stanbury@swindoncarers.org.uk

Benefits Advice Service

Writes Tim Saint - Our benefits advice service had to stop in December due to lack of funding. We now have been given a generous donation by Zurich to offer some advice. I will be finding volunteers to do benefits checks and who may be able to help to fill in forms. In the meantime, I will be running an advice line between 10am and 12pm on Tuesdays and Fridays. Please feel free to call if you want any questions answering or want to check if you are getting the right benefits. You should be registered with the centre before you can use this service. We hope to extend the support we can offer in the future.



Benefits Volunteers Wanted

Swindon Carers Centre is looking for people to advise carers on their benefit entitlement. Using a computer benefits calculator, you will assist the carer, either in person or over the phone, to work out what they should be claiming. There is also the chance to help some carers fill out benefit forms. You may have previous experience of the benefits system or be keen to get involved in this area, but full training will be given. We would need volunteers to be available on Friday morning for between 2 to 4 hours. In addition to gaining new skills in a friendly team, you will be making a big difference to the wellbeing and lives of carers. If you want to talk about this role, please call Tim Saint on 01793 531133 or speak to one of our staff for an application form.



Groups/Breaks/Courses/Activities /Therapies Review (Oct to Dec 2012)

Coffee Morning at Swindon Carers Centre

Beryl and Malcolm recited some poetry to the group at a recent coffee morning which was enjoyed by the group.

Highworth Carers Group

On 13th Dec the group enjoyed a demonstration by a local florist (Claire from Claire's flowers). On 10th Jan the group met for their 'Christmas' meal at The Highworth.



Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease Carer Group

On 15th November the group were visited by Andrea and Sian from Dressability, who gave a short talk and showed us some clothing items.



Dressability is a specialist clothing alteration and adaptation service for people with disabilities, their carers and people over 60. On 13th December Penny Munro (Specialist Registrar) attended the group and wanted to hear about day to day experiences of carers whose loved ones had Dementia. Penny will report on her findings.

Pilates for back pain

Christine Hardisty (Pilates Fit For Life) provides Pilates classes for back pain on a voluntary basis to our carers on a regular basis. The class in Nov/Dec was held at Christine's studio in Old Town. Carers learned how to help strengthen their back and ease pain by practising techniques.



Pamper sessions

On 6th November 22 carers visited the Equilibrium Beauty Salon at Swindon College and enjoyed a choice of treatments including facial, body massage, manicure, pedicure and Indian Head Massage.

New Carer Programme

As part of this programme, in November Lucy Hawkes from Swindon Psychology Service, delivered a talk 'Caring and coping'. Advice was given about how to cope with feelings and emotions, coping as a carer and managing your wellbeing. The group practised some relaxation techniques and were given a CD to take home. Carers then chose other topics that were of interest to them, including physical care, manual handling, medication etc.

Knitting/Crochet Group

On Sat 3rd November and Saturday 15th December the group were involved in fundraising for Swindon Carers Centre. ASDA West Swindon allocated them a stall and they sold the items that they had made. Many thanks to all involved.



Dementia course

Jane Rachel (Gold Standard Trainer for the Alzheimer's Society and SEQOL) delivered a 2 session course. Topics included causes, sign and symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, coping with caring for someone with dementia, looking after the carer, support available.



Basic First Aid Awareness course

This course was offered on 22nd and 28th November. Carers learned how to:



- Manage an emergency situation
- Place someone in the Recovery Position
- Check airway/breathing
- Perform CPR
- Manage shock, choking etc.
- Apply a pressure bandage and a sling

Basic First Aid courses are delivered every 6-8 weeks. If you would like to book a place, please contact Heather.

Swindon Carers Christmas Meals

The Biplob Restaurant was a venue chosen for one of the Carers Christmas meals. On 3rd Dec, 35 carers enjoyed a pleasant evening of Indian Cuisine.



Swindon College Training Restaurant

On 5th December 22 carers attended a Christmas meal at The Swindon College Training Restaurant. The students were a bit nervous as they were being assessed by their Tutors but they did very well!

The Bayberry

The third venue for a carer Christmas meal was The Bayberry on 10th December. 35 carers attended.



Bath Shopping Trip

On a very cold 11th January carers took a coach to Bath for some Christmas shopping!

What's On Guide 2013

Coffee Mornings at Swindon Carers Centre

Coffee Mornings at Swindon Carers Centre will be:

Monday April 8th 10.30am -12pm.
Monday May 13th 10.30am -12pm.
Monday June 3rd 10.30am -12pm.



Highworth Carers Group: Thursday 11th April 10.30am -12pm.

Thursday 9th May 10.30am -12pm. Thursday 13th June 10.30am -12pm.

Carers Group/Coffee Morning in West Swindon. We are looking at starting a new group. Please let Heather know if you are interested in attending.

Knitting and Crochet Circle

This group meets every Thursday morning 10.30am-12.00 at Swindon Carers Centre. Beginners and more experienced people are welcome to join the group! Come and have a chat and a cuppa!



This doll was knitted by Eileen from Knitting/Crochet Circle.

Mental Health Peer Support Group

Do you care for someone with mental health issues? Would you like to come along to a Peer Support Group for mutual support and to chat with other carers who can empathise with your situation? The group is led by a Facilitator (Emilia) and meets every 1st Thursday of the month. If you would like to find out more information please contact Heather for times.

The dates of the next meetings:

Thursday 4th April. Thursday 2nd May. Thursday 6th June.

Basic First Aid

Courses are delivered every 6-8 weeks.

If you would like to book a place, please contact Heather.

Pamper sessions at Equilibrium Beauty Salon, Swindon College

Please contact Heather if you would like to book a treatment.

Dementia course

Another dementia awareness course will be offered in June. Please ask Heather for details.

Dementia Peer Support Group

The next meetings will be: Thursday 4th April 2.30-4pm.
Thursday 2nd May 2.30-4pm. Thursday 6th June 2.30-4pm.

New Carer Programme

The next course will start at the beginning of April. Please ask Heather for details. Heather Goldsmith, Groups and Breaks Co-ordinator - Tel 01793 401095/ email heather.goldsmith@swindoncarers.org.uk



Swindon
Young Carers

Attention all budding journalists, artists, photographers, poets and writers!

The Swindon Young Carers team is looking for a group of Young Carers who would be interested in designing and producing the new Young Carers Newsletter. We are looking for Young Carers who are interested in writing, art & design, photography or just Young Carers who would like to get involved in this new project. The newsletter group would meet once a month for a 2 hour session.

You will need to be able to work as a team, meet deadlines and have good communication skills. We may ask you to visit Young Carers in a group setting or attend other events and Young Carer forum meetings.

If this sounds like it's for you then please contact me on:

Matt: 01793 401092

Or Text me on: 07912 594 233

Or just simply message us
on Facebook Swindon Young Carers



NEWS COMING SOON! NEWS

Keep your eyes peeled for our very new version of the Young Carers Newsletter due for release during summer 2013. After a lot of consultation with young carers in groups, Young Carers Forum and on Facebook, we received great feedback and we would just like to say a big thank you to all the Young Carers who took the time to help us with our research. The results from the questionnaires and surveys showed that

the YC newsletter is important to you but could do with more pictures, fun games and cartoons, Young Carers stories and more about the Swindon Young Carers team. So we are hoping to give you all this and more in the next YC newsletter in summer. WATCH THIS SPACE!!!

If you would like to be involved in the Young Carers newsletter please contact Matt.

Swindon Young Carers Design A Cover Competition!



Over the next couple of months we will be holding a competition for Swindon Young Carers of all ages to take part in. We would like you to design a front cover for the new Young Carers Newsletter. Your design will need to be bright, with lots of colour and with a theme of Young Carers. You could do a picture or design of how it feels to go to groups or activities or be supported by Swindon Young Carers or you could draw a picture of a Young Carer, it's up to you! You don't have to be great at art or drawing to enter, just let your imagination run wild. You can enter your design into the competition by handing it in at groups or activities, giving it to a Young Carer forum member, emailing it to matt.teale@swindoncarers.org.uk or messaging it on Facebook.

The lucky winner will be carefully picked by members of the Young Carers forum and the Swindon Young

Carers staff team and will be featured on the new Young Carers Newsletter in the summer which will be seen by over 2000 people.



Swindon Young Carers Facebook



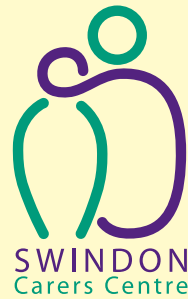
Swindon Young Carers have a Facebook account which is only open to Young Carers who have had a Young Carers assessment with us and that are still registered at Swindon Carers Centre.

To access it you will need to send a friend request to Swindon Young Carers, however if you are under 12 years old we will need permission from your parent or guardian before we add you.

If you need to talk to one of our Young Carers support workers (Julie and Helen) you can now just send us a personal message. We may not see it straight away as this page will only be checked once a day Monday to Friday. It will also be used to send out any updates about the Young Carers team, groups, activities and anything that may be happening with the Young Carers forum.



Swindon
Young Carers



Swindon Carers Centre

1 Wood Street, Swindon SN1 4AN
Tel: Swindon (01793) 531133

Office Hours:

9.30am - 4.45pm Monday to Thursday
and 9.30am - 12.30pm Friday

Swindon Young Carers

Tel: Julie Collar 01793 401096
Helen Rankin 01793 401091
Matt Teale 01793 401092

Please contact the Editor Susanna Jones with your views/articles and information editor@swindoncarers.org.uk

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE
www.swindoncarers.org.uk

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