



Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

April 2017

I'm not a political animal and I have to say that personally, I relate to the feelings expressed by Brenda, the pensioner from Bristol who exclaimed 'Oh not another one' when told that a snap election had been called this week. However, I do recognise that there are times when lobbying politicians may be the way forward. So, in this election campaign will you listen to what they have to say, will you hope it will bring a change, will you trust them or just sigh 'Promises, promises' and vote the way you always have? With so much going on with Brexit, I wonder whether the plight of carers will be anywhere near the agenda?

Last month I was approached by Kalbinder Dayal from NHS Arden and GEM Commissioning Support Unit for carer feedback on a set of proposed leaflets about Continuing Health Care. The information didn't arrive in time for me to add to the newsletter but I did include it in the accompanying email. Leaflets were also available at our meeting for carers to take and review. The deadline for this has now passed. This is such an important topic for carers and something of a minefield. I met with Kalbinder and she was extremely grateful for the feedback and suggestions she has received. So, look out for the new leaflets when they are available.

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Carers 4 Carers' monthly meetings take place on the **fourth** Friday of the month. We meet at the Kineton Village Hall, Mill Street, Kineton, CV35 OLB between 10.30 and 12 noon. We always start with time for coffee and chat and then, if a speaker or workshop is scheduled, this will usually begin at about 11 o'clock. Come when you can and stay for as long as you are able.

Friday 28th April—this will be a 'Legal Matters' meeting with Debbie Anderson from Moore and Tibbets. There are many things you need to think about in preparing

for the future. Many of you will already have Power of Attorney arrangements in place but there are often other aspects of future planning to think about that will make things easier if you know about them.

Friday 26th May—we haven't had a 'speakerless' meeting for some time so this is really one to come and relax and have more time to chat with each other and exchange experiences and ideas. Jasmin will be with us with her harps which many of you tried at Christmas and also Anita with her lovely TLC therapies.

Carers4Carers is part of the network of Omega Care for Life Meeting Point Support Groups

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12TH—18TH JUNE

Carers' Week is once again focussing on building carer-friendly communities. These communities are aware of the contribution carers make within their community and have some understanding of what daily life can be like. They know carers are under a lot of pressure and are often hidden from view.

So what might a Carer Friendly community mean? It means that if you are looking after someone unpaid (i.e. it is not your employment) local services and organisations are willing to think 'out of the box' and remove some of the obstacles that can lead to frustration, or do things differently to make things easier. A GP practice could offer alternative appointment times to enable a carer to attend or an employer could be ready to listen to carers' experiences.

The Carers' Week website explains what carers say they want and no doubt you will relate well to this:

- to live in communities that support them to care well and safely, that respect their caring role and help them to be involved and consulted about the care and support of the person they care for.
- to be supported to be healthy themselves, to be able to work if they want to and to have a life of their own outside their caring role. They want to be treated as an individual with needs of their own and not only as a carer of someone else.

If you have received support or assistance from a local service or organisation, do let us know. We already have a list but it would be good to add to them. For instance, many attractions and places of entertainment offer free entry to carers when accompanying their loved ones; the RSC has done this for many years and we have some lovely National Trust properties on our doorstep which also offer this, on request.

You can also add them to a wall of carer-friendly communities on the Carers' Week website at www.carersweek.org/. Do take a look; while many of them are carer-related organisations, there are also some encouraging stories of help received in shops and businesses.

ADVANCE NOTICE—SPOIL YOURSELF!

Last year BUPA ran a free Pamper Day for carers at their Alveston Leys Nursing Home which some of you enjoyed. It was so successful they have decided to repeat it. The date has yet to be confirmed but it is hoped that it will be during Carers' Week.

Last month I asked what you do to take a few minutes 'time out' -

A carer said:

"Shut myself in the pantry and count to 10!"