

If you care,
we care.

Carers Support Centre
Bristol & South Gloucestershire

A Network Partner of
**CARERS
TRUST**

Carers News

FREE • £1.50 when sold

Issue 93 • Winter 2023

Carers Leave Act

— Finally, carers have a right to take leave! —

Next year carers will have a right to carers' leave to juggle their employment and caring responsibilities, thanks to long and hard campaigning by carers' organisations.

Last October Wendy Chamberlain, MP for North East Fife, introduced the Carers Leave Bill, which was approved by Parliament and got Royal Assent in May. We are waiting for secondary legislation to get the final details, but what we do know is that the leave will be unpaid. However, this is still a major step towards achieving the ultimate right for carers of paid leave, as is the case in many other countries, such as Japan, Germany, Canada, Italy, Australia.

Some employers already provide their employees with carers' leave, some even paid, but until now they did not have to do so by law. More employers will begin to see

that carers' leave, especially if paid, is beneficial to them because it reduces staff absence, stress, turnover, loss of skills and talent. In 2020 it was estimated that these cost UK businesses over £3.5 billion every year. Carers UK estimate that this Act will give a right to 2 million employees who are carers. Their research shows that employed carers really struggle to juggle employment and care. 80% said that added paid carers' leave of between 5-10 days would really help them in keeping their jobs. Others say that it would be crucial to returning to work.

So, if you are an employed carer make sure your employer knows about your impending right to take leave. If you are thinking of returning to paid work bear in mind that from next year you will be able to take leave. Let other carers and employers know. Help us spread this win!



GP Carers Liaison Worker, Suzanne Ponsford, presents Montpelier Health Centre Patient Services Manager, Caroline Hawkins, with our Gold GP awards certificate. Suzanne had just given the staff, seen here in the background, a carer awareness training session during Carers Week.

The awards programme is an opportunity for GP practices to work with Carers Support Centre to look at how carer and dementia friendly their GP surgery is. An audit of services and carer awareness is completed with practices evidencing their commitment. Following successful completion of this audit, an award in recognition of this good work can be made.

Inside this issue:

- 6** Celebrating a year of Walk and Talk
- 8** How to care in an emergency
- 10** Caring and hospitals

CEO Message

The enactment of the Carers Leave Act 2023

Witnessing the Royal assent granted to the Carers Leave Act 2023 earlier this year was indeed a remarkable moment. This overdue development, catering to the needs of more than one in seven individuals in workplaces who serve as carers, holds substantial advantages for both carers and their employers. Read more about the Carers Leave Act on the front page.

Crucial changes like these emerge from persistent lobbying and campaigning by carers and support agencies. In this case, the combined efforts of Carers UK and Carers Trust bore fruit, thanks to the significant contributions from carers and carer organisations like ours. This collaborative input provides the vital evidence needed to enact substantial changes. We maintain close partnerships with both Carers UK and Carers Trust, utilising events such as our Carers Week engagement to present evidence sourced from carers across Bristol and South Gloucestershire, thus reinforcing their case.

A refreshed identity for Carers Support Centre

Some of you may already be aware of our ongoing efforts to revamp both our website and our logo and branding. The rationale behind the website upgrade is evident, as technology continues to progress, there is increased demand for online support to complement traditional methods.

When it comes to our logo and name, feedback has driven our considerations. It has come to our attention that our name lacks prominence in our current logo, an issue that significantly impacts our visibility and fundraising efforts. A preliminary survey revealed that many individuals, upon encountering our logo, mistakenly think our name is Carers Trust or You Care We Care, both of which are inaccurate.

Moreover, feedback highlighted that the term "Centre" does not accurately encompass the breadth of our services, which extend across a large and diverse geographical area, local communities, and individuals' homes. Acknowledging these insights, we will be rebranding ourselves as "Carers Support, Bristol and South Gloucestershire" and "Young Carers Support, Bristol and South Gloucestershire."

Our commitment to involving carers in the evolution of our website



and logo remains unwavering. Our target is to unveil these changes by the end of the year. Some people might ask why we are spending money on this in such a challenging economic climate. The response is straightforward: it is precisely due to these challenges that we strive to enhance our efficiency. The increasing demand necessitates our ability to support more carers despite static or decreasing income. Increasing awareness about our identity and mission is integral to fundraising and, ultimately, supporting more carers. The funds dedicated to this project are designated for such a purpose, so we are not taking any funding away from front line support.

Tim Poole, Chief Executive



Tim listening to the thoughts of carers at our recent Carers Voice event during Carers Week

From the Chair of Trustees



Mary Whittington, Chair of Trustees, having successfully completed the Bristol 10k for Carers Support Centre

Have you been searching for an opportunity to share and develop your skills, experience, knowledge and connections? Maybe you have experience of being a carer yourself or some other valuable experience or skills that would be useful to us to improve the experience of carers in our communities? Can you bring some of your time to share different experiences, knowledge and ideas, whilst working constructively and enthusiastically as part of a team?

We are looking for people to join us in a voluntary role as a trustee at Carers Support Centre. You will have opportunities to join staff team meetings and there are events and activities that trustees can get involved in. We recognise that trustees' time is limited (most have jobs and other commitments), so there is no pressure to take on more than your time commitment allows.

Don't worry if you haven't been a trustee or a board member before; we provide information and training on the responsibilities of trusteeship as part of the induction process. We recognise diversity is important in making a healthy and effective board and welcome applications from all ethnicities, people with disabilities, all genders and young people.

What's in it for you?

As one of our current trustees says, "Volunteering as a trustee at Carers Support Centre has been an opportunity to share my skills and experience from a long NHS career. My own personal development has benefitted, and I can take the learning back to the day job. It is also very rewarding to know that I am contributing to the important work carried out by the charity."

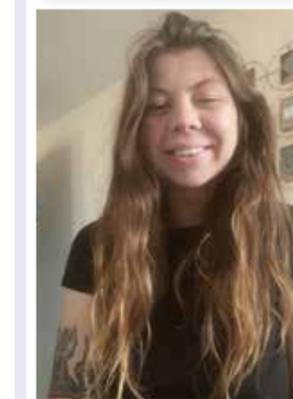
This is an exciting time to join our friendly board as a trustee. If you believe you share our passion for making the lives of carers easier and have the qualities, knowledge and experience we are looking for then we'd love to hear from you. For more information contact the Chair of Trustees, Mary Whittington:
✉ chair@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Welcome! We welcome three new staff members to the Carers Support Centre team:

Megan Powell



Megan joins us as a Hospital Carers Liaison Worker (see page 10). She is a psychology graduate and has just finished her MSc. She has previously worked in neurorehabilitation supporting patients in acute care and supporting people in Bristol experiencing food and housing insecurity.



Amanda McNaughten

Amanda joins us as an Administration Assistant. Amanda volunteers for a mental health charity as a buddy/mentor and is also studying to achieve Counselling Level 3. Outside of work and learning, she enjoys walking her dog in beautiful spots, reading and drawing.



Sal Irish

Sal has joined as a Carers Support Officer for South Glos. She has over 30 years' experience of working in the health and social care sector, most recently as a Wellbeing Navigator for Vita Healthcare, the talking therapies provider for the area. In her spare time, Sal enjoys walking, cooking and spending time with her grandchildren. Sal is looking forward to meeting and supporting carers locally.

The Priority Services Register

If you provide care for someone, extra support is available to them through the free Priority Services Register. The Register helps utility companies, including energy suppliers, and electricity, gas and water networks to look after customers who have extra communication, access or safety needs.

A variety of help is available, including the choice to nominate family, a carer, or friend as a point of contact, priority support in an emergency, accessible information, for example, account information and bills in large print or braille, and more. For further details of how to register: <https://bit.ly/3sk8Kle>



Thanks to Chloe, Stanley and Dan from recruitment specialist Henry Nicholas who came down to do some work on our Young Carers Garden! Young carers use the garden to enjoy activities and as a breakout space to relax.

The Bristol Home Library Service

This service is free and available to anyone who lives in Bristol over the age of 18 and can't get to their local library to borrow books. DBS-checked volunteers from The Royal Voluntary Service will call round and visit about once a month, pick up and return books you have read and deliver new ones. Most of the volunteers are flexible enough to have time to stay for a chat and a catch-up. They will pay a first visit to make sure that the service is right for you and for home visits. For more details contact Ken Luxon:

☎ **07974 873108**

✉ ken.luxon@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk

Milestone Trust: Warmley Wheelers

This cycle scheme gives people with a health condition or supported needs the chance to get into cycling.

They offer specialist equipment and a safe, friendly environment to support people who would normally find it difficult to ride a bike. There is a range of specially adapted bicycles for people with disabilities or added needs, including battery-assisted bikes, bikes with platforms for wheelchairs, recumbent bikes, a variety of trikes and tandem bikes so that carers can be part of the ride too!

You can ride the bikes on the Bristol to Bath railway path or in a safe area in Warmley Forest Park. If you're interested, you will need to book in advance by contacting Project Coordinator Andy Underdown:

☎ **07587 034 366**

✉ warmleywheelers@milestonetrust.org.uk

Time out in South Gloucestershire

Time 4 Carers organise activities, social events, meals and craft activities to give South Gloucestershire carers time out from their caring role.

Contact Alison Allan, Time 4 Carers Co-ordinator

☎ **07597 278204**

✉ time4carers@gmail.com

Milestone Trust: For a toe-tapping good time, come aboard The Music Train!

Music Train is a series of free events bringing people together to enjoy listening to live music in a welcoming inclusive environment. Set up by Liz Gray and Milestones Trust, these are inclusive events for everyone, with an opportunity to either listen to, or join in with, talented musicians.

The concerts are usually free, and often take place during the daytime, making them accessible for some people who might find it difficult to attend night-time concerts. For more information contact Liz Gray:

☎ **07800 884080**

✉ lizgray4@hotmail.com

Alive Activities

Alive Activities warmly welcomes carers and individuals living with dementia to three Dementia Meeting Centres found in Bristol, South Gloucestershire, and North Somerset. As a registered charity, they have over 14 years of expert experience working with older people in our community. Their centres provide a supportive environment for members to adapt to the changes mild to moderate dementia brings.



Their centres offer members the opportunity to socialise together as well as gain access to practical help and services from trained staff and volunteers. All activities, trips, and events are tailored to meet the unique needs of members. They are also piloting Carers' Corner, counselling workshops focused on improving the emotional wellbeing of carers. Their Meeting Centres are designed to allow individuals to take part both together and apart, providing everyone with some much-needed time for themselves.

Their Meeting Centres run weekly from 10am to 3pm. To book your free taster session, chat to them, or to find out more information, please call them on

☎ **0117 377 4756.**

Congratulations!

Well done Christ Church Junior School Downend on achieving Bronze in the Young Carers in Schools Awards delivered locally by Carers Support Centre.

The Young Carers in Schools programme helps primary and secondary schools improve outcomes for young carers and celebrates good practice through the Young Carers in Schools Award. Achieving the award shows a real commitment by the school to ensure their pupils don't miss out on an education because they are young carers. For more information:

☎ <https://youngcarersinschools.com/what-is-the-award/>

When your caring role has come to an end

When your role as a carer comes to an end it is important to contact Carers Support Centre to let us know if you still wish to be included on our mailing list. Also, if you have a Carers Emergency Card it will need to be cancelled.

Please call CarersLine: ☎ **0117 965 2200**

Monday to Friday: 10:00am - 1:00pm

Monday to Thursday: 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Experiencing loneliness following the loss of a loved one in South Glos?

You may be interested in joining the Care and Support After Loss Group. They meet the first Monday of every month between 10am-12 noon at the Yate Town Council offices at Poole Court in Yate.

It is a small group but you will get a warm welcome, and you can also bring a friend with you.

If you would like to attend please contact:

Liz ☎ **01454 319886** or Maureen ☎ **01454 883100**

Give As You Live As we get closer to the festive season, you might find that you're shopping online more. Did you know that you can raise free donations for us while you shop at any time of the year?

Give As You Live is a website which partners with thousands of stores to turn online shopping purchases into donations for charities like us. When you buy something online through Give As You Live, the shop donates a percentage of your purchase to Carers Support Centre. It is quick to sign up and completely free for you to use. There are over 6,000 shops taking part, including Argos, Trainline, eBay and Marks & Spencer, as well as many supermarkets.

If you don't shop online, but know someone who does, please ask them to sign up. The more people who use it, the more money we can raise to support local carers.

To join, visit our Give As You Live webpage: www.giveasyoulive.com/charity/carerscentresbg

For more information or help signing up, contact Laura Fox: Tel: 07519 534222
Email: LauraF@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



We were delighted to see so many of you at our Carers Voice Event during Carers Week. The focus of the meeting was on discharge from hospital. Presentations from the local councils and health trusts were followed by lively discussion on the subject. There were lots of opportunities for carers to pick up information from the stands dotted around the venue, as well as to meet and share experiences with fellow carers, and free stress-busting massages were also available. The day was rounded off with a special Walk and Talk to mark Carers Week.

Keep your eyes peeled for our next Carers Voice event at The Vassall Centre on Carers Rights Day, Thursday 23 November, where we'll be offering free talks, feedback workshops, information stalls, lunch and pampering massage! Look forward to seeing you there.

Share Bristol

Wouldn't it be great to be able to borrow some of the things we need rather than having to buy them? Well now you can! Share Bristol is making it easy to borrow the things we need from the Library of Things.

Whether it's a drill for a DIY project, a tent for a family holiday or a chocolate fountain for a party, they want it to be affordable and accessible, and meet the needs of the local community. For just £50 (£20 concession) you get a whole year of borrowing!

Have a browse to see what you could borrow and also for information about how to donate items: <https://things.sharebristol.org.uk/>

Currently the Library of Things is in Kingswood but they are hoping to open a second branch in Bedminster very soon. Sign up to their newsletter to stay up to date:

<https://www.sharebristol.org.uk/about-us/newsletter/>

Celebrating the first year of Walk and Talk: a year of wellbeing and connection



In a world often full of responsibilities, it is easy for carers to feel isolated and overwhelmed.

Recognising this challenge, the Walk and Talk service was introduced a year ago with a simple goal: bringing carers together while enjoying a walk in nature. As we celebrate the first year of the service, we reflect on its impact on carers' wellbeing.

Over the course of this year, the service has made its mark by organising walks where carers can connect with fellow carers while enjoying a gentle walk in a beautiful green area. With 15 walks groups organised, the service has attracted over 100 carers, providing them with a space to share their stories, experiences and challenges. These walks have been more than just physical exercise – they have been a lifeline for many who felt isolated in their caring role.

What is even more encouraging is that the impact of these walks does not end when the session concludes. Remarkably, more than half of the carers who initially joined a group have continued walking alongside other carers, showing the lasting connections created through the service. These connections have even led to the creation of an advanced walking group, where carers enjoy longer or more challenging routes.

Walk and Talk has also shown its commitment to embracing diversity and inclusivity. We understand that carers come from diverse backgrounds, each with their own unique needs. That is why we took the initiative to organise specific walks tailored to Chinese carers or for the carers with the person they care for. These walking groups have not only enriched their own lives but also



those of the individuals they care for. By tailoring the walks to these unique needs, the service has proven its commitment to ensuring that every carer finds a supportive community that understands their journey.

We also organised taster sessions, allowing new carers to dip their toes into the walks. These sessions acted as stepping stones for those who were uncertain about their fitness levels or anxious about joining a group. The success of these sessions speaks to the welcoming and supporting environment the service provides.

The achievements of the Walk and Talk service go far beyond just physical activity. The impact on carers' wellbeing and sense of isolation has been remarkable. Many participants have expressed that these walks have supplied a lifeline, a precious opportunity to have a break from their caring role and appreciate the beauty of our surroundings. In these walks, carers have not only discovered wildlife but have also nurtured relationships and their own spirits.

The success of the Walk and Talk service owes much to the dedicated walk leader and volunteers who have made it a reality. Together, they have created a safe space where carers can share their experiences and find friendship and support. Our walk leader also plays a vital role in ensuring that carers are aware of the services available to them, supporting them in their caring roles.

This service has become a living testament to the idea that the simplest of activities can yield the most profound transformations. Walking side by side, sharing stories and appreciating nature's beauty together have led to a sense of solidarity.

As we celebrate this first year, we anticipate a second year filled with more walks, more stories and a bigger

group of carers who walk together, talk together and find solace in each other's company. Hopefully, we will see better weather for future walks, although we firmly believe that the joy of walking and the power of conversation should not be limited by the bad weather. So, don't let a little rain stop you from joining one of our groups!

Upcoming Walk and Talks

Walk and Talk group in Longwell Green

Tuesdays from 1.30 to 3.00 p.m.
17th, 31st October, 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th November

Walk and Talk group in Shirehampton

Wednesdays from 11.00 to 12.30 p.m.
8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th November, 6th and 13th December

Walk and Talk group for male carers

Thursdays from 11.00 to 12.30 p.m.
9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th November, 7th and 14th December

Walk and Talk group for parent carers

Thursdays from 10.00 to 11.30 a.m.
25th January 2024, 1st, 8th, 22nd, 29th February and 7th March

Walk and Talk group in East Bristol

Wednesdays 11.00 to 12.30 p.m.
31st January 2024, 7th, 21st, 28th February, 6th and 13th March

To join in, visit our website or contact Stacey Vallis:

☎ 07742 291073

✉ staceyv@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

How to care in an emergency

Planning for emergencies

It is good to have a plan in place in case of emergencies. This is particularly so if you are a carer as you need to know that if an emergency happens replacement care will get sorted out speedily and efficiently. You never know when an emergency might arise, so it is a good idea to have a plan in place as soon as possible.



Day-to-day tasks make it difficult for us to find the time to draw up a plan, but if an emergency does occur you may well be grateful to have a plan in place to take some of the stress out of the situation. Having a plan in place can help ease your worries if you are not able to care for those you look after at any point in the future.

Creating an emergency plan

Where to start with an emergency plan? Carers Trust suggest bringing together these details:

- details of the name, address and contact details of the person you look after
- who you and the person you look after would like to be contacted in an emergency – this might include friends, family or professionals
- details of any medication the person you look after is taking and where it is stored
- details of any ongoing treatment they need
- noting details of any allergies
- details of their GP and pharmacy
- any ongoing treatment they need
- any care and support services they receive
- any continence products needed and supplier
- any mobility challenges and mobility aids such as a wheelchair or hoist
- anything behavioural others need to be aware of.

It is a good idea to discuss the details of the plan with the person/people you are looking after so they know that the plan exists and what it contains. It will also, hopefully, give them a sense of ownership of the plan rather than being something that is imposed on them. Additionally, they may well think of things that need to go into the plan that you might not have thought of.

It is important to share the completed plan with family members, friends or neighbours who would be willing to cover in an emergency. You may also want to consider giving a copy to health and social welfare professionals who help look after those you care for.

Remember that the plan should be a living document which you will need to review and update on a regular basis. For instance, you may want to have a section on upcoming appointments, which will constantly change.

If you have access to the internet, you may well find these resources helpful in creating your plan:

- Carers First Emergency Plan Template – <https://www.carersfirst.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/campaigns/plan-for-the-best/emergency-plan-template/>
- Carers UK's MyBackUp contingency plan – <https://carersdigital.org/mybackup/>

It is a good idea in preparing for an emergency to make up a hospital bag for the person you look after. As well as your emergency plan, put in everything needed for an overnight stay, like nightwear, toothbrush, medication etc. You may also feel that it would be a good idea to prepare one for yourself.

See page 10 for details on support that Carers Support Centre can offer if you or the person you care for needs to spend time in hospital.

Who can look after the person I care for in an emergency?

You may be able to arrange help and support from family and friends, but it can be reassuring to have the

involvement of your local council/trust in case informal arrangements fall through. If you cannot organise alternative care, contact your local authority or health care provider.

Another way of gaining support in the long term is through arranging an assessment for the person you look after or a Carers Assessment for yourself. Every carer who has an assessment should be asked about emergencies and offered help to plan for them. Visit our website or call CarersLine for more information on Carers Assessments.

Other resources for emergency planning

Carers Emergency Card

We promote the use of Carers Emergency Cards in Bristol and South Gloucestershire and receive and process applications on behalf of South Gloucestershire Council.

Carers carry the card and then if there is an accident or emergency it can be used to alert a 24-hour emergency call centre that the person cared for will need help. Steps are then taken to ensure the safety of the person you care for.

For more information on Carers Emergency Cards, see page 14, visit our website or give CarersLine a ring on **0117 965 2200**.



Dementia Safeguarding Scheme

If you are caring for someone with dementia, then it is worth considering signing up with Avon and Somerset Police's Dementia Safeguarding Scheme.

The Scheme enables you to upload vital information about those you care for which can be used if they go missing. With reports that over 40,000 people with dementia go missing each year in the UK, joining the scheme could make a real difference in ensuring the early return of your loved one.

As part of the Scheme, you can request a wearable wristband, hangtag or lanyard with glow-in-the-dark

card for the individual which stores electronic information about the wearer, such as their name and next of kin. The device will be scanned by emergency services if the individual is found wandering. Please note, devices are only available for those with dementia and not any other type of medical condition. Register at

<https://bit.ly/3CrkFGm>

You can also use this web address if you are already in the Scheme and need to report a change of circumstance.

Lions Clubs' Message in a Bottle

Lions Clubs' Message in a Bottle is a simple but effective way for people to keep their basic personal and medical details where they can be found in an emergency on a standard form and in a common location – the fridge.

Message in a Bottle helps emergency services personnel to save valuable time in identifying an individual very quickly and knowing if they have any allergies or take special medication.

The Message in a Bottle kit includes a form, where personal and medical information is detailed. This is placed in the bottle (with its distinctive green branding), which is stored in the fridge. Two stickers are provided: one for the fridge door and the other for the inside of the front door of the premises.

You can obtain a Message in a Bottle kit by contacting your local Lions club. To find out details of your local Lions club:

0121 441 4544

mdhq@lions.org.uk

<https://bit.ly/3Qjtg6>

Are local hospitals carer friendly?

Carers Voice is a way for carers to get their voices heard, so they can influence health and social care provision and the services of Carers Support Centre.

Here, Amanda Threlfall describes her dual role of being a carer in a hospital environment and as a Carer Representative working with North Bristol NHS Trust (NBT) to make local hospitals a more carer-friendly environment, showing Carers Voice in action.

“In most of my experiences and interactions with the Trust, as a carer, patient or volunteer, I have found a willingness to listen and embrace carers. It’s no secret that the NHS is under pressure like never before, yet through the meetings I attend, such as the Carers Strategy Group, there is always appreciation for carers and all that we do. I know from first-hand experience that the Patient Experience Team are a professional and dedicated team who genuinely care.

“The Trust is trying very hard to ensure that ward staff are aware of the Carers Charter. It’s still something that needs to become more routine but this year I have come across staff, one nurse in particular, that arranged for a bed for me in hospital not once but twice. The



second time was after her shift had finished and she was leaving but she still made sure it happened.

“Every carer has their own needs, and there is no ‘one size fits all’. Some carers will see the time that the person they care for is in hospital as essential time for them to have a break and put some charge back into their batteries. Others, like me, may want to continue caring. Others may want something in between.

Support for you in hospital from our Hospital Carer Liaison Workers

Going into hospital can be a worrying time. Whether it’s a planned or emergency admission, whether it is for you or for the person you provide care for, we are here to support you. At Carers Support Centre, we provide help, support and advice to carers from admission to discharge.

What we do

Carers Support Centre has a team of Hospital Carer Liaison Workers who work at the BRI and Southmead Hospital. We provide one-to-one support for carers whilst you, or the person you care for, are in hospital, including:

- talking you through the hospital processes
- giving you emotional support and advice
- helping you communicate your needs or those of the person you care for to health professionals
- helping you access the right care services
- attending best interest, care planning and discharge planning meetings with you and acting as an advocate, if you would find this helpful
- signposting you to financial support and other information

- referring you for carers assessments
- providing you with information about carer services in your local area

We understand that as a carer you have a wealth of information and knowledge that can help the person you care for and hospital staff. So, we will support you to be fully involved with the admission, stay and discharge of the person you care for. We will do this alongside the local Healthcare Trusts’ Carers Charters which values carers as equal partners.

We can also make sure that when the person you care for leaves hospital, you are aware of the support available to you.

Contact our Hospital Carer Liaison Workers

BRI

Alex Kelly (Tues - Thurs) – ☎ 0755 741 8692
Megan Powell (Mon - Fri) – ☎ 0776 342 7688

Southmead Hospital

Samantha Radford (Tues-Thurs and every other Mon) – ☎ 0754 259 2623

“The Carers Charter is there to help with this. If the carer meets certain criteria based on the support needs of the patient, then they can access a parking permit, the staff restaurant and also a carer’s bed or chair to sleep in.

“From personal experience daily trips in and out of the hospital are exhausting and expensive. Worse still if using public transport. I also wanted to continue to care for my husband for a number of reasons, but mostly to support his well-being as much as possible. Most carers are the expert in the person that they care for. They know and understand the verbal and non-verbal language of the patient and can still provide for their needs as consistently as possible.

“I would always say to staff ‘I’m a pair of hands’ and have found myself being valued by HCAs and nurses as vital. It is humbling when you are asked by nurses to remind them of things and trusted with those responsibilities. Even more so when they thank you, sometimes going out of their way to do so.

“My advice to carers would be to know what you want and what you can give. Maintaining continuity and knowing the treatment was important to me. I would always say to medical staff, especially doctors and consultants, that I would rather know the truth. If it was bad, tell me it’s bad. If something changes with planned treatment then tell me, and why.

“If you feel overawed by the medical experts, remember they are experts in their field. You are the expert in yours and the person you care for. It’s OK to be upset and emotional. They understand that, but at times it’s necessary to have difficult conversations. Listening is as important as questioning. I always remember that however much of a pedestal we place medical experts on they are human the same as you and I. They have the same worries over their family, friends and people they care for; the same cost of living stress as us, so always be kind and respectful, and you will find it reciprocated.

“I believe that carers are well respected in the hospital, but also it needs to work both ways. Being granted access to the ‘privileges’ comes with commitment. Asking questions is OK but listen to the answers. My personal mantra is ‘caring is challenging, and challenging is caring’, although always challenge in a non-confrontational way. A little bit of kindness goes a long way.

“It’s always worth remembering there are places within the hospital to seek help. The PALS office, and also The Sanctuary provide support or a place of calm. And if

you need help and advice either in your role as a carer or as a patient yourself, contact our Hospital Carer Liaison Workers.

If you would like to join Amanda as a Carer Representative, who work in many areas to influence local and national policies on caring and not just in hospitals, do get in touch with our Policy, Carers Engagement and Involvement Lead, Susy Giullari:

☎ 07521 945943 ✉ susygi@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Mrs G – A Hospital Carer Liaison Workers study

Mrs G was referred via a call to CarersLine, in which she explained that her mother, who has a diagnosis of dementia, was in the BRI, having been admitted with suspected pneumonia (later confirmed as Covid).

I called Mrs G, who explained that there had been poor communication from and within the ward regarding her mum’s condition, specifically that most nursing staff appeared unaware of her dementia diagnosis.

Mrs. G was concerned that her mum was in a side-room, she felt not being supported with eating and drinking and not being provided with stimulation appropriate to her cognitive needs; also, that in her opinion, therapists weren’t communicating in a dementia-sensitive way and were failing to show compassion regarding her difficulties.

Mrs. G also shared concerns that she had not been included in any discussions about current treatment, or discharge planning, despite having explained on admission that she was an unpaid carer for mum.

I contacted the ward and spoke with the senior charge-nurse. He agreed to contact Mrs. G the same day to address her concerns, and to ask one of the doctors to call Mrs. G to discuss the treatment/discharge plans. I also contacted the community dementia support service to advise of the admission to hospital and to request a follow-up.

I explained to Mrs G the different pathway routes and options and explained to her the Trusts Carers Charter, which I then emailed copies to her. We also discussed how she could best be supported going forwards.

We agreed that she would contact us again if any further concerns arose and that she would contact PALS in the event of choosing to formally share concerns around poor communication from and between ward staff.

Young Carers

We work with young people to help them to feel positive about being a young carer, feel less isolated, reduce inappropriate care, enable them to plan for their future and seek support when they need it. We provide individual and family support, activities, groups and outings.

☎ 0117 958 9980 ✉ youngc@carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Welcome to Toby



'Hey, my name is Toby, I am the new Administration and Operational Support Officer for the Young Carers team. I have been working in and around charities since graduating uni in 2021, and I'm super excited to get stuck in with all that the team is doing for young carers. Some of my past roles have included selling sofas at the British Heart Foundation, and herding geese at St Werburghs City Farm. I am a creative, imagination-driven person and spend most of my time when not at work making music.'

Summer activities

We have had another full summer programme with a range of activities including:

- street art with local artist DazCat
- sailing with the local Scouts
- a well-being day with Off The Record running workshops on lino printing, Capoeira and on top-tips for taking care of yourself.



Creating out of this world art with local artist DazCat

Additionally, the highlight of the summer break, following on from last year's success, was when we partnered again with Bath Philharmonia. They ran a five-day music project with 20 young carers culminating in a performance in The Foyer at The Beacon. Young carers produced three pieces on the theme of space complete with animations.

The project seemed to go down well with the young carers who variously described the experience as *"magnificent, fun, creative, friendship, exciting, improving, inclusive, amazing, relaxing, cool, interesting, unique, and adventurous"*. High praise, indeed!



Vocalising with Bath Philharmonia

Young Carers Action Day event

Over a six month period we worked with three key partners in Bristol (Creative Youth Network, Bristol Drugs Project, and Bristol Black Carers) to run this year's Young Carers Action Day event.

Taking place at The Station, a youth space in the centre of Bristol, 46 young carers from across Bristol came together for the day to meet others who have similar experiences, have some fun and celebrate the amazing role they play as young carers.

Through a range of workshops, young carers had the opportunity to try out some street art on vinyl with Olas,

have a go on a range of musical instruments and create a piece of music with Bristol Beacon, let off some energy with Empire Fighting Chance non-contact boxing session, and participate in a well-being session with some top tips about self-care. A great day was had by all.



Young People Heroes award 2023

Every year Community of Purpose run the Young Heroes awards, shining a light on those who have overcome difficult circumstances, made a difference to the lives of others or achieved something extraordinary. Two young carers made it to the finals, Amy and Ellis:



- Amy Lum Chi for the caring role she undertakes for her mother and her commitment to raising awareness about young carers through running assemblies in her school. She was a member of Carers Support Centre's Young Carers Voice which led in turn to Amy getting involved in The Shadow Board for the Keeping Bristol Safe partnership, the Bristol Youth Council and Unity Youth.
- Ellis Bywater scooped the inaugural Fundraising Hero of the Year award. Ellis ran the Bristol 10K in memory of his dad, who sadly passed away last year. He finished the race in 44 minutes! Ellis raised over £3,000 for Young Carers. This donation gives young carers a chance to have a break from their caring role and ensures they get the support they need.



Everyone at Carers Support Centre is extremely proud of Amy and Ellis's achievements.

They also told us that:

"The best bit about the project was getting to know everyone and being able to express myself in the best way I know how, which is singing"

"I most enjoyed that there was lots of instruments to choose from and learn, performing and making friends"

Our thanks go to The Beacon, Bath Philharmonia, Bristol City Council, South Gloucestershire Council for their support of this project.

New locality groups

With a grant from Bristol City Council, we are working in partnership with Creative Youth Network to run bi-weekly young carers groups (11-19 years) in the three localities in Bristol. Young carers tell us that it is only when they are with other young carers that they feel they can be themselves. These groups provide a regular opportunity where they can hang out with their peers, get support and have time to relax and have fun. The groups will run in Easton, Hartcliffe and Southmead. Watch out on social media for more details.

Lisa Saunders – Carers Emergency Card Co-ordinator

The day starts with the usual check of emails and phone messages. I send out a replacement card to a carer who has lost her purse. Then, I note any new details received and previously missing from the South Glos Carers Emergency Card application forms we are working on.

The next email to check for is from the South Glos Emergency Call Centre, confirming that they have input all the forms we securely uploaded to their systems last week. Yes, all the details are now on their database. They now know all about the cared for person's condition, what help they would need in an emergency and details of any emergency contacts - everything they need should they receive a call from a card holder who has an accident or emergency preventing them from caring. Safe in this knowledge, I send these carers their new cards.



goes to all the local Bristol or South Gloucestershire businesses who are offering a discount to Carers Emergency Card holders. It thanks them for supporting carers and keeps them abreast of our activities. I also send off an email to a record shop that one of our volunteers has mentioned are willing to offer a discount.

surgeries, and Walk and Talk. She also has a specific question about what can be put in place for the person she cares for. I suggest a call or email to CarersLine.

A final check of any emails and forms that have come in. I call back a carer whose wife is now in residential care and recommend that he cancel his card by calling the number on the front of it and then cuts it up. He tells me about how useful the card was when he broke his hip last October and was rushed into hospital. It's always good to hear when a card has been helpful and makes for a worthwhile day. It's time for home.

The Galleries is quietening down, time to pack up and head back to the office.

As a 'Supporters email' is going out in the next few days, I write a few lines of introduction. This email

It's time to head down to the Galleries in Bristol for some promotional work. I grab leaflets and the Carers Emergency Card banner, and Ros and I head off in her car. Ros helps with chasing form details and today is joining me, standing by the Galleries escalators talking to carers and handing out Carers Emergency Card forms.

Healthwatch have kindly offered us a few hours at their Galleries' offices. We speak to carers who have come in with queries. One of them is someone new to caring who just wants to know where to start with it all. We make sure she's aware that getting a Carers Emergency Card is a great place to begin. The card offers peace of mind, is free to apply for and is always with you. She cares for someone in Bristol, so can send a Bristol application form back to Bristol City Council for processing or apply online. We mention some of our other services like Carers Assessments, Groups, Carers Liaison in hospitals and GP

Carers Emergency Card update

South Glos Card holders

Some mobile phone providers are not connecting calls to 0800 numbers without prior contract agreement - do check yours. An added card phone number has been introduced, so you can now call

☎ **0845 266 8622** or ☎ **0300 333 6511** option 4 in an emergency or to update details or cancel your card.

There is also an email choice just for updates or cancellations:

✉ centra.info@careium.com

Carers are recommended to put **URGENT CARERS CARD UPDATE SOUTH GLOS** in the email subject line and include their name, card number, postcode and telephone number in the body of the text.

Bristol Card holders

Bristol card holders can continue to call ☎ **0117 922 3269** in an emergency or to update details or cancel their card.

To apply for a Carers Emergency Card: Visit: 🌐 www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk or call CarersLine ☎ **0117 965 2200**

Carers Support Groups

A safe, confidential space to meet with other carers face-to-face and online – to share information and provide support to each other. Groups are a great way to connect with other carers, sharing knowledge and giving each other support. Often external speakers attend Carers Support Groups.

Please find details of our carers groups below. We are currently running a blend of in-person and online groups, to suit your caring situation.

If you have not attended a group before and would like to, please contact CarersLine on ☎ **0117 965 2200** or at ✉ carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Please note you are only able to attend a carers group which meets in the same local council area as where you live, Bristol or South Gloucestershire.

December groups may include a Christmas meal or outing.



| Group | Venue | Contact | Times | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR |
|---|--|--------------|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Online Carers Support Group for Bristol and South Glos | Zoom | Carers Line* | 13.00 - 14.30 First Thurs | 2nd | 7th | 4th | 1st | 7th |
| Brislington Carers Group for carers of someone with dementia | St Peters Church 170 Allison Road, Brislington, Bristol BS4 4NZ | Carers Line* | 10.30 - 12.30 First Wed | 1st | 6th | 3rd | 7th | 6th |
| Lawrence Weston | Lawrence Weston Farm Community Room, Saltmarsh Drive, Bristol BS11 0NJ | Carers Line* | 14.00 - 16.00 Third Thurs | 16th | 21st | 18th | 15th | 21st |
| Hartcliffe | Dundry Room, Symes Building, Peterson Avenue, Hartcliffe BS13 0BE | Carers Line* | 10.00 - 12.00 Second Thurs | 9th | 14th | 11th | 8th | 14th |
| Hanham | Hanham Community Centre 118-124 High St Hanham, Bristol BS15 3EJ | Carers Line* | 13.30 - 15.30 First Tues | 7th | 5th | 9th | 6th | 5th |
| Kingswood | The Park Centre Kingswood High Street, Bristol BS15 4AR | Carers Line* | 14.00 - 16.00 Second Wed | 8th | 13th | 10th | 14th | 13th |
| Downend | Badminton Gardens Beaufort Road, Bristol BS16 6FG | Carers Line* | 14.00 - 16.00 Fourth Wed | 22nd | 20th | 24th | 28th | 27th |
| St George's | Starting in Autumn. Details to be confirmed | Carers Line* | TBC | | | | | |

How to get help from us

If you are new to caring, you may be feeling overwhelmed and unsure where to start. We can help guide you through the maze of what support is out there. Or it could be that the person you care for is starting to need more care. As things change you may find you have new questions. The place to start for information and advice is our online information hub, available for anyone to access.

If you want to access any of our services, you will need to register with us. All our services are free, and you can register on our website. Or, you can contact

CarersLine our confidential phone and email service. Once you are registered, we will keep you up to date with our Carers News magazine and monthly eNewsletter.

 www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk

 carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk

CarersLine  **0117 965 2200**

Mon–Fri 10–1pm,

Mon – Thur 2pm – 4pm

An answerphone operates outside these hours.



Tell us if your contact details change

To update your contact details, please contact:  info@carerssupportcentre.org.uk  **0117 939 2562**

If you are able to receive this newsletter by email please let us know, as this helps reduce our costs.

Join our lottery Join our lottery for the chance to win 1 of 5 cash prizes every month. It's just £1 a month for each number, and you'll also be supporting our work with carers!

Visit our website  www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk/support-us/lottery/ Or call on  **0117 939 2562**.

Lottery Winners

May G Grimes R Merritt P Dart F Arkley J Gowers

Jun J Quartly B Giardina M Price M Palmer R Merritt

Jul L Jones M Grace J Hayes S Duffett

Aug M Crump I Bisp J Quartly R Whale D Byrne

Thank you to everyone who has generously donated funds in the last few months to help support carers including: Bristol Charities, Fulmer Charitable Trust, The Honourable Company of Gloucestershire Charitable Trust, In Memoriam of William Hancock Trust Fund, Skipton Building Society Charitable Foundation, St James's Place Charitable Foundation, the7stars Foundation, Thornbury Rotary Club

Your generous donations help us make life better for local carers. If you pay tax, you can make your donation worth an extra 25p in every £1 by completing the Gift Aid declaration.

Title _____ First Name or initials _____ Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

GIFT AID DECLARATION Please treat the enclosed gift of £ _____ as a Gift Aid donation.

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Carers Support Centre. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year and will boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate.

Signature _____ Date _____

If you want to receive our supporter email newsletter please include your email address. You can unsubscribe from this at any time.

Email address _____

Please send your donation and this form to: Carers Support Centre, FREEPOST (RSSU-EZEA-JLLR) Fishponds, Bristol, BS16 2QQ

Donation form Winter 2023

Company number 3377199

Registered charity number 1063226