



# Gateshead Carers

## Winter Newsletter 2015

### Inside this issue...

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- Carer of The Year Award
- Free Telecare Assistance
- Health Spa Treatment Offer

**CARER OF  
THE YEAR  
AWARD**

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Information & Support for Unpaid Adult Carers



GatesheadCarers | 0191 4900121 | [www.gatesheadcarers.com](http://www.gatesheadcarers.com)



Hello,

Usually when writing this piece for our last newsletter of the year I spend some time reflecting on the year just gone. I am not able to do that this year as my focus has to be on Gateshead Council's consultation on its budget proposals for 2016 and 2017.

Over the last few years Gateshead Council has faced difficult challenges in attempting to protect vital services in response to government cuts to local authority budgets. These cuts are set to continue over the next 2 years. Of the twenty proposed reviews and cuts to services across Adult Social Care and Children's Services 80% will increase demands on you as a carer and also change the way those you care for live their lives.

You will find a brief outline of some of the council's budget proposals included with this newsletter. Many of the proposals simply reduce or cut council services without consideration of whether or not unpaid carers will be able to fill the gap by taking on a longer and more demanding caring role. There is no assessment of or recognition within the proposals on the significant impact the proposals will have on unpaid carers in terms of;

- Their willingness and ability to care for longer
- The effect this will have on carers physical and mental health, financial position and quality of life
- Their ability to stay in or return to work, education or training.

The assumption within the budget proposals that unpaid carers CAN and WILL DO more shows a complete lack of understanding of the impact of caring on carers lives and that these proposals may drive carers to a point where they can no longer provide care. The proposals are also contrary to the purposes and intentions of the Care Act 2014, the National Carers Strategy and the Gateshead Carers Strategy.

Carers in Gateshead, based on research by Carers UK and Leeds University (2011), are already contributing over £378 million every year to the Gateshead health and social care system by providing unpaid care. This budget is asking for more from unpaid carers who really have no more to give. Within the budget there is also a proposal to cut our contract with Gateshead Public Health for the services we deliver to unpaid carers of people affected by alcohol and drug misuse. This will result in the loss of 3 carer support workers at this organisation and effectively mean that we receive no financial support whatsoever from Gateshead Council. It strikes me as being grossly unfair that the budget proposals will simultaneously;

- Increase significantly demands on carers and at the same time
- Reduce the support services available to carers.

These budget proposals are the worst I have ever seen in terms of the impact on carers. It is really important that every one of you responds to the proposals in this budget consultation. I and all the staff at GCA see on a daily basis the impact being a carer has on your health and wellbeing, your finances and your quality of life and we know how precious your time is. However I also know this is not a time to hope that other carers will respond on your behalf. In the sheet enclosed with this newsletter you will see the range of ways in which your voice can be heard. Please do all or only one of these things but whatever you do, for your benefit and for that of those you care for please do something.

I would like to thank you for your continued support over the last year and take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a peaceful 2016.

Best wishes,

Steve Cowen, Chief Executive Officer

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Book Now to See a  
Gilbert & Sullivan  
Theatre Production in  
February 2016!  
Call: 0191 4900121

Front cover: 'Carer of The Year' nominees at the Gateshead Awards ceremony 2015.

Inside right: Carer Support Worker Andrea Goodfellow taking part in some outdoor exercise at the Carers Allotment Garden as part of our Better Health at Work Gold Award.

# GOING FOR GOLD

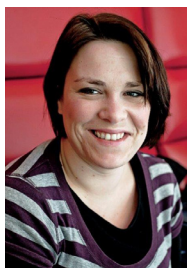
# BETTER HEALTH

# AT WORK



North East  
Better Health  
at Work Award





## Day in the life of Hannah Clemson

Employer Engagement Officer

08:30 - I'm an early bird so arrive at the office 8.30 sharp. Make a quick brew and head up to the top floor office which I share with the Working Carer team.

09:30 - Look through my email, and then I start writing a Working Carer's Guide for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital – who are one of our Carer-friendly employers.

11:00 - A few calls to make, and chasing up people. Meetings to organise, more emails' and more tea!

12:00 - Lunch time comes and we all descend on the lunch room. I have a good catch-up with my colleagues. It's lovely to share food and have a laugh with people over lunch.

12:30 - Quick lunch today as I have an appointment with a local employer, better get a move on!

13.30 - Arrive at the meeting with my NE Working Carer's Toolkit in hand, ready to impress them with all the great work we do.

14:30 - An hour later, and we have organised drop-in sessions, got an article into the staff newsletter, and the HR team are looking at our 'Working Carer Charter'. Back to the office.

15:30 - Last part of the day, so another email check and then I'll spend 30 minutes or so looking for new employers to approach for our project. And another cup of tea!

16:30 - Time to tidy up, cups in the dishwasher and say goodbye for the day.

## 'Points of You'... Crisis Team want your views

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear (NTW) NHS Foundation Trust have participated in the development of a service user/carer led project aimed at improving Crisis Team services. The newsletter named 'Points of You' has been developed between NTW NHS Foundation Trust and the NTW Service User & Carer Network to allow direct feedback to individuals who use Crisis Team services.

The partnership would like to hear the views, experiences and opinions of those accessing Crisis Team services in Gateshead. Your views will then be used to inform staff and service managers about what people think of:

- The way that services are run
- How effective they are
- How staff treat people
- What needs to improve

The biannual newsletter not only highlights feedback received from carers and service users but also shows the actions taken to improve the services provided.

Clinical Lead for Gateshead Crisis and Home Based Treatment Team, James Lang said: *"We welcome any feedback from individuals in Gateshead who have recently been supported by the Crisis and Home based Treatment Team, or those close to them."*

For more information please contact: James Lang, Clinical Lead, Gateshead Crisis and Home Based Treatment Team, Community Service Group, Tranwell Unit. Tel: 0303 123 1145. To view 'Points of You' newsletter please visit: [www.ntw.nhs.uk](http://www.ntw.nhs.uk).

## Deciding Together

### MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

Since summer 2014 the NHS has been asking people who use mental health services, their families, carers, mental health professionals and service providers for views on how to improve the way specialist mental health services are arranged in Gateshead. As a result, the local NHS has proposed several different ways that in-patient and community and mental health services could be arranged in the future. The term 'scenarios' is being used to describe these different arrangements. All of the scenarios include improvement to the way service users and carers are able to access services.

**Have your say on mental health services by getting involved in the consultation.**

### CONSULTATION EVENTS

**Newcastle City Library** - 3rd December 2015 6pm - 8.00pm. Bewick Hall, Charles Avison Building, 33 New Bridge St West, Newcastle, NE1 8AX.

**Gateshead Civic Centre** - 13th January 2016 10am - 12.00pm. Bewick Meeting Room, Gateshead Civic Centre, NE8 1HH.

**Community Art Space** - 6th February 2016 1pm - 3.30pm. St Edmund's Chapel, High St, Gateshead, NE8 1EP.

### COMPLETE A SURVEY

Surveys are available in various formats by contacting Newcastle Gateshead CCG on: 0191 217 2670.

### LEAVE FEEDBACK ONLINE

**Email:** [ngccg.enquiries@nhs.net](mailto:ngccg.enquiries@nhs.net)

**Twitter:** @NHSngccg #decidingtogether

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/deciding-together](http://www.facebook.com/deciding-together)



Healthwatch Gateshead have been working to ensure everyone has a voice in how health and social care services in Gateshead are delivered and paid for. Healthwatch have responded to the issues you recently highlighted.

**You said...** There were difficulties in accessing GP appointments.

### What Healthwatch did...

Healthwatch Gateshead conducted a survey across the community from April to September 2015 to establish the views of the community. The findings of the survey have been fed back to Medical Practices so they can improve patient access to appointments. The information will be shared with Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and will form part of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) who are looking at GP access as part of their work programme 2015/ 16.

**You said...** There were delays when you had been given your Hospital Discharge time.

### What Healthwatch did...

Healthwatch Gateshead conducted a Hospital Discharge survey across 15 wards in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in August, September and October 2015 when people who were being discharged were asked to complete the survey. The findings of the survey will be fed back to the community through the Healthwatch Gateshead website, newsletters, social media, posters and leaflets in community buildings. Discussions will also take place with the QE Hospital Patient, Public & Carer Involvement & Experience group to highlight any issues identified.

For more information please contact Healthwatch Gateshead on freephone: 0808 801 0382 E: [info@healthwatchgateshead.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchgateshead.co.uk) or visit: [www.healthwatchgateshead.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchgateshead.co.uk).

## Rise of the Male Carer

Caring is often seen as a 'female' issue but it's something that affects a large number of men too. Carer's Trust and the Mental Health Forum have recently produced a report on the experience of male carers.

In England and Wales more than 2.44 million men provide unpaid care. The report which spoke to over 609 male carers, found that 35% of them were in employment in addition to a caring role. The report focused mainly on fathers who were also carers, caring most commonly for a son or daughter with a disability or autism. Out of the 119 fathers surveyed, 30% had retired and 35% were in employment. Just under half of them (49%) felt their responsibilities as a carer were supported by their employers, for example the provision of flexible working arrangements. This leaves 51% who did not feel fully supported at work.

Though most men enjoy their caring role, there were some issues. Men felt unrecognised as carers, struggled to get a break from the role, missed out on family time and social activities, and ultimately felt that caring had an impact on their mental and physical health. Men reported feeling very isolated and 55% felt the needs of male carers are different to those of female carers. They struggled with the perception of male roles in society, and felt support groups were aimed at women, and not men.

The report concluded that more needs to be done to support male carers, who make up 42% of the caring population. The full Dads Care Too report can be found at: [www.gatesheadcarers.com/about-us/publications](http://www.gatesheadcarers.com/about-us/publications).

If you are a male carer and would like to find out more about the report or how to access support from us, please email: [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com) or call us on: 0191 4900121.



The Male Carer Support group enjoying a Tyne River Cruise.

## Breaking Down Barriers

We recently received money from the Big Lottery fund to develop a project that aims to break down barriers for men who are in employment in addition to a caring role - this could be for an elderly parent, or a disabled child, a friend with substance misuse issues, or anyone else who depends on them for care.

In addition to the Big Lottery project we also offer male carers access to a dedicated support group, just for men. The group provides opportunities to take part in social outings to places of interest, allowing male carers to take a short break from caring in the company of like minded people.

## Male Carer Social Group

The Male Carer Group will be meeting up on December 9th to enjoy Christmas lunch at the Milecastle pub, Newcastle. If you would like to join this friendly bunch in some light banter and a free lunch, please get in touch with Paul Forster to reserve your place before Monday 30 November.

We are also very keen to hear from any working male carers who might benefit from our other carer groups and support. Please call: 0191 4900121 or email: [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com).



Telecare gives peace of mind when away from your loved ones

## FREE Telecare Assistance

Our Working Carer team are offering free Telecare assistance for working carers. If you are working and caring for someone in addition to employment, the Telecare system might help alleviate concerns when you are away from the person you care for.

Telecare is a service that enables people, especially older and more vulnerable individuals, to live independently in their own home. Equally it gives peace of mind to family, friends and carers, knowing that when they are unable to watch over their loved ones, Telecare can alert them to any accidents, emergencies or changes in their condition.

Telecare provides a pendant or wristband for the cared-for person and an electronic box in their home which signals if anything goes wrong. For example, if the person falls over. They can also press the button if they need assistance which will alert the Telecare centre in Gateshead where a member of the team can talk directly to the person and check on their condition.

If you are a working carer and would like to try the Telecare service for free, please get in touch with Hannah Clemson to register your interest on: 0191 4900121 or email: [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com).

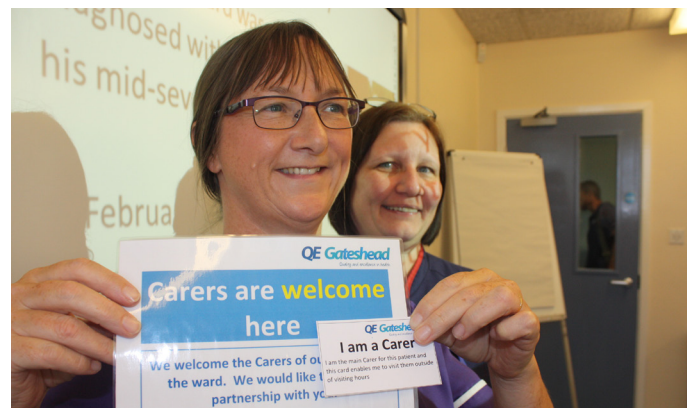
## QE Gateshead Launch the Carer Passport

GCA were very happy to be in attendance during the recent launch of Queen Elizabeth Hospital's Carer Passport campaign. Chris Crone, Modern Matron Medicine and Children's Services, at the QE Gateshead, announced the initiative following the QE's involvement with 'John's Campaign'.

'John's Campaign' is a national campaign led by Nicci Gerarrd and Julie Jones. Nicci started the campaign after the death of her father last year. Julie Jones, whose mother has Alzheimer's, followed suit after her mother expressed a wish for her daughter to be able to stay with her if she is ever in hospital. The campaign encourages hospitals to let carers visit the person they care for without restriction, importantly outside of rigid visiting hours.

The campaign has grown across the country with many hospitals now signing up to 'John's Campaign'. This means that carers are welcome to visit their loved ones outside of regular hospital visiting hours. This is great news for carers, particularly those who juggle many competing demands on their time. It also means carers can rest knowing they can be there to represent the people they care for and reassure them when they are in most their most vulnerable situation.

For more information on John's Campaign visit: [www.johnscampaign.org.uk](http://www.johnscampaign.org.uk)





GCA Chair, David Clelland awarding Wendy Mahon 'Carer of the Year' 2015.

## Carer of the Year Award

GCA were very proud to be in attendance at this year's Gateshead Award ceremony to support the four nominees for 'Carer of The Year' 2015. The Gateshead Awards are presented annually by the Mayor of Gateshead to celebrate all those who have made a real difference to the lives of others. The Award recognises the hard work and dedication of volunteers, carers and everyone else who goes out of their way to make the Borough a better place to live, work and visit. The four carers who were nominated for this year's 'Carer of The Year' Award 2015 are...

**Ray Cook** a dedicated father and carer to his wife Alison who suffers from dementia.

**Nicola Eastern** a single parent who cares for her son who has ongoing health issues.

**Wendy Mahon** carer to her sister, brother-in-law and nephew who all suffer from physical and educational disabilities.

**Joanne Taylor** carer to her mother who is recuperating after a serious illness and operation, and her daughter who suffers from multiple allergies.

Wendy Mahon took home this year's 'Carer of The Year' award and her nephew, Josh White was awarded 'Young Carer of The Year'. Well done to all those nominated for a Gateshead Award!



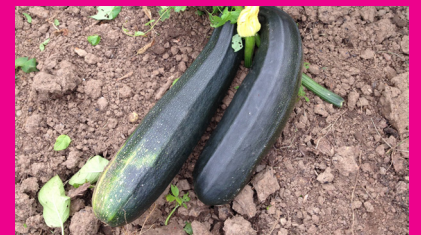
Left-right: Carers Derek Elliot and Peter Searle digging potatoes.

## Reaping the Reward

During the course of 2015 we held a series of gardening sessions at our carers allotment site in Bensham, Gateshead. The sessions were arranged to give tips and advice to carers accessing the garden on seasonal horticultural work, ranging from seed sowing, to planting right through to harvesting the produce.

We joined forces with local charity 'Green Horizons' to provide these sessions as a way of giving carers a better understanding of allotment growing and how to prepare the garden for the coming seasons.

Carer Derek Elliot said: *"We've had a great harvest this year, thanks to all the carers who come and help out. The Green Horizons sessions proved really useful for getting all the seasonal jobs carried out on time."*



To get involved at the allotment contact Denise Graham on: 0191 490 0121 or email: [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com).



# The Carer's Column



Dear Carer's Column,

Leaving school at age of 14 to look after my mother meant that I didn't get any basic GCSE qualifications, unlike the rest of my friends I have no qualifications to show for being my mam's main carer. When mam's health improved enough for me to go out for a few hours every day, I realised that not having any qualifications was holding me back and I didn't want that anymore. One day I was out with my girlfriend and we saw an advert for a jobseeker course ran by Gateshead Carers, it seemed like the perfect starting point to get my life back on track.

I was nervous when I first rang to speak to the Training Officer but Kelechi was really nice and put my mind at rest straight away. The course took place over six sessions which was good because each topic focused on my needs as a carer and as a jobseeker. It also made it easier for me to understand why I hadn't been successful in finding a job or going to college, even though I'd been on other jobseeker courses in the past. Kelechi helped me to understand why I needed to improve my literacy and numeracy skills and I began to learn how barriers in my caring role and not having basic qualifications, have held me back in life.

After completing the jobseeker course I decided to work on my literacy and numeracy by attending an Adult Learning programme. I have now passed my Level 1 Maths and gained a place at Gateshead College to study Joinery & Carpentry.

I am really grateful to Gateshead Carers for helping me get my life back on track, I've never felt so good or so confident!  
Thanks so much to Kelechi and the team at GCA.

Best Wishes,

Jamie Bone - Young Adult Carer

Win  
A £10  
Shopping  
Voucher!

## Get in touch...

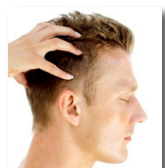
We're so pleased to hear from Young Adult Carers like Jamie, who managed to overcome barriers and turn his life around, all thanks to 6 simple sessions with our Training Officer. If you would like to take a leaf out of Jamie's book, please get in touch with Kelechi Dibie on 0191 4900121.

Send your letters, stories & photos to: The Carer's Column, John Haswell House, 8-9 Gladstone Terrace, Gateshead, NE8 4DY or email: [enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com](mailto:enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com).

### Go on... Treat Yourself!

Health treatments are all about relaxing and de-stressing, so what better way for carers to unwind than by enjoying one of our fabulous new pamper sessions!

#### Look at the relaxing treatments on offer...



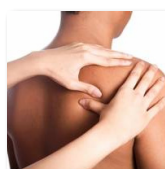
**Indian Head Massage** - traditional massage working on the head, neck and shoulders to help with the overall well-being of the body.



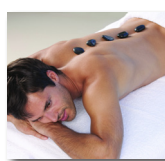
**Reflexology** - an alternative therapy involving pressure to the feet using specific hand techniques to provide pain and anxiety relief.



**Facial** - a deep cleansing facial treatment that gets right in to the pores, leaving your skin feeling revitalised and refreshed.



**Sports Massage** - deep tissue massage that helps relieve stiffness, tightness and tension due to overuse of the muscle tissues.



**Hot Stone Massage** - deeper muscle relaxation through the placement of smooth, water-heated stones at key points on the body.



**Aromatherapy Massage** - a blend of essential oils used with the ancient art of massage to help release tension in the muscles.

Each treatment session will last half an hour and usually costs £25 however, we are able to offer these subsidised sessions to carers for only £10 each! To enjoy one of these relaxing treatments please contact Denise Graham, 'Moving On' Support Worker on: 0191 490 0121.

### Groups & Activities

Fancy taking a little time out for yourself? then have a look at what exciting activities we have on offer for carers until the end of 2015.

#### Tuesday 24 November

Carer Craft Club - GCA, John Haswell House, Gateshead, NE8 4DY. 10 AM

Alcohol & Substance Misuse Peer Support Group - GCA, John Haswell House, Gateshead, NE8 4DY. 4 PM

#### Wednesday 02 December

LGBT Carer Support Group - The Tyneside Coffee Rooms. 2:30 PM

#### Tuesday 08 December

Carer Craft Club - GCA, John Haswell House, Gateshead, NE8 4DY. 10 AM

Carer Social Group - Christmas Dinner at The Greenhouse Brasserie, Gateshead College. 5:30 PM

#### Wednesday 09 December

Male Carer Group - Christmas Lunch at the Milecastle, Newcastle. 1 PM

#### Thursday 17 December

Alcohol & Substance Misuse Peer Support Group - GCA, John Haswell House, Gateshead, NE8 4DY. 12 PM

#### Tuesday 22 December

Carer Craft Club - GCA, John Haswell House, Gateshead, NE8 4DY. 10 AM

If you have any suggestions for activities or would like to find out more about our groups and activities please visit: [www.gatesheadcarers.com/eventsandoutings](http://www.gatesheadcarers.com/eventsandoutings) or call: 0191 4900121.



## Don't leave things to chance. Put your affairs in order before it's too late

If you answer **NO** to **ANY** of the questions below then  
don't delay, pick up the phone today!

- Do you have a current Will?
- Do you have a Lasting Power of Attorney?
- Have you protected your assets so they pass to your loved ones and not to the Government (e.g. Inheritance Tax, Capital Gains Tax, Care Fees)?

We hear the horror stories all the time about people dying intestate (without a Will) and the problems and family anguish this can cause, not to mention the expense that can be incurred.

Would you want this to happen to your loved ones?

- Who will manage your affairs if you ever lost capacity to do so yourself?
- Do you want to spend thousands and let a court decide who should be in charge?
- Don't leave it till it's too late, put your affairs in order while you can and make sure that you decide where your assets are going!
- We do home visits as a matter of course so no need to come to us as we come to you!

**£100 for a single Will (simple) or £130 for mirror Wills (simple)**

**Lasting Power of Attorney - £250 for 1 or £350 for 2**

*(This price does not include the registration fee which is a maximum of £110 per LPA  
but you may be able to apply for a reduction based on your income)*

**For more information or to book an appointment in the  
comfort of your own home please contact:**

**Julie McAlpine | Tel: 0191 432 6860**

or email: [jsm@crichtonwtp.co.uk](mailto:jsm@crichtonwtp.co.uk) [www.crichtonwtp.co.uk](http://www.crichtonwtp.co.uk)

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# Are you an unpaid carer?

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. The reasons and causes of someone taking on caring responsibilities are varied but can include:

- Serious physical illness
- Long-term physical disability
- Long-term health conditions
- Learning difficulties
- Mental health problems
- Dementia
- Frailty & old age
- Alcohol & substance misuse

**GET FREE  
HELP &  
SUPPORT  
TODAY!**

## Get in touch...

Gateshead Carers recently moved to new premises at John Haswell House, Gladstone Tce, Gateshead. Please get in touch if you would like to make an appointment to discuss your needs as a carer.



Gateshead Carers  
John Haswell House  
8-9 Gladstone Tce  
Gateshead  
Tyne & Wear  
NE8 4DY.

Tel: 0191 4900121  
Fax: 0191 4900128

Scan the QR code to  
visit our website.



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