

January - March 2013 Newsletter of **West Cumbria Carers**



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West Cumbria Carers Staff

We are a local carers organisation providing support to people in Allerdale and Copeland who are caring for a family member, friend or neighbour. We support carers of all ages from the age of five with no upper age limit.

To include any articles in the newsletter please send by email to:

general@westcumbriacarers.co.uk

or by post to: West Cumbria Carers,

Suite 7F Lakeland Business Park, Lamplugh Road

Cockermouth CA13 0QT

Charity No. 1119369

Reg in England No. 6123034



10/2374



Changes to Housing Benefits

This does not apply to pensioners.

From April 2013, council tenants and housing association tenants will have their housing benefit entitlement reduced if the council decides their home is too big for their needs. You may have heard this referred to as the under-occupancy rule, or 'bedroom tax'.

Under the new housing benefit rules, the size of the home you can rent without being affected by this cut will be:

- 1 bedroom for a couple
- 1 bedroom for a person aged 16 or over
- 1 bedroom for 2 children aged under 16 of the same sex
- 1 bedroom for 2 children aged under 10 - boys and girls are expected to share a room
- 1 extra bedroom if you or your partner needs an overnight carer to stay.

A severely disabled child who needs a room of their own may not be required to share a room.

You won't be allowed to claim housing benefit for rooms above this limit that are used for:

- Foster children
- Couples who use separate bedrooms because of illness
- Children visiting a divorced or separated parent
- Disabled adults.

When will the changes affect me?

If you might be affected by these new rules your local authority will write to you to confirm the information they hold. They will then write again to confirm what the changes will be to your Housing Benefit.

How might the changes affect me?

- It is possible that the amount of Housing Benefit you get to pay your rent and any service charges could go down.
- If, under these new rules, it is decided that you have more bedrooms than are necessary for your household your Housing Benefit will be reduced by:
 - 14% if you have 1 extra bedroom
 - 25% if you have 2 or more extra bedrooms
- If you are getting, or thinking of claiming Housing Benefit, or thinking of moving home, you need to consider this change before you renew or make a new tenancy agreement.

Benefit Changes

Many of you will have noticed that there are lots of changes to benefits from April 2013. We will try to keep you up to date with the changes and present the information in a straight forward way. Please do call the office if you need any further information or try the Government's website www.direct.gov.uk or www.gov.uk.

More information on page 3 (Personal Independence Payment)

Winter Warmth Grants

Don't forget there are grants of £125 per household available to help with winter fuel bills:

You may be able to get a grant if you:

- Are over 60
- Have at least one child under 5
- Have a chronic underlying health condition, particularly respiratory or coronary
- Have a disability particularly affected by cold weather
- Care for someone

and struggle to maintain a basic acceptable standard of living during the winter due to the cost of heating your home and the restrictions of cold weather.

Call the office for more information or to make an application. A Carers Support Worker from West Cumbria Carers may need to visit you to gather some extra information

Contact 01900 821976



DON'T FORGET

Don't forget that West Cumbria Carers have moved offices. Our new address and contact numbers are as follows:

**Suite 7F Lakeland Business Park
Lamplugh Road
Cockermouth
CA13 0QT**

Tel: 01900 821976 · Fax: 01900 826206

ALL EMAILS AND THE WEBSITE ADDRESS remain the same.

Spring Trip to Edinburgh, Wednesday 24th April 2013

Name:

Address:

Postcode: Tel: Email:

I enclose payment of £14.00

Why not join us on our Spring Trip to Edinburgh?

Lots to see and do and most of it free!

Wednesday 24th April 2013, £14.00 per person



Edinburgh has a host of fabulous attractions, including Edinburgh Castle, the National Museum of Scotland, the National Galleries including the newly refurbished Portrait Gallery, the Royal Botanic Gardens and of course all the great shops.

Please note this trip is only available to current Carers and former Carers

Closing date for the trip is Thursday 28th March

Free Training

Chrysalis Cumbria has secured some funding to provide FREE training for unpaid carers. The training will be delivered at Chrysalis's base in Wigton.

West Cumbria Carers is working in partnership with Chrysalis to help promote these events. This is a great opportunity to attend some good quality training for free.

Introduction to wheelchairs

Wednesday 20th February 10am – 12 noon

Helping to develop your CV

Thursday 21st February 10am – 12 noon

Introduction to back care

Friday 22nd February 10am – 12 noon

Introduction to epilepsy

Tuesday 26th February 2pm – 4pm

Introduction to Autism

Wednesday 27th February 2pm – 4pm

Resilience Skill

Tuesday 5th March 1.30pm – 3.30pm

For more information or to book a place call Chrysalis

Tel: 016973 44751

West Cumbria Carers may be able to help with transport or a respite/sitting service to enable you to attend this course so do give us a call if you secure a place on one of the courses.

FREE gift with newsletter!

Enclosed with your newsletter you should find a FREE room thermometer, forehead thermometer and information about recognising the signs of HYPOTHERMIA. We hope you find these useful now the cold weather seems to have arrived.

PLEASE NOTE

The room thermometers have our old contact details on them so please do not use the address or telephone number listed.



Emergency First Aid Training

We have 12 FREE places on a certificated Emergency First Aid training day.

The event will take place:

Tuesday 26th March 9.30am – 4.30pm (lunch provided)

The Barn, Rosehill Theatre, Whitehaven.

Call Clare Edwards or Gillian Walker at West Cumbria Carers for more information or to book a place.

We may also be able to help with transport or a respite/sitting service to enable you to attend this course.

Carers Sing Owt

Many of you will have seen the singing group in action at the Christmas lunch, where they ably supported Voices Dot Com performing a medley of Christmas songs.

We all sing for fun, we don't read music and we have a teacher even better than Gareth Malone! Why not come and join us. The group will be meeting on the following dates:

1 – 3pm at The Barn, Rosehill Theatre, Moresby, Whitehaven

Monday 25th February

Monday 25th March

Monday 29th April

Monday 20th May

Monday 24th June

Transport or a respite sitting service can be arranged to enable you to attend.

Please call Clare Edwards at the office if you would like more information or to join us.

Healthy Eating Courses

One Pot Wonders

Following on from the success of our previous Healthy Eating courses we will be running a special One Pot Wonders Course. The three session course will cover three hearty winter meals; a stove top soup, a stew and an oven baked casserole.

Thursday 14th March 2013 1pm - 4pm

Thursday 21st March 2013 1pm - 4pm

Thursday 28th March 2013 1pm - 4pm

You can either book on all 3 sessions or pick those that suit your diary

Cooking from scratch

A three session course designed for those who are new to the kitchen or who want to learn how to cook some good old kitchen standards like shepherd's pie, omelettes and corned beef hash. Each session will work through a basic recipe and give you some pointers about good kitchen techniques

Monday 25th February 2013 1pm - 4pm

Monday 4th March 2013 1pm - 4pm

Monday 11th March 2013 1pm - 4pm

You can either book on all 3 sessions or pick those that suit your diary

Both courses are free to current carers and take place at Lakes College. All food and equipment will be provided by the college and you get to take your ready-made meal home with you. We can also help with transport and/or respite services to enable you to attend.

Please call our new staff member Gillian Walker to book a place.

As places are limited and we expect the courses to be popular we may need to limit places to those who have not attended a Healthy Eating Course before.

Exercise, team sports, walking, swimming, cycling – anyone interested?

Perhaps you find it difficult to find time to exercise because you're a carer, perhaps you would like to meet up with other like minded 'sporty carers' or maybe you just need the encouragement to get out there again to exercise. We are keen to find out if any of you would like to get together to exercise. Perhaps we could have a Carers Running/Jogging Group, a five-a-side team, badminton group or a circuit class. If you are interested please call Clare Edwards at the office who will send you out an Exercise Questionnaire. Once we have brought together information from all you sport mad carers we will look at putting together a programme of activity.

Strictly Carers Dancing!

We all love the sparkle and fun of BBC's Strictly Come Dancing. Would any of you like to join a ballroom and Latin dancing class for carers?



Give Clare Edwards or Gillian Walker a call to register your interest and if there's enough Strictly fans we'll get things moving.

Healthy Activities

Thanks to ongoing funding from health sources we are able to continue to provide a range of 'Healthy Activities'. Over the next few months we will be continuing to run the Carers Sing Owt group, Healthy Eating Courses and coping with stress and relaxation classes. We are also working with Chrysalis Cumbria; a Wigton based charity that provides support to people with learning disabilities; to provide a range of health related training courses.

All events are FREE and open to our members, call Clare Edwards or Gillian for more information or to book a place.

Relaxation

We may not be able to provide the hammock, pina coloda or the sun shine but our relaxation classes with Maria Richardson should help. The sessions are free and are followed by tea/coffee and cake. No need to book just turn up on the day.

**2 -3pm Wild Solway Centre,
The Aquarium Maryport**

Monday 18th February

Monday 4th March

Monday 18th March

For more information call Clare Edwards at the office.



Personal Independence Payment

Later this year the Government is introducing a new benefit called Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for eligible working age people aged 16 to 64.

What the change means

Disability Living Allowance will end for everyone of working age (16-64) even if they have an indefinite period award.

There are no current plans to replace Disability Living Allowance for children under 16 and people aged 65 and over who are already receiving Disability Living Allowance.

Personal Independence Payment is based on an assessment of individual need. Information will be gathered from the individual, as well as healthcare and other professionals who work with and support them. Most people will also be asked to a face to face consultation with a trained independent assessor as part of the claim process.

Existing DLA claimants

Existing Disability Living Allowance claimants who are aged 16 to 64 on 8 April 2013 will be affected by the introduction of Personal Independence Payment, even if they have an indefinite or lifetime award of DLA.

The Department of Work & Pensions will write to all existing DLA claimants in February and March 2013 with more information.

There is no automatic transfer from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment

All benefit information sourced from DWP website.

GROUP DATES

Carers Support Group Dates

You are always welcome to join us at one of our friendly carers support groups.

If you are attending a group for the first time or haven't been to the previous meeting it's always best to call the office to check the venue, we may also be able to help with transport.

Cleator Moor

1pm - 3pm at the Civic Hall, Cleator Moor

Tuesday 26th February, Tuesday 26th March,

Tuesday 30th April, Tuesday 28th May

Cockermouth & Keswick

10am - 12pm at Booths Coffee Shop, Keswick

Tuesday 19th February, Tuesday 19th March

Tuesday 16th April, Tuesday 21st May

Copeland

1pm - 3 pm at the Reading Rooms, Beckermat

Friday 15th February, Friday 15th March,

Friday 19th April, Friday 17th May

Millom

1pm - 3pm at Knights Club, Queen Street, Millom

Wednesday 20th February, Wednesday 20th March

Wednesday 17th April, Wednesday 22nd May

Wigton

1pm - 3 pm at Low Moor Church, Wigton

Friday 22nd February, Friday 22nd March

Friday 26th April, Friday 31st May

Workington

1pm - 3 pm at the Curwen Centre, Workington

Tuesday 12th February, Tuesday 12th March,

Tuesday 9th April, Tuesday 14th May

If you are attending any of the groups for the first time it would be advisable to contact the office to confirm the venue.

The Men's Group

In addition to our regular Carers Support groups we also run West Cumbria Carers Men's Group. The group meets every other month.

At every meeting we discuss and decide on our next event. More often than not we go out for lunch and over the last four years we have been to many a West Cumbrian eatery. We have also visited places of interest including the Maritime Museum in Barrow, The Motor Museum near Windermere, the Roman Museum in Maryport and Tullie House in Carlisle. Our attendees come from both Allerdale and Copeland and the only common factor is the fact that we are male! The conversation ranges over politics, footie, local history, the arts; anything and everything in fact. The group is made up of a wide age range and individuals come from a wide selection of backgrounds.

If you would like to become part of our group call Jeff Carroll at the office.

Hello to the G Force and goodbye to Caroline

Sadly we had to say goodbye to Caroline Dawson (nee Sullivan) who left us at Christmas. Caroline had been with West Cumbria Carers for two years, first as a Carers Support Worker and since November 2011 as our Copeland Carers Health Worker. She and her husband have abandoned the mountains and lakes of Cumbria and moved back to London to be closer to family.

We also welcomed two new staff members who we like to think of as the G force at West Cumbria Carers. Gillian Wintrup joined the Young Carers staff team in November and Gillian Walker took on Caroline's role at the start of 2013.

Gillian Wintrup

Hello I live in Lamplugh with my husband and our cat. I have recently been appointed by West Cumbria Carers as a Young Carers Support Worker. My role is specifically to raise awareness of young carers in schools to staff and all pupils, identifying any new young carers with a view to them accessing the extra support that we can offer.

I was a Senior Teaching Assistant before working here; I worked at Flimby Primary School for fifteen years, I have also worked at Victoria Infants in Workington and Broughton Moor School too.

Gillian Walker

Hello prior to joining the team I volunteered at West Cumbria Carers which gave me a great understanding of the needs of Carers and their families. I have previously had some experience of this type of role as I worked for West Cumbria CVS as Healthy Communities Development Worker for South Whitehaven. I'm looking forward to the challenges I may face and meeting lots of new and interesting people. If you would like to contact me regarding the Health Project in Copeland please call me at the office.

Four easy ways to contact us:

- 1. In person at the office:**
West Cumbria Carers
Suite 7F
Lakeland Business Park
Lamplugh Road
Cockermouth
CA13 0QT
www.westcumbriacarers.co.uk
- 2. By Letter at the**
above address
- 3. By E-Mail:**
general@westcumbriacarers.co.uk
- 4. By Phone:**
Tel: 01900 821976
Fax: 01900 826206

Staff Quick Reference

Manager:

Sue Whitehead

Adult Carers

Support Workers:

Clarice Nichol
Susan Pickering
Jeff Carroll
Lisa Forrester

Adult Project Manager

Dot Barwise

Carers Health Workers

Clare Edwards (Allerdale)

Carers Health

Worker

Gillian Walker (Copeland)

Young Carers Project Manager:

Deb Vaughan

Young Carers

Support Workers:

Mags Little
Michelle Watson
Gill Wintrup

Administrator:

Vanessa Gray

Volunteer Coordinator:

Nia-maria Quinlan

Transitional Project

Support Worker:

Jacqui Miller

Disclaimer:

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