

Caring with Confidence



The Carers' Centre will again be hosting the Caring with Confidence training programme, starting 23rd February.

This course is completely FREE and will help you to balance your caring role with finding time for yourself.

If you'd like to come, but cannot leave the person you care for, it may be possible to help with respite care and travel costs.

Vinnette (pictured) completed the programme in December. "It really helped my confidence to know there are other people who are going through similar things," she says. "Now I know what services are out there and have the confidence to know how to ask for them."



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Ring Kayley on 020 8563 8014 to sign up for the course and to talk through any problems you might have in attending. All sessions take place from 11.00am – 2.00pm including a free, light lunch.

Finding Your Way

Introduction to the course
Tuesday 23 February 2010

Caring and Coping

Emotions, issues and stress
Tuesday 2 March

Caring and Me

Prioritising your own well-being
Tuesday 9 March

Caring Day to Day

From medication to emergencies
Tuesday 16 March

Caring and Resources

Maximising your income
Tuesday 23 March

Caring and Life

Juggling your roles
Tuesday 30 March

Caring and Communicating

With professionals and service providers
Tuesday 6 April

Moving on

Regular users of the Centre will be sad to hear that Hira Bhanderi is leaving. As ECIL's Head of Advice & Information, based at the Carers' Centre, Hira did an enormous amount to relaunch the Centre after Carers Connect took over its management last year. Our thanks and best wishes go to her as she moves on.



Hira Bhanderi (far left)

Christmas at the Carers' Centre



Don't miss out on up to £250 to help with the cost of caring



Our team can advise

On 4th December the Carers' Centre marked Carers Rights Day by hosting its own conference, opened by Cllr Mark Reen, Portfolio Holder for Adult Services & Health, London Borough of Ealing. A packed audience soaked up an avalanche of info for carers, who were particularly pleased to find out about the one-off Direct Payment for Carers.

Sounds good. What is it?

This payment of up to £250 can be applied for by carers living in the Ealing Borough, but get in quick - the deadline is 31st March and it's possible funds may run out before then. The money is for you as a carer, to meet your needs.

So what can I spend it on?

It could be used to buy a washing machine, or a mobile phone. It could even be used for leisure purposes - including therapy treatments at the Carers' Centre!

How do I get it?

It's paid by Social Services after a short assessment to establish your needs. Kirstie, one of the carers in the audience, reports she was "gobsmacked that I'd never heard about the payment. I've since successfully applied and will be spending it on respite services".

To apply, ring Social Services contact centre on 020 8825 8000 and DO IT NOW!

Supporting working carers



Image: The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

The second half of the conference was devoted to advice on the world of work.

Hardeep Sangha of the Dept of Work & Pensions, talked about the New Deal for Carers strategy, which aims to support carers who may be considering going back to work.

A useful booklet, 'Supporting working carers', is available. Contact the Carers' Centre for a copy.

Weekly - with free refreshments

	When
Drop in for advice and info on Learning disabilities	Thursdays 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Drop in for advice and info on Dementia	Wednesdays 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Drop in for Gentle Keep Fit	<i>Note NEW time</i> Wednesdays 12.30pm - 1.30pm
NEW from 19 Feb - drop in for Carers Central - make connections over coffee & cake	Fridays 10.30am - 12.30pm
Ring for an appointment for Benefits Surgery - help with form filling and support with other issues	Tuesdays & Wednesdays 10.00am - 1.00pm
Ring for an appointment for Therapies - massage, stone therapy, reflexology, hopi ear candling, facials, manicures & pedicures, eyebrow/lash tint	Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays 10.00am - 4.00pm £20 for 50 mins. £10 for 25 mins.

Monthly - with free refreshments

	When
Ealing Mencap Transition Group welcomes carers of young people with learning disabilities. For info call Gabriel Jones 020 8567 9185	Wednesday 10.00am - 12.00pm on: 24 Feb, 24 Mar, 28 Apr, 26 May
Ealing Mencap Carers Together Group - campaigning around learning difficulty. For info call Alka Tripathi 020 8280 2263	10.30am - 12.30pm on: Thu 25 Feb, Thu 25 Mar, Tue 20 May
Coffee mornings for former carers of people with dementia. For info call Isabel Kosky at Alzheimer's Concern 020 8568 4448	Thursday 10.30am - 12.30pm on: 18 Feb, 18 Mar, 15 Apr, 13 May
Call in for a coffee with ContinYou Ealing Parents Partnership Services. For parents & carers of children with special education needs up to age 11	<i>Note NEW time</i> Thursday 10.00am - 12.00pm on: 11 Feb, 11 Mar

Contact the Carers' Centre, or drop in, for full details of dates. If coming for the first time, please double check the time hasn't changed.

Coming soon - Carers Central

You don't need the internet to network! Forget Facebook – come and meet real people at our new regular get-together for creating contacts and friendship. Carers are invited to come in for coffee, cake and conversation every Friday morning. Some weeks we could focus on a particular topic – for instance transport – and kick around ideas, or invite an expert to join us. Let us know what you'd like!

Please make time for yourself and help make this group work.



Carers Central starts on **Fri 19th February** and will be held weekly between **10.30am-12.30pm**.

Help to run the Carers' Centre

Carers' Connect is committed to the idea that carers should have as much input as possible into how the Carers' Centre is run.

Are you interested in joining with other carers, as part of the Carers' Centre management committee? This is not a fully fledged, standalone committee at the moment but it aims to be in the future.

If you think this might be right for you, join us at a future management meeting, to find out more.



The dates are:

Monday 15th March

Monday 12th July

Monday 20th September

Monday 22nd November

All meetings are held at the Carers' Centre, at 2pm.

Carer's Allowance - is it worth claiming?

You might think you're not eligible for it, but it may still be worth applying. Even if you're not entitled to the allowance you might, for example, receive increased housing benefit as a result.



For more information, or to arrange a benefits check, contact the Carers' Centre and we will be pleased to help.

Pamper yourself

Between them, Natasha and Elsa provide a range of therapies here at the Centre (see page opposite), at a discounted rate for carers and disabled people. Ring 020 8840 1566 for more details or to book in.



Single mother Sasha (pictured) cares for two children with disabilities and looks forward to relaxing with Elsa.



"A treatment like a facial makes you feel more womanly again, rather than just a mum and a carer. I don't get much luxury, but here it's affordable."

Paul (pictured) cares for his dad as well as getting up at 2am for his part-time job. He regularly has a hot stone massage with Natasha. "I get a lot of relaxation and stress relief", Paul says. His dad has noticed a difference too. "Before, Paul would be tensed up," he says, "but now he's much more cheerful."

Need somewhere to meet?

The Carers' Centre training room is available for hire for meetings and get-togethers. It has disabled facilities and is available weekdays from 10am-4.30pm at very reasonable cost. All requests for bookings will be considered individually by the Centre Manager.



Ring **020 8840 1566** to discuss a booking.