



Issue 39 - Summer 2008

Carers Week 2008

To support this year's focus on carers' own health, VOCAL has organised a sponsored walk for carers, their families and VOCAL supporters to get active and healthy, and help raise funds for new carer health initiatives:

A walk along the water

Join VOCAL staff and volunteers for a sponsored walk along the Water of Leith, taking in the countryside of Balerno, activities at the Water of Leith Visitors Centre, and the urban stretch to Leith Docks.
More details on page 3

Dynamic trips for carers

Carers are invited to explore tropical rainforests, erupting volcanoes and polar extremes during two free tours of Our Dynamic Earth. Interactive exhibits covering the Earth's past, present and future promise an exciting and informative day.
More details on page 3

Strengthening VOCAL

VOCAL is holding an information evening on Tuesday 10 June to help recruit new members to VOCAL's Board of Directors. The evening will begin at 5.30pm with refreshments followed by a presentation and discussion.

Board members bring a unique combination of caring experience and wider expertise to lead VOCAL and ensure we provide professional services of the highest quality. Members may have gained relevant experience in their community, through work or through their interest in caring.

If you are interested please contact our director Seb Fischer on 0131 622 6666.



Irene and her husband Douglas recently participated in a photo session to help raise carer awareness. If you are interested in getting your photo taken for use in VOCAL publications please contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666.
Tina Norris © 2008

For better or worse?

Radical changes to Edinburgh's home care services for elderly and vulnerable people have been agreed by City of Edinburgh Council. Six-week intensive home care support will soon be offered to new clients to help them regain maximum independence – provided by better trained Council staff working in smaller teams.

The proposal also moves 75% of home care out to independent contractors who at present only provide 50% of services in the city. This will achieve £6.6 million savings.

“Any service modernisation with such enormous impact should have been subject to consultation and public

scrutiny, not rushed through for budget savings” commented VOCAL's chairperson Ann Anderson. “We need increased investment and would have liked to explore the long-term impact on the families and unpaid carers of older people” “Of course, VOCAL will work with carers and the Council to ensure carers and the people they care for receive the best support. We want to hear from carers about the home care experiences and how changes impact on them to feed back success and failure to those responsible.”

See page 5 for a summary and details of the Council's new Home Care proposals.

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What do we do?

The following services are available to carers:

- Information and Advice
- Training
- Groupwork
- Counselling
- Advocacy
- Support to carers
- Family Support (Addictions)
- VOCAL Midlothian
- South Edinburgh service

How to contact us:

Address

VOCAL Carers Centre
8 - 13 Johnston Terrace
Edinburgh EH1 2PW

Telephone

0131 622 6666 - General
0131 622 7625 - Advocacy
0131 466 8082 - Counselling
0131 622 6262 - Family Support (Addictions)
0131 644 8506 - Family Support South Edinburgh
0131 663 6869 - VOCAL Midlothian
0131 672 0987 - VOCAL South Edinburgh

Email and website

centre@vocal.org.uk
www.vocal.org.uk

VOCAL manages the Princess Royal Trust Edinburgh Carers Centre. Through its network of 122 Carers' Centres in Scotland and the UK, the Trust provides information, advice and support services to over a quarter of a million carers.

Many thanks to Sean and his team at Hampden Advertising for their help and assistance. If you would like to include an article in Carers News please contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666 or send an email to centre@vocal.org.uk

Dear carers and readers

For better or worse? is the headline question of this edition of Carers News and I find myself answering this question at another crucial time for the carers' movement in Lothian and nationally.

For better ...

We have the four new posts in Lothian funded by the Moffat Charitable Trust, two of which will be directly managed by VOCAL. These posts are aimed at improving the carers' experiences of hospital discharge and carer assessments. Two of the posts will be embedded with Health and Social Care Teams based in Edinburgh and at the Royal Infirmary and St John's hospitals. A great opportunity to improve understanding of the issues carers face and to strengthen the support offered - so definitely for the better. More detail can be found on page 7.

For worse ...

New Single Outcomes Agreements will be agreed between the Scottish Government and each local authority. These agreements will set out what targets and outcomes each local authority will need to achieve and report to the Government, and it will generally define where local authorities spend their money.

These agreements have to be in place for June this year and early indications are that community care is not high on the agenda of most authorities.

As ever carer organisations are watching carefully and VOCAL alongside the Coalition of Carers in Scotland will be discussing how we can make sure that in the future these Single Outcome Agreements work for carers - so watch this space!

Finally I'd like to draw your attention to the different events we are holding during Carers Week, from a chance to raise your fitness levels and funds for carers by walking the Water of Leith, to dynamic trips to the rainforests and polar extremes at Our Dynamic Earth. Come along and join in!

Best wishes

Ann Anderson



Making donations to VOCAL

VOCAL's services are free, but carers often ask how they can make donations. Donations to VOCAL can be made through our online donation facility at www.justgiving.com/vocal where Gift Aid is automatically reclaimed on any donation you make.

Your guide to Carers Week 2008 at VOCAL

Carers Week 2008 runs from 9 - 15 June



Water of Leith sponsored walk

To launch Carers Week 2008, VOCAL is organising a sponsored walk along the Water of Leith for everyone who supports carers. Starting at Balerno High School on Sunday 8 June (11am) the walk is suitable for all ages and abilities.

Children and wheelchair users are welcome, particularly for the first stage, a five-mile walk to the Water of Leith Visitors Centre on Slateford Road. Walkers will have free entry into the centre for tea, refreshments and a chance to explore exhibits, interactive displays and play areas. Some may choose to end their walk at the centre, or even join the group at this stage.

The walk will then continue for a further 7.5 miles to Leith Docks. A Countryside Ranger will accompany the group to point out plants and wildlife to children, finding spots where fish, otters and foxes have been spotted. More information and registration packs are available, please contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666.

Sunday, 8 June, 10.30am for an 11am start at Balerno High School

Two trips to Our Dynamic Earth

Carers have a choice of two free trips to Our Dynamic Earth (112 Holyrood Road) on Tuesday and Friday of Carers Week (10 and 13 June). The tour will take in a range of exhibits including an earthquake simulator! For more information on the tours contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666.

Tuesday 10 or Friday 13 June, 11.45am at Dynamic Earth. Carers can also meet at VOCAL at 11.15am and walk to venue with VOCAL staff

Daffodil tea party at Marie Curie

VOCAL is joining forces with the Marie Curie Volunteer Visiting Service who are hosting a daffodil tea party for carers. Teas, coffees and home baking will be served and complementary therapies will be available for carers to try. Staff from VOCAL and the hospice community team will be attending to give advice and support to carers and the event will finish with a raffle. For more information call the Volunteer Visiting Service on 0131 470 2254.

Tuesday, 10 June, 1.00 – 3.00pm, Marie Curie, Frogston Road West

A full list of Carer Week activities around Edinburgh can be found on VOCAL's website: www.vocal.org.uk. A special e-bulletin will also be circulated - to get on the list send your email address to centre@vocal.org.uk. For more details about events for Carers Week, see Dates for your Diary on the back page of this newsletter

Queen Margaret University - Higher Education Certificate in Care



Queen Margaret University
EDINBURGH

If you care for a member of your family, a friend or a neighbour then you might be interested in the Higher Education Certificate in Care. Through your experience, you have already gained considerable knowledge and skills. This programme will provide you with opportunities to further develop your knowledge in relation to your caring skills. The study programme is flexible and if you have been out of education for some time this is a great way to get back into learning and gain a recognised qualification.

If you would like more information please contact: Martina Balaam or Kristina Mountain, Joint Programme Leaders, School of Health Sciences, Queen Margaret University, 0131 474 0000, email: MBalaam@qmu.ac.uk or KMountain@qmu.ac.uk



Hand-made goods at affordable prices

Centrally located at 23a Castle Street, The Royal Edinburgh Repository and Self Aid Society shop is a real treasure trove of new, hand-made goods of the highest quality, sold at affordable prices.

Items for sale (as pictured below) range from home-baking and preserves to knitwear, Shetland shawls and toys. They are made by the Society's members - people of limited means who want to increase their income through sale of their handiwork. All proceeds from the sale of goods are paid directly to the members with no commission charged.

The Society aims to provide imaginative ways of encouraging people to continue to live in their own homes using the skills they have acquired over the years. Many of their members are carers or former carers.

If you are on a low income and skilled in knitting, sewing, arts and crafts, baking, jam or sweet making, you can approach the Society to become a member - provided you do not work full time or sell your work elsewhere. Contact Posy on 0131 220 1187 or drop into the shop for more information.



In the last issue we looked at the Welfare Reform Act and new Employment Support Allowance expected to take effect in the Autumn. The next issue of Carers News (September 2008) will look at this topic in more detail.

Benefit rates for 2008/2009

Carers Allowance	£50.55 (per week)
Earnings limit for claimant	£95.00 (per week)
Disability Living Allowance	
Highest rate care	£67.00 (per week)
Middle rate care	£44.85 (per week)
Lowest rate care	£17.75 (per week)
Higher rate mobility	£46.75 (per week)
Lower rate mobility	£17.75 (per week)
Attendance Allowance	
Higher rate	£67.00 (per week)
Lower rate	£44.85 (per week)

New help to beat cancer

NHS Lothian is about to launch a new way of tackling cancer. A new screening programme means that people with bowel cancer will be picked up early, maximising the chances of successful treatment. Men and women aged 50-74 in Lothian will be sent a testing kit, starting from May, and asked to help protect their own health by taking part in the screening.

Bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in Scotland. Every year 3,500 people are diagnosed with the disease and 1,600 people die from it. Men are at higher risk than women.

Dr Dermot Gorman, who is leading the launch of the Scottish Bowel Screening Programme in Lothian, said: "We know the chances of successfully treating bowel cancer are much higher when the disease is detected at an early stage. I would urge everyone receiving the testing kit to take part in the scheme. The test is easy to do and this screening programme will save lives."

The Lothian programme is part of a national scheme being introduced across Scotland. Pilots in NHS Tayside and NHS Grampian have already proved that this screening programme will save lives.

NHS Health Scotland has sent information on the programme to pharmacists and general practitioners in Lothian. For more details see: www.bowelscreening.scot.nhs.uk or 0845 270 0030

For better or worse? . . . continued from front page

New Home Care proposals in Edinburgh aim to modernise current provision and establish a new model:

- ▼ A re-enablement service, provided by better trained Council staff: all new clients will receive comprehensive and intensive home care support for the first six weeks of care, with rigorous reviews. 'Re-enablement' seeks to support people to live as independently as possible rather than making them dependent on services
- ▼ After the first six weeks, and subject to review and requirements, ongoing home care support will be purchased from external care-at-home providers
- ▼ After the first six weeks, those with a need for the most complex care packages will continue to be supported by an internal service provided by staff with higher qualification levels and more experience of complex care
- ▼ Home care provision at the times clients need it most, with more provision in the evenings and at weekends. The report claims that of the current 1,375 home helps and social care workers, approximately 50% have contracts for 9am – 1pm, Monday to Friday, which no longer meets the needs of clients
- ▼ Regular dedicated care reviews, not just for people receiving Council services but also for those receiving services from private care agencies
- ▼ The development of new integrated community nursing and home care models similar to those used successfully in Scandinavia
- ▼ A move away from central provision to small team working in order to improve holiday and sickness cover, and better links with nursing teams for more reliable and efficient care for clients

Currently, Edinburgh's home care 'market' is made up of in-house services provided by the Council's Home Care staff, and services purchased from private and voluntary sector agencies. In-house services account for approximately 50% of the market, with private and voluntary agencies making up the other 50%.

The Council's vision is that in six years' time the Council's share of the market will have reduced to 25%, and private and independent providers will command 75%. As external providers are cheaper than the Council's own services, this proposal can save £6.6 million over the next six years.

Website: http://cpol.edinburgh.gov.uk/getdoc_ext.asp?DocID=108364 (copy of full six-page report)



2008 – focus on respite

Regular breaks from caring remain the top priority of unpaid carers across Scotland and the UK. This has been recognised by the Scottish Government who are about to publish national respite guidance to NHS and local authorities.

On 16 April, Edinburgh Council published a comprehensive local report on the *Combined Respite and Short Breaks Services in Edinburgh*, describing the current state of NHS and Council commissioned respite and short breaks services for all client groups and all ages within Edinburgh. This report is available from the Edinburgh Community Health Partnership website (see below) and marks a new focus on the development of better respite services in the City.

In response to the report, VOCAL has hosted an initial meeting with the main voluntary sector agencies to discuss how national guidance and this local report can be used to develop better services. Both are important building blocks for the implementation of new respite targets contained in *Towards 2012*, the City's new strategic action plan for carer services. Together with national agencies like Shared Care Scotland, VOCAL will lead the local campaign for better respite services for Edinburgh's 40,000 unpaid carers.

Website: www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/community/edinburghCHPs/committee/edinchp.asp

Keep counting carers

Carers in England and Wales have won their battle to keep a question on caring in the 2011 census. Treasury Minister Angela Eagle confirmed money has been made available for an extra page of questions. The campaign continues in Scotland, see the Carers Scotland's website www.carerscotland.org/Newsandcampaigns/KeepCountingCarers

VOCAL runs training courses offering information and support to carers, through a series of weekly sessions with expert speakers and professionals. Courses are free with travel and care costs reimbursed. Free lunch is provided, helping carers to benefit from valuable peer support. Unless stated otherwise, training courses take place at VOCAL Carers Centre. For more information or to register for any of the courses contact VOCAL's training team, Debbie and Jane, on 0131 622 6666.

Starting in May

Caring for someone and looking after yourself

Focusing on the needs of the carer, this course looks at diet and nutrition, stress management, body M.O.T. and an active lifestyle.

7 May - 11 June, 10am to 1pm

What follows school for children with additional needs?

This five week course answers many of the questions that parents of children with additional needs have as their child moves into adulthood. The course is designed specifically for parents of children aged between fourteen and sixteen who are making the transition to adulthood in the next couple of years.

27 May - 24 June, 10am to 1pm

Starting in June

Looking to the future with someone with a learning disability

For carers of someone with a learning disability who have questions and concerns about the future. The course looks at living in the community, support available, communication, decision making and money matters.

5 June - 24 July, 10am - 1pm

Tour of the SMART Centre

This tour is for carers of someone with mobility problems. Learn about the work of the centre and see a wide range of equipment to make life easier for someone with disabilities. There are large items such as chairs and beds through to smaller items such as kettle tippers and cutlery.

2 June, 10am - 12.30pm

Starting in September

Caring for a child with additional needs

A seven week course for people caring for a child with additional support needs. The course looks at diet, medicine, support from social services, the education system, communication and affects of caring. The final session focuses on the ways carers can look after themselves, dealing with stress and learning about different ways to relax.

2 September - 14 October, 10am - 1pm

Caring for someone who has had a stroke

This eight week course deals with secondary stroke prevention, medication and lifestyle management, communication problems, behaviour and mood changes, physical problems, support in the community and changing relationships. The final session focuses on the ways carers can help themselves, dealing with stress and learning about ways to relax.

3 September - 22 October, 10am - 12.30pm

Foot care seminar

For carers who help someone with foot care and do things like washing their feet or cutting their toenails. Someone from the Podiatry Team will talk about how you can help someone else to have healthy feet and suggest techniques to make things easier for you.

4 September, 10.30am - 12.00pm

VOCAL is looking for carers who are interested in telling their story. There are few things more powerful than hearing from a carer about their caring role, how it has effected them and how they have coped. Hearing carers' experiences first hand can help shape policy, influence professionals working with carers and improve services. Sharing your story can be a very empowering and positive activity. If you are interested in working with VOCAL to tell your story, please contact Jane on 0131 622 6666 for an initial discussion.

Can we offer you a life line?

VOCAL carers groupwork programme for Summer 2008 includes a range of free workshops open to carers and those who have been carers within the last two years. Workshops take place either at VOCAL Carers Centre or another venue and run from 10.30am – 3pm. Lunch is provided and help with travel and sitter costs is available if needed. Numbers are limited to twelve for each workshop so please book early to ensure a place. Please contact Ada Blair on 0131 466 8082 for more information or to book a place.

We are very pleased to welcome Mairi Nye, our new sessional groupworker, to VOCAL. She is an experienced groupworker, trainer and counsellor and will be working with Ada on the groupwork programme. Funding from the Cattanach Charitable Trust has enabled us to fund this post. In addition to our usual programme of workshops at Johnston Terrace we will now run workshops in other areas of Edinburgh.

Changing relationships - Wednesday, 11 June

This workshop looks at how becoming a carer can affect relationships with family, friends and others and how to manage these changes

Venue: South Edinburgh – venue to be decided

Changing relationships - Monday, 16 June

Workshop content as above.

Venue: VOCAL Carers Centre, Johnston Terrace

Dealing with guilt - Thursday, 14 August

In this workshop we discuss what we mean by guilt, how to let go inappropriate feelings of guilt and find ways to accept our feelings

Venue: VOCAL Carers Centre, Johnston Terrace

Moffat Trust funding

A Scottish charity, The Moffat Charitable Trust, has donated £1million to The Princess Royal Trust for Carers to fund a two year pilot project to reduce waiting times for hospital discharge and to prevent emergency re-admissions to hospital.

NHS Lothian was one of four Health Boards chosen for the pilot. Recognising that a planned discharge from hospital will have benefits for the NHS, the patient and the carer, support will be given to the carer to ensure appropriate care packages are in place before the patient is discharged from hospital.

Carer Support Workers have now been recruited to take this work forward. Rosyln Scott will be based at Springwell House, initially covering hospital discharge in the north west and south west of the city. Claire Easton will cover the Midlothian area, focusing on carer's assessments. Both workers will be managed by VOCAL. A further two workers - Keith Lugton and Claire Thomas - will cover the West Lothian and East Lothian areas respectively and will be managed by Carers of West Lothian and Carers of East Lothian.

For more information on this new pilot please contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666

Remember me? - Wednesday, 27 August


This workshop focuses on you, not only in your role as carer, but reminding you of the parts of yourself - who you were before becoming a carer and who you are now

Venue: Midlothian - venue to be decided

Dealing with guilt - Wednesday 10 September

Workshop content as above.

Venue: North Edinburgh – venue to be decided



Part of the Department for Work and Pensions

Are you or the person you care for over 60? At VOCAL's Pension Credit surgery you can find out if you are entitled to Pension Credit which is available to people over 60 on low incomes. Call Sheena at VOCAL on 0131 622 6666 to find out more.

Royal Edinburgh update

NHS Lothian are reviewing the future of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital (REH). The review process is called the 'REH Campus Project Review' and a recent Stakeholder Briefing Paper broadly outlined proposed changes.

Movement towards home care and community-based care settings continues with proposals for two home treatment teams, community rehabilitation and an inter-disciplinary Challenging Behaviour Team.

More information is available from www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/hospitals/reh/campus_review.asp. You can also contact Edinburgh Carers Council on 554 5153 or VOCAL on 622 6666.

Dates for your diary

Carers Week events

A full programme of Carers Week events is available from VOCAL's website www.vocal.org.uk. A special e-bulletin will be circulated nearer to the time. If you have an email address and would like to join the carers email group, simply send an email to centre@vocal.org.uk

Water of Leith sponsored walk

Join VOCAL staff, volunteers and carers for a fun-filled walk along the diverse and scenic Water of Leith walkway. Activities for young and old throughout the walk. For more information contact VOCAL on 0131 622 6666 and see page 3 for more details.

Sunday, 8 June, 10.30am for 11am start at Balerno High School. You can also join the walk at the midway break at the Water of Leith Visitors Centre.

Governance at VOCAL

A recruitment evening for carers interested in joining VOCAL's Board of Directors (Management Committee). Please contact our director Seb Fischer on 622 6666

Tuesday, 10 June, starts 5.30pm at VOCAL

Our Dynamic Earth

Two trips have been organised for carers to experience natural phenomena and learn about the earth's history and future at the Our Dynamic Earth centre (112 Holyrood Road). Call VOCAL on 622 6666

Tuesday and Friday, 10 & 13 June, 11.45am - 2pm

Carers in Midlothian

VOCAL Midlothian is organising a number of Carers Week events for carers in the Midlothian area. For more information call 0131 663 6869

Carers Book Group

A monthly reading group for carers offering the chance to meet other carers and chat about books. Call Rosie on 622 6666.

2nd Tuesday of every month, 6.30 - 8pm, VOCAL

Hearing Voices Groups

Support groups for people who would like to learn to cope with unwanted voices and talk to others in the same situation. Groups take place at **The HIVE, Royal Edinburgh Hospital** (537 8650), at **Inchkeith House** (537 4530) and at **Cambridge Street House** (537 8650). For more details call any of the numbers above and ask about the groups.

Family Support Addictions Service

VOCAL's Family Support Addictions service runs support groups for people affected by someone's drug or alcohol use. Contact Moira on 0131 622 6262 for more information:

Tuesday evening groups

Two support groups - one for people affected by someone's alcohol use, the other for people affected by someone's drug use.

Tuesday, beginning of each month at VOCAL

Are you concerned about someone's drinking behaviour?

VOCAL is running four 3 week courses for carers at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital starting Wednesday 28 May, from 6.30 - 8pm.

If you would like to update or remove your details, or would like your name added to VOCAL's mailing list to receive Carers News, then complete this form and return to: VOCAL Carers Centre, FREEPOST 3172, Edinburgh, EH1 OXG

Carers

Title: Name: Add

Address: Remove

Previous address (if updating): Update

Postcode: Tel: Email:

Condition of person being cared for:

Relationship to person being cared for:

Your details will be stored on VOCAL's database and we will send you useful information and publications related to your caring situation. Email addresses will be added to our Carers Email Group to receive bi-monthly e-bulletins. We will not share your details with anyone else without first obtaining your consent. You can remove your details at any time by notifying VOCAL.

Professionals

Title: Name: Add

Organisation/Address: Remove

Tel: Email: Update

Your details will be stored on VOCAL's database. You can remove your details at any time by notifying VOCAL