

Prevention is better than cure!

Keep well this winter - take steps NOW to ensure your health comes first

When you are caring for a family member, partner or friend, your own health often takes a back seat. Putting yourself first is important but can be difficult, which is one of the reasons there are extra supports available to Midlothian carers to ensure you stay healthy and well this winter.

Get a health MOT

VOCAL works with the Community Health Inequalities Team (CHIT) to offer free one hour appointments for carers with a nurse, who will carry out a health check and provide a space for you to talk about issues that may be affecting your health.

Follow-up appointments are also available and the nurse can make referrals to other specialist services and support if required. Appointments take place on a monthly basis at the VOCAL Midlothian Carer Centre (see contact details below).

Free flu jabs for carers

All carers in Scotland are entitled to a free flu vaccination, so if you have not already received your jab or heard from your GP surgery, contact them today to book an appointment or attend one of their drop-in flu clinics.

Keeping fit and well

Taking time away from your caring role will help you to keep in good health. Check out the Wee Breaks Midlothian website - weebreaks.org - for ideas about local social and leisure activities, places to go, freebies and funding opportunities.

To book a nurse appointment, find out more about free flu jabs for carers or speak to someone about taking time away from your caring role please contact VOCAL Midlothian at midlothian@vocal.org.uk or call the carer support team on **0131 663 6869**.

Free events & courses for carers

Dementia information day:

15 Nov 10am - 2.30pm or 18 Jan 2018 10am - 2.30pm

Switching Lab - save money on your energy bills:

7 Nov 10am - 1pm or 27 Nov 1 - 3pm

Preparing for end of caring - from 31 Jan 2018:

A series of short courses run by VOCAL and Marie Curie exploring the decisions and arrangements that are made when someone dies. For those whose caring role has come to an end, we will look at what comes next.

To find out more or register visit careevents.co.uk or contact VOCAL Midlothian (details on page 2).



July 2017: VOCAL Midlothian were delighted to welcome new Midlothian Carers Champion Councillor Margot Russell to the VOCAL Carer Centre to meet carers.



Sept 2017: Pauline Quinn from VOCAL visited Danderhall library to receive a cheque for £551.15 raised by their coffee morning group.

Midlothian carers news

Update on the Carers (Scotland) Act

Under the new Carers (Scotland) Act, which will come into force in April 2018, a carer is defined as 'an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual' removing the previous requirement to prove 'regular and substantial' caring responsibilities.

From April 2018 all carers will have a right to request and receive an Adult Carer Support Plan. The plan is an opportunity to discuss your caring role, your aspirations and needs, and planning for the future, including emergencies.

VOCAL will keep you informed about further developments through our newsletter, and also by email and social media. If you haven't already provided us with your email address please contact us - details below.

Carers Action Midlothian is a carer-led partnership group including carers, Council planning officers and voluntary sector organisations. Over the coming months the group will be discussing the new Act and what it means for carers in Midlothian. To get involved please contact Pauline Quinn at VOCAL - email pquinn@vocal.org.uk or call **0131 663 6869**.

New faces for Wee Breaks Midlothian

VOCAL is delighted to welcome David Walker (Short Breaks Officer) and Linda Walker (Carer Support Worker) to the Wee Breaks Midlothian team which supports carers to take time away from their caring role.



Many carers feel guilt and worry about the person they care for when considering a break. David and Linda will guide you through the process, help you identify what would make a real difference and support you to put that in place.

For support to arrange a break, contact Wee Breaks Midlothian on 0131 663 6869 or visit weebreaks.org



Sept 2017: Thank you to all the walkers who completed the Walk the Line event! To get involved in future fundraising events contact fundraising@vocal.org.uk or call 0131 622 6666.



Aug 2017: Proud mum Leanne Ewens and family attended the Sheffield Special Olympics with support from VOCAL Midlothian, Clevedon Forbes Fund and Lothian Special Olympics to watch daughter Chloe (above right) win 2 gold medals in boccia.

Supporting someone with a drug or alcohol addiction

VOCAL Midlothian's Family Support Addictions service works with people who are affected by someone else's drinking or drug use.

Having a loved one who is using drugs or alcohol can be stressful and difficult to deal with. Many people experience feelings of isolation and often have nowhere to turn for support.

This service aims to reduce these feelings, focussing on your own needs and offering a safe space for you to speak in confidence. We also run regular SMART Recovery meetings for families and friends exploring ways to help you achieve a more balanced lifestyle. Meetings are twice monthly on Thursdays, 10am-12pm or 1pm-3pm at VOCAL Midlothian Carers Centre.

For more information contact Ashleigh at asoltani@vocal.org.uk or call 0131 663 6869.

Caring for someone with a physical disability?

Midlothian Council's **Joint Physical Disability Planning Group** meets every 8 weeks and is keen to attract new members. If you or the person you care for would like to get involved please contact Jayne Lewis at Midlothian Council - call **0131 271 3665** or email jayne.lewis@midlothian.gov.uk

Where to find VOCAL Midlothian:

VOCAL Midlothian Carer Centre:
30/1 Hardengreen Estate,
Dalhousie Road, Dalkeith EH22 3NX
Tel: 0131 663 6869

Email: midlothian@vocal.org.uk

Web: www.vocal.org.uk

Find us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/MidlothianCarers

