

Carers' Gazette

News for carers in Pembrokeshire
Issue 34 - February 2011

CARERS RIGHTS DAY

Was held on Friday 3rd December 2010 at the Letterston Memorial Hall, with the theme

'Know Your Rights'

In spite of snow that fell in the early morning, 34 carers and other professionals attended the day and were presented with talks about benefits, the carers assessment and the contingency plan 'In Case of Emergency'.

At the Carers Forum we heard from carers when we asked "As a carer, what have you found helpful in getting to know your rights or understand your rights? And what would help you to do so?". Their responses included -

- "I don't understand my rights as it is a minefield"*
- "Getting support to access the help that is out there (from The Rowan, Alzheimer's Society etc), having problems with managing the system"*
- "Meetings like this help me getting to know and understand my rights"*

Another question we asked the Carers Forum was: "What issues would you like to discuss at future Carer's Forum events?" Carers answered:

- The role of social worker, how does one get one?
- Surviving as a carer – coping strategies
- Benefits of Direct payments, being in control and things to watch out for!
- Dealing with difficult feelings, guilt, depression etc.



PEMBROKESHIRE
ASSOCIATION OF
VOLUNTARY SERVICES

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If you would like to receive regular news via e-mail please let me know by sending a message to Nicole.vanschie@pavs.org.uk

Newsletters are also available electronically at www.pavs.org.uk/carers



A day in the life of Robert Havard, Carer

Background:

Robert was brought up in Newport, Pembrokeshire at the local ironmongers shop. He went to the primary school in Newport and the 'Secondary Modern' -as it was then- in Fishguard in the sixties. Robert started work in leisure centres and did that for 20 years, first in Haverfordwest and finally with management of the swimming pool in Stratford upon Avon. Then Robert came back to Newport where he ran the family business for 10 years (usually in his shorts!). In 2001 he moved to Fishguard. Five years ago Robert went back to training at Pembrokeshire College. Last year he was successful in obtaining his BSc Honours in architectural technology and is now looking for work.

Who do you care for?

I care for Rebecca, my daughter, who is 17 years old. She was assessed by the paediatrician when at primary school age and is statemented with educational and behavioural problems. Rebecca also has a form of epilepsy. With her learning difficulties she attends Portfield School in Haverfordwest. Soon Rebecca will be 18 and because there is no medical diagnosis I am concerned about support after transition. But I have been reassured that because she is at Portfield now that should be an indication of the need, and a trigger for social care after Easter.

What is your usual daily routine?

I get up in the morning to get Rebecca ready for school and off to the school bus. I am at home all day. Since I finished at the college I haven't found a job yet, there isn't a lot going for me at the moment. When Rebecca comes home from school she goes to friends at the neighbours, while I cook a meal for our family -my middle son lives at home as well- and we have dinner together. Rebecca gets herself to bed but I have to be around and keep an eye.

What support do you have?

Every other week Rebecca goes to the Jam session in Haverfordwest where I drop her off and then do my weekly shopping, have a coffee and read the paper before picking her up again. She also goes to Holly House one night every week, where they help her with her personal hygiene, as it is not appropriate for me now she is a teenager. We also have a Barnardos volunteer for a few hours per week, who picks Rebecca up from school and takes her out. All this will be finished now by Easter, when Rebecca is 18 years old. We have a key-worker who is looking into transition. We have been told that we will get Direct Payments and I hope that Rebecca will have supervised living accommodation.

What has been your worst experience?

When my wife passed away, that was very traumatic, for all of us. In some ways Rebecca coped better with it than we did. Before she died my wife was helping with the care for Rebecca, it is hard going from a shared caring role to doing it alone. I can't do the care for both of us; I find it a pity, as there are limitations.

What has been most helpful?

I think perhaps the assurance that there are people out there who can help. Organisations like Barnardos, Holly House providing short breaks, the key-worker at the Child Care team. There have also been gaps in the support and when it comes down to it you are on your own. Family living locally are supportive in their own way.

What would you like to see changed to make it easier for carers?

After many years of caring I was offered counselling. It would help if there were a dedicated counselling service for carers and their immediate family.



The offer of this support at an early stage to help you come to terms with being a carer would make it easier.

What advice would you offer other carers?

Before we had the Carers Gazette and all the information we have received, we knew nothing about what we could claim for, where we could get support. At the early stage when you are becoming a carer, you need to know where to go for information and for help.

When the child is statemented, the education department -who recognised that this person needs help- could give information or pass your name on to someone else that can give advice. For other people it might be the doctor who diagnosed, he/she should then put you in touch with the relevant organisation or pass your name for benefits, allowances, respite etc. There should be a One Stop Shop – one telephone number.

A day in the life of Katherine Clegg

Job Title: Dementia Support Manager at the Alzheimer's Society.

What is your role?

My role is twofold. I look after the needs of people with dementia, supporting them and ensuring they get access to the care they need. To achieve this, you have to look after the needs of their carers. We do that by being here at Pembrokeshire Alzheimer's Society's local office in Milford Haven. Carers can email us, telephone us, or come in to the office where we have some 200 leaflets with dementia related information and advice regarding personal hygiene, nutrition, day care, residential homes, financial and legal matters, etc. We also provide an outreach service and I currently visit 3 or 4 carers each week, either in their own homes or at a convenient location.

At the moment we receive several phone calls and emails each week from family and friends of carers who live away, who find out about us from the website. Once we actually visit the carer and the person with dementia we can offer advice, support in the form of befriending or respite, information about the 4 local support and social groups and also help with filling in forms. We explain about and invite carers to the 6 weeks Carers Information programme and to the 2 week Dementia Education Programme.

Describe a typical working day?

During a typical working day I would be answering phone calls from carers, responding to emails, doing outreach work, attending meetings or running the carers support and social groups. I also go to fund raising meetings or to give talks about the society, for example to a Rotary Club or WI. This raises the awareness of dementia, the effects on the person as well as on the carer and it helps to raise funds for our work.

Background

Katherine was born and brought up in Croydon, Surrey. She trained as a Primary School teacher in 1994 and became a Special Needs teacher at a mainstream school. Katherine moved on to be a deputy head teacher briefly and worked long hours. She was also a member on the Special Education Statement panel and would have loved to have gone on to become an educational psychologist. Once Katherine had her first child they moved to Pembrokeshire in 2006, as her sister and family already lived here. She started working full time for the Alzheimer's Society in 2008 and now has three children.

What is the best part of your job?

I love meeting new carers and being able to help them sort out various services and support which will make their life, and that of their cared for, easier. It is so satisfying when a carer later rings up to say that they have successfully acted on the advice we gave them, such as setting up Direct Payments, or organising a power of attorney with the solicitor. We encourage people to sort those things out when it is still possible.

How much of your time is spent working with carers issues?

I spend about half my time on carer's issues, but it is hard to separate the work for carers from the work for the person with dementia. We try to support carers through each stage of the journey, as the situation changes and their cared for may require more support or a move into a care home.

At each new stage I help to find leaflets with appropriate information; do referrals for Carer or Community Care Assessments and explain that Social Services are there to help, and that they can always turn the service down at a later date if it isn't helpful or request additional support. Often support initially centres around the person with dementia's needs and overlooks the needs of the carer, for example replacement care so that they can have a little break from caring, re-charge their batteries and come out of their isolating position.

**What is the biggest problem you encounter?**

Some people come to us so late, if we could help them in the earlier stages of dementia they could be supported much better and this could prevent crisis situations arising.

I wish people would come sooner and accept our help or at least allow us to signpost them to all the help available and all the agencies in Pembrokeshire that help carers. Coming to the Carers Information programme first is so important to understand:

- the effect of dementia on the person with dementia and on the carer
- the changes that might occur as the dementia progresses
- how important stimulation, exercise and occupation can be for keeping peoples minds active
- how many agencies there are in Pembrokeshire ready and willing to support carers in so many ways

After or alongside this programme carers can join the two half day Carers Education Programme which discusses the dementia environment and nutrition and hydration, or join one of the four Carer Support Groups and enjoy wonderful refreshments, simple activities and speakers, and gain simple but invaluable tips from other carers.

If there were no carers, what impact would this have on your organisation?

That would make my work a lot harder as we rely on carers to look after the people with dementia. However we do have a significant group of people who don't have a carer living with them. We support other agencies in keeping an eye on them, provide a befriender where possible, telephone them or pop in regularly and also keep distant family members informed. We liaise with professionals such as Community Psychiatric Nurses (CPNs) or social workers when appropriate to ensure that all our clients are safe and well.

What changes would you like to see to benefit carers?

The idea of a generic one stop shop where carers can go and get all the information they need in one place is an interesting one. Fortunately the agencies in Pembrokeshire work well together and highlight other agencies relevant for carers, but a generic carers support service would alleviate difficulties and ensure all carers receive the services they are entitled to. Also I think some assessment forms could be simplified and more support offered to people to help them fill these out.

I would like to see carers being offered support more individually tailored to their needs, including weekly respite from their role and discounted social activities and courses.

Pembrokeshire Alzheimer's Society

are presenting a series of information sessions for carers. The carers Information Programme runs for 6 Wednesdays from the 16th Feb till 23rd March.

Topics included are

- Understanding Dementia,
- Stress and Managing Difficult Behaviour,
- Legal matters,
- Pensions services,
- Direct Payments,
- Voluntary organisations who support carers,
- and Occupation and Cognitive Stimulation.

The sessions begin at 10am with coffee, and end at 12.45, after which lunch is served for those who wish to stay and chat. The course will be held at the Pembrokeshire office Suite 18, Cedar Court, Haven's Head Business Park in Milford Haven SA73 3LS.

Please ring Mike on 01646 692329 if you would like more details, to put your name down or for information regarding the Carers Support Groups at four different locations in Pembrokeshire.



The Torch Theatre Company presents:

Flowers from Tunisia by Laurence Allan

5 May 2011 - 14 May 2011

There's nothing like a bit of romance to spice up your holiday - a camel ride through the desert, a Bedouin banquet, a mystery tour through the walled medina. But when Reah, a woman suffering from the early stages of dementia, announces to her ex-serviceman son that she is becoming engaged to Khalid, a seventeen year old flower seller from Tunisia, memory and tradition collide in surprising ways.

A brave, absorbing and poignant play which explores a delicate subject with humour and compassion, this is a timely revival of an acclaimed drama from Laurence Allan - one of Wales' finest and most experienced playwrights.

The Pembrokeshire Alzheimer's Society will be present in the foyer each evening to hand out leaflets and give information. They will also hold a collection on behalf of the Alzheimer's Society at the end of the performance.



Crossroads Care News

NVQ and Long service presentation.

Mrs Jacque Peters, Regional Manager came to the Staff Meeting on the 16th January to present members of the staff with badges and certificates.

Valerie Williams, Mike Thomas Palmer, Amanda Davies and Allison Corcoran all had completed their Level 2 in Health & Social Care. Long service badge was given to Christine Blackburn, also to be presented were Helen Sutherland and other members who were unable to attend on the day.



CROSSROADS CARE

Saturday Clubs

Wintern Saturday Club started on 8th January in Fishguard and is open every other week for Carers -who care for family with memory problems and dementia mainly- to have a break . We are open from 10.00 to 4.00 with lunch provided.

Please contact the Crossroads office in Haverfordwest for more details on 01437 764639.

Both our other Saturday Clubs in Havenhurst Milford Haven and The Anchorage Pembroke Dock have vacancies at the moment.

Friends of Crossroads in Pembrokeshire

The Line dancing evening organised by Alan and Sheila Spence in Carew Memorial Hall on November 13th was a wonderful evening which raised £670. This event was suggested by a carer who had received service from Crossroads, many thanks to them all.

The Christmas Bingo held in Haverfordwest Cricket Club was a wonderful success. This was organised by Sue Hayes & Gillian Studley with Queenie Thomas and Friends supporting them. We had an excellent turnout the: club was full. The Bingo caller was Hillyard Studley who was very entertaining. The evening raised £1,067 which is an amazing amount many thanks to all involved. Next event will be the Easter Saturday Coffee Morning in St Davids.



CYSWLLT CONTACT

COFFEE MORNINGS FOR CARERS IN PEMBROKESHIRE

Are you a carer affected by the use of drugs or alcohol? Or do you care for someone affected by drugs or alcohol? If you can say yes to either of the above then there are two events coming up locally that will be of interest to you.

Pembrokeshire's Peer Mentoring Scheme is hosting 2 coffee mornings to give you the opportunity to take the load off your feet, meet with other carers and guest speakers, to find out about what substance misuse services are available in Pembrokeshire, and also to have your say on what you feel is needed.

The first coffee morning is at the Pater Hall, Lewis Street, Pembroke Dock, SA72 6DD on **Thursday 17th of February** from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Taking place in the Warrior Suite, accessed from Lewis Street and with a stair lift available.

This will be followed by a second coffee morning on **Wednesday 9th of March** at the Picton Centre, Freemans Way, Haverfordwest, SA61 1UG from 1.30 to 3.30pm.

Come along at any time during those sessions – all are welcome!

For further details about these events please contact Rob Allen on 01970 626470 or Julie Pritchard on 01239 623831.



NATIONAL PEER MENTORING SCHEME IN PEMBROKESHIRE

The National Peer Mentoring Scheme is an initiative which provides additional support for people who have been affected by drugs or alcohol and who are seeking to make positive changes in their lives. Uniquely the support is provided by trained volunteers who know what it is like to have problems with substance misuse

themselves and who can offer personal insight. Sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government and funded by European Structural Funds, the Peer Mentoring Scheme is a Wales wide four year project.



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



Welsh Assembly Government Programme

Manager Mike Hardy says: "I am confident that the Peer Mentoring Project will support people across Wales to make positive changes to their lives. To complete substance misuse treatment programs, to access volunteering, training and ultimately achieve economic independence through paid employment."

Nicky Webb, Director of Cyswllt Contact, which delivers the peer mentoring scheme in Pembrokeshire, says "People who have past experiences of substance misuse are often the best role models for those who have had similar experiences and are now re-integrating back into the community with improved self esteem and confidence."

If you have been affected by substance misuse, either yourself or a family member, are aged over 18 and interested in either volunteering to be a mentor or receiving the support of a mentor please contact David Wall, Peer Mentoring Co-ordinator on 07889408157.

Calling Parents of Children with Autism or Aspergers, with or without a diagnosis



The coffee support mornings have now been running for over a year and will continue in 2011. The morning is very informal with parents sharing their experiences and offering informal support. Come along between: 10-12 for a chat, cup of coffee, biscuit and meet others in a similar situation.

Meeting at Action for Children, Penffynnon, Hawthorn Rise, Haverfordwest, SA61 2AZ.

Dates for your diary in 2011:

Tuesday 15th February

Tuesday 29th March

Tuesday 10th May,

Tuesday 7th June

Tuesday 12th July

Tuesday 6th September

Tuesday 11th October

Tuesday 8th November

Tuesday 8th December

No meeting in April due to Easter holidays.

No meeting in August due to school holidays.

Please ring Liz on 01437 776512 if you want further information or directions to the venue.

DIRECT PAYMENTS

Direct Payments is a service the Local Authority funds so that people can choose to pick the people they want to have coming into their home and providing care and support. The scheme is growing in Pembrokeshire with the introduction of Third Party Payments, which enable people without capacity to have the benefit of Direct Payments for the first time.

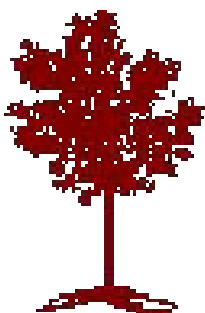
The Direct Payments recipients meet regularly to provide mutual support and discuss issues relating to their situations. The next get-together is on Wednesday 6th April 2011 in the Picton Centre hall from 12.00 til 2.00pm. There is free parking, fully accessible venue and all Direct Payments recipients and their carers are welcome to come along. This time we will be organising a fish shop lunch, so bring your monies to buy a bag of chips or something more substantial if you prefer!

COULD THE PA REGISTER BE THE ANSWER TO YOUR SITUATION?

For people in receipt of Direct Payments, finding the right person to be your main personal assistant or to find people to provide short term cover in emergencies can seem a nightmare.

But did you know that the 3Counties **Rowan Organisation** Team has a PA register? Anyone who applies for a Personal Assistant job can fill out a form and have their name added to the register, which will be automatically deleted after 3 months unless they inform us otherwise. When new vacancies arise, Direct Payments Recipients can ask their advisor from the Rowan Organisation to look at the register and see if there is anyone on the list who meets the particulars of the job advertised. Your job description and application form can be sent to these people and the person can choose to apply in the usual way if they wish. It is possible to avoid re-advertising in the paper when you are re-recruiting, by using this register. If you know of anyone who would like to have their name added to the register to be sent vacancies

as they arise, the person to contact is Jane Williams on 0800 783 8397. Please remember, The Rowan Organisation do not make any recommendation with regard to a person's suitability when you use this register.



Pembrokeshire Cancer Support

Hello, my name is Lyn Neville and I am the Coordinator for the local Charity, Pembrokeshire Cancer Support. We have a Support Centre which is based at 91 Queen Street, Pembroke Dock (above the Charity Shop). I wanted to give details on our centre.

In my time with the Charity I have made it my job to speak to lots of people about us and what we do. It worried me that many people have not used the Support Centre because they do not want to be with people who are upset, crying and depressed. They also do not want to be seen as unable to cope, to be weak, or to be embarrassed.

Our Support Centre encourages self help, with support from our support workers when needed. If you want to talk about your illness and problems you are having, we are happy to do that, and this is always done in private, and is confidential.

Some people do not want to talk about illness, and would rather talk about anything else.....and that's fine as well. We want people to feel at ease and use the centre as they want. We have

- Relaxation Classes
- a Card Making Group
- Reflexology and more

We also have outreach services and can do home visits for those unable to come in, and we can visit in Hospital. The centre is open to Cancer Sufferers, Carers and Family members.

Cancer affects the whole family and hopefully we can help to support you all. We do not give medical advice but we can help you find the professionals you need to help with health, benefits etc.

Cancer is a very difficult illness to get to grips with. Cancer affects all the family and puts a great strain on people. I know this because I am going through Cancer myself, after being diagnosed and then having to have a Bone Marrow Transplant. My carer, my wife, was under great strain looking after me, our son and home. At Pembrokeshire Cancer Support we want to help you to get through this cruel illness, by offering a listening ear, a place to go, support and advice, or even..... just a cup of tea and a chat.

We would be pleased for you to come along and just have a look around. If you have a family member or friend with Cancer, are caring for someone with Cancer, or have lost someone through Cancer, come along and see if you think we can help.



Just call in anytime between 9.30am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. Or ring on 01646 683078 and ask for Lyn, Barbara or Gill.

We also now have a website which will tell you more about us, it is

www.pembrokeshirecancersupport.org.uk

or, you can e-mail us at.... pembrokeshirecancersupport@btinternet.com

Together we can help each other to get through this!!

John Edge presented his views on the theme 'KNOW YOUR RIGHTS' at the Carers Rights Day in December.

Carers RIGHTS and LEFTS

What right have I to address you today? Well I am a long term carer and I know very little about what my rights are. My situation is that my wife has a progressive condition which makes it very difficult to decide exactly when I became a carer, but I put it down to when I left full time work as a senior teacher at age 50 and started 'dabbling' in other work which was relatively home-based. I know a fair bit about what my cared for's rights are. She is relatively well looked after by the system.



About a year ago, I asked for a Carer's assessment and eventually the much anticipated home visit took place. Unfortunately, for me it was not what I wanted or needed. I wanted to know what support there would be in the future if I was unable to carry out my caring role and if my wife's condition deteriorated so that I could not support her.

We fall into the trap of having been careful with our finances all our lives, we now have what is deemed, sufficient savings so that we are not entitled to grant aid for our accessible bathroom, which cost us over £5000 – widening and renewing low-level access exterior doors £1200 – ramping the outside entrances (ongoing) and levelling all around the house - £4000. So it seems that my rights are to delve into savings to pay for most of our needs.

I don't qualify for Carer's allowance because my wife, although on the higher rate of mobility allowance, is only on the lower rate of DLA. Do the powers that be appreciate the amount of support you give to someone who uses 2 sticks to get around, can't pick things up easily and constantly needs a 'sous chef' on hand when cooking?

I'm sure you have all heard similar before, and horror stories by the bucket load. Don't get me wrong, we are grateful for the mobility aids and motobility vehicle provided, which does enable some independence for my wife.

Now, as regards any other rights, I haven't a clue, but here is a wish list to consider:

- The right to a break from caring, when and if needed.
- The right to be ill oneself without feeling guilty
- The right to be regarded as a worker and not a 'you're so lucky to be home all the time and not at work' type.
- The right not to feel like a scrounger
- The right to be respected by society for the tasks that one does

I am sure there are many others you will suggest.

As regards the 'Lefts'

- Not to be left out of society
- Not to be left feeling unsupported and isolated
- Not to be left in debt directly attributed to caring

A couple of commercials now:

Cars for Carers is a unique voluntary service for Pembrokeshire. Founded by my wife, when working for CSV-RSVP, it offers a service similar to country cars for all unpaid carers in the County. One journey a fortnight at present can be booked for a volunteer driver to pick you up, take you to your non-hospital appointment (except by special agreement), shopping trip, visiting relatives or friends etc. They will meet you for the return journey. The costs are very low. A return trip from Fishguard to Haverfordwest for example would cost under £9, reduced to about £5 with a bus pass and the cared for can travel as well at no extra cost. Anyone requiring assistance in obtaining a bus pass for themselves (if they qualify) and/or their cared for, can see me afterwards. I or my colleague from the south of the county, will arrange to visit the house, help complete the forms, take the photo and give general transport advice. We can also take your photo for blue badge applications or renewals. There is no set charge, but the charity CSV-RSVP welcomes a small donation towards the cost of the photography.

Complaints. Please note that anyone who is a client of social services may make a complaint through the county council. This complaint may be made on behalf of the client by a responsible person. There are 4 stages.
 Stage 1 is informal and the SS try to sort it out.
 Stage 2 (if not satisfied at Stage 1) needs an investigation from an officer independent of the department complained about and a written report and response from the head of that department is produced.
 Stage 3 (if not satisfied at Stage 2) takes the complaint to an independent Panel who look at the Stage 2 report and how it was conducted and at the authorities response. They can overturn a decision made at Stage 2.
 Stage 4 (if not satisfied at Stage 3) is to go to the Ombudsman.
 Do not just sit back and accept poor, wrong or bad standards from SS: complain!
 They also like compliments by the way.
 A similar complaints system exists for Local Health Board complaints.

Thanks for listening!



Young Carers Forum



Young Carers Forum News

Plans are taking shape for the February half term break with forum days for young carers and the X forum as well as a young carers cookery day. The forum days will be on 22nd and 23rd February and the cookery day on 24th February. There will be a maximum of 8 places for the cookery day with this being limited to one per family.

Contacts for the Forum are Mel Richards 01437 776534 and Nadine Farmer 01646 680863
 emails: Melanie.richards@pembrokeshire.gov.uk and Nadine.farmer@pembrokeshire.gov.uk .



the brain injury association

HEADWAY PEMBROKESHIRE

Headway (the brain injury association) is the leading UK charity dedicated to the care and support of people with brain injury and their families. It exists to promote understanding of all aspects of brain injury and to provide information, support and services to people affected by brain injury.

Headway is a UK national charity and supports a network of over 120 local groups and branches throughout the country. Through these groups people with brain injury and their families and carers can make contact with other people in similar situations and offer each other understanding and support. Group members can share experiences and guidance on coping strategies, as well as companionship and the opportunity to meet socially. The group can become a resource for information on brain injury based on experience, local knowledge and national information from Headway.

Headway Pembrokeshire is mainly made up of brain injury survivors, their carers, some professionals and volunteers, that give their time and support to those who need it following brain injury. We go out on Outreach calls as and when it is needed, generally forming contact and friendship to support survivors and their families through their trauma. We are regularly supported by Dr Rodger Weddell, Consultant Neuropsychologist at Morriston Hospital.

For further information please contact:

Barbara Moules (Joint Chair and brain injury survivor) on 01348 875313, email

bmoules@live.com

or Caroline Husecken (Joint Chair and brain injury survivor) on 01834 861 835 email

carly.max@virgin.net

Tackling Fuel Poverty in the Home

The project is aimed at the most vulnerable people who are struggling with their energy use and those who are suffering with cold and damp related illnesses due to not having adequate heating and insulation. The Cosy Homes Advisor will be available to look at options, solutions, grants and funding that can be accessed to help finance the measures required, and will also support the client through the whole process to ensure that the vulnerable and the infirm are able to heat their homes adequately and at a reasonable cost.

If a client has health issues due to having an inadequate heating system, the 'Cosy Homes Advisor' will look at ways of finding sources of funding/grants to enable them to change their heating system. Renewable heat systems may be an option (solar hot water and biomass heating). There is a small crisis fund available for those clients who can not afford to pay for all the measures. The advisor will assess each case and identify the work needed to improve their levels of warmth, comfort and quality of life.

If you have any questions about the project please contact:

Tina Shevlin (Cosy Homes Advisor) Project Manager

01239 821905 or 01239 820235, email tina@ecocentre.org.uk



POETS CORNER

The Mind

A befuddled mind, fighting the mist,
as past becomes the present.
Incapable of defining which,
it truly is unpleasant.

They say it is Alzheimer!
She never will get better.
Terror and fear are her intimate friends,
never knowing any other.

There are times when she is lucid,
as sane as you or I.
Yet can turn with a vengeance
in the blink of an eye.

You love this woman who gave you life,
after all she is your mother.
Her ranting and raving tears you apart,
you desperately wish it was another.

Though tonight you said she knew you,
her eyes showed she remembered your birth.
With trickling tears, she held your hand tight,
as she sadly left this earth.

In the Lords hands she now is cradled,
her memory true and bright.
You too may get Alzheimer,
pray God: you never forget this night.

Denise Winstone

Haikus

January

in the bottom field
a single frosted oak tree –
the last leaf falling

February

she meets somebody -
he falls in love with her face,
she watches his eyes

dawn hangs by a rope
hand by hand I swing
into the morning

March

nobody's listening
to this song-bird in the dark -
or is it just me?

today's violence
an ice-cold front sweeps in
fragile blooms perish



Jacqui Thewless



The Care to Work Project, run by Mid & West Wales Chamber in partnership with Crossroads Care Mid & West Wales is having an image change! This is a relatively new project which supports Carers and Former Carers across Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire to access training, education, and voluntary/work placements. The new name is **STARS** which stands for “**Support, Training And Recognition of Skills**”

reflecting the aims of the project. We are currently running a ‘Moving forward with Confidence’ day to support carers and former carers in planning their next moves and their personal and professional futures. This is proving very popular and will be run again in the future. As we are in partnership with Crossroads Care we are able to offer replacement care for any carer attending our training days/courses and events. We are finding that the one to one support we can offer to individuals is also extremely helpful and we are constantly looking for more ways to support Carers and Former Carers across these two counties. If you are a carer or former carer not in full time paid work and interested in becoming involved with the project or if you wish to talk to the Project Officer please call Marie on 07792 566799 or email mwright@mwwc.org.uk

Carer gets dream job with Jobcentre Plus help

A recent visit to her local jobcentre has transformed the life of full time carer and mother Debra Roberts



Debra has been caring for son Alex, now 21, since he was born. Eight years ago Debra had to give up work at a local college because of her caring role but was hoping to return to work once Alex was able to live more independently.

Debra then heard about Work Choice, a supported placement/employment programme run by Jobcentre Plus. This seemed perfect for Alex who has ADHD and Aspergers. After discussing Work Choice with Disability Employment Adviser Gemma Pontin, Debra and Alex called into Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind who deliver the service locally. Not only was Alex accepted onto the programme but they offered Debra a full time job as a trainer and assessor, based on her previous work experience and recent volunteering.

Alex now attends a Work Club and also volunteers at a local hospital whilst waiting to start the Work Choice programme. Knowing that support for Alex will shortly be in place, Debra has felt able to start to work and enjoy her own independence.

'For so long my life has been all about caring or looking after the house but now I've got something just for me....my job.'

'I was nervous at first and worried about Alex but they are all wonderful here and by the second day I was fine.'

'If I had made a list of what I wanted, this would have been it. I've got exactly what I was looking for and more.'

Debra was able to get some extra help as well. This included a grant from Job Match to fund an assessor's qualification and a Jobcentre Plus Job Grant to smooth the financial transition into work.

But that's not the full story. Just two years ago Debra was diagnosed with cancer which, after treatment, left her with limited mobility in one arm. Over the years Debra's also battled depression and anxiety which affected her confidence and self esteem.

'I knew I couldn't do the work I did before the cancer but I knew I needed to do something. I may be tired in the mornings but I have so much more energy and I feel so much better now that I'm working. As a carer, as lone parent and as a disabled person I've had to overcome a lot of issues but now I'm happy where I am in my life.'

'This is my dream job.'

If you'd like to know more about the help and support Jobcentre Plus offers to carers or ex-carers who'd like to start or return to paid work, contact Chris Clark at Jobcentre Plus in Pembrokeshire on 01437 823262.

For information on Jobcentre Plus Work Choice programme please contact your local Jobcentre on 0845 604 3719.

jobcentreplus
canolfanbydgwaith

Department for Work and Pensions
Adran Gwaith a Phensiynau

Pembrokeshire Carers Forum

Picton Centre Haverfordwest on the 2nd March 2011

At the Carers Forums last years carers were asked:
"Where to take the Carers Forum?" and
"What should be the function of the Carers Forum?"
Some of the suggestions were:

- Having a chance to approach professionals
- Being a pressure group with one voice and
- Campaigning for higher carers allowance.....

Together with Pat McCarthy from Carers Wales we will be holding the next Carers Forum on the 2nd March 2011 at the Picton Centre in Haverfordwest with the proposal to set up a more formalised Forum.

We will discuss: Why have a Carers forum?

What it can do?

Who it can influence?

What will it look like?



For more information please get in touch with Nicole van Schie on 01437 771196
or email Nicole.vanschie@pavs.org.uk

Your experiences of caring - tell it like it is!

The past months have brought changes to the lives of disabled people and their families - cuts to services, large scale reform of benefits, all threaten to have a huge impact on carers' lives.

This is why we need your help to make the case for a better deal for carers.

Carers UK is conducting a major new research survey to examine the State of Caring in the UK.

We need evidence on the impact of caring for ill, frail or disabled loved-ones on carers' health, wellbeing, careers and finances.

Fill in our online survey about your experiences of caring at:

www.surveymonkey.com/stateofcaring

If you are not on line we are happy to send you the survey form in the post to you. Please get in touch (for a hard copy) with Nicole van Schie, Carers Development worker at PAVS on 01437 771196 or contact Carers Wales (details below).

Nearly 1,500 carers in the UK (about 150 from Wales) have already completed the survey, but we need as many as we can to make headlines! Your answers will help give us the evidence to fight reforms to benefits and get a better deal for disabled people and carers on a local and national level.

Thank you for your support.

Beth Evans

Information and Communications Officer

Carers Wales, River House

Ynysbridge Court, Cardiff CF15 9SS

Telephone: 029 2081 1370 and website:

www.carersuk.org

CARERS Wales
the voice of carers

Making your voice heard



An event for carers
Monday 18th April 2011 – 10.00 am - 3.30pm
Liberty Stadium, Swansea

Morning 10.00 - 12.30
How carers can make a difference to the way local services are designed and delivered.

Workshop session – looking at how carers can get involved & change things. There will be some examples of how carers are making a difference locally.

Afternoon 1.30 - 3.30
Question Time
Carers Manifesto 2011

There will be an opportunity for carers to question politicians from the main political parties who will be standing in the Welsh Assembly Elections 2011
(The afternoon event is in conjunction with the Wales Carers Alliance)

You can attend both sessions or just one. Please contact Carers Wales on 029 2081 1370 or email: info@carerswales.org.

(Tea, coffee & sandwiches will be available between 12.30 & 1.30pm for those who book for both sessions).

This newsletter is available on our website too at: www.pavs.org.uk/carers.
If you would like a copy sent to you please forward your details to **Carers Gazette, PAVS, FREEPOST SWC4881, 36-38 High Street, Haverfordwest, SA61 2ZZ**
email: Nicole.vanschie@pavs.org.uk or ring 01437 771196.

Name Carer: Yes/No
Email.....
Address
.....
Postcode Telephone.....
Age Group: 0-20 20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60 60-70 70-80 80+
Ethnic Origin (for monitoring purposes):