



A Welsh version of Caring Times is available.

It would really assist the Carers Team if you can provide **your email address** if we do not already have it. Please can you email Carersservices@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk with your latest email address and this will enable us to send information about suitable events, as well as Caring Times, more quickly to you.

Carers' Week 2017

(June 12th – June 18th) www.carersweek.org/



If you are looking after a relative, neighbour or friend who is unable to manage at home due to long term illness, age, disability or substance misuse you are a carer. By a carer, we do not mean an agency worker, paid or volunteer carer. So if you think this is you, come along and join in activities planned for Carers Week 2017.

Caring can be rewarding but it can also affect your homelife, worklife, free time and your relationship with the person you care for. You

don't have to live in the same house as that person to be their carer. Carers are not paid a wage to provide support and are sometimes referred to as unpaid/family/informal carers.

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities. It is backed by eight major charities.

Local events taking place in the week include:

Monday 12th June

(morning), Parents Federation are hosting a Ten Pin bowling event at Hollywood Bowl in the Red Dragon Centre. Parents Federation ask for people to contact them, either by email to admin@parentsfed.org or by phone **029 2056 5917**, to secure a place at the bowling and a future gathering in Barry.

Wednesday 14 June

10am-2pm Information and Carers' week celebration event taking place at the Eastern Promenade, Barry Island.

Thursday 15 June

10am-4pm Drop-in at West Quay Medical Centre, Barry to talk to representatives from EPP Cymru, Care and Repair and Wellbeing 4u.

Saturday 17th June 2017

12pm – 2pm
YMCA Cardiff
YMCA Young Carers Showcase
Neuadd Hall
Sponsored by Bethan Jenkins, AM
YMCA would like to invite you to attend our Young Carers Showcase at The Senedd.
RSVP: Rebecca.frew@ymcacardiff.wales

More details about all events taking place in Carers' Week will be added to www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/carers as we become aware of them. Let us know if there is something you know about that we've missed.

Carers Casework Service



Care & Repair Cardiff and the Vale
Gofal a Thrawio Caerdydd a'r Fro

Many older people care for a partner, an adult child or a grandchild in their home. They have to deal with the responsibilities of being a carer and managing their own wellbeing, whilst maintaining a home.

Between the 1st March 2017 – 30th September 2017, Care & Repair Cardiff and the Vale will be providing a Casework service that will help older carers (aged 50 and older) to complete repairs, improvements and adaptations to their properties.

The Carers Caseworker Service is free of charge and is tailored to the individual needs of older carers living in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. The Caseworker will arrange to visit an older carer at their home and listen to what they want and need and will then put together a package with support to make it happen.

The Carers Casework Service will be able to offer the following:

- ❖ A Healthy Homes Check to help identify any areas of concern in the home.
- ❖ Advice on options to repair, maintain or adapt the home.
- ❖ Help to find sources of funding for any works that need doing.

- ❖ Help to find a reliable, local contractor or builder.
- ❖ Access to support from Care & Repair Cardiff and the Vale's Technical Officers to oversee and project manage any adaptations, repairs and maintenance works.
- ❖ Advice and help to apply for any unclaimed benefits or potential annuities carers may be eligible for to raise the household income.
- ❖ Details of services that can help with daily living or daily activities or other local services that may of interest.

For further information about the Carers Casework Service provided by Care & Repair Cardiff and the Vale, please feel free to contact us or ask someone to contact us on your behalf by:

Telephoning: **02920 473337**

Emailing: **careandrepair@crcv.org.uk**

Writing: Tolven Court, Dowlais Road,
Cardiff, CF24 5LQ

NEW!! YMCA Young Adult Carers 'Time for More' Project



YMCA Cardiff has secured funding to run a pilot Young Adult Carers Project for 18-25 year olds. This is a research project to find out the need and issues of Young Adult Carers in Cardiff and the Vale. It will be running until early 2018. It is unsure how many Young Adult Carers there are, but with an estimated 700,000 young carer in the UK and a recent survey in the Vale of Glamorgan indicating that 1 in 12 (8%) of

pupils in primary or secondary school could be a young carer, there is possibly a high number of young adult carers that require support and advice.

If you are or know of any Young Adult Carers who may want to get involved, or you would like more information, please contact Becky on either **07807 084202** or **Rebecca.frew@ymcacardiff.wales**



Gardening Project – Time to Grow

The YMCA Cardiff's gardening project has begun! It's called Time 2 Grow, and is open to all young carers across Cardiff and the Vale. The project will take place at YMCA Plas, just off City Road in Cardiff.

Transport is not provided for every session, but we will reimburse any travel expenses that you incur.

The project aims to renovate the courtyard in Plasnewydd community centre and take into account young people's ideas and work with young people from both areas closely.

Here are some pictures from last year's project which involved young carers from Cardiff and the Vale.

Contact Sarah on: **07817728070** or sarah.miller@ymcacardiff.wales if you'd like to get involved.



The South Wales Police and Police Crime Commissioner



The South Wales Police and Police Crime Commissioner have been working with partner agencies and local residents to develop a new approach to tackling door step crime and scams. Each of the seven Local Authorities within South Wales has supported this new approach to the traditional 'No Cold Calling' campaign.

Carers may be interested in this new initiative for themselves or the person they look after. This new initiative was launched in September 2016 with a South Wales wide media campaign to raise awareness and inform residents' of their right to say no to uninvited traders and nuisance callers. Every household will be offered a sticker and booklet, which also signposts people to further information on postal, telephone and online scams.

The booklet and sticker artwork will be available to download, to pick up from designated points in local communities like libraries and health centres, and will also be distributed via our partner organisations.



Police Youth Volunteers and Police Community Support Officers will deliver the booklet and sticker to the most vulnerable communities.

If you know of any other local community service which may be a good channel to get this resource out to residents, particularly vulnerable community members, please send the details through to Deanna Lynda Young Email: Deanna.Young@south-wales.pnn.police.uk Tel: **07469 907906**

Quit Smoking with Stop Smoking Wales!

Quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do as a carer for your health. Apart from the health benefits and confidence quitting will give you, by Christmas you could have saved over £2000 (if you smoke 20 cigarettes a day).

NHS Stop Smoking Wales provides a FREE seven week support service to help smokers to quit. A friendly Advisor will discuss stop smoking products (such as patches, inhalators or prescription medicines) available free on prescription that can really help during those tough few weeks after your quit date. During the sessions your Advisor will discuss a range of topics such as withdrawal symptoms, coping with cravings, dealing with stress, triggers and how to prevent relapse. These sessions really help the smoker to overcome the addiction.

Remember, when you quit with Stop Smoking Wales you are 4 times more likely to give up than doing it alone.



In the Vale of Glamorgan we currently hold sessions in: Barry Hospital, West Quay Medical Centre, Court Road Surgery, Eryl Surgery and Penarth Health Centre (on Stanwell Road). Sessions are available across Wales; including evening and Saturday appointments.

Please call **0800 085 2219** to book an appointment. For more information or to request a call back from one of our friendly team for free visit: www.stopsmokingwales.com. We look forward to welcoming you on to the service.

Follow us on Twitter: [@StopSmokingWales](https://twitter.com/StopSmokingWales) / [@DimSmyguCymru](https://twitter.com/DimSmyguCymru)

Add us on Facebook: [StopSmokingWales](https://www.facebook.com/StopSmokingWales) / [DimSmyguCymru](https://www.facebook.com/DimSmyguCymru)

Stay positive! You can do it!

Do you care for someone with dementia?



The Alzheimer's Society Dementia Support Service (DSS) provides one-to-one support to people with dementia, carers and family members in the Vale of Glamorgan. The service is unique to your personal circumstances and the information and support that you need. The DSS can visit you at home to provide you with information and practical support to help you understand more about dementia and support you to live well with dementia.

What kind of support do we provide?

- ❖ Information on your diagnosis and possible symptoms you experience
- ❖ Techniques to help you cope day-to-day with the symptoms of dementia

- ❖ Advice about equipment that can support you with daily living
- ❖ Information about managing and planning your financial and legal affairs
- ❖ Information and support accessing local services that can help
- ❖ Support with transition periods, such as diagnosis, working with Social Services, moving into residential care
- ❖ Emotional and practical support for people with dementia, their carers and families

To refer yourself, or someone else, please contact Becky Oatley (Dementia Support Worker, Vale of Glamorgan) on **07715 802632** / becky.oatley@alzheimers.org.uk (Working hours: Monday-Wednesday 9am-5pm)

Are You Caring for an Older Person with Dementia or Late Onset Mental Illness?

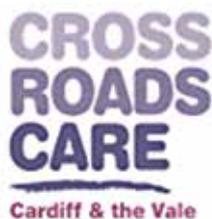
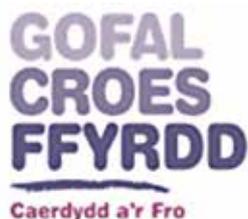
Would you benefit from support from others who understand your day-to-day challenges?

Crossroads Care in the Vale provides groups to support carers and their dependent relative.

Caregivers in Support Groups report many benefits:

- ❖ Feeling less lonely and isolated
- ❖ Making new friends
- ❖ Gaining a sense of empowerment and control
- ❖ Developing coping skills
- ❖ Taking time for yourself
- ❖ Being understood
- ❖ Learning valuable care giving tips
- ❖ Freedom to express feelings
- ❖ Enhancing self esteem
- ❖ Reducing stress, depression and anxiety

Please note that referrals do not have to be for Crossroads domiciliary care service users. Anyone who lives in the Vale and cares for someone diagnosed with late onset dementia or late onset mental health issues can qualify.



GROUPS FOR CARERS & THEIR DEPENDENT RELATIVE

Western Vale Social Group

Meets monthly for a pub lunch in the Rhoose/ Llantwit Major/Wick area

Penarth Social Group

Meets monthly at Stanwell Road Baptist Church, Penarth. Guest speaker and a cuppa/ biscuit

GROUPS FOR CARERS ONLY

Barry Carers Group

Meets monthly at St David's Church Hall, Colcot Road, Barry

Barry Evening Carers Group

Meets monthly at Crossroads Day Centre, Barry Island

GROUP FOR WHEN THE CARING ROLE HAS ENDED

CAMEO 'come and meet everyone' Group

Meets monthly for lunch in Barry, Sully or Penarth

For more information about Crossroads support groups please contact Jayne Hill:

02920 700057 Option 3

counsellor@crossroads-vale.org.uk

Live Well with Hearing Loss Equipment/ Advice/Information/Demonstration

Do you have a hearing loss? Do you need help with assistive equipment? Do you want to know more about suitable telephones, personal loops, and doorbells? On 1st Thursday of each month, between 10am to 12 Midday, Action on Hearing will be holding a drop-in session at Age Connects Cardiff and Vale Senior

Health Shop in Barry (see page 8). Action on Hearing will provide information, advice and demonstrate a wide range of equipment. NO Appointment is needed just come along. Contact **01446 732385** for further information or Chris Lazo, Action on Hearing, **02920 523129**

Carer/Family Member Bipolar Telephone Mentoring



Make an appointment to speak to a Bipolar Mentor

Our telephone-based peer mentoring service gives you the chance to talk one-to-one with someone else who has supported someone with bipolar. We offer mentoring if you are the loved one/family member of someone with a diagnosis of bipolar. You'll be matched with a

trained volunteer Mentor who will listen to you, help you find ways to manage, and help you to better understand bipolar.

Please contact mentoring@bipolaruk.org / **0333 323 4458** to find out more.

Follow us at: twitter.com/bipolaruk
facebook.com/bipolaruk

Vale of Glamorgan Libraries – Home Library Service



Do you work with or know people who are housebound and could benefit from the Vale Libraries Home Library Service? This Service uses volunteers to deliver books to people in their homes. We are able to support carers who cannot or do not want to leave the cared for at home alone. This free service is ideal for anyone who can no longer get to a library themselves because of disability, mobility or other issues. Every four weeks a volunteer will drop off a bag of books for the reader and collect the previous month's books.

the volunteer an idea of the kind of books they like – books by a particular author for example, or historical fiction, crime, romances or non-fiction – there's loads to choose from!

If you think this service might be just what you are looking for or if you know of someone who could benefit from it, for more information please call Melanie on **01446 422419** or visit www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/libraries

The volunteer can bring books in a number of formats – ordinary print, large print or talking books on CD. All the reader has to do is give



Parents' Federation hold successful event on New Social Service and Wellbeing Act

As we go to press we have heard about an event hosted by the Parents Federation. Full details about the event will be provided in next edition of Caring Times.

On Friday 28 April, the Parents Federation hosted an event at Cardiff Yatch Club about the New Act and its impact on parent carers. The event covered topics such as: an Overview of the New Act, Putting the Act into Practice, How the Act can help families and the people

they support. Additionally there was an 'Open' session where participants provided feedback about their experiences and discussions about what might be possible under the new act and barriers we need to overcome. For more information about the event, please contact the Parents Federation on **02920 565917**.



Celebrations at the Marie Curie Carers Café

The Marie Curie Carers Café celebrated its 2nd Anniversary on 28 February 2017 and all those who attended enjoyed afternoon tea that included Pancakes and Welsh Cakes, all freshly made by the Hospice Chefs.

The total number of visitors welcomed to the 'Carers Cafes' since it began in March 2015 is an amazing 580. The 'Carers Cafe' is held on the first and last Tuesday of every month, between 2pm and 4pm with FREE refreshments. No appointment necessary to attend.

Forthcoming Carers Cafes dates are: - 30th May, 6th and 27 June, 4th and 25 July 2017 in the Day Therapy Unit at



Gofal a chefnogaeth drwy salwch terfynol

Care and support through terminal illness



Marie Curie Hospice, Bridgeman Road, Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan, CF64 3YR

For further information call Susan Court Tel: **02920 426023**

Carers will be warmly welcomed, to socialise with other carers and Care Professionals, in an informal environment. Carers can also bring along the person they care for as long as they are able to support their needs while attending the café.

We look forward to welcoming many more carers as well as returning friends throughout 2017.

Support for Mental Health Carers in Cardiff & Vale

If you are a carer for someone with a mental illness, Hafal provides a range of services and support across Cardiff and the Vale. These include:

- ❖ Family Support Workers based within the Community Mental Health Teams in Cardiff and the Vale. The Family Support Team can provide practical and emotional support to carers and family members
- ❖ Accessible information and advice; providing Carers with the latest news and information relevant to them
- ❖ Mutual support; enabling Carers to support each other through Carers' groups
- ❖ Access to the Carer Participation project, giving Carers a voice, especially in the planning of local mental health services
- ❖ Awareness raising; highlighting Carers' rights
- ❖ Support groups for mental health carers in Cardiff and the Vale

Do you live in the Vale and care for someone with a mental illness? Then come along to one



dim gollwng i salwch terfynol

hafal

for recovery from serious mental illness

of our friendly and informal support groups to meet other carers and chat to Hafal's Family Support Team.

NEW

Daytime Discussion/Information Group to be held at Chapter on the third Thursday of every month between 1.00pm - 2.00pm. Future dates are: 18 May, 22 June, 20th July 2017

Ongoing

A Daytime Support Group meets in the Chapter Cafe on third Thursday of every month between 2.00pm - 4.00pm. Future dates are: 18 May, 22 June, 20th July 2017.

For further information on Family Support contact Nyeasha on **07974 175 189** or e-mail nyeasha.nicely-price@hafal.org

For Carer Participation contact Julia on **07500 040 657** or e-mail julia.greenhaf@hafal.org

Age Connects Senior Health Shop is pleased to become a Dementia Friendly Cafe



Age Connects Cardiff and Vale are pleased to have become a “Dementia Friendly Café” by making the pledge to become a member of Barry’s Dementia Friendly Community.

The Alzheimer’s Society campaign aims to involve and support people who have dementia as well as their families in community life. Volunteers from the Café and drop-in information centre based in Holton Road, Barry have attended Dementia Friends Training and are all now signed up as Dementia Friends.

Nona Hexter, Coordinator of The Project, said, “We are delighted that we are now identified

as a friendly and supportive business for the Dementia Community in The Vale of Glamorgan. The training enabled us to be aware of social challenges that we may come across. We understand we have a duty of care to our users and being part of Barry’s Dementia Friendly Community. It is important for us to understand and have empathy as a team so we can provide an excellent service.

“The Cafe now displays its Dementia Friendly Certificate along with the Alzheimer’s Society Dementia Kite Mark at the premises”.



New Meditation Classes in Barry and St Athan

Additionally, The Age Connects Senior Health Shop has recently started a Meditation Class at Holton Road Barry. Meditation is proven to reduce blood pressure and increase happiness. The relaxation and mindfulness class can give relief from pain, anxiety, sleep disorders and many other health conditions.

The class takes place every Thursday between 3:15pm to 4:15pm; please note there is another class at The Gathering Place St Athan on Monday Mornings 9:30am to 11:15am. Contact Natalie 07341 264686 for further details.

Update on Cardiff South and Vale Forget-me-not Choir



In the September 2016 edition of Caring Times, we shared news of a new Forget-me-not chorus, held in Ysgol y Deri, Sully Road, Penarth. The sessions are specially designed for people with dementia and their families and it’s an opportunity to come together to share an evening of singing, fun and laughter. As one attendee says:

‘It is a fantastic therapy for people with dementia and a happy relief for me. It is perfect, no pressure just fun, everyone playing a part to the best of their ability. For us, choir evening is our happiness fix.’

There are spaces for new participants. The sessions have proved very popular and the venue has easily accessible parking for people with dementia and their carers. We meet on Thursday evenings between 7-9pm at Ysgol y Deri Sully Road, CF64 2TP and includes tea, coffee and cake!

To find out more call/text Sarah on **07968 169424 / 02922 362064**

Email hello@forgetmenotchorus.com
www.forgetmenotchorus.com

Seasonal Influenza



Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Has spring sprung? Well we have to say it is trying, and with it we see the official end of influenza Season. While influenza is present all year round, it is between September and March that it is most common and so we offer immunisation to those at risk at this time. As you know, all carers are entitled to a free seasonal flu vaccination.

This year's influenza season reached medium intensity at Christmas and remained at this level until the end of February. Like me I am sure you will have heard of carers who had a rather nasty dose of influenza just after Christmas. Immunisation is not a 100% guarantee that you will not catch influenza but there is evidence to show that if you do catch flu when you have been vaccinated you may well have a milder infection with fewer complications. Unfortunately there are a number of influenza viruses and we cannot be protected against them all. Each year the vaccine protects us against two type A viruses and one type B, this year most influenza's were caused by the A virus. The viruses change slightly from year to year and indeed sometimes during the season, therefore it is important that we get vaccinated each year to ensure we are protected against the most harmful type of flu virus.

As always the Vale of Glamorgan has come out tops in uptake of the Flu Vaccination for those over 65 years, over 18,000 people were vaccinated. That is an uptake of 70%, exceeding both the Health Board at 68.8% and the Wales total of 66.6%. Unfortunately it was a different story for those with chronic diseases (under 65 years). Uptake in the Vale was 46.8%, Health Board 48.4% and the Wales total was 46.9%.

Carers keep up the good work and remember to plan for your influenza immunisation in September. If you are caring for someone under 65 who has a chronic disease remind their GP to call them for their immunisation or to make arrangement for it be administered at home, if they are housebound.

Shingles

In 2013 the Welsh Assembly approved the introduction of the Shingles vaccine for all reaching the age of 70 years with a catch-up to the age of 80 years. Unfortunately due to supply issues they were unable to offer it to all and a phased introduction was put in place. This has caused a lot of confusion, however the situation is beginning to improve. Currently, all those (including carers) aged 70, 77, 78 and 79 years as of the 1st of September 2017 should be offered the vaccine by the GP, with those 71, 72, 73, 74 years remaining eligible until they reach 80 years young. If you or someone you know is eligible and has not yet been called by their GP, please get in touch with your practice. Any one who has had Chickenpox can develop Shingles; it is a painful condition that often leaves pain at the site of the rash. This can be very debilitating and last for some time. Uptake has been lower than anticipated, if you are unsure about the vaccine, why not speak to your practice nurse.



We are very fortunate in Wales to have a wide range of free vaccines to protect ourselves, our families and communities. We should take advantage of this.

For more information see link below
<http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk>
Search Immunisation

Call for Veterans to help with research



There are over five million veterans living in the UK, not including those who have served in the police, fire and health services at home. It is estimated that 28% of these individuals are living with a mental health problem as a result of the trauma they experienced while carrying out their duties.

Service men and women are exposed to many types of emotional and physical distress, such as witnessing, experiencing or having repeated exposure to evidence of abuse, injury and death. Studies have suggested that 40% of veterans suffering from PTSD do not

seek support from a medical professional and are left to deal with these issues alone. The National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH) are currently looking into the reasons why some people are more likely to experience mental health disorders, like PTSD, than others. They are looking for volunteers to give up an hour of their time so they can explore the genetic, environmental and psychological factors that lead to mental illness.

To learn more about the research, or take part, visit www.ncmh.info or call **02920 688401**

Caring for a loved one, you are not alone



1 in 8 adults are providing care for a loved one who is older, disabled or seriously ill. Carers can be any age, we work with carers who have been caring from the age of 5, others still caring in their 80's.

It is carers who are holding families together, enabling loved ones to get the most out of life. Caring requires huge and unexpected lifestyle changes, as carers take on responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, healthcare and personal care, it could be for a few hours a week or providing around the clock support.

Caring can be complicated. The maze of rights and entitlements can be complicated. Filling in paperwork can be complicated. Getting a break can be complicated. Our feelings about caring can certainly be complicated.

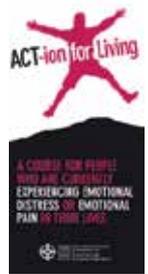
Carers Wales is here to make sure that no matter how complicated the query or the experience, no one has to care alone. Our expert telephone service is here to provide

information and advice. Our website, leaflets, booklets and newsletters give accurate and up-to-date information so carers know exactly where they stand.



If you are new to caring, try Upfront <https://www.carersuk.org/upfront>. This is a simple tool for carers who are new to the maze of benefits and entitlements. Fill in your details, spend a couple of minutes answering questions and we'll guide you to the information you need. If you can't find what you're looking for, give us a call - we're here to help. Carers Wales - **02920 811370** www.carersuk.org/wales

Managing Stress - Primary Mental Health Support Services (PMHSS)



In the February 2016 edition of Caring Times, an article featured the PMHSS. The service offers assessment, support, advice and therapeutic interventions to carers and members of the public experiencing common mental health issues, such as stress, anxiety and depression.

The PMHSS runs two, open-access courses called ACT-ion for Living and Stress Control. Any carer is able to come along on the day to register, there is no need to book ahead or speak to us first.

The courses follow an adult education model to learn coping strategies for managing distress. Details about forthcoming courses in the Vale are shown below:

ACT-ion for Living (four sessions) Course Dates 2017

Tuesday 5pm - 7pm from 30 May - 20 June at Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU

Tuesday 5pm - 7pm from 5 September - 26 September at Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU

Stress Control (six sessions) Course Dates 2017

Wednesday 5pm – 7pm from 5th July - 9th August at Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU

Tuesday 2pm – 4pm from 7th November - 12th December Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU

You can find out more information about courses on our website www.stepiau.org/ or ring **02920 906210**. Please be aware that courses are first-come first-served, in that we can only fit as many people as the venues allow, so it's best to arrive a bit early to guarantee a place.



Food Fact Sheets

As a carer it is important to eat a well-balanced and nutritious diet. However, people often say that it's difficult to know what to believe about nutrition and healthy eating. To help make sense of all the conflicting information, the British Dietetic Association has Food Fact Sheets available on their website. They cover topics relating to healthy eating and lifestyle, some medical conditions and weight loss. There is information about reducing your risk of becoming malnourished and about nutrients that are important for your health.

Dietitians are health professionals. They use the most up-to-date public health and scientific research on food, health and disease, to

give practical guidance so people can make lifestyle and food choices. All the Fact Sheets are written by dietitians with a special interest and knowledge in that particular topic. The British Dietetic Association is the Professional organisation that represents dietitians in the UK.

You'll find the Fact Sheets on <https://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts/home>

There is also a very useful leaflet, The Eat Well Guide, available on this Dementia Care webpage: <http://www.dementiacare.org.uk/services/need-some-advice/living-well-with-dementia/maintaining-a-healthy-lifestyle/diet-and-nutrition/>



If your home is hard to heat, call Nest

The Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme could help carers keep warm and save money on your energy bills.



saved an average of £408 on their energy bills."

New research published in April 2017 shows for the first time how

Nest is open to all householders in Wales and provides advice on saving energy, money management, energy tariffs, and benefit entitlement.

In addition to free advice, if you own or privately rent your home and you or someone you care for receives a means tested benefit you may be eligible for home improvements at no cost. These may include a new central heating boiler, loft insulation, or cavity wall and solid wall insulation.

Head of Nest, Lee Parry, said:

"Nest offers a wide range of support and advice to help people who are struggling to heat their homes. Between 2011 and 2016, over 85,000 householders have contacted Nest and 23,700 have received free home improvements and

Welsh Government funded home energy efficiency improvements, aimed at low income households, are having a positive impact on health. The study used NHS data to compare the health service use of people who had benefited from Nest home energy improvements and a control group who were eligible for improvements, but were still waiting for these to be completed. The Fuel Poverty Data Linking Project report can be viewed/downloaded via <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/fuel-poverty-data-linking-project/?skip=1&lang=en>

If your home is hard to heat, please contact Nest on: Freephone **0808 808 2244** for free advice and to see if you are eligible for energy saving home improvements, or visit www.nestwales.org.uk for more information.

EPP Cymru

The NHS are offering free courses to help carers focus on their own health and wellbeing, which can often take a back seat. The courses cover a wide range of topics in particular techniques to manage stress, something that due to the pressures and expectations of caring, carers can be particularly vulnerable to.

Gill Purse who cares for her husband Michael recently attended a course.

"I was experiencing a period of low mood and high levels of stress so my GP suggested I go on a course. I was doubtful at first that it would help but I felt more able to cope, I could sleep better and my mood improved"

EPP Cymru run a number of NHS courses including short carers' workshops, confidence building and wellbeing sessions for anyone with a long term health condition or a caring role. They're unique in that they are not delivered by health professionals but by trained tutors who

have real life experience of living with a health condition, or caring for someone. The courses are peer lead and participants learn from each other, gaining practical advice and information on local services. *"At times being a carer was a lonely experience- It was great to meet other people who understood, to pick up tips, and learn about things like the carers assessment. It was good to talk to other carers."*

"One of the most challenging parts of being a carer is feeling like I'm on call 24/7, I had little time for myself. The course helped me find pockets of me time, something I used to feel was impossible. I'd encourage anyone to attend a course – I'm so much more positive and I have my confidence back."

For more information on courses Tel: Carol or Jess on **02920 335403** or email Epp.Info.cav@wales.nhs.uk

