



Carers' Rights Day Friday 29 November 2013

Each year here are two UK-wide events to recognise the invaluable role of carers. Carers' Week is normally held in mid-June and Carers' Rights

Day at the end of November.

This year, Carers' Rights Day will take place on Friday 29 November 2013 and the theme created by Carers UK will be: 'Rights, Advice, Support'.

- **Rights** Do you understand your rights as a carer? If you provide unpaid, regular and substantial support then you are a carer and entitled to a carer's assessment focusing on your needs.

- **Advice** Do you need advice on welfare changes, appropriate information or signposting to a relevant organisation?
- **Support** Do you know how to access the right support at the right time?

If you require more information on support, or on what may be available to help you in your caring role, please contact:

James Livingstone, Carers' Development Officer for the Vale of Glamorgan Council on 01446 704604 or email: CarersServices@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/carers

The Carers UK website also has more information:

www.carersuk.org/get-involved/carers-rights-day



Adult Carers Support and Services - Consultation 2013

The Vale of Glamorgan Council conducted a short survey early in 2013 to ascertain views on the provision of information and support for carers. We wish to thank everyone who took part in this exercise for their valuable contributions.

This has been a useful piece of work which, alongside other information currently being gathered, will help inform the shape of carers' services in the future.

Where applicable, and in conjunction with Cardiff Council Adult Services, we will be looking to develop joint or comparable services to achieve equity across Cardiff and the Vale.

The summary of responses is available to download from the carers section of the Vale website: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/carers

Focus Group summary findings for Vale of Glamorgan Council

CARERS UK
the voice of carers

UNIVERSITY OF
FORWARD
THINKING
WESTMINSTER



In April 2013, 17 carers from the Vale of Glamorgan participated in a focus group about devices that allow people to perform tasks that they found difficult to do (so called 'assistive technology' products) and how carers can benefit from the use of technology. The group was facilitated by Carers UK and the University of Westminster who are working in conjunction with technology companies and product developers to find out how best carers can be supported by technology. Three other groups were held in England, and some of the early results from this project have been shared with us below.

Three quarters of the carers who attended the focus groups use a smart/mobile phone and/or landline phone in connection with their caring responsibilities, and two thirds use the internet. All participants use either a mobile phone or have access to the internet. More than half of the people they care for use their landline phone, but only a quarter use a mobile phone and less than a quarter use the internet to assist with their caring needs.

Some individuals are caring for family members with serious medical/physical conditions who are able to live independently purely through the use of assistive technologies. In fact, 80% of participants reported that the people they care for use some form of assistive technology and/or equipment/adaptation.

At each of the focus groups, the most commonly-cited benefit of assistive technology that carers have experienced is reassurance and peace of mind, particularly with regard to the safety and emergency contact that some of the technology facilitates.

Technology had also provided family members being cared for with greater independence

which in turn gave greater freedom and enhanced quality of life for the carers. Some experiences shared by carers...

- *A good rest not worrying about her at night*
- *We would be unhappy about [my son] living on his own without technology*
- *Can relieve anxiety – door alarms etc*
- *When dad carries mobile I feel more reassured he can contact me / someone else if he needs help*
- *Helps with frustration on both sides*
- *Feeling like you are doing something positive/empowering.*

Smartphone and tablet apps:

A mobile phone application (or mobile "app") is software designed to run on smart phones, tablet computers and other mobile devices. There were a small number of families making use of tablet apps for both themselves and the person they care for. These apps were helping enormously in the day-to-day lives of children who have developmental or psychological difficulties. Applications included: cognitive behavioural therapy; mood tracking; relaxation and meditation; medication reminder; and text to voice for those with communications difficulties. These apps help to create independence for the person being cared for, which in turn gives carers and wider family improved quality of life and well-being.



- *Reminder texts for appointments means relationship improved as I'm not reminding and perceived as "nagging mum"*

- *Tablet taking app and prescription reminder removes conflict of my reminding being resented. Improved relationship.*
- *'Where am I?' Nearest bus/tube stop free app helps when family member out and doesn't know where they are.*
- *iPad gives independence to my son - helps him learn; gives him tools.*

Information about technology:

Carers expressed frustration at not knowing where to go to get information about assistive technology. At each group there was a big call for advice and information to come from health professionals, primarily General Practitioners (GPs) and Occupational Therapists (OTs), either based on an individual assessment of need or as an information point.

Here are a few websites suggested by participants that can help you find some products that might be useful:

Mi More Independent – provides information about various “Life enhancements”
www.moreindependent.co.uk

Everyday Support - www.everyday-life.co.uk

Which? Also have useful section on home adaptations as well as reviews of the different devices/technologies.

www.which.co.uk/money/retirement/guides/long-term-care/home-adaptations

www.which.co.uk/money/retirement/guides/long-term-care/long-term-care-assistive-technology

Design:

The focus group also looked at the design of products and asked carers what features they would like and how they could see assistive technology fitting into their lives and homes. The most common feature carers requested was ease-of-use including a clear on/off switch and big-enough buttons.

Wishes for the future:

At the end of each focus group the participants were asked what their ‘3 wishes’ would be for using technology in the future. A range of

ideas were given but overwhelmingly carers would like technology that is more robust, better supported and more affordable. Some of the responses included...

- *Totally reliable technology*
- *For technology to be more affordable.*
- *Greater awareness of new technologies and their benefits*
- *Enable all elderly to live at home*
- *To give me time to do my work*
- *Mobile/smart phone technology for checking their health any time of day or night*
- *Up to date technology that will do a variety of things*

The research team that organised the Focus Group aim to complete their work in the next few months with a view to make their findings public, most likely in the Spring of 2014.

How are we doing - measuring the impact on carers

In October 2011 the Cardiff and Vale UHB, Cardiff Council and VOG Council surveyed carers as part of the gathering information on the impact of caring and access to services to inform the development of the Cardiff and Vale Carers Information and Consultation Strategy (see Strategy via web link below). This survey will be repeated in January 2014 to measure the impact of any changes made and identify further improvements. Everyone who receives Caring Times will receive a questionnaire. I hope you will be able to spare a little of your valuable time in order to respond to the survey. Your responses are important to us and a significant number of Vale carers kindly engaged in the original survey.

www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/information-for-carers

60% of carers worried about nutrition

At any given time, it is estimated that more than three million people in the UK are either malnourished or at risk of malnutrition and the vast majority of these (approximately 93%) are living in the community.

A new research survey from Carers UK and Nutricia has shown that six in ten worry about the diet of the person they care for and over half of carers struggle to maintain a healthy diet themselves, saying that they neglected their own health as a result of caring.

Over half (54%) of the carers surveyed cared for someone who has experienced difficulties with their diet, nutrition and hydration. This

rises to 57% for those caring for someone aged 75 years and older.

CARERS UK
the voice of carers

Carers UK are supported by Nutricia to provide advice about eating well and to support and empower carers to provide the best possible nutritional care. Find out more at:

www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/care-with-nutrition

Caring Times wishes to thank Carers UK for permission to use this information. More information can be found at www.carersuk.org

Winter – season for soups and stews

Soups and stews can be healthy as well as being cold weather comfort foods. They are a way of adding vegetables to your diet and make a balanced meal in one pot. A selection of vegetables such as leeks, onions, carrots, celery and swede with stewing beef and potatoes will cook slowly in some stock to make an easy meal. Beef shin is especially good for long, slow cooking and makes delicious gravy.

Replace some of the meat in a recipe with tinned chickpeas, butterbeans or lentils to reduce the cost and add some fibre

Store cupboard essentials

Many meals and snacks can be made from a well stocked store cupboard. Check yours before the nights draw in. Consider keeping the following

Milk – long life, evaporated or dried,

Breakfast cereals and porridge – a healthy snack any time of the day

Pasta, rice and cous cous, crackers or crispbread

Tinned meat and fish especially oily fish such as sardines or mackerel

Lentils, beans, baked beans

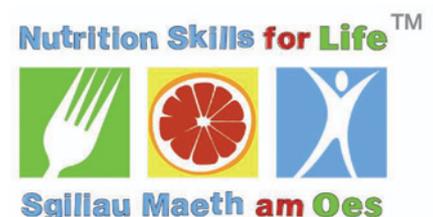
Canned tomatoes, vegetables and tinned fruit

With a few items from each food group in stock you have the makings of some balanced meals if you aren't able to shop.



If you have any queries about nutrition please contact nutrition.

skillsforlife.cav@wales.nhs.uk or 07970 740598 and a nutritionist will contact you within a couple of weeks.



For further information about nutrition:

About healthy eating in general
www.nhs.uk/livewell/goodfood
www.carewelluk.org

A Welsh Government document and resources about preventing malnutrition
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/health/publications/socialcare/guidance1/nutrition/?lang=en>

Caroline Walker Trust website. www.cwt.org.uk/publications as they produce some useful information packs with food ideas and pictures.

ACCESS RESPITE THROUGH ADULT PLACEMENT SCHEME

SharedLivesPlus is the UK network for family-based and small-scale ways of supporting adults. The local version of this scheme operating within the Vale is called Adult Placement.

- *Do you feel that you would benefit from a short break from caring?*
- *Would you like the person you care for to receive support in an ordinary family environment?*
- *Would you like to make sure that the person you care for receives consistent support from the same trained individual(s)?*

Adult Placement (also known as Shared Lives) is a model of care whereby vulnerable adults receive support and / or accommodation within a family environment provided by approved Adult Placement Hosts. Hosts come from a wide range of backgrounds and have varied work and life experiences and interests. The people who use adult placement are as varied as our hosts and range from people with learning disabilities to people with mental health problems.

Mary and John are a married couple in their fifties. When John suffered a brain acquired injury, Mary became his full-time carer. She finds it difficult to get a short break from her caring responsibilities because it would mean leaving John in a residential care home with older people (70 and over). Through Shared Lives, John is getting short breaks with a local family in an ordinary family environment. Mary is happy because she can trust the support that John receives and doesn't feel worried whenever she needs a break.

Adult Placement Hosts are matched with service users depending on the Hosts' skills, training and experience and the person's wishes about the type of household they would like to live in and the type of support they would like to receive.

Our service is regulated by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). A

copy of our Annual Inspection Report, national minimum standards and regulations can be found on the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

Our statement of purpose, which can be downloaded from the Vale of Glamorgan's website, is updated annually.

Referrals are accepted from social work teams. Therefore, if the service user has a social worker, please contact them. If you do not have a social worker but want to find out more, please contact:

Contact OneVale (C1V) Tel: 01446 700111
Email: C1V@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
Useful Weblinks: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk then search for adult placement

www.sharedlivesplus.org.uk <http://wales.gov.uk/cssiwsbsite/newcssiw/?lang=en>



Where you stand

Cardiff & the Vale Parents' Federation supports families who care for a relative with a learning disability. We produce an extensive A4 information guide called **Where You Stand** that has over 200 pages of contacts, information and guidance written by carers, for carers. The guide is free for carers with a learning disabled relative. It is also held online at www.wherestand.org and updated weekly to ensure entries are up-to-date. Contact us on 02920 227800 or by email to admin@parentsfed.org to secure your copy.





Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd Family Information Service

If you are a parent caring for a disabled child and you pay for childcare, you could access a special government scheme, called "childcare vouchers", which is operated through employers. The scheme enables parents to pay for child care out of your pre tax and national insurance income. Childcare vouchers can potentially save parents with children aged up to 15 over £1000 on childcare. The Family Information Service describe how the scheme works.

Using Childcare Vouchers can save you up to £100 per month

How does it work?

You need to find out from your employer whether they run a childcare voucher / salary sacrifice scheme. If so, you can choose to take part of your salary (up to £55 per week or £243 per month) in childcare vouchers which is tax and National Insurance free. It's up to you how you spend them. Each working parent can take

part in a scheme offered by their employer. So if both parents work for an employer who has a scheme, they can both save up to £100 per month.

If your employer doesn't run a scheme, please let us know and we can provide them with some useful information, as it's very easy to set up a scheme.

Childcare Vouchers can be used to pay for the care of children up to the age of 15 including out of school clubs (breakfast clubs, after school clubs, holiday clubs).

For more Information

Visit the following websites for more information:

- *Childcare Vouchers website - www.childcarevouchers.co.uk/google/ccvparents.html*
- *HMRC (you can also do an online calculation to see whether you are better off claiming childcare vouchers or tax credits) - www.hmrc.gov.uk/calcs/ccin.htm*

If you have any questions or need information and advice on registered and unregistered childcare in the Vale, contact the Family Information Service (FIS) on Tel: 01446 704704, fis@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or visit: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis

"Get your Voice Heard"

YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL

INDEPENDENT NHS 'WATCHDOG' WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS

Your local Community Health Council works to ensure your views are taken into consideration in the planning and delivery of local NHS services, and, if you are interested or concerned about NHS services in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, here is your opportunity to get involved:

- *We seek the views of patients and the public on local services and use that information to inform our work with the NHS. We run a quarterly Health Watch Group and should you wish to join please email us at healthwatch@cavogchc.org.uk and an application form will be sent to*

you or contact us on 02920 377407 and an application form will be posted.

- *If you prefer to use the internet, we have a Facebook page where you can feed in you views on any health service issues you feel strongly about located at www.facebook.com/cavog.chc or tweet us on our Twitter page www.twitter.com/cavogchc*
- *We also run a FREE Advocacy service for anyone wishing to make a complaint about any aspect of NHS service, whether it is in Hospital, General Practice or other Health Care provider and our advocates will help you through the NHS complaints system.*

Should you wish to learn more about what we do, there is a wealth of information on our website page, please take a look: www.communityhealthcouncils.org.uk/cardiffandvale

Everyone's Future: Think Differently about age

Everyone's Future
Think Differently About Age



Carers can be any age. In the article below Age Connects describe the effects of ageism, something that could become increasingly important as people are living longer in the UK and more people will become carers as they age themselves.

Age discrimination is one of the most widely experienced forms of discrimination in the UK. It goes unnoticed and unchallenged. Both older people and younger people who have caring responsibilities are stereotyped and can face negative attitudes and unfair treatment which undermines their self-esteem and confidence, as well as increased likelihood of feeling isolated and unappreciated.

Far too often, older people are talked about in a derogatory, disrespectful or patronising manner and their contribution to society is not recognised or valued. Age discrimination is a root cause of injustice, oppression and abuse. It can affect individuals and communities, it must be challenged.

Everyone's Future is an exciting partnership project between youth organisation Vibe Experience and local older people's charity, Age Connects Cardiff & the Vale. Funded by the Big Lottery, the project works together with community members of all ages to highlight and challenge negative stereotypes and prejudice associated with age.

Think differently about age!

Everyone's Future is running **free** workshops

Age Connects

If you are aged over 50 and need any information or support and live in the Rural Vale, we might be able to help you. Age Connects have various clubs and activities (such as Majong, Tai Chi) running in the western Vale so if you would like to come along or would like to get something going in your area please call Jane Platts, Rural Connections Coordinator on 01446 795631 or email: Jane.platts@age-concern-cardiff.org.uk

and talks to organisations, groups, societies and schools throughout Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Sessions are interactive and informative and cover a wide range of issues surrounding age discrimination. We explore the causes, effects and positive ways in which to confront negative stereotyping to improve intergenerational community cohesion.

Feel strongly about ageism? Want to see changes in your community?

We are currently looking for enthusiastic individuals of all ages to get involved and play an important role in shaping the project and planning intergenerational events.

You really can do as much or as little as you like, so if you feel strongly about creating a fairer and happier society, believe that age is just a number and that sharing ideas and learning from one another is important, then get in touch. We can fit around your other commitments and all travel expenses will be covered.

Want to know more?

If you would like to arrange an informal workshop or talk for your group or think that you may like to get involved with intergenerational work then please get in touch with Alice Matthews, Age Equality Worker (Older People) Age Connects Cardiff and the Vale Telephone: 02920 683694 or at [alice.matthews@age-concern-cardiff.org.uk](mailto:matthews@age-concern-cardiff.org.uk)

Age Connects also run a nail cutting surgery at Highlight Medical Park Medical Centre, Lakin Drive, Highlight Park, Barry, CF62 8GP (£10 per session). For further details or to book an appointment please contact: 02920 56 0952

Please note that as from 1st October 2013 Age Concern Cardiff and the Vale's new operating title became Age Connects Cardiff and the Vale.

British Red Cross – Mobility Aids Service

The Red Cross will shortly be making changes to the mobility aids service it currently provides (formerly known as the medical equipment service). These changes will be as follows:

- From 1 November 2013 the Red Cross depot based in Treforest, will cease providing the mobility aids service. During the month of November the depot will be open to accept returns of equipment only.
- From 1 November 2013 the issuing of all equipment across the SE Wales locality will be undertaken from the new SE Wales depot based in Newport.

- From 1 December 2013 the Treforest depot will close and the issuing and returning of all equipment, will take place at the new SE Wales depot based in Newport
- A delivery and collection service will operate throughout SE Wales for service beneficiaries unable to get to the SE Wales mobility aids depot.

For more information please contact Nicola Wannell, Aneurin Bevan Locality Manager on 01633 245766 or email NWannell@redcross.org.uk. Alternatively, please contact the mobility aids department on 0844 412 2756.

Help for carers

Protecting your pension

The amount of State Pension you get is based on the National Insurance contributions you have paid and any that have been credited to you. If you care for someone you may be entitled to National Insurance credits for carers. These credits are usually given automatically if you get Income Support.

If you can't get Carer's Allowance but care for at least one person for 20 hours or more a week, you may apply for a weekly Carer's Credit towards your pension.

Find out more at www.gov.uk/carers-credit or phone 0845 608 4321

Welsh Water Assist

If you are in a low income household and you have a large family, or a family member with a medical condition requiring high water use, Welsh Water may be able to help by capping your water and sewerage charges at £125.00 each respectively.

For more information ring Welsh Water on 0800 0152 680 www.dwrcymru.com then search for "assist"

Turn 2 us

Turn 2 us is a great organisation for financial advice, a source of information and grant sourcing and is used widely by the CAB.

Turn2us have extensive information regarding benefits and benefit checking but also an A-Z list of organisations providing grant support covering a massive range of industries from painters and decorators to actors!

www.turn2us.org.uk

The Water Energy Calculator

Is your energy bill overflowing?

Heating water costs you money, use this free online tool and learn how you can save money from your energy and water bills. The tool only takes a few minutes to complete and you can:



Receive a personal report on how much water and energy your household currently uses

Find out how much energy, water and money you can save and what action to take

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/water-energy-calculator

Co-Creating Healthy Change at Diverse Cymru



The Co-Creating Healthy Change project at Diverse Cymru is working with the citizens of Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan to promote paths to health and wellbeing. In particular we are working with people from the following communities:

- *Black and Minority Ethnic People*
- *Carers*
- *Disabled People*
- *Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People*
- *Older People*
- *Transgender People*

to overcome any inequalities they may face in relation to health, social care and wellbeing services. The project is working with people to develop their knowledge and skills to enable them to influence decisions about these services.

Activities will include:

- *Citizen Involvement Forums*



- *Training and support*
- *Volunteering opportunities*
- *Events*
- *Linking communities and health and wellbeing service providers*
- *Collecting people's stories, experience and feedback on health, social care and wellbeing services*

If you want to have your say and make your voice heard on health and wellbeing issues, or if you want to find out more about our project please contact us. Roz Warden roz.warden@diverseecymru.org.uk

Shelagh Maher
shelagh.maher@diverseecymru.org.uk or
 call 029 2036 8888

Chronic Condition Self-Management Programme / Looking After Me – Courses for Carers

If you are a Carer for a friend or relative and recognise any of the following symptoms:
 Stress • tiredness • pain • tense muscles
 • depression • shortness of breath
 • difficult emotions • anxiety

You may be interested in either joining a group for 2½ hours each week over 6 weeks or, a one-off 3hour course, to help with these symptoms.

The next six week Carer's Health and Wellbeing (6 week) course is at: Barry Library from Tuesday 21 January 2014 to 25 February 2014, 10.00am until 12.30pm

The next An Introduction to Self-Management (3 hour) course are:

Llantonian Hall, Llantwit Major Thursday 23 January 2014 13.30pm to 16.30pm

Courses are led by trained tutors who live with a health condition or who care for someone with a health condition. For further information or to book a place on a course contact EPP Cymru on 02920 556028 (please note this new telephone number).



FREE
Health and well being course

Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors

Boots UK and Macmillan Cancer Support believe every woman has the right to feel good about themselves, this is why from 10 September 2013 Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisors will be introduced into selected Boots stores* across the UK, making it the first retailer to offer this unique role on the high-street.

A poll by Macmillan Cancer Support showed 81% of women surveyed** feel the physical side-effects of their treatment have negatively affected their self esteem and despite this, 64%** are unsure of how to disguise them and 73% would welcome beauty advice from a local trained advisor**.

In response to this, No7 advisors have been specially trained to offer advice and support to help people affected by cancer to manage the visible side-effects of their treatment, via a tailored and personalised service developed by Boots UK and Macmillan Cancer Support. This support aims to help women undergoing cancer treatment to feel more like themselves again at a time when they need it most, with a discrete one-to-one consultation.

The Beauty Advisors have completed an in-depth training programme enabling them to advise customers on the best products for their needs, and demonstrate how to apply cosmetic techniques to minimise these visible side-effects. Their training means they are able to offer other important advice on the side effects of cancer treatment such as the loss of eyebrows and eyelashes, deeper wrinkles, dry or sensitive skin and brittle nails. They can also offer important advice on sun protection, and the appearance of hair loss and hold sensitive conversations to ensure women do not feel intimidated.

Karen White, Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor, Boots store Northwich, has completed the training,

“By offering advice and support to help people affected by cancer to feel more positive about their appearance, they can get a little bit of



themselves back. The training with Macmillan has been invaluable in helping me respond to and meet the individual needs of those affected by cancer.”

Jeni underwent treatment for breast cancer and explains how she would have benefitted from seeing a Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor, “It is a shame that during the time I was undergoing treatment, the Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor role was not yet available as I would have definitely benefitted from seeing them. I would have felt more like myself, just popping into a high-street store and asking for some advice and a chat, but also knowing that because of their training, I would get a sensitive and reliable answer. It is great that they are now in stores to make a huge difference to women like me.”

The introduction of the new role in-store complements the launch of Boots Macmillan Information Pharmacists last year, which as a result of the Boots Macmillan partnership, Boots UK is now the only high-street destination to offer a more holistic cancer support service. This means customers can access beauty advice, alongside support on medication and the associated side effects from qualified pharmacists, under one roof with advice from people they can trust.

www.boots.com/cancer www.macmillan.org.uk/visibleSideeffects

* In selected Boots UK stores. To find your nearest store please go to www.boots.com/storelocator

** Macmillan Cancer Support online survey of 100 women living with cancer in the UK. Participants were recruited from Macmillan’s online community forum. Fieldwork conducted between August and October 2012. Survey results are unweighted.

Sleep Deprivation

An article on the BBC's website earlier in 2013 shows the importance of getting a good night's sleep. Often a person's caring responsibilities make it difficult for them to get a good night's sleep with the resulting effects on the carer's health and well-being.

Caring Times would be interested in your experience of how disturbed sleep affects your caring responsibilities and whether you have any tips or suggestions to help others who may be in a similar caring situation.

For more information see: www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-21572686
www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/looking-after-you/looking-after-your-health/sleep



Cerebra's Sleep Service

Sleep disturbance is often a problem for families who have children with a neurological condition or brain injury. Cerebra's sleep team can support parents and carers and help with a wide range of sleep issues including:

- *Bedwetting*
- *Good sleep hygiene*
- *Nightmares*
- *Night terrors*
- *Anxiety at night*
- *Night-waking*
- *Sleeping alone*
- *Rhythmic movement disorder*
- *Biology of sleep*
- *Melatonin*

They can give advice by telephone, post or e-mail and in certain areas they have sleep counsellors who can make home visits. They can also give talks on sleep related topics to groups of parents or professionals.

Cerebra is a national charity supporting children and young people with neurodevelopmental conditions and brain injury through research, education and direct, on-going family support. To find out more please contact them at sleep@cerebra.org.uk or call them on their Freephone helpline 0800 328 1159 or visit their website www.cerebra.org.uk. Cerebra have also produced a **Disabled Children Parents' Guide: Parent/Carers, available at:**

www.cerebra.org.uk/English/getinformation/disabilityrightslegalissues/Pages/DisabledChildrenParents'GuideParentCarers.aspx

Cyd Cymru



Wales is coming together to reduce our energy bills.

The Cyd Cymru collective energy switching scheme is grouping individuals in Wales together to bulk buy energy for a better price. The scheme was launched in October and has already received an enormous amount of interest from people in Wales. At a time when tensions are high and energy prices even higher, Cyd Cymru provides a unique opportunity for Wales to group together to collectively save money.

The first step is to register your interest and provide some information about your energy use. An energy auction will then take place, where Energy suppliers will give their best price to the collective of registered users. Next, you will be contacted with a personal offer for you, based on the information you have provided. If you accept the offer, you will be assisted to switch to the new cheaper tariff.

This is the first time we've tried a collective switch in Wales, and the Cyd Cymru scheme

is backed by the Welsh Government. Similar switching schemes that have previously run across the UK and in Europe have seen great results. At a time when the costs of energy seem to be going up, ways to save some money have never been more important.

Cyd Cymru will also provide its registered participants with plenty of energy efficient advice to help them save more money on energy bills and reduce the nation's carbon footprint. There will be information on how to switch energy suppliers in future, too, so participants will be fully informed on how to switch again if they want to.

Everyone in Wales is welcome to join the scheme, and the more people we can get to sign up, the better discounts we can negotiate with the energy supplier.

You can register your details with us by filling in the online form on the Cyd Cymru website, www.cydcymru-energy.com or calling the contact centre on 0800 093 5902.

For more energy saving tips please visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/wales.

New Guidelines to support children with autism and their families

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has published new clinical guidelines on the management and support of autism in children and young people. According to NICE, recent studies have shown that there are more than half a million people in the UK with an autism spectrum condition and at least one in 100 children is thought to be affected. The new guideline from the government's health watchdog entitled, "Autism: the management and support of children and young people on the autism spectrum", aims to ensure that children and young people with possible autism, and their parents or carers, get appropriate care and support.

<http://publications.nice.org.uk/autism-cg170>

And finally....

If you have not already done so, please tell us your email address so we can send you future information quickly and efficiently.

In the September 2013 edition of Caring Times mention was made of the Passport to Leisure Scheme. Unfortunately this scheme is no longer operating at Vale Leisure Centres. Caring Times is happy to clarify this. To discuss whether your local leisure centre operates a reduced membership scheme, please ring 01446 403000 or visit www.leisurecentre.com

QR code: Vale carers now have a new QR code which will enable those with a smart phone to be taken straight to Vale of Glamorgan's home page for carers.



We would welcome any articles/ideas/suggestions you would like to contribute to future editions of Caring Times. Please ring on 01446 704604 or email: CarersServices@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk