



Durham County
carers support

Caring Matters

Your local charity
supporting carers

Charity No: 1069278
Company No: 3534933

Our **mission** is to "Improve Carers Lives"

Our **vision** is to "Create a community where Carers are recognised, valued and supported"

Are you afraid of technology? Do you feel left behind?



**Would you like to learn the basics?
We can help, see page 3 for more information**



County Durham
Clinical Commissioning Group

Contact us:

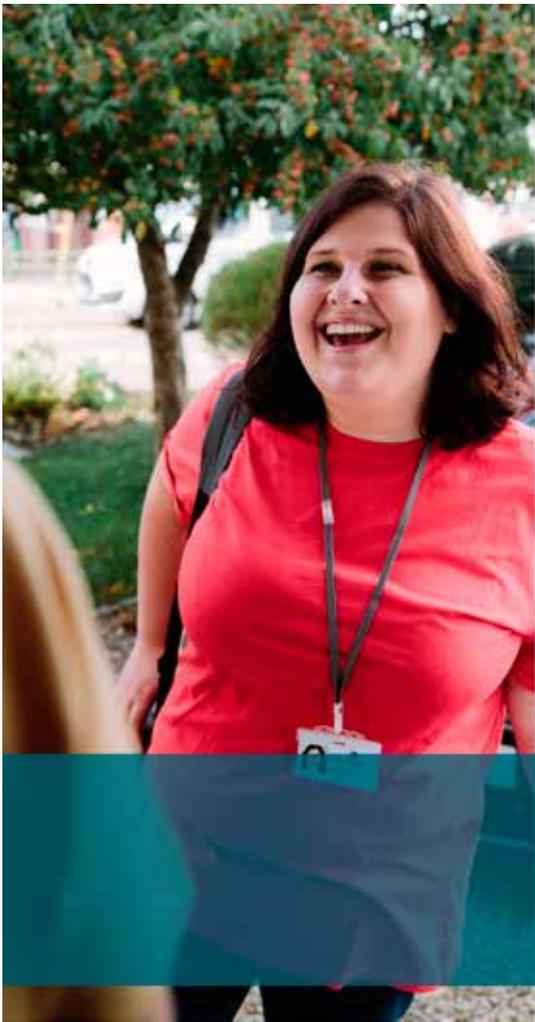
Head Office: Enterprise House, Enterprise City
Meadowfield Avenue, Spennymoor
Co Durham DL16 6JF

Telephone: 0300 005 1213 Text: 07860 017 632

Email: admin@dccarers.org Web: www.dccarers.org

www.facebook.co.uk/durhamcountycarerssupport

[@dccarers](https://twitter.com/dccarers)



Outstanding Home Support

Our person-centred, tailored packages act as a support system for you and your family. We flex to your needs, including:

**Companionship | Meal Preparation
Personal Care | Home Help
Specialist Care**

Call our team today to discuss your needs

0191 313 0189

Or visit Belleviecare.co.uk

WITHOUT YOU...



Telephone

0191 338 5155

to see how you can join our caring workforce and be part of a team that makes **a real difference to real lives in your area**

Rates of pay up to £8.60 an hour.
Full training provided.

**Harold might not speak
to anyone this week**



Dale Care
Care services

www.dalecare.co.uk

Want to Use a Computer / Smartphone? or other online device, but don't know where to start?

My name is Alison Dixon. I joined the Carer's Centre over 16 years ago. I started as the Admin/Finance officer. In 2012 I became a Carer Support Coordinator. It is my passion to work with and help Carer's. I have supported Carer's with very complex issues and enjoy every minute of it. Caring can be difficult at the best of times. But in this current situation my job has made me aware just how much it is a struggle with all the restrictions. The world is becoming more digital and people are getting left behind. I have been given a great opportunity to help Carer's in a different way, which I am very excited about getting my teeth into. DCCS have some funding to roll out a new project. The project will help Carer's to connect to the internet and I will be able to show you the basics of setting up and using it. In some cases, the funding may be able to help purchase the equipment.

You will be aware that due to the restrictions of Covid-19 many Carer's have felt isolated, businesses have closed, or the staff are working from home where possible. This has led us to rely on technology to keep business running and the economy going. What is not recognised is that many people do not know how to turn a computer or use a smart phone. They could be afraid because they have heard so many horror stories, they would rather rely on a family member to do it. Or the best one I have heard is "I'm too old to start with that"! Hopefully this is where I can help in a fun way. I am self-taught so I don't know all the computer jargon but, what I do know is how to be patient and listen to what you need help with. We have also had lots of courses and support available online and we would like to help more Carers take part in these.

How much time would you save if?

- Shopping was brought to your door.
- Appointments and prescriptions were organised or ordered with the click of a button.



- You could talk to friends and family and see them live on the screen.
- Reminders were set to take medication.
- Bank Statements were available to view in an instant.

I can help with all of these and many more ways to support you with your caring role.

If you are interested in learning the basics or you want to blow the dust off that piece of technology or computer that has not been turned on, please return the slip to me and I will call you to discuss how I can help. Email alison.dixon@dccarers.org or ring 0191 5006031.

Please return to: FREEPOST RTXA-HHGH-SAGE Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House, Enterprise City, Meadowfield Avenue, Spennymoor, Co Durham. DL16 6JF

Title Forename Surname

Address

Postcode Telephone

Email address

Please return to: FREEPOST RTXA-HHGH-SAGE, Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House Enterprise City, Meadowfield Avenue, Spennymoor, Co Durham DL16 6JF

We're here to help you stop smoking . . .

Our dedicated and friendly advisors are here to support anyone living or working in County Durham with a service tailored to your needs, including access to a range of stop smoking medications.

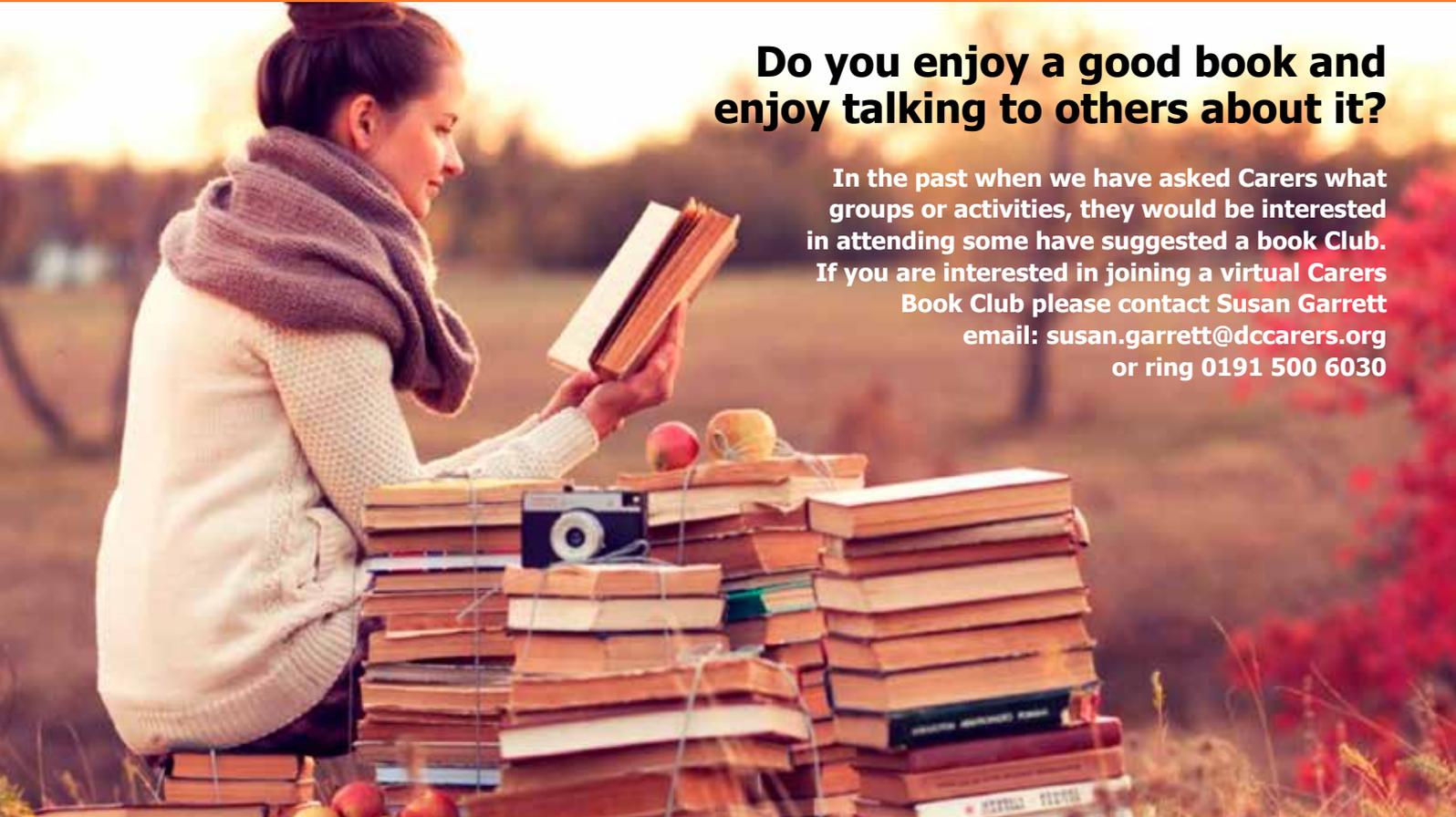
For more information or to make an appointment call us on **0800 772 0565 or text **DURHAM** to **62277** (texts are free).**

www.smokefreecountydurham.co.uk

Smokefree County Durham offer flexible, tailored stop smoking support to anyone living or working on the County Durham, with access to a range of medications including Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and Champix. Smokers are three times more likely to quit if accessing support from a trained advisor than going it alone.

Due to the current Covid-19 situation, we are presently offering telephone-based support or digital support through our QuitGenius app. Anyone who would like to access our service can do so by contacting us on 0800 772 0565 or by texting DURHAM to 62277.

The service is free to access though prescription charges may apply for any stop smoking medications provided.



Do you enjoy a good book and enjoy talking to others about it?

In the past when we have asked Carers what groups or activities, they would be interested in attending some have suggested a book Club. If you are interested in joining a virtual Carers Book Club please contact Susan Garrett email: susan.garrett@dccarers.org or ring 0191 500 6030

This newsletter is produced 4 times a year and is sent to over 18,000 supporters. If you have any comments we would very much like to hear from you. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by email or not to receive it at all please email, telephone or write to us using the details below.

Freeport RTXA-HHGH-SAGE, Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House, Enterprise City, Meadowfield Avenue, SPENNYMOOR DL16 6JF. Telephone: 0300 005 1213. Email: admin@dccarers.org
Website: www.dccarers.org Charity Number 1069278. Registered Number Company 3534933

Are you an Unpaid Carer?

Are you an Unpaid Carer, over 50 years old and living in Tow Law, Crook, Willington or surrounding areas?

Do you feel outfoxed by technology?

Does the thought of going "online" fill you with dread?

If so, this course, funded by the Three Towns AAP, could be for you!

Do you already have access to the internet but don't have the confidence to use it?

Maybe you've never used a tablet/laptop but are interested in trying it, if so, this course will help. We can loan you a tablet for the course, or even help to purchase a tablet or laptop for you!

The courses are split into 4 sessions, one 2.5 hour session per week, over 4 weeks. COVID permitting, these will be held in local community venues between January and May 2021. Otherwise, they will be from the comfort of your own home, via Zoom, but this is easy to do.

The aim of the course is to help unpaid Carers get more out of technology and feel less isolated. We will cover

topics including:

- How to spot scams & stay safe on the internet;

- How to access local services and find out what leisure activities are available locally or online;

- How to navigate websites and shop safely online;

- How to switch utility providers, to make the most out of your money.

The course is hosted by me, Michelle, so will not be technically challenging as I am not a computer whizz kid! It will be done at a steady pace with time to ask questions.

There are limited spaces on each course, so if you are interested, or would like to find out more, please contact me, Michelle Peaker, on 01388 439748 or email me at michelle.peaker@dccarers.org.



Keep us Updated

Have your details changed, would you like to be removed from our database or would you be happy to receive the newsletter by email?

Please let us know here

Current address details and preferences

Name

Address

.....

.....

Postcode

Telephone

I would like to receive my newsletter by email:

Please remove me from the database:

Previous address

Name

Address

.....

.....

Postcode

Telephone

Email



How to refer to us and access our services:

**Telephone:
0300 005 1213**

**Email:
admin@dccarers.org**

**Visit:
www.dccarers.org**



Understanding Challenging Behaviour

Positive Behavioural Support Awareness Workshops for Carers supporting Adults with Learning Disabilities or Autism

Do you support an adult who can display behaviour that can be challenging?

By the end of the workshops you will be able to:

- Identify things, people and situations that increase the chances of challenging behaviour.
 - Identify the possible reasons for challenging behaviour.
 - Develop some support strategies.
 - Develop an awareness of Positive Behaviour Support.
- Help improve the quality of life for the adult you support.

Workshops are to be delivered over 5 virtual sessions using Zoom.

Tuesday 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd March 2021

10.00am til 12 noon

Final session to arranged with group



Durham County
carers support

To book a free place on this course please contact Susan Garrett:

**susan.garrett@dccarers.org
or 0191 500 6030**



Carers Support Group

Carers Support Group meet the first Thursday at 2pm every month on Zoom. The group is small and friendly offering Carers "time out" to chat and meet other carers. We have speaker that join the group given us up to date information on services they are providing at this difficult time. For further information on how to access this group please contact 0300 0051213 or email asking for the link to be sent to you.

YOGA Classes for Carers

Due to the continued demand and success of our exercise classes we are continuing to offer friendly and inclusive Yoga classes for people of all abilities one morning per week.

Delivered via the digital internet channel Zoom
Starting Tuesday 16th February 10.30 am to 11.30 am
for six weeks

The class will be taught by Julie Metcalfe

Julie explains that Yoga helps to strengthen your body, improve your balance and increase your flexibility. Reconnect with your breath and find a CALM space in your busy world! Yoga has a multitude of benefits, on or off the mat. With yoga in your life you will soon notice the physical benefits of better strength, balance and flexibility. However you will no doubt discover that making the time to reconnect with your breath and find a calm space will lead to a multitude of other benefits OFF the mat for example better sleep, less stress/anxiety. To book a place on this course please email Jan Burden jan.burden@dccarers.org



The Silent Solution.

WHEN YOU CALL 999

All 999 calls are directed to BT call centres and operators will ask which service you need. If no service is requested but anything suspicious is heard throughout the process, call operators will connect you to a police call handler.

IF YOU CALL 999 FROM A MOBILE

It is always best to speak to the operator if you can, even by whispering. You may also be asked to cough or tap the keys on your phone in response to questions. If making a sound would put you or someone else in danger and the BT operator cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed, your call will be transferred to the Silent Solution system.

The Silent Solution is a police system used to filter out large numbers of accidental or hoax 999 calls. It also exists to help people who are unable to speak, but who genuinely need police assistance. You will hear an automated police message, which lasts for 20 seconds and begins with 'you are through to the police'. It will ask you to press 55 to be put through to police call management. The BT operator will remain on the line and listen. If you press 55, they will be notified and transfer the call to the police. If you don't

press 55, the call will be terminated. Pressing 55 does not allow police to track your location.

WHAT THEN?

When transferred to your local police force, the police call handler will attempt to communicate with you by asking simple yes or no questions. If you are not able to speak, listen carefully to the questions and instructions from the call handler so they can assess your call and arrange help if needed

The Silent Solution is not used on 999 calls from landlines as it is less likely to be an accidental call. If the call handler does not get any response to questions, can only hear background noise and is unsure whether there is an emergency you will be transferred to a police call handler.

If you replace the handset, the landline may remain connected for 45 seconds in case you pick it up again. If you pick up again during this 45 seconds and the BT operator is concerned for your safety, the call will be connected to police. When 999 calls are made from landlines, information about where you're calling from should be automatically available to the call handlers to help provide a response.

Stable & Balanced Course with Living Active

Armchair exercise delivered virtually using ZOOM on your laptop, tablet or smartphone.

**Wednesday afternoons between 2pm and 3pm
beginning 10th February for 10 weeks**

Easy to follow exercises which will help you feel fitter, stronger and more steady on your feet, giving you more confidence to get out and about or move around your home.

Specifically focussing on improving our balance, stability and coordination will help us remain active and confident with day-to-day activities. The best news is that it is never too late to start!

Julie will conduct a one to one private assessment before the course begins. Please read the success stories from a couple of my previous clients.

"I had several explained falls at home and decided to get help. The process of working with Julie has been enjoyable. I find it so much easier now when getting out of chairs and sofa"

"After waiting almost a year for a hip replacement I was left finding it difficult to walk and move in general. Julie's class was pleasant but not easy but it gave me confidence to try things. Now I can walk without my stick and I can climb the stairs again"

Julie has been teaching and participating in group fitness classes for many years and she is a qualified Postural Stability Instructor (Falls Prevention). She loves to meet new people and find out how she can help them. Julie is especially connected to this course because of personal experience therefore she knows just how important it is - it is never too early - or too late - to become stronger. It's important to Julie to see people's confidence and ability to improve each week.

If you would like to attend the class but you don't think



you have the equipment needed or the skills to use Zoom, please contact Alison Dixon on 0191 500 6031 alison.dixon@dccarers.org and she will do her best to help you



**To book a place on the
Armchair exercise
class
Please email Jan
Burden
Jan.burden@dccarers.org**

**Or call
0300 005 1213**

CHANGES Programme is going virtual

CHANGES is a 6-week programme aimed at Parents and Carers who support young people from 15 to 20 years old. The programme aims to ensure that parents and Carers of young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well informed about future opportunities and gain valuable links to support networks and useful resources across County Durham. Speakers cover the following subjects Employment, Benefits, Health and Wills and Trusts and much more.

Parents and Carers who have attended in the past have

said:

'Overwhelmed with information', 'Really interesting', 'Excellent course, lovely, friendly atmosphere'

**When: 6 weeks from Tuesday 13th April 2021
Where: Virtually**

This course is delivered in partnership with Durham County Council. If you would like further information or book onto the programme, contact Susan Garrett at susan.garrett@dccarers.org or 0191 500 6030

Calling all Carers Living in East Durham

Research from the Mental Health Foundation shows that creative activity can help to boost confidence and make us feel more engaged and resilient. Besides these benefits, art engagement also alleviates anxiety, depression and stress. You are invited to join Jaynie for a Craft and Create session on

Wednesday February 24th

from 10.30am – 12.30pm

The session will be held at Blackhall Community Centre - local Covid restrictions permitting - and will also be available via Zoom if we are not able to meet in reality or for people who would prefer to take part from home.

Jaynie will support you to create a make for yourself and one to gift to a friend in a small act of kindness – so you can also experience the joy of giving!

No experience is necessary – just a willingness to have a go!

With your permission materials needed for the make will be delivered to your home along with some tasty goodies to keep your creativity flowing!

If you would like to take part please ring me on 0191 5006011 or email karen.wilson@dccarers.org to book a



place. You will need to give your permission for the activity materials to be delivered to your home and information about any allergies you live with.

Karen Wilson – Mental Health Carer Support and Development Worker – East Durham

Staying Healthy – Keeping Well

If you care for an adult or young person over 16 years old with a Learning Disability, GP's are being asked to restart Annual Health Checks.

It important to have an Annual Health Check even if the person you care for feels well. This is an opportunity for you and the person you care for to talk to a health professional about staying healthy and to make sure they do not miss out on any tests or advice to help them keep well.

Due to Covid 19, Annual Health Checks may be different to the ones which have been offered in previous years. Some doctors are sending out a form to fill in and send back. You can also ask some questions about the health and wellbeing of the person you care for – please ask if you need support to fill this form in, as it will help the doctor to decide if there is a need to go into the surgery or if they need to make a home visit.

Some Doctors are offering to telephone or use a computer to complete the Health Check, so you do not need to go to the surgery. If you are not sure what will work best for the person you care for please ask for help. There are lots of resources and lots of information about staying well and healthy, but if you are worried about someone you care for you should speak to their GP, their Care Coordinator or you can contact the County Durham Health Facilitation Team for advice Michaela. Hopps@nhs.net or teww.healthfacil-durham@nhs.net

Making Sense of Caring

**Information Session via Zoom
4th March 2021 at 2.00pm**

We are hosting an information session for any new Carers who feel they need more information about what support is available to them in their caring role. Existing Carers are also welcome to attend.

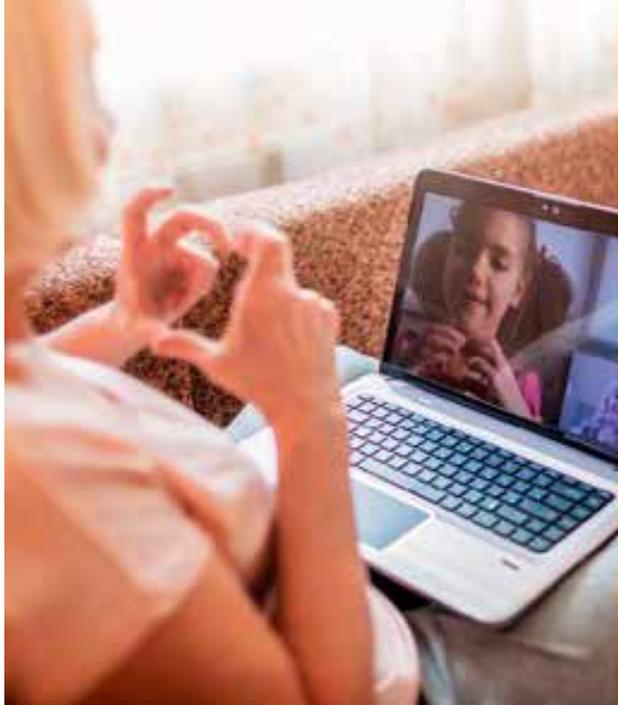
We will be discussing jargon around services and explaining who can help and where to go for support when needed. All attendees will be delivered an afternoon tea, so we can chat about any issues around your caring role while enjoying your afternoon treat.

If you are interested in joining or would like more information about this, please contact Jackie Young 01207 263494 or email: jacqueline.young@dccarers.org



National Eye Health Week 2020

Keep your eyes healthy while you're keeping in touch



Thanks to the coronavirus lockdown, lots of our usual activity is now taking place online, from keeping in touch with friends and family, through to collective worship and yoga sessions. You might be concerned about the impact all this screen time has on your eyesight, particularly if you have a diagnosed disease like glaucoma or dry eye.

How does the use of screens affect your eyesight?

When you're looking at a screen and concentrating, you blink less often and, sometimes, less completely. Your eyes constantly make a tear film which nourishes the front surface of the eye. When you blink the tear film is spread over your eye. If you're not blinking enough, the front of your eye can start to feel uncomfortable.

What can people do to make using screens easier?

Glare can be a problem, so try using a glare-reducing screen or filter and position the screen away from bright sunlight or other strong light sources.

Think blink! And rest your eyes frequently. The 20-20-20

rule is helpful – after 20 minutes of screen usage, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. Keep a good distance between your eyes and the screen. Finally, if you have glaucoma or dry eye disease you may find lubricating eye drops (also known as artificial tears) helpful – put these in your eyes as often as you like. Heat pads for eyes can also be helpful and soothing.

If you or someone you care for is living with glaucoma or dry eye disease you can find lots of useful information on our website, including links to our digital support groups. www.Glaucoma.uk.

We know that many people struggle to take their eye drops, which are vital in managing their condition. That's why Glaucoma UK in partnership with Durham Carers Support are planning some sessions to help you get to grips with glaucoma and eye drops.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Hannah Morrow: h.morrow@glaucoma.uk or 07854 821 911

Green Homes Grant Scheme

The Green Homes Grant scheme, which offers homeowners vouchers worth up to £5,000 to help cover the cost of making their homes more energy efficient, will be extended by a year.

The scheme, which launched in September and was due to end on 31 March 2021. The Government has announced that it's now set to be extended until 2022 after consumers reported struggling to find installers to complete the work before the end of March.

What will the extension mean for the scheme?

Here's how the extension is set to work:

- The vouchers will still be worth the same amount under the extended scheme. That means most homeowners will

be able to claim vouchers worth up to £5,000, covering up to two-thirds of the cost of the work. Some homeowners who receive certain benefits will be able to get up to £10,000 in vouchers, covering the whole cost.

- Vouchers under the scheme will now be valid for three months after they're issued or until 31 March 2022 – whichever is sooner. However, you will be able to request an extension if you can't use your voucher in time for reasons outside your control.

Other than the new deadline, the scheme will still work in the same way and the Government's said the same rules will apply. For more information visit: www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/pages/green-homes-grant or call 0800 444202, Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm.

Taking time for yourself with Silver Talk

When time is taken up looking after someone else, it can be easy to forget about looking after your own wellbeing.

But what if we told you that we could give a Carer the opportunity each week to socialise, make a new friend and talk about themselves for once? All from the comfort of their own home!

Silver Talk is a free telephone befriending service, which offers over 50s the opportunity to connect for a regular, social telephone chat. People are matched with one of our friendly volunteer companions, for an up to 30-minute chat at the same time each week.

If you, or someone you know would benefit from a friendly voice, a listening ear and taking some well-deserved me time, Silver Talk could be the perfect fit.



To find out more about Silver Talk, or to make a referral, get in touch with the team today either by email, silvertalk@karbonhomes.co.uk or by calling 0191 223 8662.

Parent Carer Support

In October parent carers joined our **Tea Talks** virtual group and told us how the pandemic has changed their caring roles. Most families have experienced a change in school routines as well as delays to appointments with services. Children's activities have also been put on hold. For many children with additional needs regular activities form part of their familiar routines which help to reduce anxiety. Also physical activity can help a child with sensory processing difficulties gain sensory feedback and regulate behavioural responses, not being able to access groups for some families has had a significant impact on wellbeing and family life. Parents told us that they now feel more tired than normal, experience feelings of anxiety, stress and overwhelm. As a service we continue to offer support to parent carers and are working to adapt our service to meet this changing need.

DID YOU KNOW?

Parent carers can still access Parent Carer Needs Assessments, Carer Breaks, the Counselling Service, help with grants and welfare benefits, including completion of DLA forms, online peer support, advice and information.

Covid 19 doesn't mean you have to manage your caring role on your own. Call 0300 0051213 and ask to speak to one of the Parent Carer Team.

Are you caring for someone living with dementia?

We are pleased to be able to offer you the opportunity to attend a 3 session course full of useful information and techniques to help you to manage what can be a challenging caring role.

The Course Tutor is Amy Ryan who, in her role as Lead Occupational Therapist with TEVV NHS Trust Older Persons Mental Health Services, has a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience to share.

You will have the opportunity to ask questions, engage in discussions and learn from others. Session content will be influenced by the things you would like to discuss and will also include training in relation to the Positive Approach to Care™

The Positive Approach to Care™ concept has been developed by Teepa Snow, an internationally renowned leading educator on dementia and the care that accompanies it. As an occupational therapist with 40 years' experience of clinical practice Teepa Snow's approach demonstrates how to support people living with dementia by equipping both formal and informal Carers with specific skills aimed at increasing understanding of what it is like

to live with dementia. Her approach is focused on care delivery, rather than theories.

Positive Approach to Care™ training focusses on what skills remain, rather than what is lost. It explains the changes in the brain and why people living with dementia may behave in a certain way and supports the care giver to appreciate what it is like to live with dementia, to accept the person with dementia is unable to change but that the caregiver can be flexible in their approach to make care giving easier by matching the approach with the specific needs of the individual.

The sessions, which will last for 1.5 hours, will be held over Zoom on

Thursday March 25th 1.30pm – 3.00pm

Thursday April 1st 1.30pm – 3.00pm

Thursday April 8th 1.30pm – 3.00pm

To book a place please contact Karen Wilson on 0191 500 6011 or email karen.wilson@dccarers.org It is advisable to plan to attend all three sessions. If your caring role would limit you from attending we may be able to arrange a sitting service for the person you are caring for – please contact Karen to discuss.

Armed Forces Outreach Service

Have you or the person you care for ever served in the Armed Forces (regular or reserves)? If so the Armed Forces Outreach Service (AFOS) may be able to help you.

Two ex-forces outreach workers (Steve Winter ex-Royal Navy, and Spencer Wiggins ex-Army) offer support to serving personnel looking to leave the forces, veterans and their families who may be in need. Both Spencer and Steve are SSAFA trained case workers and can offer advice on housing, income, forces pensions, and benefits. They work with organisations such as the Royal British Legion and Citizens Advice to help you keep on top of payments and bills and can also advise you if you are entitled to apply for any financial assistance through forces charities.

They have access to local authority employment teams and many other Forces employment organisations to help get the best employment and training opportunities for service leavers and veterans.

They are trained to help people from the Armed Forces to find a home and settle into the community. They can also give general housing advice and help with any other housing matters or problems such as moving home, homelessness, and rent arrears.

One client who was helped to find a new home said: "I couldn't of done it without your help, I'm glad this help now exists for Veterans. It's a weight off my shoulders and one less stress, I highly recommend your service. I would like to thank you for your efforts in helping me to achieve what my family and I needed."

Veterans and their families can also suffer from ill health



(both mental and physical), and loneliness and isolation. The AFOS team can help signpost to appropriate veterans' support services.

Remember, if you or the person you care for is ex-forces then feel free to contact one of the armed forces outreach workers based within Durham County Council to see how they can help. You can email: armedforcesoutreachworker@durham.gov.uk or telephone: 03000 268 000

Also remember to register with both your GP and Durham County Carers Support the fact you are a veteran. Being flagged as a veteran in your NHS medical notes will help to ensure that you are able to access dedicated services for those who have served in the UK armed forces.

Carers Urged to Seek Help

Article from The Northern Echo 26/11/2020

A Carer has urged people to swallow their pride and seek help as the pandemic makes looking after their loved ones even more difficult.

Olive Hobson had high praise for Durham County Carers Support, a charity with offices in Spennymoor and Darlington, which helps around 22,000 people who look after someone informally at home.

Its chief executive Jenni Wood said she was concerned that referrals had dropped since the pandemic took hold and Mrs Hobson urged people to get in touch with the organisation for help in accessing a range of support, from practical matters to benefits.

"They have been an absolute God send," said Mrs Hobson, of Newton Hall, who looks after her husband Dereck who was diagnosed with cancer three years ago. "I'd gone through life never asking for help and have worked all my life without a day off sick or having to claim benefits. But when it's your husband you just do it not realising you can need professional help. At times it all becomes too much and it grinds you down. Then I came across a leaflet about Durham County Carers Support and gave them a ring."

"The carer support coordinator Carole Gibson has been amazing. I was trying to decorate during lockdown and having a terrible time. I couldn't get rid of the rubbish and I needed my garden sorting. I asked Carole and it was all sorted, in fact, whatever I need gets attended to. Often I don't want to talk to friends when I'm down or worry my family and I can pick up the phone any time to Carole and she is such a good listener. She has also helped me apply for carers' allowances, get discounts on my carpets and access Macmillan nurses services. There are so many practicalities they help with but it's also so nice to know that people care."

Jenni said lockdown had seen a drop in referrals at a time when it was estimated that an additional 4.5 million people nationally had taken on caring responsibilities since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"People don't see themselves as carers, they are just husbands, wives, children, siblings, looking after their family," she said. "Carers tend to put themselves last and can end up with no energy left to help the people they are

caring for. There is so much help available out there but if you don't know what it is then how can you look for it."

Durham County Carers Support receives around 250 referrals a month

via word of mouth, social and health services, charities and voluntary organisations, providing a one stop shop for their needs.

"There are no criteria to meet, there is no stigma attached, just help in many forms, whether that is practical, financial or moral support," said Jenni. "When I first started this job most people seeking help were over 65, now it is anyone from 18 to their 90s with around a third in work trying to juggle caring with their jobs – and this percentage is rising. We are living longer and having to wait longer for our pensions.

People could be still looking after their children and their parents and are living complex difficult lives. We are there to help in any way we can and we know we can make a massive difference to people who are really struggling."

Carers UK will mark Carers Rights Day on Thursday, November 26, with a host of activities staged nationwide. Carers UK Head of Policy Ruby Peacock said: "The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted every aspect of caring, affecting carers' access to support and services, their finances, and their physical and mental health.

"Last year more than 400 carers' support groups, carers' organisations, local authorities, GP surgeries, hospitals, businesses and others got involved reaching thousands of carers with information, support and advice. With help we can reach even more."

For more information on Durham County Carers Support visit www.dccarers.org or phone Durham: 0300 005 1213 or Darlington: 0300 030 1215.

Chief Executive Jenni Wood



Pilates Evening Class for Carers

Due to the continued demand and success of our exercise classes we are continuing to offer one evening class per week.

Delivered via the digital internet channel Zoom

Starting on Friday 12th February 2021, 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm for six weeks

The class will be taught by Cath Lofthouse who has been teaching Pilates about 10 years. She has been an exercise teacher for 28 years and went on to study Pilates when she developed arthritis in her spine.

Pilates is manageable for all abilities.

Cath teaches us to forget what we can't do and find out what we can do.

Cath says: "We will be strengthening our core muscles and lower back whilst getting some overall body toning in. Starting a basic movement then progressing it to a challenging level for yourself. We will also get some stretching and spine mobility work in, helping us to improve your range of movement in day to day life. It will



help with arthritis and back pain as you find that moving the body in certain ways and keeping moving will benefit you. It will help improve your posture and encourage your body to keep good posture through other exercise and daily life".

Any concerns you may have can be worked around and Cath is always open to discuss issues at any time To book a place on this course please email Jan Burden jan.burden@dccarers.org

Volunteer Corner

So this year has had some exceptional challenges as you can imagine but I couldn't be happier or more proud of the way our team have stepped up to support Carers especially in times of crisis due to increased anxiety, changes in services IE for respite or day services, difficulties with care homes and bereavement to name just a few.

However, bittersweet for some of our much-loved Volunteers in that we have not been able to follow our usual calendar of events and they have been very much in our thoughts whilst not being able to carry out their normal volunteering roles. We hope very much to see you all back doing what you do best as soon as it is safe to do so.

During the pandemic our counselling service saw a sharp increase in the need for sessions and more importantly sessions required on a more urgent basis. We were very fortunate to already have a telephone counselling service in place and with the backing of the BACP and their change in guidance for students' hours we were able to automatically move to a full telephone service with ease and we are now also fully operational in facilitating Carers to access face to face sessions if they wish on platforms such as Zoom, WhatsApp, Skype and facetime.

During this period over 260 Carers have been referred to the counselling service and we have delivered over 850 hours between 25 counsellors - this is a fantastic achievement. We are aiming to offer urgent referrals to a counsellor within 1-2 weeks and around 4-6 weeks for non-urgent referrals.

Our newly established Keeping-in-Touch (KIT) project is now up and running and has contacted over 620 Carers so far. Some examples of the outcomes of the phone calls are listed below 15% of people asked needed some help with benefits and referrals have been made to look at this. 68% of people were not aware of the hospital passport, we have arranged for support in this.

53% of people were not aware of making an application for a carer break

38% of people were not aware of the carer discount card and we have made arrangements for those to be sent out.



Our Volunteer team is essential to the service so that we can continue to support as many Carers as we can, and their feedback is much appreciated so we can update or change things as needed. To get this feedback we send out a Volunteer survey and I am happy to share the results from this.

61% of our volunteers have now been with us over 3 years

100% of volunteers were clear about what is expected from them in their roles

100% also felt they have received adequate training for their role.

48% of people volunteer with us as a way of giving back

22% are with us as part of a college placement

100% would recommend DCCS to their families and friends

And 96% of people say they still feel they will be with us in the future.

When we asked for any other comments, we received the following responses:

"It is a worthwhile organisation to volunteer with the camaraderie is excellent and you feel part of a valued team"; "I enjoy my role and I am missing being away from the office at the moment due to covid"; "Great organisation, tell my friends and family about the help and support I receive"; "Everyone is so friendly and helpful"; "I really enjoy my volunteering role. Definitely feel very well supported and very much part of the team" And my personal favourite..... "I'll be here as long as you'll have me"

None of this would be possible without the generosity of donations towards the counselling service.

If you are able to help us to keep this service going please go to our website www.dccarers.org and click on the donate button or send your donation to:

**Durham County Carers Support
Enterprise House, Meadowfield Avenue,
Spennymoor, Co Durham DL16 6JF.**

THANK YOU



Everything in Place Project

The 'Everything in Place' project has been delivered for 5 years on a face-to-face basis, by St Cuthbert's Hospice, Durham, mainly to small community groups. We have already delivered several face-to-face courses in Partnership with Durham County Carers. During this year, the programme has been redesigned to be compatible with zoom delivery. The advantage being that we no longer are confined by locality and can engage with an audience from across the county.

It is our belief, and has been proven time and time again, that discussing plans for life, and the end of life, can empower individuals, and help them understand how to remain in control of making decisions for later life – particularly around finances and care/health.

We would like to deliver this new programme in Partnership once again, we hope you would come to all sessions, as they can have an impact on each other. The sessions are delivered on an informal basis, with plenty of time to ask questions. We are not lawyers, but our aim is to make sure that you understand the conversations you should be having with family members and professionals, and making sure family or friends know how you would like to be cared for in later years if you become unwell. Gaining confidence in dealing with these issues for yourself may help you to have the conversations with those you care for and help to get "Everything in Place" for them.

Louise Johnson

Community Liaison Officer, St. Cuthbert's Hospice

We are not selling any products; the aim is to help you to make your own well-informed choices about future or anticipated needs. Why don't you ask your family or friends to come along, it will make the conversations easier in due course.

If you are interested the please contact:

Karen Wilson, Carer Support and Development Worker on 0191 5006011 or email: karen.wilson@dccarers.org



1. Introductory session

Tuesday 2nd Feb - 10.30 / 12.00

Come along for an informal chat and see what the course is about, meet the team.

2. Why you need a will?

Tuesday 23rd Feb - 10.30 / 12.00

Choosing an Executor, probate, some of the laws of inheritance. Things to think about.

3. Understanding Capacity

Tuesday 2nd Mar - 10.30 / 12.00

What is Mental Capacity and who can make decisions on your behalf if capacity is lost.

4. Power of Attorney

Tuesday 9th Mar - 10.30 / 12.00

Process and forms – what you should know.
Cost reduction for people on low incomes.

5. Understanding Care

Tuesday 16th Mar - 10.30 / 12.00

Anticipating future needs and putting plans in place – what to think about, finding information.

6. Planning a funeral

Tuesday 23rd Mar - 10.30 / 12.00

Making your wishes known, pre-payment options etc. Do you know what you want to happen?

7. Understanding Euthanasia

Tuesday 13th April - 10.30 / 12.00

Understanding the debate, how it might work/the evidence from other countries.

8. Heart and Soul/memories

Tuesday 20th April - 10.30 / 12.00

Laws on organ donation, donating body to medical science. How to share your memories.

9. Digital legacy/difficult conversations

Tuesday 27 April - 10.30 / 12.00

Social media accounts, storing digital information.
Managing difficult conversations.

10. Drop in/mop up

Tuesday 4th May - 10.30 / 12.00

Open sessions, Q and A – drop in for a chat or catch up with something you missed.

WEA Courses for 2021 Online Enrolment is Open

The WEA has been providing high-quality educational opportunities to communities since 1903. Today, our Vision, Mission and Values inform everything we do. Using a combination of video and online classroom environment, our courses offer you the opportunity to stay connected with other students with similar interests. Our brilliant tutors have worked hard to offer you the same high quality and enjoyable learning experience from the comfort of your own home.

One Click Courses are designed to offer students with additional needs and challenges the opportunity to access learning through ZOOM as an online classroom environment. Our courses help students stay connected with other students with similar interests. Courses include Novelty Sugar Craft and Cake Decorating, Life Coaching, Tai Chi, Drama, Creative Writing for Women, Card Making for Springtime, Relax and Unwind, Springtime Flowers, Dance your way to Musical Theatre, African Drumming and many more.

To find out more contact: Donna Utterson - Education Coordinator dutterson@wea.org.uk Tel: 07887 821462

For some Carers there may be a fee to enrol on a course, NHS Carers Breaks Funding can help towards those fees. Please contact your Carer Support Coordinator for more information.

Keep Up To Date



Keep up to date with what's happening through our Learning Disabilities and Autism Carers Facebook Group and Carers Group meetings.

This facebook group is for people caring for an adult or young person who has a Learning Disability and or Autism. It is a closed group where Carers can share information and access peer support, in a safe and enclosed environment.

Our Learning Disability and Autism Carers Groups continue to meet virtually at present monthly through zoom. The groups meet in a relaxed atmosphere, to share what has been happening and give mutual support to one another. If you would like to join our face group or find out about our virtual groups please contact Susan Garrett our Learning Disability and Autism Development Worker 0191 500 6030 or email: susan.garrett@dccarersorg

Volunteer Vacancies

KIT TEAM

Our Keeping-in-Touch team are looking for Volunteers to make one off phone calls to Carers to engage them with our support.

This role requires a minimum of 4 hours per week and you need to be IT literate, the post also includes a DBS check and full training support. This role can make a huge difference in someone's life by helping us to offer vital support and therefore can be very rewarding.

PARENT CARER TEAM

Our Parent Carer Team are looking for Volunteers to assist our Parent Carers with completing DLA forms for children with disabilities.

The role requires around 2-3 hours at a time in order to complete the form. This is currently being done over the telephone, you will need a DBS check and will receive full training and support. This can make a big difference to the family of a young person with a disability and offers a very enriching volunteering role.

If you are interested in hearing more about these exciting opportunities please give Andrea a call on 0191 500 6010, looking forward to welcoming you as part of our fabulous Volunteer Team.



Carer?

Lesbian?

Gay?

Trans?

Bisexual?

**We're here if
you need us.
03000 051213**





Carers' Monthly Lottery

Don't miss the chance to win one of 3 great cash prizes every month! Proceeds in aid of Carers Counselling Service

Simply fill in and return the slip below or join online by visiting www.dccarers.org
Winners will be notified by post.

**ONLY
£1.00
per stake**

**Join today to be in
next month's
draw**

Carers' 50:50 Club Membership Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS

Name Telephone Number

Address

Postcode Email

We would prefer payment by standing order but are happy to accept cash (in person) or cheque.

Please note that if you pay by cash or cheque you must join for a minimum of 1 year (£12)

Monthly or Annual Standing order

Your Bank Name Bank Address

..... Bank Postcode

Account Number Sort Code

Please debit my account and pay: Durham County Carers Support the sum of £.....

on the (start date) and then on the same day (please circle): Monthly or Annually

Signed Dated.....

Please cut out and send this completed form to:

Durham County Carers Support, Meadowfield Avenue, Spennymoor, County Durham, DL16 6JF

50:50 Club Winners:

October 2020

1st Neil Geddes £109

2nd Deirdre Smith £73

3rd Lesley Stephenson £36

November 2020

John Manson £111

Brian Galloway £74

Thomas Pennick £37

December 2020

Geoff Taylor £106

Mrs M Wood £71

Mrs T Fleet £35



Zoom Virtual Carers Group

Join us for coffee and a chat

First Thursday every month at 2.00pm

For joining instructions email:

aileen.scott@dccarers.org

Occasionally we have guest speakers.



Contact:

0300 005 1213

www.dccarers.org



Infection Control Course for Unpaid Family Carers

What is it?

It is a 2.5 Hour course designed to help unpaid family Carers prevent or tackle any outbreaks of infection.



Who is it for?

Unpaid, family Carers either living in County Durham or caring for someone living in County Durham.

The aim of the course?

Is to reduce the risk of infection whilst caring for someone with an illness or disability in their own home or that of the person caring for them.

This course is ideal for family Carers where infection risks are present. The course will help Carers to understand what the risks are and the different types. Carers will learn how the right personal protective equipment is used to prevent infection or the spread of infection. Not only will this course enable Carers to deal with potentially infectious material, but it will help you understand cross infection through both direct and indirect methods, keeping the Carer and the cared for person safe.

How and when will it be delivered?

It will be delivered using ZOOM by Bob Harris (Carer) Managing Director Chronos Safety Ltd

Maximum 20 Carers.

Wednesday, 10th of March 10 am to 12:30 noon



For more details or to book a course, contact

☎ 03000 260 222 ✉ careacademy@durham.gov.uk 🌐 www.durham.gov.uk/careacademy

Brand New Course at Recovery College Online!

Recovery College Online has a new online resource ADAPT (After Diagnosis of Autism Parent support Training). This resource is for parents of children and young people who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).

Co-produced by York CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and CYC (City of York Council) Specialist Teaching Team for Autism in York, the resource aims to increase parent's understanding of the diagnosis of ASC and how the diagnosis impacts on family and school life.

Topics covered include:

- Receiving a diagnosis
- Autism at a brain level
- Language and communication

- Visual supports
 - Understanding and managing behaviour
- To find out more go to their website <https://lms.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk/>



This newsletter is produced 4 times a year and is sent to over 18,000 supporters. If you have any comments we would very much like to hear from you. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by email or not to receive it at all please email, telephone or write to us using the details below.

Freepost RTXA-HHGH-SAGE, Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House, Enterprise City, Meadowfield Avenue, SPENNYMOOR DL16 6JF. Telephone: 0300 005 1213. Email: admin@dccarers.org
Website: www.dccarers.org Charity Number 1069278. Registered Number Company 3534933



Managing Medication Course for unpaid family Carers

What is it?

It is a half-day course designed to help unpaid family Carers understand the dos and don'ts of medicines management. Colleagues at County Durham and Darlington Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC) deliver this interactive course. The LPC is the body which represents community pharmacy locally and are experts in the handling of medication.



Who is it for?

Unpaid, family Carers either living in County Durham or caring for someone living in County Durham.

The aim of the course?

- To help carers to be more aware of the medication they are administering and managing.
- To advise carers on how to store medication safely.
- To dispel myths and fears especially around strong pain medicines.
- To provide carers with the confidence to approach pharmacy teams with any concerns and questions they may have and;
- To make sure Carers feel part of the 'cared for' Medication review.



How and when will it be delivered?

The course will be held "virtually".

Maximum 20 Carers.

Wednesday, 17th February 2021, 10 am.



For more details or to book a course, contact

☎ 03000 260 222 ✉ careacademy@durham.gov.uk 🌐 www.durham.gov.uk/careacademy



Moving and assisting course for unpaid, family Carers

What is it?

A half-day course to prepare and demonstrate how Carers can protect their backs within their caring role.

- What is moving and positioning/what are the benefits?
- Practical techniques to assist someone to move
- Basic (visual) risk assessment
- Posture, anatomy & common injuries
- The benefits of (appropriate) exercise



Who is it for?

Unpaid family Carers either living in County Durham or caring for someone living in County Durham.

The aim of the course?

To show Carers the benefits of assisting people to move. To support Carers health and wellbeing. To help Carers to sustain a good level of mental and physical wellness.



How and when will it be delivered?

Practical instruction will be delivered using ZOOM by Bob Harris (Carer) Managing Director Chronos Safety Ltd and a registered Occupational therapist

Maximum 20 Carers.

Wednesday, 26th February 2021
10 am to 12:30 noon



For more details or to book a course, contact

☎ 03000 260 222 ✉ careacademy@durham.gov.uk 🌐 www.durham.gov.uk/careacademy



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