

Puzzles Beat Alzheimer's

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For people supporting their disabled, frail or ill relatives and friends in Southwark

Reading or doing puzzles could be the simplest way of staving off Alzheimer's disease.

Keeping the brain active and stimulated has been found to have a dramatic effect on reducing the build-up of harmful proteins in the brain.

These destructive fibres, known as beta-amyloid, clump together in plaques, killing off nerves and leading to the symptoms of memory loss and confusion typical of Alzheimer's.

The condition is incurable but experts believe the key to tackling it – and even stopping it completely – lies in early detection, treating people before the plaques even form.

While previous research has suggested that mentally stimulating activities may help stave off Alzheimer's, the latest study identifies the biological mechanisms at work and heralds a new way of thinking about how keeping the mind active affects the brain.

Researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, found that brain scans on people with no symptoms of Alzheimer's who had engaged in stimulating activities all their lives revealed they had fewer deposits of beta-amyloid.

Lead investigator Dr William Jagust said: "These findings point to a new way of thinking about how cognitive engagement throughout life affects the brain.



"Rather than simply providing resistance to Alzheimer's, brain-stimulating activities may affect a primary pathological process in the disease. This suggests that cognitive therapies could have significant disease-modifying treatment benefits if applied early enough, before symptoms appear."

Susan Landau, research scientist at the Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute and the Berkeley Lab, who led the research which is published in the journal Archives of Neurology, added: "Amyloid probably starts accumulating many years before symptoms appear.

"The time for intervention may be much sooner, which is why we're trying to identify whether lifestyle factors might be related to the earliest possible changes."

Researchers asked 65 healthy, normal adults aged 60 and over to rate how frequently since the age of six they did mentally engaging activities such as reading books or newspapers, and writing letters or email. Their memories and other brain functions were assessed and their brain scans

Welcome

Hi everyone, welcome to our first newsletter of 2012.

It promises to be yet another year of changes, most of which we hope are positive, for example the move to Walworth Methodist Church. On Friday 23rd March we will be having an open day from 12.00 to 4.00 so please feel free to drop in to the centre to have a look around and see your new carers centre and share a cup of tea with the staff and volunteers. We look forward to sharing ideas with you as to what the centre can offer. We also launch our book club this year and later on this year we may even attempt writing a novel! We will also be doing a piece on the last 30 years of Southwark Carers and caring in Southwark.

You will see that one of our founding members John Bland has resigned so that he can use his energies to pursue rights for pensioners in Southwark. We would like to thank John for his hard work and support of carers in Southwark over the last 30 years and wish him well for the future and we look forward to working closely with the pensioners centre.

There are a number of key dates for your diary on Saturday 19th May the annual carers walk will take place, please contact us if you would like to talk part and raise funds for us. On Friday 22nd June we will be having a funding raising ball to raise funds and also to celebrate Southwark Carers 30th Birthday.

If you have any comments or complaints that you want to discuss please feel free to contact me.

Verinder

Puzzles...

were compared with those of 10 Alzheimer's patients and 11 healthy people in their 20s. A significant link was found between higher levels of cognitive activity over a lifetime and lower levels of beta-amyloid.

Dr Simon Ridley, of Alzheimer's Research UK, said: "The authors of this small study suggest there may be benefits to keeping an active mind throughout life. While the study found an association between cognitive activity and levels of amyloid protein in healthy volunteers, we cannot conclude one directly causes the other."

Dr Anne Corbett, research manager at the Alzheimer's Society, said: "This is an interesting initial finding.

The research involved only a very small number of people and we do not know if they went on to develop dementia. However, we would encourage anyone who enjoys reading, writing and playing games to keep it up."

Research last year revealed that doing a daily crossword or sudoku puzzle, could halt the advance of dementia as effectively as some drugs.

At least 820,000 people in the UK have a form of dementia with more than half having Alzheimer's.

Carewell is here

Carewell - a partnership between Bupa, Carers UK and MEND is a new website designed to encourage and support carers to make positive changes to be healthier and happier.

Drawing on the tips from carers and health experts Carewell pulls together a range of information, support and guidance aimed at helping to improve the health and quality of life for carers themselves. And ultimately, supporting them in continuing to provide better care for their friends and family.

We're starting with 'Energy to Care', which is packed with useful tips and guidance including how to manage stress levels, getting a better quality night's sleep, eating healthily and how to increase physical activity on a busy schedule.

Visit: www.carewelluk.org

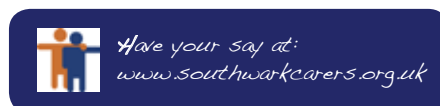


Carewell is a website in development. We want to build a resource which is of true value to carers.

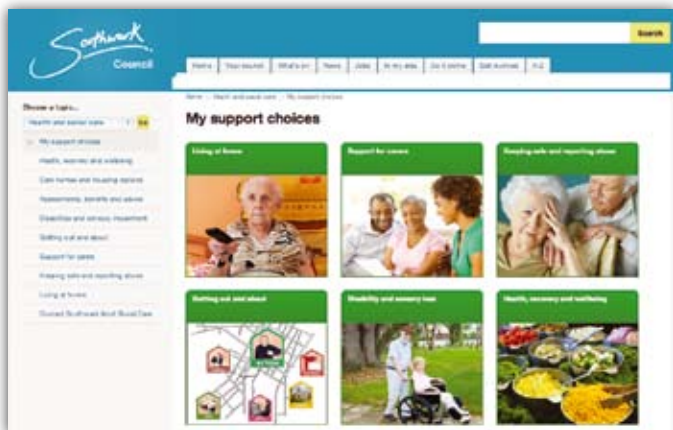
So visit Carewell, take a look around, discuss the content, comment and tell us what you think.

Most importantly, what's at the heart of Carewell is how carers can help each other by sharing their own tips and advice.

We know caring affects everyone's life in a different way but your contribution may well help other carers to continue to provide great care to their loved ones.



Southwark Council—new online guide for older people



Southwark Council has launched a new online guide that provides information about adult social care and other community services.

It is called “My Support Choices” and is a website page that provides links to resources and services for Southwark residents.

The council is keen for people to visit the online pages to improve their health and wellbeing and stay independent.

Southwark recognises that some people will be slightly apprehensive about using the internet, so local residents are being encouraged to visit their local library and seek support from library staff. More information at :

www.southwark.gov.uk/mysupportchoices

Digital Switchover Help Scheme



The Switchover Help Scheme is run by the BBC, to help older and disabled people with everything they need to switch one TV to digital.

Even for those who already have digital TV on their main set, we can convert another TV in their home, for example in the bedroom or kitchen.

The Help Scheme can help everyone who:

- Is aged 75 or over, or
- Has lived in a care home for six months or more, or
- Gets (or could get) certain disability benefits, or
- Is registered blind or partially sighted.

For more information, please call free on 0800 40 85 900 or visit helpscheme.co.uk

Farm Champions

Surrey Docks Farm is working to establish Farm Champions, a new volunteer leadership project at the Farm.

Volunteers will be invited from all sectors of the community to come and train and enjoy workshops from making and baking to animal care and growing farm produce and will be encouraged to take on organising roles, alongside the Farm's core staff.

Farm Champions is intended to give volunteers a stake in the Farm and a say in how its activities are developed and to increase the Farm's capacity to welcome and engage a growing number of new users.

For further contact and information:
Tracey Neil, Education Co-ordinator: e-mail: education@surreydocks.org.uk

New Funds for Housing Adaptations

An extra £20 million has been pledged for the fund which helps elderly people and those with disabilities to carry on living independently in their own homes. The Disabled Facilities Grant is worth a total of £200 million this year, and is awarded to pay for adaptations such as grab rails, accessible bathroom or kitchen facilities, wheelchair ramps, etc. The extra funds were announced by Grant Shapps, the Housing Minister, as part of a £51 million programme to support independent living.

He said: “As we get older the last thing we want is for our properties to become our prisons. That’s why today I’m offering a new deal for older people, backed with millions of pounds of Government cash, to ensure elderly residents get the support they need to live independently and comfortably in their own homes for as long as they can, with particular support for those leaving hospital.”

By providing extra funds for Home Improvement Agencies, they want to help ensure that people can access reliable tradespeople to carry out necessary alterations and installations, rather than risk being ripped off by ‘rogue traders’. If you would like to find your local Home Improvement Agency, you can do so on the Foundations website - <http://www.foundations.uk.com/hiasearch>

Local councils will also be obliged to ensure suitable numbers of accessible properties are included in their future housing plans as part of the government’s proposals.

Silver Active



The Silver Active programme is aimed at encouraging people of 60 years and over to take part in regular physical activity.

It operates at 6 Leisure Centres across Southwark; Camberwell Leisure Centre, Elephant and Castle Leisure Centre, Dulwich Leisure Centre, Seven Islands Leisure Centre, Peckham Pulse Leisure Centre and Surrey Docks Watersports Centre.

All activities are tailored to meet the needs of the 60+ age group so there is no need to worry if you have not been physically active for a while.

Activities on offer include dance sessions, badminton, bowls, aqua aerobics, yoga and gentle aerobics. There are also designated Silver Gym sessions throughout the week supervised by a knowledgeable instructor who can help you with your workout.

The cost of the activities is £1 per session when you become a Silver Member. To become a Silver member all you need to do is prove you are over 60 years of age, and pay the annual £1 membership fee.

For more information contact Fusion Lifestyle on 020 7740 7500

Keeping Warm

As you may know, the Government heating allowance has been cut. The good news is that for some people the Warm Home Discount Scheme will pay £120 towards the heating costs.

To qualify, you must be in receipt of the Guarantee Credit Element of Pension Credit.

You must receive your energy from the suppliers shown below who are involved with the Scheme.

Atlantic British Gas / EDF Energy / E.ON / Equipower / Equigas / Manweb / M&S Energy / Utility / Warehouse / Swalec / Southern / Electric / SSE / ScottishPower / Scottish / Hydro / Scottish Gas / NPower / Sainsbury's Energy

You should get your rebate automatically by the end of February 2012.

Helpline number 0845 603 9439
Monday to Friday 8.00 till 6.00

Heart attack deaths halve in eight years



Deaths from heart attacks have halved in less than a decade, a study has found.

Experts say the dramatic decline has been fuelled by fewer people smoking and better treatment in NHS hospitals.

Improvements to diet and general health – which lead to lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels – have also had an impact, they say.

But researchers warn that the encouraging trend could be halted because an increasing number of young people are obese or have diabetes – both key risk factors.

The conclusions come from a study, by Oxford University academics, which found the death rate from heart attacks between 2002 and 2010 fell by 50 per cent in men and 53 per cent in women.

Researchers were attempting to discover whether the drop was driven by prevention through lifestyle changes or treatment once a heart attack happened.

They analysed data on 840,000 victims either admitted to hospital in England for a heart attack or who died suddenly from one. And they found that lifestyle and treatment played an almost equal role in preventing fatalities.

As well as revealing the plunging death rate the study also found that the occurrence of heart attacks fell over the same period by 33 per cent in men and 31 per cent in women.

In their report, published in the British Medical Journal, the researchers, from the university's Department of Public Health, said just over half of the decline in deaths could be attributed to a fall in the number of new heart attacks, while just under half was due to a decline in the death rate following a heart attack.

Overall, 61 per cent of those who experienced an attack were men and 73 per cent of attacks happened in those aged 65 and over. They found that 36 per cent of attacks were fatal.

MPs doubt supermarket scheme to spot carers

Using supermarkets to identify carers has been described as a “bemusing” and “nonsense headline-grabbing idea” by members of the health select committee.

Sainsbury's has begun training staff to look for signs that customers may be caring for elderly or disabled people.

They are told to give those doing two lots of shopping at once, or collecting two lots of prescriptions, information about services for carers in the area.

Minister Paul Burstow said it was one of several ways used to spot carers.



Sainsbury's announced last summer that it was working with the Department of Health on its scheme which aimed to identify “hidden carers” - those who do not think of themselves as carers, despite looking after someone.

At a committee hearing Labour MP Barbara Keeley said she was “bemused” by the scheme. She questioned whether using supermarkets was the best way of identifying others in a similar situation.

“To identify carers through a double shop at Sainsbury's when there is the possibility to direct GPs through their contract to do this... I mean really, are we taking this issue of our commitment to carers seriously at all?” she said.

Her Labour counterpart, Rosie Cooper, described the scheme as a “nonsense headline-grabbing idea”. “None of this actually seems to be at the point of making a difference,” she said. “If the GP doesn't know there's a carer involved... then it's time to pack it up and go home.

“We're grateful for anything [Sainsbury's] can do but it's at the margins. We need to be dealing with the real problem... and that is helping families, carers and the cared for - it's just mad.”

Care Services Minister Paul Burstow said GPs were being used but it was important to use a variety of ways to identify carers.

“What we're not doing is saying there is one magic bullet that allows you to identify all the carers in this country,” he told the committee.

“It is a contribution to the identification of carers. I think it's wrong to denigrate a supermarket who chooses to act in a socially conscious way.”

The Sainsbury's scheme has been trialled in Torbay, where the chain says it resulted in twice as many people signing up to the local carers' register as would normally be expected.

The scheme is now being rolled out in some London supermarkets.

Carers UK estimates there are 6.4 million carers in the UK, who provide £119 billion worth of care each year.

The Great British Care Awards

The Great British Care Awards pay tribute to those individuals who have demonstrated outstanding excellence within their field of work.

There are twenty two awards categories available for nomination, which represent all areas of the social care sector, whether it be older people or specialist services, residential or home care. From frontline staff such as care workers and care managers to people who have made an impact in other ways such as training and innovation.

The awards are all inclusive, bringing together the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors, as well as unpaid carers; promoting joint working. Working in partnership with care partners and local care associations is at the heart of the initiative; working and linking directly with local managers and networks to further promote the event.

<http://www.care-awards.co.uk>

Staff news

In February 2012 we said goodbye to two valued staff members. Carol Ment and Lilian Dias da Silva have both left the organisation.



Carol worked for Southwark Carers for a number of years and will be a familiar face to carers who have attended our outings and activities.

Carol has decided to retire to spend more time with her grandchildren, relax and enjoy her singing with the Koruso Choir.



Lilian Dias da Silva has been part of the Advice and Support Team since 2010 helping carers with their advocacy needs and later as the Mental Health Lead for Southwark Carers working closely with the South London and Maudsley Hospital.

One of Lilian's goals is to complete her necessary hours to become a qualified counsellor and we wish her all the best in this.

Trustee news

In February 2012 John Bland resigned from the Management Committee to concentrate on his role as the Chair of the Southwark Pensioners Centre.



John was a founding member of Southwark Carers 30 years ago and has been a key figure in many of the most important moments of the charity's development.

John was recognised for his contribution to carers and charities in the area with a Community Champion Award in 2001 and remains a very committed advocate of carers and the elderly.

We would like to thank him for all of his hard work over the years and wish him every success with his work for the Southwark Pensioners Centre.

AGM 2011

At the Southwark Carers AGM we were very fortunate to have a number of key speakers attend and share their thoughts on the current state of caring and what carers mean to the economy.



The meeting was chaired by Anna Raeburn who spoke of her experiences as a carer in Southwark for many years, and more recently her caring responsibilities for her sister.



MPs Harriet Harman and Simon Hughes both recognised the good work that Southwark Carers have achieved over the last 30 years and wished us every success going forward.

The position of Chair was voted on at the Annual General Meeting with June Hollands being elected.

One of the key decisions made at the AGM was to review the constitution and amend the voting processes and procedures for Southwark Carers.

At the AGM we also welcomed a number of new trustees to the board in welcome new members of the board Doreen Gee, Grace Hurd and Christine Oldham.

Profiles of all board members will appear in the next newsletter.

New Groups for 2012

Knitting and Nattering

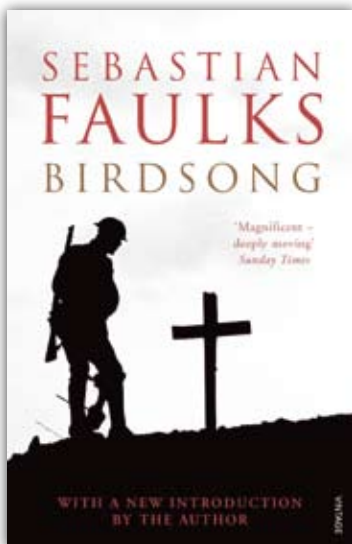


Following the success of our efforts to knit blankets and woollen goods for homeless charities in Southwark, we have decided to continue with the knitting and nattering group.

The group meets on the first Friday of every month in the Carers Resource Centre at the Walworth Methodist Church from 14:00 to 17:00.

It's a very friendly group and full instruction is given to non knitters, come along make some new friends, and knit some scarves, gloves or blankets.

Southwark Carers Book Club



The first book that we will be reading for the book club is the *Birdsong* which has recently been adapted for television by the BBC.

In 1910 a young Englishman, Stephen Wraysford, goes to Picardy, France, to learn the textile business.

While there he plunges into a love affair with the young wife of his host, a passion so imperative and consuming that it changes him forever.

Several years later, with the outbreak of World War I, he finds himself again in the fields of Picardy, this time as a soldier on the Western Front.

A strange, occasionally bitter man, Stephen is possessed with an inexplicable will to survive. He

Southwark Carers Film Club

In May we will be relaunching the Southwark Carers Film Club on the 1st Saturday of every month.



In a change to the old club the films that are shown will include documentaries, news reels and history films that look at London in the 50s and 60s.

We hope that these films will stir up memories and get everyone talking about their experiences and own recollections of the events shown.

The documentaries will bring back to life many names, faces and colourful characters from the past.



If you have any films or documentaries that you would like to show or any events that you would like us to try and find footage of please contact Rob on 020 7708 4497.

struggles through the hideously bloody battles of the Marne, Verdun, and the Somme (in the last named, thirty thousand British soldiers were killed in the first half hour alone), camps for weeks at a time in the verminous trenches, and hunkers in underground tunnels as he watches many of the companions he has grown to love perish.

In spite of everything, Stephen manages to find hope and meaning in the blasted world he inhabits. Sixty years after war's end, his granddaughter discovers, and keeps, Stephen's promise to a dying man.

Sebastian Faulks brings the anguish of love and war to vivid life, and leaves the reader's mind pulsating with images that are graphic and unforgettable.

Birdsong can currently be purchased from Amazon or Waterstone's for only £4.99 or rented from any of Southwark's libraries.

Book clubs will be held on last Thursday of each month from 17:00 - 19:00 starting in March in the Carers Resource Centre at the Walworth Methodist Church.

Events & Groups

March and April Events

If you are interested in any of the support groups and activities detailed here we recommend you call the office on 020 7183 2286 and speak with a member of staff who will be able to register you for the event and provide more information.

- | | | | |
|------------------|---|------------------|---|
| Mar
1 | Gardens Surgery Group 14:00 - 15:30
A speaker from the Ethnic Health Foundation will attend to talk about their services.
Lew Evans House, 188 Underhill Road SE22 0QH | Apr
2 | Carers Activity Group 11:00 - 12:30
We will be learning a little about Chinese lanterns and creating our own to release from the park. |
| Mar
2 | Knitting and Nattering 14:00 - 16:00
We provide the wool, needles and tuition for beginners. | Apr
5 | Gardens Surgery Group 14:00 - 15:30
A chance to meet people, make friends and share experiences.
Lew Evans House, 188 Underhill Road SE22 0QH |
| Mar
5 | Carers Activity Group 11:00 - 12:30
A jewellery designer will be showing us how to make our own necklaces and bracelets. | Apr
10 | Bermondsey Surgery Group 14:00 - 15:30
A chance to meet people, make friends and share experiences.
Artesian Branch, 138 Grange Road SE1 |
| Mar
7 | Arts Group Outing - DPG 13:45 - 16:00
A guided tour of the ragmala painting exhibit at the Dulwich Picture Gallery
Gallery Road London SE21 7AD | Apr
11 | Belly Dancing 18:30 - 19:30
A chance to get healthy and have a lot of fun at the same time with coin belts, cymbals and music. |
| Mar
12 | Belly Dancing 18:30 - 19:30
A chance to get healthy and have a lot of fun at the same time with coin belts, cymbals and music. | Apr
11 | Peckham / Alzheimers Group 14:00 - 13:30
A group run in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Society.
Peckham Library, 122 Peckham Hill Street SE15 5JR |
| Mar
13 | Bermondsey Surgery Group 14:00 - 15:30
A speaker from the Ethnic Health Foundation will attend to talk about their services.
Artesian Branch, 138 Grange Road SE1 | Apr
12 | Arts Group Outing - ArtSpace 14:00- 16:00
A visit to see 'In and Out', a new exhibition of work by London based artist Adrián Navarro.
60 Threadneedle Street, London EC2R 8HP |
| Mar
14 | Peckham / Alzheimers Group 14:00 - 13:30
A group run in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Society.
Peckham Library, 122 Peckham Hill Street SE15 5JR | Apr
13 | Knitting and Nattering 14:00 - 16:00
We provide the wool, needles and tuition for beginners. |
| Mar
15 | Arts Group - Carers Centre Mural 10:30 - 13:00
We will start work on creating the mural in the new carers resource centre. | Apr
19 | Arts Group 10:30 - 13:00
We will learn new techniques like collage and mosaics to incorporate into the new carers centre mural |
| Mar
17 | Weekend Activity Group 10:30 - 13:30
We will learn about wild foods and foraging, making our own nettle soup and chickweed pesto. | Apr
21 | Weekend Activity Group 10:30 - 13:30
We will continue our investigations into wild foods and foraging, making more seasonal dishes. |
| Mar
28 | Carers Outing - Kensington Palace 11:00
A trip to see the Victoria Revealed exhibit at the newly refurbished Kensington Palace.
Kensington Gardens, London, W8 4PX | Apr
25 | Carers Outing - Wellcome Collection 12:00
Brains - the mind as matter explores not so much what the brain does as what we have done to it.
183 Euston Road, Kings Cross, NW1 2BE |
| Mar
29 | Book Club 17:00 - 19:00
Our first book group of 2012 will focus on the Sebastian Faulks' WW1 epic Birdsong. | Apr
26 | Book Club 17:00 - 19:00
We will be sharing our thoughts on the moving story of Auggie in Wonder by R J Palacio. |

Unless otherwise stated all events take place at 3rd Floor WMC, 54 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0EN

Southwark Carers Mural

Local artists Stephen Wright has agreed to lead a number of art groups through the year which will also involve the creation of a mural in the new carers resource centre at the Walworth Methodist Church

Local artist Stephen Wright opened his house to the public in 2000. Having been a designer for over 20 years he decided to create something remarkable.

With the backing of the Lottery and the National Trust, he began to transform his house and garden. The museum is influenced by Mexico, India and South America.

The house is covered in mosaics with pattern and images using found objects and ceramics. Within the environment there are sculptures and text embellishing the walls. It is a story of his life

The museum had over 800 visitors in 2011. The story of the museum is being filmed by Channel 4 for a documentary to air in the near future.

Art groups will be held on the third Thursday of every month at 10:30 and arts group outings will happen on the second Tuesday of each month.

Southwark Carers Massage Service



From March 2012 we will be working alongside Kander Chinese Herbal

Medicine on the Walworth Road to provide the massage therapies service.

After a long period of research and negotiation we have partnered with Kander to provide carers with massage treatments for members of Southwark Carers.

In order to claim your massage therapy, you must have completed the Carers Assessment form. If you have completed this you can contact us to request a massage token which allows you to claim 1 hour of massage at Kander at times which suit you.

After the initial session you may request up to 2 additional tokens for massage.

To claim your token please call Rob on 020 7708 4497



Would you like to sing in a choir?

Southwark Carers are working alongside The Koruso Community Choir to provide carers the opportunity to join a local group.

Koruso began in October 2008 as a Southwark Council initiative to promote community cohesion. It has since grown from a small choral group to a self-run community choir with a wide-ranging repertoire, performing music that bridges cultures and unites faith traditions.

If you are a registered member and interested in taking part, please go along to one of their rehearsals on a Thursday night 18:30 - 20:30 at Oliver Goldsmiths Primary School, 83 Peckham Rd, Camberwell SE5 8UH, and if you want to join we will cover your joining fees and contribute towards your weekly subscription.

For more information please contact Koruso on sing@koruso.org.uk or phone 07539 525 559 for further information.

Self Love Pilates



Southwark Carers are working alongside Cambridge House to provide carers with access to pilates classes.

Pilates classes take place on Tuesday evenings at Cambridge House at 19:30 for 1 hour.

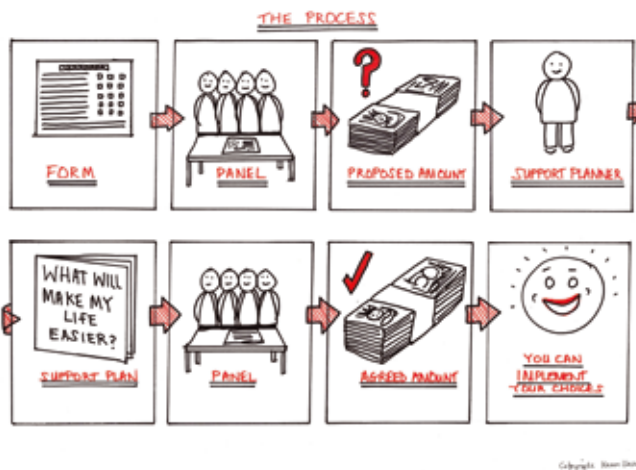
If you are a registered member and interested in taking part, please go along to the session and join the group.

Each session costs £10 which we will refund to carers, please keep your proof of payment and bring them into the office.

Personalisation

No doubt many of you will have heard of 'Personalisation' as a way to provide the care and support that your cared for person needs in the community. This process is gathering pace throughout the country as a way of providing services. In theory by 2013 every service user, should have a Personal Budget.

'Personalisation is about giving people much more choice and control over their lives...it is about addressing the needs and aspirations of whole communities to ensure everyone has access to the right information, advice and advocacy to make good decisions about the support they need. It means ensuring that people have wider choice in how their needs are met and are able to access universal services such as transport, leisure and education, housing, health and opportunities for employment, regardless of age or disability.'



How to get started

If your cared for person already receives services from the Council or you believe that they should be eligible, you can telephone Southwark Council and request an Outcome Based Assessment (OBA) to be carried out. This will be done by a Social Worker and you can request to be present. Your needs as a carer, including what you are willing and able to provide will also be included in the assessment.

'Personalisation should impact on the support provided to the person you are looking after...and affect the support provided for you as a carer.'

Carers Assessment

You as a carer have the right to an assessment and can ask for one to be done with the Social Worker. You may wish to privately discuss any difficulties you are encountering in your caring role in a confidential setting.

Southwark Carers now provide carer assessments you will have received an assessment form in the last newsletter. We will be happy to help you complete this assessment. This will determine your Carer Personal Budget i.e. the money that Southwark Council provides individually for your breaks and respite services via Southwark Carers.

The OBA will establish which outcomes need to be achieved and is a basis for them to work out the Personal Budget. The eligibility criteria, (FACS eligible Fair Access to services) applied by Southwark Council is that they will only provide funding for Substantial or Critical needs, this is true of majority of councils in England.

If your cared for person does already receive a Care Package from the Council a Financial Assessment will have been carried out already and the client contribution towards their care will already be in place. This is the amount of money that the service user is eligible to contribute weekly toward their care having been assessed. This varies according to individual financial circumstances and needs to be assessed.

The Next Step

Once the OBA has been completed the indicative budget (which is an approximate amount), is agreed by the funding panel at Southwark Council using a Resource Allocation System (RAS). A Support Plan will then need to be designed. This is a document that shows how a service user will spend their personal budget to meet their care needs (or fulfil their outcomes), and be able to have the quality of life they are aiming for. Other areas that need to be included are informal carer breaks and services for you, the carer. Also plans for what will happen in an emergency should you be unable to provide the same level of care.

Southwark Council have a list of Support Planners and their organisations which have been accredited to assist you to create a Support Plan. Southwark Carers is one of these organisations.

Working on the Support Plan

Once you have been allocated a Support Planner or requested the organisation of your choice they will visit your cared for person at home. It is desirable for you 'the carer' to be present at this first visit and anyone else in the family who wishes to attend. The process will be explained to you and information given on the indicative budget and the OBA. The Support Planner will introduce Person Centred Tools which are a way of putting the individual service user at the

centre of the planning and places an emphasis on their choice and control. These Tools can be quite fun to complete, the Support Planner will explain them to you and may provide you with an example. The family can be involved in this exercise e.g. answering questions about what is working or not working in that person's life and what makes good days and bad days. The Support Planner will leave these tools with you and pick them up on the next visit or if you wish assist you with them.

Care and Money Management Options will also be discussed at this first visit. Many service users and their carers find the idea of managing a personal budget daunting, please don't worry. If having discussed this with the Support Planner you are not happy with the direct payment option you can retain a Council Managed Personal Budget. You would still have some flexibility and choice i.e. changing the hours or days that the care is delivered or changing the agency to another contracted Council agency. The Council will then continue to pay the agency directly.

Other service provision listed in the support plan can also be paid directly by the Council (see below) or as a direct payment to you for you to pay the provider e.g. Day Centre costs. Alternatively you have the choice to have the care provided by another agency of your choice however this may be more expensive and you may have to reduce the hours of care, this will only be possible if the support needs are still met as safety is always a priority. This is called a Provider Managed Personal Budget this agency will pay for all the care in your support plan even if some support is provided by other organisations or people. The Personal Budget will be paid directly to service users by the Council, they may charge for this service. The advantages to this option are that it is Third Party Managed and the service user doesn't have to be concerned with payments for other services, while still receiving care from an agency of their choice.

The third other main alternative for care provision is employing a Personal Assistant of your choice This could be a family friend, neighbour or relative as long as they don't live with the cared for person. The Council will pay the Personal Budget directly into a named bank account of the cared for person and the employee can be paid directly by them. This is called a Self-Managed Personal Budget. Or through an agency who will help with employment issues e.g. recruitment and managing the money.

Once all the alternatives have been discussed with the service user, the carer and the wider family the Support Planner will work on the plan using the outcomes highlighted by the OBA. Research into costing the care and other desirable activities is done

jointly with the Support Planner and everybody involved. Knowledge of resources available within Southwark, whether they are provided by the voluntary sector, private agencies, the Health Service or the Council is essential.

In December 2010 Southwark Council set up a Support Planning Partnership Team at Southwark Council. Training was given to representatives from voluntary organisations in Personalisation and Support Planning. This team is an important resource giving advice on complicated plans, money management and Southwark Council Policy.

Final Step

The Support Plan is taken to panel with a final Personal Budget*. They agree that the plan meets eligible outcomes, acknowledges risks and includes contingencies. The release of the budget is then agreed. The service user or carer can present their plan or the Social Worker, the Support Planner or a Senior Member of the Support Planning Partnership Team.

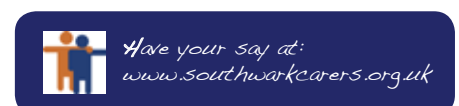
After this the Plan goes live. The services are put into place e.g. Personal Assistant is employed or alternative activities commence. This can involve the Support Planner the service user or the carer this is called the Brokerage part of the journey. The budget is paid as agreed.

Approximately six weeks after the Plan has been up and running the Social Worker will make contact to ensure that everything is working well and iron out any problems that may arise.

Southwark Carers is available to give you advice on Personal Budgets and Support Planning. We plan to hold workshops for carers to improve your understanding of this process and how it can be of benefit to your life and the life of your cared for person.

For further information please call and ask to speak to Irene who is a member of the Support Planning Partnership Team on 020 7525 4616 or 020 7708 4497.

For further information please visit:
<http://www.southwark.gov.uk>



Tips for dealing with difficult behaviour

This page provides a list of useful tips to bear in mind when you are dealing with difficult behaviour in someone you care for. 'Defusion' means verbal and non-verbal ways of reducing tension between you and this person. These tips were developed from practice. The more you try these tips, the better you will become.

1. Don't invade their space. People like to have their own bit of territory, such as their own chair. Stay an arm's length away. Avoid corners yourself and cornering the person. Always knock on their door.

2. Get to know the signs of rising tension. These could be rocking, stuttering, colouring of the face, pacing, hand-wringing.

3. Keep neutral body postures. Keep your hands in sight, no clenched fists, no hands on hips, no pointing, no leaning over people, make eye contact but don't stare. You are trying to make your own non-verbal communication non-threatening. They say that 90% of communication is non-verbal. Smile!

4. Let everybody win. If you can defuse a situation you have won. If your loved one has not lost face, has kept their pride, they have won too.

5. Establish a warm environment. This can mean a lot of things, from literally turning a heater on, to sitting by it to talk things out, to being sensitive about colour schemes or the effect of uniforms/the clothes you wear.

6. Self-awareness. If you are in a grotty mood don't pretend you are feeling great or that it doesn't matter. Just being aware of your mood can help you make adjustments to how you deal with any given situation.

7. "Walk, don't run". Apply this in loads of ways, for example, lower your voice, move slowly, avoid sudden movements.

8. Count to ten. This really does work. When first faced with a situation, start counting to ten. As you do this, check your mood, assess the situation, decide on a first course of action, confirm it to yourself, then do it. You will be more likely to gain control because unwell people are very often frightened people and do not know what is going to happen next. Your loved one will develop confidence in you to come up with safe solutions.

9. Use humour. A good one-liner can be worth all the other tips put together. One son joked, "I know the

voices aren't really me. They're much too clever." Avoid negative humour like sarcasm, put downs, jumping to conclusions.

10. Empathise. This means "I know how you feel". You can't always but if you think you do, then use it.

11. Sympathise. This means "I agree with you". Someone may well be right to show anger or distress. Develop this by talking about ways of doing something about it.

12. Once you get someone talking, let them let off steam, don't try to stop them. Ask open-ended questions like "How did that make you feel?", rather than closed-ended ones like "Did you do that?"

13. Use phrases along the lines of, "Lots of people feel that way when they are ill" or "You are not alone in thinking like that" or "That's not you, that's the illness".

14. Split up the people involved in an argument. This sounds obvious but take one off for a chat. If this is not possible, get them both talking to you, not so much at each other.

15. Sit out a threat. Never ever accept any kind of invitation to join in an argument or fight. This will be appreciated because you become safe. By setting a limit, you reassure. Threatened violence to a named individual is always to be taken seriously. Ask for any weapons or implements to be put down, not handed over.

16. Women are as good at defusing as men. There are more differences in individual ability within the sexes than there are between them. If your partner is dealing with the situation, you could just let yourself be seen. Be around to be called upon.

17. Accept that your life has changed, at least for as long as your carer or loved one is ill. If a problem develops, be prepared to stop everything, ignore a deadline or be late for something. It also means take breaks yourself, even when that also inconveniences someone. You all need respite breaks.

18. Physical contact. Don't wake someone abruptly or aggressively as this carries a high risk of an equal response. Don't touch the back of the neck or take a grip on the arm.

Magic mushrooms may help with depression, say leading scientists

A drug derived from magic mushrooms could help people with depression by enabling them to relive positive and happy moments of their lives, according to scientists including the former government drug adviser, Professor David Nutt.

Two studies, for which scientists struggled to find funding because of public suspicion and political sensitivity around psychedelic drugs, have shed light on how magic mushrooms affect the brain.

Nutt, from Imperial College London, was sacked as a government drug adviser after claiming tobacco and alcohol were more dangerous than cannabis and psychedelic drugs such as ecstasy and LSD. He believes prejudice and fear have prevented important scientific work on psychedelic drugs. Research began in the 1950s and 60s but was stopped by the criminalisation of drugs and stringent regulations which made the work costly.

“Everybody who has taken psychedelics makes the point that these can produce the most profound changes in the state of awareness and being that any of them have experienced,” said Nutt.

The drugs had been used for millennia, he said, since psychedelic mushrooms grew in the Elysian fields of Greece. Aldous Huxley wrote *The Doors Of Perception* about the insight such drugs gave him into the life of the mind.

The studies, led by Robin Carhart-Harris, also of Imperial College, looked at the effect that psilocybin, the active ingredient in magic mushrooms, has on the brain through the use of a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner. The first study on healthy volunteers, published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*, surprised

the researchers. They had assumed the drug might increase activity in certain parts of the brain. Instead, it decreased it in the “hub” regions which link different areas.

“This loss of connectivity might mean consciousness is less constrained by inputs from the outside world via the senses, which could explain why people can imagine things very vividly,” said Nutt.

The 10 men and five women who volunteered experienced changes in visual perception, extremely vivid imaginings and changes in their perception of time and of size and space.

The MRI scans showed lowered bloodflow to regions linked to the ego, the sense of self and personality. A second study, to be published on Thursday in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, gave volunteers cues to remember positive events in their lives such as their wedding or performance in a play. Their recollection became very vivid. “It was almost as if rather than imagining the memories, they were actually seeing them,” said Carhart-Harris. “This could be very useful in psychotherapy, for instance in people with depression who find it very difficult to remember good times and are stuck in the negative.”

The team are now hoping to do a further study which will involve giving psilocybin to depressed people who are undergoing psychotherapy, in the hope that it will allow them to relive times of past happiness.

The studies showed that psilocybin worked on the same areas of the brain as the SSRI antidepressants such as Prozac, as well as talking therapies and meditation as carried out by skilled practitioners. But the advantage over pills, the team believes, is that the positive effect could be long-lasting.

MH Support groups

1st Thur **Maroons Group - 18:00 - 20:00**
Service for Afro-Caribbean Mental Health Users.
Unit 3 and 5 Addington Lofts
1 Bethwin Road, SE5 0HF
For details: Call Lucky on 020 7708 1524

1st Thur **Chaucer Group - 18:30 - 20:30**
Service for people aged 18-65 with a mental health diagnosis.
13 Ann Moss Way (off Lower Road), Rotherhithe, SE16 2TH
For details: Call Judith on 020 3228 9800

Last Wed **Lordship Lane Group - 17:00 - 19:00**
Service for people aged 18-65 with a mental health diagnosis.
Top Room, Dulwich Library, 368 Lordship Lane SE22 8NA
For details: Call Vishnu on 020 3228 2767

Elderly 'suffer as social care spending cut'

Spending on social care for the elderly in England is falling this year – despite the assurances of ministers, an analysis by campaigners suggests.

The Age UK report said £7.3bn was being budgeted this year – the same as in 2011 – but it represented a drop of 4.5% once inflation was taken into account. The charity said the squeeze meant thousands were missing out on care.

But ministers said there should be enough money available to avoid cuts.

The report, based on official data plus Age UK's own research, comes amid mounting concern about the state of social care, which includes help in the home with activities such as washing and dressing as well as residential care places.

Ministers have promised to publish plans in the spring to reform the system to ensure it is sustainable in the long term.

But following the Spending Review in 2010, they said extra funds would be made available for social care – including money from the NHS budget – to help councils out.

This is because of the wider cuts to local government funding – over the next four years its budget from central government will be reduced by a quarter, leading to cuts in everything from leisure centres to libraries, which are being seen across the country. The Age UK report argues that despite the extra money social care has not been able to escape unscathed from the cuts programme.

The analysis shows that councils are reducing spending by 4.5% – £341m in monetary terms. But the report said that if rising demand from the ageing population were taken into account, the drop would be closer to £500m.

And the charity predicted the situation would get even worse in the coming years.

The report said the squeeze on spending had led councils to restrict access to services as well as increasing the fees they charged – only the poorest got their care completely free.

Age UK believes there are 2m people in England with care needs, 800,000 of whom are not getting any formal support.



Michelle Mitchell, charity director of Age UK, said: "Behind these figures are real older people struggling to cope without the support they need, compromising their dignity and safety on a daily basis.

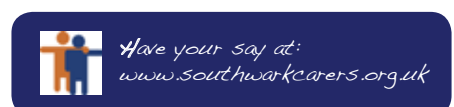
"Social care is not a nice-to-have extra – it is the support that helps older people get out of bed, feed themselves, have a wash and live a life that is more than just an existence."

Care services minister Paul Burstow said: "We believe councils have enough to maintain the current levels of access and eligibility but they will need to work hard and smart, and invest in things like telecare and re-ablement [helping people regain skills] to free up more money for front-line services."

But he said he recognised the system needed improving for the future and that was why a White Paper would be published in the spring.

David Rogers, of the Local Government Association, said councils were doing the best they could. "These figures highlight what we already know – there isn't enough money in the system and without fundamental reform the situation is only going to get worse."

Shadow care services minister Liz Kendall said: "This report provides yet more evidence that there is a growing crisis in care for older people."



Associated services

Reaching out to carers



Caring touches every family in Southwark. There are approximately 24,000 people in Southwark caring, unpaid, for frail, ill or disabled friends or family members. These people are called carers but they would probably say "I'm just being a husband, a wife, a partner, a mum, a dad, a son, a daughter, a friend or a good neighbour."

Southwark Council wants to find out more about carers and caring in Southwark, and to reach out to Southwark's 'hidden carers'. That is why the Council, in partnership with Southwark health and Carers UK, has started a Carers in Southwark project.

It is a significant project and quite a few things will be happening in Southwark over the coming months

- We will be running surveys and focus groups to collect evidence about carers in Southwark, the impact of caring on their lives and how they use services.
- We will be raising awareness and reaching out to 'hidden carers' in the borough by circulating information about caring and how to get support in lots of places around Southwark and on-line.
- We will be looking at the way the Council and health services do things, to see if there are changes we can make to help identify more carers sooner and to make it easier for them to access information and advice, and to get more support if they need it.

We are very interested in hearing from carers in Southwark, both those who know about and use existing services, and those who don't. We will use their feedback as part of our evidence base. This evidence will help us figure out what the local authority and health services, in partnership with voluntary organisations like Southwark Carers, need to do to better help more carers in Southwark.

You will find a survey included with this newsletter. We would be grateful if you could spend a few minutes completing it, even if you have completed similar surveys in the past. This is because this survey is for the Council and its partners, rather than Southwark Carers. It is going to many different groups of carers and contains questions that will help the Council and its partners better understand the impacts of caring on you, and how to identify and help carers more carers earlier.

Carers Trust Launches in April

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Crossroads Care have announced their intention to create a new carers' charity that will provide support, information, advice and services for the millions of people caring at home for a family member or friend.

The two charities have been in detailed negotiations for the past 18 months and, subject to the remaining formal and regulatory steps, the new charity will be operational from 1 April 2012, with a public launch in the summer.

The Trust and Crossroads Care have a strong history of working together, with a number of jointly funded posts and a range of successful fundraising and policy campaigns.

The Carers Trust, will build on the experience and expertise of its two founder charities to work towards its vision of a world where the role and contribution of unpaid carers is recognised and they have access to the quality support and services they need to live their own lives.

Andrew Cozens, former Vice-Chair at The Trust, has been appointed as Chair of the new charity. Mark Currie joins the board as Treasurer, a role he has been carrying out at Crossroads Care for the past two years. Recruitment of a Chief Executive for the new charity is now under way.

Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, has agreed to be President of the new charity, a role she has held at The Trust since it formed in 1991.

Commenting on the announcement, Andrew Cozens said: "We are delighted that The Princess Royal will be President of the new charity, which continues her long support for carers.

"Both of the founder charities place carers and carers support at their heart and this will be at the core of the new organisation. The work undertaken by Crossroads Care and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers is complementary and they have a well known and respected track record of working together."

Both charities' networks will continue to provide support to carers under their local brands, and are not expected to merge locally as a result of the national merger.

Contact Us

Main Contact Number:

020 7183 2286

Website: www.southwarkcarers.org.uk

Postal Address:

Southwark Carers
3rd Floor, Walworth Methodist Church,
54 Camberwell Road
London
SE5 0EN

Email: info@southwarkcarers.org.uk

How To Contact Each Service:



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Health Services Liaison Worker

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irene.kruger@southwarkcarers.org.uk



Advice & Support

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Finance

Jackie Olding
jackie.olding@southwarkcarers.org.uk



Communications / Grants

Rob Danavell
rob.danavell@southwarkcarers.org.uk

Useful numbers

Southwark Carers 020 7708 4497
British Gas General Enquiries 0800 070 1122
Age Concern helpline 0800 00 99 66
Southwark Health & Social Care 020 7525 3838
Carers Direct helpline 0808 802 0202

NHS Direct 0845 4647
Mental Health Crisis line 0800 028 8000
Victim Support Southwark 020 7277 1433
Samaritans 08457 90 90 90
Salvation Army 020 7367 4500

If you have any compliments, comments or complaints about your services please contact:



Verinder Mander
verinder.mander@southwarkcarers.org.uk

Do you have some news for us?

If you have any news about events, information or offers that would be of use to carers please let us know and we'll try to include it in future newsletters

Please take note of our new postal address

Postal Address:

Southwark Carers
3rd Floor, Walworth Methodist Church,
54 Camberwell Road
London
SE5 0EN

Main Contact Number:

020 7708 4497

Southwark Carers is a member of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers national network of carers centres

Registered Company: 4146495 Registered Charity: 1085300

