

CARERS' CHAMPION NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2011

Dear Carers' Champions

I'm sure you've all got plenty to do in the run up (or down?) to Christmas but I wanted to get the few items below out to you rather than wait until January.

RESOURCES:

A free download has been launched called: **Looking after Someone: A Carers Guide to Rights and Benefits**

http://www.carersuk.org/media/k2/attachments/Looking_after_someone_a_guide_to_carers_rights_and_benefits.pdf You can also order printed copies for 60p each from Carers UK.

Please find attached a copy of the 2012 flyer for the **St John Ambulance Carers Support Programme**, together with the support programme leaflet.

Emily Lang advises that as of April they may be extending the current 4 week course to make it a 6 week course, although this is yet to be confirmed. When we have confirmation of this, we will of course inform you and give you the titles of weeks 5 and 6 should these changes take place.

Looking after the carers

The report (follow the link above), *New Approaches to Supporting Carers' Health and Wellbeing*, presents the findings of an independent evaluation of the national carers' strategy demonstrator sites programme and I was pleased to see how well one of the recommendations fits in with what we are doing in Somerset:

- *All GP practices have contact with carers, even if this is not always recognised locally. **Every GP practice should be encouraged to identify a lead worker for carer support**, who can assist in carer identification, help in referring carers to suitable local services, and ensure carers' access to health appointments and treatments is not impeded by their caring circumstances. These workers may require carer awareness and carer support training. The action guide 'Supporting Carers', for GPs and their teams, published by the PRTC and the RCGP in October 2011 provides detailed suggestions for practical ways of taking this forward (PRTC and RCGP, 2011).*

Federation Updates

The South Somerset Carers' Champions meeting on the 16th November was extremely productive and we now have the basis of their 'Carers Pack'. The next meeting will be held at the fabulous new Wincanton Health Centre on Wednesday 18th January at which time we will review the pack, agree on the style and design of the folder, the costings and the time and format of the spring 'launch'.

It is great that Carers' Champions in other Federation groups are starting to meet up – please do get in touch if I can be of any help at all.

Report on providing carers services online

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Crossroads Care have carried out research into the way that carers use the internet and the barriers that may stop carers from doing so. They have published a report aimed at organisations and local authorities that are looking at [how the internet can be used to reach and support more carers](#). The report explores the advantages and challenges of providing carer support online, as well as the pros and cons for the main types of web services that are currently being offered.

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year to you all

Kind regards
Clare