

# Information Update

February 2006

We start by wishing you all **Happy New Year for 2006** and welcome you to the first Newsletter of the year! We would like to hear from any carers who would like to either **make a contribution** to the newsletter or make a **suggestion for future articles**. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any queries or would like more information on anything on any of the articles in this newsletter! Our full contact details are on the back page.



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## Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers News



# Commission for Social Care Inspection

Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers provides services within regulations detailed in the Care Standards Act 2000. This Act provides for the Inspection of Services (by the Commission for Social Care Inspection - CSCI) to ensure National Standards are met and to assess the services meet the needs of service users.

In **November 2005 an inspection took place** over 5 days and this included an inspector meeting with carers and service users as well as both care and management staff. The inspector examined office practice, care planning, telephone support, staff training, referral procedures and staff meetings.

A random selection of records were sampled as well as other evidence relating to Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers' performance. The **views of service users and carers were represented** and a feedback form was made available.

Questionnaires were sent to 40 randomly selected carers and service users and in depth interviews were undertaken with a further 5 carers who explained to the inspector their **experience of service provision** from Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers.

All **staff completed a questionnaire** about their views of Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers and their work. Social Work Managers and Health Service Staff and Medical Staff commented on Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers services and a scrutiny of the office took place.

A detailed assessment questionnaire was completed by their registered manager. All themes and issues raised by service users were used to assess this service. Many **positive comments** were made by service users and almost all described the service they received as good or excellent.

The organisation was described as **well structured, competently managing and run by experienced, dedicated staff** and the inspector found numerous examples assisting people to remain at home. Complaints were taken seriously and resolutions sought. Staff training was positively commented on as was the good financial administration of the agency.

Finally the organisation had progressed from the previous inspection and **all standards were met or exceeded**. This report is available in full from our office, on request, and will soon appear on the CSCI website at **[www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk)**. You can also view our previous inspection report on the site.

Jeff Gray  
Scheme Manager

## Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers News

### Benefits Advice Service

Our **Benefits Advice Worker**, Natalie Freeman, can offer:



- Advice and support in claiming Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance
- Help with benefits calculations to find out if carers and people with care needs are entitled to housing benefit, council tax benefit and pension credit.

You can contact Natalie at the Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers office on **0191 478 2423** for advice and support. She is available for an office appointment or home visit.

#### Drop - In!

Every 2nd Friday in the month Natalie holds a drop-in surgery 1- **4.00pm** at Gateshead Carers Association which is at: **11 Regent Terrace, Gateshead (opposite the Civic Centre)**.

### Mental Health Involvement Service

**Do you care for someone who suffers from mental distress?**

**Would you like your views and experiences to make a difference to services for carers and the people they care for?**

Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers is an independent charity which provides practical services and support to carers in Gateshead. We also provide support, information and training for carers who want to make their voices heard by people who plan and deliver local Mental Health Services.

Involvement can range from informal discussions with other carers to attending meetings with Key Workers in the National Health Service. Carers are also invited to explore other ways of influencing change, including campaigning and the arts.

If you want to find out more about becoming involved in improving how Mental Health Services work with carers then contact Joe Lewis on **0191 478 2423** or e-mail at: [joelewis@gatesheadcrossroads.org.uk](mailto:joelewis@gatesheadcrossroads.org.uk)

#### Do you have an old Mobile Telephone?



Crossroads Association have brokered a fundraising deal with a company called SHp who will make a donation in exchange for old mobile telephones. Crossroads have provided us with a list of what old mobiles are worth and when we send them back to the company we receive **80%** of the worth for each phone. If you have an old mobile you no longer use and would like to donate this, please drop it into our reception.

# Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers



## St James Park Fun Day

Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers Young Carers Service have embarked on a 3-year partnership with Macmillan Cancer Relief to support and develop the services to young carers in the Borough of Gateshead. The fund is to sustain the existing services but also to look at developing a special programme for young people who are caring for a parent, sibling or grandparent with a cancer diagnosis. Macmillan wanted feedback from young carers on how their lives are affected by their caring role.



Thirty-one young carers, from the region were invited to St James Park for a fun day. Gateshead Crossroads staff facilitated workshops in a fun way to highlight issues the young carers have around caring. The information will be given to professional and commissioning bodies to highlight the impact of caring both socially and emotionally.

In the afternoon we were given a full guided tour of St James Park!

**Through the workshops the following feedback from young carers was gained :-**



### Feelings

"Glad and happy because I make more friends every time I come"

"Helps getting away from the stress and giving us a break from our roles as a young carer"

"I wish I could help my mum more"

"I feel good because I help my mam"

"I sometimes get upset"

### Dreams and aspirations

"My dream would be to live in a mansion and have lots of money"

"I hope in the future I am rich and that everyone is happy"

"My dream is to play for the toon"



### Song writing

Yesterday I was happy, excited accepted

Today I'm unhappy, sad and dejected

Yesterday was disappointing

I was shy and alone

But today could be special

Cos I'm not on my own

We received positive evaluation and feedback from the young carers who attended the event and hope to hold another regional event in the future.

## Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers News



### Young Carers TV Appearance!

You may have seen our Young Carers Service on TV on Wednesday and Thursday last week! The young carers team took part in the North East Tonight programme to highlight young carers issues and how Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers aims to help. The film crew filmed a family of young carers in their home and at an activity session where the girls were performing Indian dance.

Jill Stevens, Activity Co-ordinator, and Lynn Readman, Service Manager, also appeared in the programmes and Lynn took part in a studio interview! Fame at last! Hopefully the programme will be useful to any young people watching who may not recognise themselves as a young carer, and help to raise awareness.



### Macmillan Partnership

Due to the new partnership with Macmillan Cancer Relief the young carers are looking to embark on joint projects. Through links that Macmillan have we may have an offer of a tour bus to take the young carers away for an overnight residential.

Two families have benefited from free tickets to watch Newcastle United and a number of free basket-ball tickets have been distributed to young carers. Jill, our Activity Co-ordinator is looking at the possibility of taking a group of young carers to a Macmillan Cancer Relief sponsored walk which is along Hadrian's Wall!

### Mental Health Service Partnership

Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers has developed its relationship with Gateshead Primary Care Trust by developing a range of services commissioned by Gateshead PCT.

The existing service, Mental Health Involvement, which ensures carers are supported and encouraged to participate in planning and involvement in Health and Social Care Practices and to raise understanding among clinicians and professionals about carers needs is well underway.

This has been added to by an additional **Care Service** specifically to work with people who care for someone with a mental health problem. We look forward to working even more closely with Doctors, Social Workers, Nurses and Clinicians in this specialist area.

## Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers News Leisure Pleasure Pass for Carers

Relax, get fit and pamper yourself  
at the Swallow Hotel Leisure Club, Gateshead.

- Indoor heated swimming pool
- Spa bath
- Steam room
- Sauna
- Gym
- Chill-out room
- Changing rooms
- Car parking
- Beauty treatments, sun beds/ massage chair available at extra cost.



A Leisure Pleasure Pass entitles the holder to half day use of the above facilities at a cost of **£6 per person (or £10 including sandwich and drink)**.

Open Monday to Friday 7.30am–9.00pm and Saturday and Sunday 7.00am-8.30pm. To take advantage of this offer you must be a member or service user of Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers or a member of Gateshead Carers Association but you can take a guest along with you!

Enclosed within this newsletter are 2 Leisure Pleasure Passes and an information sheet to get you started but you can collect additional Leisure Pleasure Passes from either Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers on 0191 478 2423 or Gateshead Carers Association on 0191 490 0121. You may request as many vouchers as you would like, and visit the Leisure Club as often as you want! This offer is available until **31 January 2007**.

**Note: If you are under 18 years of age, you must be accompanied by an adult. The Leisure Club is not wheelchair accessible.**

## Proctor and Gamble Donation



Audrey Carr (pictured) has volunteered for Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers for around 7 and a half years. Before Audrey retired she worked as a secretary for Proctor and Gamble. They have kept track of her activities since she retired and this year kindly have sent a donation to us to acknowledge the voluntary work that Audrey has done. We would like to thank both Audrey for her hard work and support and Proctor and Gamble!



## News You Can Use

### Krocodile Klubs 2006

Krocodile Klubs are nightclubs run by and for people with learning disabilities and friends. They run a monthly disco and the dates and venue's for the **next three disco's of 2006** are:

- March 17th - @ **Caedmon Hall**                      **£2.00 Entry fee**
- April 7th - @ **Caedmon Hall**                      **£2.00 Entry fee**
- May 5th - @ **The Sage Gateshead**              **£4.00 Entry fee**

All disco's run from 7 - 11pm. Tickets for those held at Caedmon Hall are available on the door and tickets for those held at The Sage are obtained from the Sage box office on telephone number: 0191 443 4661. For more information contact the Krocodile Krew on **0191 478 9200** or e-mail [info@thelawnmowers.co.uk](mailto:info@thelawnmowers.co.uk) or visit their new website:

[www.krocodilekrew.co.uk](http://www.krocodilekrew.co.uk)

### Gateshead Care Call

Gateshead Care Call is a service (run by Gateshead Council) to help older, disabled and vulnerable people in Gateshead to live safely and independently in their own home. The trained staff are available to respond to a variety of situations and provide emergency cover to:

More than **10,500 residents**; **24 hours** a day; **365 days** a year.

#### How does it work?

You wear a pendant or wristband which when pressed triggers a phone alarm system that connects directly to Gateshead Care Call. In the event of a fall or sudden illness, trained operators immediately know your name, address and other relevant information. They will then call for any help required such as a family member, a doctor, emergency services or the police.

You can contact Gateshead Care Call for a free home demonstration on: **0191 477 0844**. If you need to talk to a Social Worker and English is not your first language please contact the **Duty Social Worker on 0191 433 2515** who will arrange for an interpreter to talk to you.

Information taken from Gateshead Council's Website at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk).



### Carers Week 2006 Survey

The theme for Carers Week 2006 (12 - 18th June) is 'In Sickness and in Health'. Carers throughout the country are invited to take part in a survey. The purpose of the survey is to ensure that carers' experiences come through loud and clear and are at the centre of everything that takes place this Carers Week. The survey has been designed so that it should only take you a few minutes to complete. You can complete it online at [www.carersweeksurvey.org.uk](http://www.carersweeksurvey.org.uk), you can download a paper copy of the form from [www.carersweek.org](http://www.carersweek.org).

## News You Can Use

### Advocacy Service - Age Concern



#### What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is an active process that offers support to people to enable them to:

- Express their views
- Ask for what they want and need
- Obtain services to which they are entitled
- Stand up for their interests
- Safeguard their entitlements

**Age Concern Gateshead's Advocacy Service** can work with an older person to help them to speak up for themselves. Where the person does not feel able to speak for him/herself, an advocate can speak for them.

#### How can we help?

An advocate can also inform a person about their rights, entitlements and opinions so that their choices are based on accurate knowledge. We can help in a variety of ways including:

- Liaising with Service Managers with our clients, or on their behalf.
- Helping older people choose residential/nursing care.
- Listening to older people
- Addressing meetings with our client or representing their views.

#### Contact Us:

If you think that we can help anyone you know or would like to talk to someone about this service, please contact Alan Davison, Advocacy Co-ordinator on **0191 477 3559**.

### Become a Trustee....

**... And shape the future of Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers!**

- Would you like to make a positive difference to the lives of carers?
- Would you like to open up opportunities for your own personal or career development?
- Would you like to use your valuable skills in a rewarding way if you are retired or unemployed?

We need people with experience in business practice, personnel, financial management, public relations, marketing and fundraising. We especially welcome **carer representation** so if you have experience of caring for someone and would like to help, please contact us. We positively welcome and encourage applications from people from minority ethnic groups. Please contact Jeff Gray or Katherine Nichols on **0191 478 2423** for further information.

## News You Can Use

# Accessible Holidays



There are many tour companies who specialise in providing accessible holidays for people with disabilities. Below is a list of useful contacts:

- **Grooms Holidays**

Grooms Holidays provide a wide range of accessible holiday accommodation at affordable prices and offer people with disabilities, their friends and families a real choice.

**Telephone:** 08456 584478  
**Website:** [www.groomsholidays.org.uk](http://www.groomsholidays.org.uk)  
**E-mail:** [holidays@johnngrooms.org.uk](mailto:holidays@johnngrooms.org.uk)

- **Calvert Trust**

As one of the first organisations to consider access to the countryside and challenging activities specifically for disabled people, and now with over 20 years experience, the Calvert Trust has specially designed its latest centre on the edge of Exmoor in Devon to provide fun packed holidays for disabled people, their families and friends. It may be the first time you have tried climbing, sailing, canoeing, swimming, archery or horse riding but with the help and encouragement of our experienced and friendly instructors, you will have an exciting holiday to remember in one of the most beautiful parts of Britain.

**Telephone:** 01598 763221  
**Website:** [www.calvert\\_trust.org.uk](http://www.calvert_trust.org.uk)  
**E-mail:** [exmoor@calver-trust.org.uk](mailto:exmoor@calver-trust.org.uk)

- **Nirvana**



Nirvana hire out motorhomes that have been specifically designed and built to be accessible. It's motorhomes have electric lift platform access, are fully wheelchair accessible and have swivel seats in the cab, as well as a low rear bed for easy access.

**Telephone:** 0800 328 1475  
**Website:** [www.nirvanarv.com](http://www.nirvanarv.com)

- **Accessible Travel and Leisure**

Accessible Travel and Leisure can take care of all of your holiday arrangements and special requirements. They can arrange holidays in a variety of places from Australia to Egypt to Florida to Tenerife!

**Telephone:** 01452 729739  
**Website:** [www.accessibletravel.co.uk](http://www.accessibletravel.co.uk)  
**E-mail:** [info@accessibletravel.co.uk](mailto:info@accessibletravel.co.uk)

## Good Practice Guidelines for Involvement

When the National Service Framework for Mental Health was published in 1999 it provided a template for a ten year programme of change and modernisation for mental health services. Crucially the document includes a formal recognition that service users and carers have a vital role in the design, delivery and monitoring of those services.

The document prescribed the setting up of Local Implementation Teams (LITs) to oversee change locally and stressed the importance of partnership working at a local level.

In order to address the barriers to effective involvement which service users and carers across the region have identified the “**Good Practice Guidelines for the Involvement of Service Users and Carers in Local Implementation Teams**” have been developed over the last year.

The introduction to the Guidelines states, “Some barriers are relatively simple to dismantle, for example, having access to information, and knowing how to contact other Local Implementation Team members between meetings.....other barriers will perhaps require a different understanding of a carer’s or service user’s situation and view of the world.”

Joe Lewis, who works as Carers Mental Health Involvement Worker has developed an Action Plan based on the guidelines (awaiting adoption) to ensure that carers and service users continue to become involved and represented on statutory and voluntary groups.

For more information on Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers Mental Health Involvement service, or to get involved **see page 3** or contact Joe on **0191 478 2423** or **joelewis@gatesheadcrossroads.org.uk**.

### How to Contact Us

-  **By Post:** 97 Bewick Road, Gateshead, NE8 1RR
-  **Telephone:** 01914782423  **Minicom:** 0191 478 6284
-  **Fax:** 0191 478 5476
-  **E-mail:** enquiries@gatesheadcrossroads.org.uk
-  **Website:** www.gatesheadcrossroads.org.uk

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Equal Opportunities Policy.**

**If you require this information in other formats,  
please contact us.**