

Gateshead Crossroads organises Events for Carers Week 2005

Gateshead Crossroads are holding three events for carers as part of this year's national **Carers Week (June 13-19)**.

The first event is a **Carers Information Day**, which will take place at Ryton GP Surgery on 14th June 2005 at 11.30am until 1.30pm. Carers are invited to come along to speak to workers from local voluntary organisations to find out more about the help and support available to carers within the Borough of Gateshead.

The second event is the official opening, performed by Tyne Tees Weatherman **Bob Johnson**, of the new **Friends and Family Room** at the Jubilee Wing of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital from 12pm until 4pm. The Friends and Family Room has been opened to support relatives, carers and patients within the hospital. At this event there will be workers from local organisations on hand to provide information and advice, as well as freebies for carers, a prize draw and free blood pressure checks.

The final event: **Picnic in the Park** will be held on Saturday 18th June in Saltwell Park and is for **Young Carers** and their families. A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 who is caring for a family member. The children can take part in the various sporting activities taking place, or try their hands at some arts and crafts!

Carers Week supports the UK's six million carers – people who look after a sick or disabled friend, partner or relative. Many carers are not aware of the services available to them, and the thousands of events taking place up and down the country help to publicise the support that exists.

The theme of this year's Carers Week is "work, rest and play" to highlight the right of every carer to have the opportunity to lead fulfilling lives of their own, whether through work, study or leisure activities.

“Anyone with caring responsibilities will be more than welcome at our events. It’s an ideal opportunity to meet with people in a similar situation, find out more about the local support and services available to them and to give themselves a break. A further carer focused event is also being planned in the Autumn.” said Jeff Gray, Scheme Manager for Gateshead Crossroads.

Carers Week 2005 is supported by a number of high-profile celebrities including TV personalities Gloria Hunniford, Esther Rantzen and Cilla Black as well as actresses Shiela Hancock and Pam Ferris – all of whom have been carers themselves.

Cilla Black says *“I helped care for my husband Bobby, who sadly died of cancer in 1999, so I understand the challenges as well as the rewards that looking after a loved one can bring.*

“I’m supporting Carers Week 2005 because I think it’s important that carers get the support they need to be able to carry on - whether it’s getting time to work, to study or to do something they enjoy on a regular basis.”

2005 is the eleventh annual Carers Week. It is jointly organised by seven UK wide charities – Carers UK, Crossroads Caring for Carers, Help the Aged, Macmillan Cancer Relief, MS Society, Rethink and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers.

For more information on the events being held by Gateshead Crossroads, please contact us on **(0191) 478 2423**.

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Note for Editors:

For further details about local Carers Week events and activities contact Gateshead Crossroads on **0191 478 2423** or visit www.carersweek.org/whats happening.asp