

Newsletter

Winter 2010

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Hello and welcome to the Winter Newsletter.

Exactly a year ago we moved to our new premises here in Kentish Town – it is almost impossible to comprehend where those 12 months have gone! It's been another incredibly busy year for the organisation, but also an interesting and rewarding one, as a number of key developments have taken place.

The Health and Well Being Project proved a great challenge for the organisation, initially in the recruitment of six new staff, and was also the impetus for us finding new premises. But the project has been a success in its own right, with all the team working extremely hard over the past 10 months to achieve its targets.

Another key development for the organisation was the introduction and recruitment of volunteers. This was very much an area I wanted to develop and whilst we are now well on the way there are still a lot of areas of work where I would like to see volunteers getting involved.

However, unfortunately, there is no hiding from the fact that we are going through a period of uncertainty and facing another year of change. How that change will impact on the organisation remains to be seen but we have to look at the coming months as being a challenge that all of us here at Camden Carers Centre can rise to.

Meanwhile I can only wish you a great festive season and a really happy and prosperous New Year.

Ashley Barber
Chief Executive Officer

As was expected, on 20th October 2010 the Government announced a whole range of spending cuts across a number of services and departments.

Whilst the spending review gave some details about overall government spending Camden Council will not know what services and departments will be cut until the local government finance settlement in early December.

Local authorities are receiving an overall reduction in revenue from central government of 26% over the next four years. There could be a real risk that care and support services will see deep cuts unless local authorities prioritise care.

There will also be major cuts to welfare and benefits spending which could have a huge impact on the income of carers and families and could result in pushing the most vulnerable into poverty.

Some positive news was the Government's pledge to provide an additional £2billion to adult social care, but the effect this will have on carers and their families remains unclear.

Generally we do not yet know how the Spending Review will directly affect carers' families and carers' support services. We hope to update you with more news in the next Newsletter.

Ashley Barber



NATIONAL SELF CARE WEEK – 15 to 21 NOVEMBER

'Self care' is an approach to improved health and wellbeing, to encourage people to look after their general health. The idea is to help individuals to manage their lives and not just their condition. Camden Carers Centre is delighted to help NHS Camden to promote National Self Care Week. Please see page 11 for more details and also the enclosed information leaflet.

Self Care Week 
15-21 November 2010

www.nhs.uk/selfcare Learning to live well

Most of the new Act came into force from 1st October 2010. The Government is looking at how the Act is implemented for business (and therefore employment – although basic rights are enforced through the general application of the Act) and will make an announcement about this later.

How the new law could help you if you're a carer

If you're looking after someone who is elderly or disabled, the law will protect you against direct discrimination or harassment because of your caring responsibilities. This is because you're counted as being 'associated' with someone who is protected by the law due to their age or disability. You're already protected from discrimination and harassment if it happens at work, but the new law will also protect you if you are caring for a disabled person whenever you:

- shop for goods;
- ask for services;
- receive services;
- use facilities like public transport.

If you're caring for an elderly person, the new law will only protect you at work until more parts of the law come into effect later on.

Direct discrimination

This is where you're treated less favourably than someone else because you're caring for an elderly or disabled person. At work this could include your employer:

- refusing to offer you a job because of your caring responsibilities;
- treating you less favourably because of your caring responsibilities.

You are also protected outside work from direct discrimination, which could include:

- discouraging you from using a service because you care for someone who is disabled;
- making it impossible for you to use a facility because you look after someone who is disabled;
- providing you with a worse service than someone who isn't caring for a disabled person.

Harassment

The new law will protect you from harassment because you're looking after an elderly or disabled person. Harassment is unwanted behaviour related to, for instance, disability or age.

It hurts your pride or creates an intimidating, degrading or offensive environment for you. It might be deliberate but it doesn't have to be. Someone could be harassing you even if they don't mean to or don't realise they are doing so.

It's already against the law to harass you at work but it will also be against the law to harass you when you buy goods or get services if you are caring for a disabled person. If you're caring for an elderly person, the new law will only protect you at work until more new parts of the law come into effect later.

Example

You're a carer for your disabled husband, who is a wheelchair user. When you're trying to buy something in a shop, the shop assistant makes rude remarks about wheelchair users to her colleague, which you find offensive and upsetting. You may have a claim of harassment related to disability, even though you are not disabled.

Victimisation

If you complain about direct discrimination or harassment, the law will protect you if you are treated unfavourably because of your complaint. You have to believe that your complaint is true for this to apply.

Exceptions

If you were disabled yourself, you'd have the right to have reasonable changes made so you could use services and facilities or go to work. This doesn't apply to people associated with disabled people so it won't apply to you as a carer. However, as a carer you already have the right to ask for flexible working hours so that you can fit in your caring responsibilities with your work.

Further information is available from:

Age UK: www.ageuk.org.uk
Carers UK: www.carersuk.org
Directgov: www.direct.gov.uk

Also from disability organisations, of which there are many, both local and national. You can find useful contact details on the Directgov website. Go to: www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/HealthAndSupport/DG_10037826

Also from The Equality and Human Rights Commission: www.equalityhumanrights.com or the Government Equalities Office: www.equalities.gov.uk and from your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

Time is really flying by now ... the training programme for September to December is well underway and the days and courses are all proving very popular and beneficial. I am very happy to say that an increasing number of new faces are joining the training days. With this Newsletter you will find a number of flyers/booking forms for training and health days to the end of the current schedule.

Calling all you male carers! We are offering a male-only day for you on Wednesday 8th December. As before this day is being run by Josh Wellman, from NHS Camden, and Alan Margolis, who is a carer and also runs his own training agency – Hampstead Training Consultants. Alan has also been supporting some of the other training days, including the very popular ‘Let Rip! Let Go!’ day and the Introduction to Co-counselling for carers. Positive comments from carers include: *“Very good – please repeat!” “The whole day was fantastic and every bit was good.” “I feel I can be more patient and relaxed in anger-making situations.” “Very enjoyable and enlightening.”*

The **dementia carers** training is going extremely well and is, once again, well attended. This is the seventh programme of training we have run for dementia carers and the information and strategies offered by the three trainers is consistently excellent: *“I thought that Mycal Miller was a well-informed, very empathetic group leader.” “I learned more about both communication and dementia.” “I can explain to my children how to help with my father. That it’s not his fault.” “Increased overall awareness.” “Dementia has many varied manifestations.”*

We have been very fortunate to have been offered some creative writing workshops by local community interest company, Creative Health Labs. Paul Lyalls – a shining light in the modern poetry world – has been leading lively, sometimes moving, but very creative writing sessions with a group of carers. I never cease to be amazed at the wonderful talents that carers have to tap into, given the opportunity.

Coming up for the end of this programme you will see that there are a number of special Christmas pamper days – for dementia carers, working carers, mental health carers and a general carers Christmas Pamper on 13th December. We will share some seasonal food

and you can enjoy a wonderful head and shoulder massage.

I am now focusing on the next training programme which will run from January to April 2011. Included in this programme will be some specific training days around employment – so if that is of interest to you – look out for those.

Questionnaire re training – I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who completed and returned the questionnaire. I was delighted at the response and the detail which you put into your responses. This is very helpful for future planning of training.

Wishing you all the best for the season, and I look forward to seeing you at a training event very soon.

For more information on training courses and events, please contact Jill Pay, Carers Training Co-ordinator, at the Carers Centre, or mobile number 07508 420 210, or email: jill@camdencarers.org.uk



The Expert Patients Programme Community Interest Company ‘Looking After Me’ carers course

The EPP CIC ‘Looking After Me’ carers course is a **FREE** course for adults

who care for someone living with a long-term health condition or disability. The course is about you making time to look after your own health needs. It lasts for six weeks, half a day a week, and aims to help you take more control of your situation and make a difference to your life. The next course in Camden is starting soon, so please get in touch as places fill up quickly!

Contact: **020 7922 7860** or Free phone **0800 954 0650** Email: london.courses@epcic.co.uk

Would you like to share a day in your life with other carers? We welcome contributions from any and all Camden carers. Please send up to 250 words to Deborah Knight, Camden Carers Centre, 293-299 Kentish Town Road, NW5 2TJ, or email to: info@camdencarers.org.uk. A photograph would also be welcome! See page 6 for “A Day in My Life”.

Woken by the alarm clock at 7.45 am. Working on the computer by 10 am. He tries to interest me in radio programmes and what's in the paper but I resist. A pension of £58 a week does not go far, just enough to cancel the Carer's Allowance that I should have applied for years ago. About now I will have remembered I have forgotten the pill rota. Suddenly there is a call from a share boiler room and I shout down the phone. Focus again, don't get upset. But I shudder to think how much they must have had already. Stable doors. Too late. Think of NOW. Focus.



Then it is lunchtime. He selects a TV programme to watch, I am working again, sorry darling. The TV is tuned off and I can hear him writing, again and again, scores of letters written to banks and the DWP asking about his pension. To distract him I ask him to cut up vegetables. Yes, that is the right knife, yes, that is the right amount of potatoes, and yes that is the right pot. One hotplate, the gas stove was condemned. I will buy another when I sell something. A smell of burning, he has gone back to write letters. Never mind. At least the fire alarm works.

Then it is evening. He will ask for money to go out. I give him a few pounds so it gives me time to set up the giant paper shredder. He comes back and I feel guilty, little shreds on the carpet as evidence of destruction of hours of work. He kneels and picks up each tiny piece not realising what they are. My heart is ready to burst with sadness.

Last check on the computer, bedtime about midnight and shut the heating off. At two in the morning woken by nightmares to sit in the freezing kitchen and write, "Cerberus¹ has dragged me from the underworld and each blood red maw screams

'DEBT!' 'DEBT!' 'DEBT!'"

Anon

¹ Cerberus, in Greek and Roman mythology, is a multi-headed hound (usually three-headed) which guards the gates of Hades, to prevent those who have crossed the river Styx from ever escaping.

Ever had the flu?

Now is the time for carers to consider the benefits of flu inoculation. If you've ever had influenza you already know how debilitating it can be. Seasonal flu is a highly infectious viral condition; it cannot be treated with antibiotics. It occurs most years, often during the winter months. Having flu can lead to more serious complications like bronchitis or pneumonia. Some people are at greater risk – for example, people of maturing and advancing years and those who already have a long term health condition or disease. Vulnerable people, like those receiving treatment for cancer or with immuno-suppressed conditions – ie, those whose immune system is not strong enough to fend off the virus easily.

Anyone who has one or more of the conditions listed below should consider the potential benefits of the flu vaccine:

- A heart problem.
- A chest complaint/breathing difficulties, including bronchitis emphysema.
- Kidney or liver disease.
- Reduced immunity.
- Has had a stroke or has diabetes.
- A neurological condition like multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy.
- Removal of the spleen or difficulties with the spleen and sickle cell disease.

Carers of people with any of these conditions should also consider vaccination because of its highly infectious potential to spread. The symptoms of flu are:

- fever and chills;
- headaches;
- aching muscles and joints;
- cough and sore throat.

For more information speak to your GP or health professional/community nurse or go to:

www.nhschoices.nhs.uk or

http://www.camden.nhs.uk/winterfluvaccine

where you can watch an online film about flu and the vaccine plus find the latest flu leaflet in a selection of languages.



The last meeting of CCV was held on Tuesday 14th September at Kingsgate Resource Centre, with 12 carers present. The focus of the meeting was Carers and Employment. The invited guests were Andrea Hughes and Kay Patel from JobCentrePlus in Kentish Town and Marcia Davidson from Age Concern Camden.

Andrea and Kay have a role at JCP offering a year-long programme to carers of training and support into employment. During the course of the programme replacement care costs and some other expenses related to the programme will be met by JCP. They can be reached on **020 7853 3144** or **3148**. Marcia Davidson supports people over 50 into employment and whilst she doesn't have a particular carer focus she often does work with carers. She is happy for people to ring her directly on **020 7837 3777**.

Jill Pay gave some background information on the business case for supporting carers to remain in or return to employment. As more people of working age become carers, more people in the job sector are affected. This will have an increasing impact on the workforce, with many skilled and experienced employees being lost to the caring role. It's therefore worthwhile for employees – and local and national government – to recognise this and find ways to support carers to stay in employment, or to return to employment quickly when they have taken time out due to caring responsibilities. At the International Carers Conference in July a number of speakers from different countries talked about their support for carers in employment – including from Canada, where they have a number of initiatives to support people who suddenly find themselves affected by caring responsibilities.

Carers UK have set up the Employers for Carers forum, with lead businesses like BT as members. Locally the Royal Free Hospital Trust is a member. From the carers' point of view being in employment is good not just for financial reasons, it can greatly boost self-

esteem by keeping up skills and combating the isolation that carers often experience in their caring roles.

The second part of the meeting focused on the need for CCV members to be able to 'mobilise' in the case of threats to, or cuts in, services; also the ability to respond to the many requests for consultation that fall outside our cycle of four meetings a year. This issue was originally flagged up by one of the mental health carers who reported that the Community Psychiatric Nursing service was under threat.

Already we have some smaller groups of carers developing – e.g. Dementia Carers, Mental Health Carers – who come together to represent and speak up on their particular areas. Some CCV members are now representatives on the Carers Strategy Group within the local authority, attending their first meeting on 6th October. They will have the opportunity to make direct input on behalf of all carers in Camden, as well as members of CCV, to decisions made about carers services and support. Jill had circulated documents to CCV members regarding the 'refresh' of the National Carers Strategy, giving them the opportunity to have input into that. It was generally agreed that these initiatives need to be built on – and that communication was key. You can get a full set of notes from the meeting if you wish – just contact Deborah or Jill at the CCC office.

There has been a lot of conjecture about what will happen with the massive cuts that the Coalition Government is proposing – especially the threats to benefits, including disability benefits. Inevitably those cuts will impact on carers and their families. I am sure we will know more by the next meeting in December and can look at what measures we might take in lobbying for services, benefits, etc.

The next meeting of Camden Carers Voice is on **Wednesday 1st December**. This is the first anniversary of the launch of CCV – so there will be some celebration, as well as business planning for the way forward in 2011. This meeting will be at **Argenta House**, from **10am-1pm**. We will invite back all our guests over the year as well as Dame Joan Bakewell and Glenda Jackson, MP, who were both so supportive at the Carers Day in Swiss Cottage back in June.

The way that Camden Adult Social Care provides support to service users and carers has changed under 'Better care choices' (BCC). Many people will find the new system better suited to their individual needs and will have greater choice about the services they receive.

Supported Self Assessment (SSA)

Under BCC the cared-for person will complete a supported self assessment (SSA) to determine whether they require support from Adult Social Care. A carer's need for support or breaks from caring should, where possible, be considered at the same time. If it is identified that the carer needs a break and that the break can only be achieved with support from Adult Social Care, then this will be taken into account within the cared-for person's SSA. Once the SSA is complete, a personal budget will be allocated to the cared-for person which will include an amount to ensure that their carer receives a break from caring.

How to plan your breaks from caring

When planning both the person's care and carer breaks, it is a good idea to think about the **total** amount of personal budget allocated per year to the cared-for person. This can help both of you plan for services throughout the year, including short and longer carer breaks. When planning use of the personal budget the person you care for can have as much support as they need (from Adult Social Care, DISC or Age Concern) and your needs as a carer should always be taken into account when services are being planned.

Types of breaks from caring

As in the past, breaks from caring can be achieved in many different ways. Usually the person you care for will receive care or support from another person or service while you take your break. They might, for example:

- Attend a resource or day centre for all or part of the day;
- Take part in learning activities or other activities, perhaps with support from a paid carer worker or personal assistant;
- Go out or socialise, with assistance from a paid care worker;
- Be cared for at home by a paid care worker or personal assistant while you spend time with family, friends or enjoying activities of your choice, or just take the chance for rest or sleep;
- Spend a period in residential or nursing care home.

Carer Needs Assessment and a Life outside Caring

A separate carer's assessment, which looks at life outside your caring role, will continue. This will ensure you receive information about carer support services and could also lead to a personal budget of up to £300. This money would be paid directly to you, for something specific either to help you maintain your caring role or enhance your life outside caring. It could be spent on, for example, a washing machine, gym membership, massage therapy, course fees, a computer to help study or work or to keep in touch with family and friends etc. It can be applied for once a year.

Any carer who is included in the cared-for person's SSA should always be offered the chance to complete a separate carer's assessment. Where possible this should be completed by the carer at the same time as the cared-for person's SSA, although carers should be given the opportunity to answer all questions away from the person they care for, so they can discuss things freely. Alternatively, the carer's assessment can be left with the carer to complete in their own time, if this is better for them. Carers can request help to fill in the form from carer support services such as Camden Carers Centre or Centre 404.

*Karen Timperley
Commissioner for Carers in Camden*

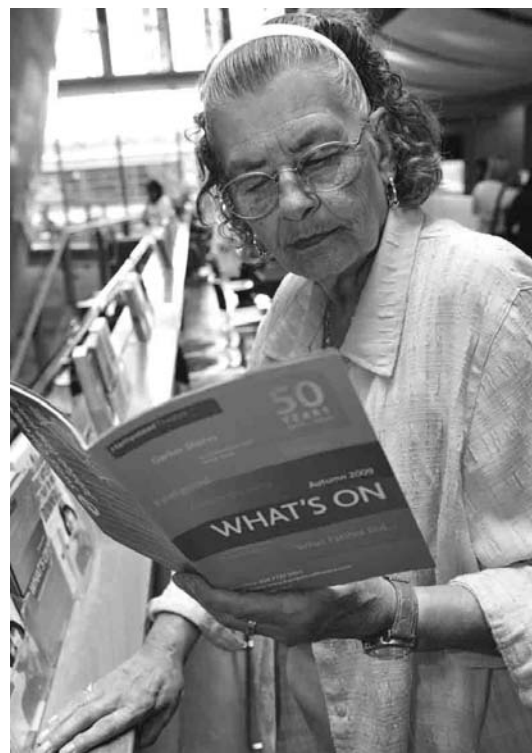


Photo: Camden Adult Social Care

The partnership pathway to progress

Hello all carers – The Health and Wellbeing Project is now over half way through its project journey and thus far our figure for carers who have either had a health check, a wellbeing check, or both, now stands at an impressive 174.

The health and wellbeing checks actively began in May this year – that's only just six months, but prior to that the team were busy addressing the project systems, processes and documentation needs, purchasing the health equipment and developing policies and protocols. The team were also using their marketing and relationship management skills to connect with local Camden-based organisations, forge strong partnerships for referral and signposting work, and publicise the project with its array of project materials.

The team have worked closely in partnership with several local voluntary and statutory organisations, some of which you will learn about in other health and wellbeing features by the staff directly involved, e.g. Katie Stewart and her project development work with Suhel at Age Concern, Gavin's contact with health partnerships (local GPs and pharmacies) and our links with Kingsgate and Charlie Ratchford Resource Centres.

I would also like to highlight partnership work the Health and Wellbeing team have initiated with Ezra Burnette of Women and Health. Our nurses have frequently referred carers to Women and Health for stress-relieving treatments like massage, reflexology, aromatherapy and counselling. Ezra offers a whole range of services from acupuncture and Alexander Technique to osteopathy and pilates. She can be contacted on **020 7482 2786** or by logging on to **www.womenandhealth.org.uk** or **connect@women-and-health.org**. Ezra has also been busy informing her staff and clients about the benefits of the Health and Wellbeing Project and has successfully referred several interested carers to the project. Such partnerships demonstrate the value of local organisations' interest in each others' work, and supporting carers by utilising the diverse services offered by each.

Furthermore, the project has joined forces with the Expert Patient Programme (EPP), distributing several information and awareness

packs during the sessions offered to carers on the Looking After Me course. We would like to thank Nurcan Cahill for her support in publicising the project. Anyone who is interested in finding out more about EPP and Looking After Me courses can contact Nurcan on **020 7922 7860**, Freephone: **0800 954 0650** or email: **nurcan.cahill@eppcic.co.uk**

Karen Timperley, Commissioner for Carers in Camden, has also been busy with Jeannette De La Harpe to further increase the interest in the project by writing to carers already known to the Adult Social Care Teams. This has been instrumental in the Project Team reaching out to new carers.

We also continue to draw upon our colleagues in health and have forged much closer links with the REACH team – Community Therapies. We recently provided each REACH team member with a Health and Wellbeing mouse mat, similar to the one designed by Gavin for local GPs. Carers' Nurse Sharleen, and Gavin, Primary Care Development Co-ordinator, recently gave a presentation to the REACH team on the Health and Wellbeing Project. Since then we have had several referrals from staff at REACH and would like to thank them for their support.

Recent contact with the Psychological Therapies Team has proved effective in the exchange of information, creating new opportunities to make further appropriate cross referrals, thus ensuring that carers are better supported through access to mental health and wellbeing services.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all colleagues across the voluntary and statutory sector. This level of engagement has enabled the project staff to develop closer professional relationships to benefit carers in the nine key wards of the project.

I would also like to thank each and every one of the project staff, plus Allegra and Ashley, for the full support they have provided throughout the set-up and delivery of the project. Every team member has a wealth of experience and knowledge to offer carers, including palliative care experience (supporting the needs of carers at this difficult time), plus housing and mental health support, while other staff have brought experience working with national charities and advice centres to enrich the invaluable and

progressive nature of the work. Sharleen, the Carers' Nurse, has identified several urgent health needs amongst carers who would otherwise be unaware of sometimes serious conditions. Lastly, it's important to recognise and thank Camden Carers Centre staff for engaging with and supporting the project by continuing to make inward referrals, and the volunteers who have given their time to enhance the project and assist in signing carers into the service.

Project Managing the Health and Wellbeing Team

As Project Manager, my role is to have a clear map of the project journey from beginning to end and to ensure that the Team meets the Department of Health targets and local targets outlined in the project scheme.

Project life invariably begins with a plan of work, a road map in other words, supported by a scheme of work that weaves through to the agreed project outcomes. Steering this work through uncharted waters and in new ways that have not been tried before has its challenges and hidden surprises. The project team has taken a problem solving and solution focused approach to addressing these challenges. As a result of all this learning and development, the project is robust and moving more swiftly through the initial casework.

We've also seen an increase in the level of interest and many new referrals have been passed to the team by social workers and other colleagues.

Apart from supporting the Carers' Nurse with some health checks, my role is to develop and chart the progress of the project, manage the expenditure with the assistance of Elaine, our Administration Facilitator, and manage the individual team members while supporting and developing staff in their individual roles. I am also responsible for managing the development needs of the team, which is different from managing individuals, and is essential to the overall success of the project.

Tracie Stevens
Health and Wellbeing Project Manager

My name is Gavin Williams and I have been working for Camden Carers Centre since February 2010 as the Primary Care Development Co-ordinator. My role is to liaise with Primary Care in Camden on behalf of carers, provide training to staff on carer issues and raise levels of carer referrals to our service. I have undertaken several tasks since joining the team and I would like to update you on the areas I have been working on.

Increasing carer referrals to CCC

The Health and Wellbeing team has produced a clear marketing strategy to assist the identification and referral of carers in Camden through Primary Care, with specific targets of the GP and pharmacy sector. I have been delivering presentations to a number of large GP practices in borough, to raise awareness of CCC's services and the ways in which GPs and medical staff can refer carers to us for support. The practices have included:

James Wigg (Kentish Town) Health Centre – 25 GPs and senior nursing staff.

Prince of Wales – 6 GPs and the Practice Manager.

Grays Inn – Practice Manager and senior nursing staff.

Keats Group – 12 GPs and senior nursing staff.

Camden and Islington Palliative Care team – Entire clinical team.

Marketing strategy

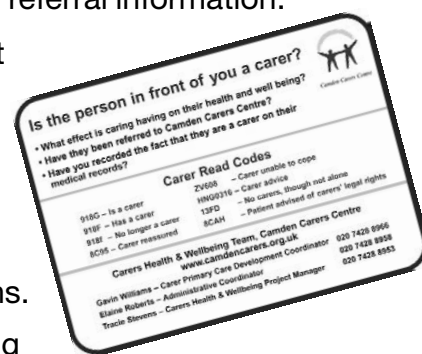
In order to increase 'carer awareness' we have produced a series of marketing products that have been distributed to all the GP practices in the borough. These have included posters and specialist mouse mats, branded with CCC's referral information.

The posters have been put up widely across the borough including:

- Libraries
- GP Practices
- Voluntary Organisations
- Community Organisations.

Our third wave of marketing has used evidence based research from the PRT's 'Focus on Carers and the NHS – identifying and supporting hidden carers – Good practice guide'. Research indicates that 80% of prescriptions are repeats and a large majority of these are collected by carers. To try and reach these 'hidden' carers we have asked community pharmacists to agree to hand out self referral forms with prescriptions for a set period of time. The pharmacists who signed up to the programme will soon receive these self referral pads.

Gavin Williams
Primary Care Development Co-ordinator



'Self care' is a term now used to encourage people to look after their general health. It is often used when people are living with a long term health condition – the idea is to help people manage their lives and not just their condition. Some people with long term health conditions may not feel confident about their condition or how it affects their life, although this is definitely not true of everyone. 'Self care', however, is an approach to improve better health and wellbeing for people who need to grow their confidence.

A long term condition could be, for example, asthma or multiple sclerosis, but can be any medical condition – the list is endless. The 'self care' approach helps people to manage their medicines, give up smoking, change their drinking habits, start exercising, maintain social friendships or choose healthy food options – even



if on a limited budget. 'Self care' also means making sure we have the most suitable equipment to stay independent and safe, such as appropriate wheelchairs, home blood pressure monitors and adaptations for the home. So it can be seen as representing diverse ways of taking care of oneself, and this can be as varied as our own perceptions of what health and wellbeing means to each of us individually.

Camden Carers Centre's Health and Wellbeing Team is delighted to promote the development work of the NHS and indeed NHS Camden to launch the enclosed leaflet *Help and advice for living with a long term condition* and promotional work on 'self care'. For male carers we are also including a booklet titled *Self Care for Minor Ailments*.

NHS Camden is launching National Self Care Week commencing 15th November and plan to develop a *Self Care Information Toolkit*. The work is closely related to the development of Information Prescriptions and the Expert Patient Programme, both of which Camden Carers Centre has featured recently.

The 'self care' topic will be accessible via the Department of Health website and the NHS Communication Link. NHS Camden will also feature self care as a topic on their website www.camden.nhs.uk, which should be launched soon. The idea of self care week is to help people consider the support and services available to manage their health through statutory support and voluntary organisation involvement.

To find out more about self care Google the words **self care week 2010** or visit longtermconditions@dh.gsi.gov.uk for questions about how to get support and advice. The National Pharmacy Association has also completed a feature about minor ailments and self care.

Tracie Stevens

Psychological Therapies – Building more bridges

The Health and Wellbeing Team recently met with Amber, Amal, Abdul and Samantha, who form part of the Camden Psychological Therapies Team. The two teams hope to be working more closely together, supporting carers by making appropriate referrals for services. For anyone who has not heard about this dynamic team, they provide a range of services and interventions to support carers and people with 'psychological' needs.

Most carers undergo stress or anxiety at some point in their caring life and at least one in four people experience a mental health issue or need at some time. If you want to discuss support and help with anxiety and stress please contact Camden Psychological Therapies Service on **020 3317 5600** or self refer to cpts@camdenpct.nhs.uk or visit www.camden.nhs.uk/cpts. You can also talk to your GP to find out more.

The team also provide access to individual support therapies, group therapies and Self Help books on prescriptions, which can be found in most Camden libraries. Whilst not a crisis intervention service the team can help those who experience low moods or anxiety and depression. It's really simple – the 'books on prescriptions' can be exchanged for one of the Self Help books. Visit your local library or NHS Camden for more information, or call the Team and ask about how to obtain a book.

GREAT CROFT CARERS GROUP

Camden Carers Centre's Health and Wellbeing team has been working closely with the Bangladeshi/Asian carers group at Age Concern Camden's Great Croft Resource Centre. We want to ensure that carers in all sections of the community (within the nine agreed wards) can access the Health and Wellbeing Project, and that we work in partnership with established local carers' services.

The Great Croft carers group meets regularly at the centre, located in Cromer Street, King's Cross. Co-ordinated by Suhel Siddiqui, it is open to carers from the Bangladeshi/Asian community who care for someone over 55 years of age. Suhel runs regular support and advice sessions, offered in both English and Sylheti, and also co-ordinates an exciting programme of activities for the group, including:

- Trips to places of interest
- Garden parties
- ESOL classes
- Exercise classes
- Massage sessions with therapists from Women and Health.

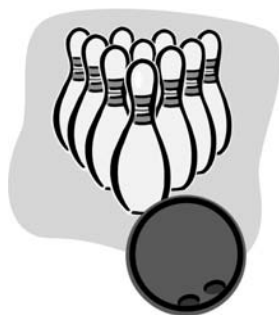


This summer the group went fruit picking, enjoyed a trip to the seaside and held an Eid party!

The Great Croft Resource Centre also offers many activities to the over-55s in the wider local community, including:

- Singing
- Dancing
- Craft classes
- Keep fit
- Tai chi
- Indoor bowling
- Dementia care group
- Day trips.

For more information about the Bangladeshi/Asian carers group, or other activities on offer at Great Croft, you can contact Suhel and the Great Croft team on **020 7278 5090**.



The Health and Wellbeing Team is looking forward to ongoing partnership working with Age Concern Camden.

Katie Stewart
Health and Wellbeing Project Worker

Katie Stewart

My name is Katie Stewart and I am one of the Wellbeing Project Workers. My role is to meet with carers to discuss their wellbeing goals and identify ways in which they can be achieved. Carers' goals have included:

- taking a break from caring;
- learning to drive;
- obtaining a Camden Wellness card (for discount leisure centre use);
- developing more confidence ... and many more.

The team has developed, and is continuing to develop, good links within the community. This is invaluable, as much of my work involves signposting and referring carers to community organisations which provide specialist services, such as Age Concern Camden, Women and Health and KIDS. I am looking forward to meeting and working with many more carers over the remaining months of the project.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING CONFERENCE

In October I attended the national Health and Wellbeing conference at Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre. Key speakers included Lord Freud, Minister for Welfare Reform, Dept for Work & Pensions.

His speech centred around the 'migration' of people on Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance and Income Support on grounds of incapacity, to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). Following a trial run in October it will be rolled out nationally from February over the next three years. Everyone on Incapacity Benefit will be re-tested for work capability assessment by an Atos healthcare professional.

Based on a figure of 1.5 million on long term Incapacity Benefit it is estimated that 23% will be found fit for work and therefore not entitled to any component of ESA. They will be moved through the assessment process with a focus on "what they can do" as opposed to "what they can't do". Claimants will find themselves on one side or the other of ESA – either re-entering the job seekers' market or supported through the Support element of the benefit. We have prepared a Tip Sheet on these changes and the implications for carers. For a copy, please contact Gavin Williams on **020 7428 8966**.



The Mental Health Carer Support Service is managed by Camden Carers Centre and offers support and information to the carer, family member, friend or neighbour caring for someone experiencing mental health problems in Camden. The aim is to provide an easily accessible service that offers practical help in order that carers are able to cope more easily with their caring responsibilities.

Camden Carers Support Service provides the following:

- Information about mental health and local services.
- General information about medication and possible side-effects.
- Help in applying for welfare benefits.
- Advocacy and support in key meetings.
- Help in accessing other services, such as specialist groups, training, carer breaks or respite.
- Emotional support.
- Support in getting a Carer's Assessment.

The service is operational between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Appointments can be made to meet either at the office or at the carer's home. The Family Support and Development Worker, Angela Edwards, can be contacted in the following ways:

At the Peckwater Resource Centre, 6 Peckwater Street, NW5 2TX
Telephone: **020 7530 6431** Email: **angela@camdencarers.org.uk**
Or by ringing Camden Carers Centre on: **020 7428 8950**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Direct Payments

If any mental health carer receives a letter from Direct Payments and is not sure what to do:

Please contact Angela Edwards

**Camden Carers Centre
presents
The Camden Carers
free
International Fashion Show**

Date: Saturday, 20th November 2010

Time: 5.30pm – 7.30pm

Venue: Parliament Hill School
140 Highgate Road, Kentish Town, NW5 1RL



**Please come along and join in!
Free light refreshments**

If you would like to take part in this fun event please contact
Angela Edwards on **0207 530 6431**
or **Allegra Lynch** on **0207 428 8967**

What a difference support makes!

I was referred to Camden Carers Mental Health Support Service by my daughter's social worker from the Community Mental Health Team.

My daughter has been unwell with mental health issues for several years. I have always looked after her by myself. Since I have received support from the Mental Health Family and Carer Support Worker my confidence has grown and I am able to talk about my caring role and how I feel. I have also completed some training days and joined two carer support groups. The first is a BME support group and the other is a mental health carer's support group. I feel as a family we are receiving some good support and both my support worker and my daughter's have made joint visits and work together to assist both of us.

Since I completed the Mental Health First Aid training I feel that I have a better understanding of my daughter's difficulties and I am able to cope better. Now that I have support I do not feel alone and isolated any more. I look forward to meeting the carers in the support group and having the space to discuss issues and have some time for fun and laughter also.

R.D.

Mental Health Carers – Planning for Recovery

On 22nd October we held the first of a two-part course for mental health carers, run by Jill Pay and Angela Edwards.

The first day was on Recovery Planning – there were lots of positive discussions throughout the day; it was very interactive. This is a new training course which we plan to run again in the New Year.



Photographs of carers training day: Angela Edwards

TAKE A BREAK!

ACTIVITIES FOR CARERS AT CHARLIE RATCHFORD CENTRE

SPANISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

Learn Spanish in a mixed group, including carers, on **Mondays** from **10 am – 12 pm**. Contact Miguel Angel Alforcea. Email: dsgangels@hotmail.com

POETRY FOR PEOPLE aged 60+

Read and discuss poems and poetry in a fun, lively and friendly atmosphere – and perhaps inspire you to write your own poetry! This is a mixed group, including carers, meeting on **Fridays** from **10.30 am – 1.30 pm**.

POTTERY CLASSES FOR PEOPLE aged 60+

A mixed class, open to carers who are over 60 and Camden residents, or caring for someone from Camden. The classes are on **Fridays**, from **11 am – 2 pm**.



RELAXATION FOR PEOPLE aged 60+

Try relaxation techniques to relieve stress and anxiety, provide balance and calm, leading to a healthier wellbeing. A mixed group, also for carers, meeting on **Wednesdays** from **11 am – 12.30 pm**.

STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR CARERS

Try a one-to-one session with a qualified worker who can offer emotional support and stress management techniques. All areas of stress are covered, including depression, anxiety, panic etc. The sessions are available by appointment, made by ringing the Centre (details below).

TAI CHI FOR CARERS

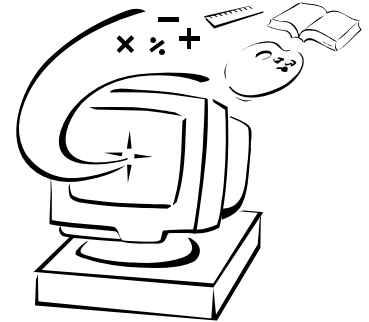
Tai Chi is a form of gentle exercise, an excellent way of relaxing and improving your balance, posture and mobility. Free Tai Chi classes for carers take place on **Tuesdays, 11 am – 1 pm**. Classes are very informal – you don't need



to be experienced in Tai Chi, and you don't have to commit to attending every session. Wear loose clothing and just come along and join in. For more information contact Deborah Knight on **020 7428 8950**.

COMPUTER LEARNING FOR CARERS

Learn how to use computers and programmes as well as the Internet at drop-in sessions on **Wednesdays, 1 pm – 3 pm; Thursdays, 10 am – 3 pm** and **Fridays, 10 am – 1 pm**. Please ring the Centre on **020 7485 2968** for more information.



Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre is on Belmont Street, NW1 (off Chalk Farm Road). For information on all classes and groups meeting at the Centre please ring **020 7485 2968**.

ADULT SPECIALIST SWIM SESSIONS

These sessions will offer a gentle way for people with disabilities (acute or chronic), older adults and those recovering from injuries (including post-op knee or hip replacement) to take part in swimming and water-based exercise at Kentish Town Sports Centre. Non-swimmers, as well as those with experience, are welcome. Accessible changing facilities are available.

Standard entry will be £2.90, concessions £1.50, and people with a disability can join for £6.15 for a whole year. Unfortunately, one-to-one physical support cannot be offered but carers or family members may come along free of charge.



All participants will need to complete a Try Swimming PARQ before entering the water. For further information please contact Lucy Wilson on **020 7974 2985** email: lucy.wilson@camden.gov.uk

ACTIVITIES FOR GROUPS AND CARERS AT KINGSGATE RESOURCE CENTRE



- Women-only gentle exercise class on **Mondays, 11 am – 12 pm**
- Men-only gentle exercise class on **Thursdays, 2 pm – 3 pm**
- Computer group for beginners on **Fridays, 1 pm – 3 pm**
- Pet therapy every other **Friday, 1 pm – 3pm**

For further information on any of the above please phone Liana Richter on **020 7328 7613**.

(Carers attending any afternoon activity at Kingsgate may enjoy a 3-course lunch for only £3. Please phone to book lunch by 11 am the day before: **020 7624 8818**.)

BRITISH MUSEUM VISITS

The last British Museum community preview was for the exhibition **The Journey through the Afterlife: Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead** which 30 Camden carers (our biggest group ever!) went to see on Hallowe'en.

The exhibition showcased material from the British Museum's collection of Book of the Dead papyri alongside treasures on loan from major international collections, and using state-of-the-art visualisation technology we could follow the ancient Egyptians' journey from death to the afterlife. The exhibition is on until 6 March 2011. If you want to read more about it go to: www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/future_exhibitions/book_of_the_dead

The museum is still running its popular 'Behind the Scenes' sessions and CCC is taking a group of carers to one on **Friday 3rd December**. Sessions start off with warm refreshments and a unique opportunity to handle objects from the museum's teaching collection. Volunteer staff then assist visitors to explore the galleries of their choice at a pace that suits them. If you would like to join a group on that day, let Deborah know by phone as soon as possible: **020 7428 8950**.



ADMIRAL NURSING DIRECT

Information and support by phone and email (provided by experienced Admiral nurses) for professionals and family carers of people with dementia.

Tel: **0845 257 9406** or email: direct@fordementia.org.uk

Admiral Nursing DIRECT
Supporting people affected by dementia

Telephone 0845 257 9406

CARERS DIRECT

For general advice and support over the phone.

Tel: **0808 802 0202**

If you look after someone, who looks after you?

PRINCESS ROYAL TRUST CARERS' BENEFITS HELPLINE

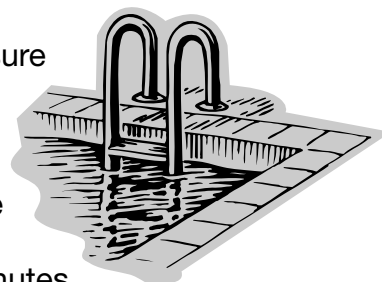
The PRT's free helpline, offering advice specifically on welfare rights and benefits, is staffed between **10 am and 4 pm, Monday to Friday**. Outside those hours and at weekends there is a live answering service. Phone **0800 161 3839** or go to: www.carerscentre.com

Carers Help-Line
0800 161 38 39
www.carerscentre.com

FREE WATER RELAXATION CLASSES FOR CARERS

at Kentish Town Leisure Centre, starting in late January (week beginning 24th). There will be two back-to-back sessions of 30 minutes each, with up to five people per session.

Please call **020 7428 8950** and put your name down if you are interested.



SUPPORT BROKERAGE

As part of the national 'personalisation' programme to transform adult social care Age Concern



Camden has developed a new Support Brokerage Service for people who are:

- aged 65+, and their carers;
- resident in Camden;
- and undertaking Camden's Better Care Choices programme.

By working with and supporting local older people and their carers we enable them to have control over the funding allocated to them by the local authority to purchase different services, in different ways, which meet their individual care and support needs. We have Support Brokers who work with people who fund their own care, including some who specialise in working with black and minority ethnic clients. We can also provide home visits. The support we offer includes help with:

- completing the Supported Self Assessment form;
- identifying what support the person needs;
- creating a support plan;
- advice and guidance on locally available services;
- the practicalities of setting up a service, e.g. negotiating and setting up contracts with service providers or setting up direct payments.

If you would like help with any of the above, please contact the Age Concern Support Brokerage Team by calling **020 7255 9695** or emailing supportbrokerage@ageconcerncamden.org.uk

CAMDEN MONEYWISE PROJECT

Camden Moneywise is a project run by Age Concern Camden; the objective is to support financial inclusion by giving money advice to black, Asian, minority ethnic groups and refugees aged over 50.

The service will primarily help people in the Somali community, as well as dementia sufferers and carers who are looking after an older relative. The funding aims primarily to rectify the disadvantage that older people in black and minority ethnic groups suffer when trying to

obtain financial advice. It will also offer a range of support in other areas such as housing, social care, welfare entitlements and debt advice, particularly for people who have limited spoken English. The project will run until January 2013 – volunteers will be placed in a range of locations across Camden, as well as offering drop-in and telephone advice from Age Concern's offices in Kings Cross.

For information and advice in Somali or English, please contact Hassan Aden on **020 7837 3777** or email: h.aden@ageconcerncamden.org.uk For referrals, please contact Jo Holloway, Advice and Rights Manager, on **020 7837 3777** or email: j.holloway@ageconcerncamden.org.uk

If you would like to become a volunteer for this project please contact Sagal Mumin on **020 7837 3777** or email: s.mumin@ageconcerncamden.org.uk

THE WINTER WARMTH CAMPAIGN

Keep Warm, Keep Well

The campaign is aimed at people on limited incomes, older or disabled people in the community (and their carers) and families with young children on low incomes. It gives practical advice, including tips on how to keep warm, eat well and use fuel energy efficiently, along with information and signposting to relevant grants and benefits.

You can also check out the Winter Fuel Allowance available to certain groups of vulnerable people.

Talk to your social worker or phone one of the Health and Wellbeing staff for more advice. Alternatively call the Carers Helpline on **0800 161 3839**, or visit the government's website: www.direct.gov.uk/keepwarmkeepwell

A VICTORY FOR CARERS – AND FOR COMMON SENSE!

It took many months but, thanks to the diligent campaigning of a Camden carer, the council has now agreed to change the criteria regarding eligibility for a Dedicated Disabled Person's Parking Bay. Specifically, the council has removed the condition that carers must receive or, in the case of pensioners, be entitled to Carer's Allowance to be eligible. The application form and guidance on the website should by now reflect this change.

Patient Medical Records

Patients are to be put in charge of their medical records online under proposals for an 'information



revolution' in the NHS. Patients will be able to log on to keep track of their treatment and make choices about the care they receive. The Department of Health says everyone should have choice and control over their care by 2013-14.

Everyone who is cared for by the NHS in England already has formal rights to make choices about the service they receive. These include the right to choose your GP surgery and which GP you want to see, which hospital you are treated at, and to receive information to support your choices. The government now wants to extend this offer of choice to mental health services and end of life care too, and for all patients to be able to change their choices at any stage.

The internet is seen as the key tool. Every patient would have a username and password and could update their records with information like blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Those requiring treatment would be able to weigh up different options, comparing the performance of different hospitals and doctors, for example. The changes are supported by Professor John Williams of the Royal College of Physicians, who says, "Useful information rarely follows the patient through the system, making it more difficult for doctors and nurses to provide them with the personalised treatment they have a right to expect."

ARE YOU CARING FOR SOMEONE FOR 35 HOURS OR MORE A WEEK?

If so you may be able to claim Carer's Allowance. The person you look after could be a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour who cannot manage without help – and you don't need to live with them!

Carer's Allowance is a weekly benefit. You don't need to have paid National Insurance contributions to be eligible and even if you are not on benefit you may be entitled to claim it. However, you must be over 16 and not in full time education, and if you work your earnings may affect the amount that is paid.

You can make a claim if:

- you look after someone who gets Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance at the middle or high rate care component;
- you care for them for over 35 hours per week.

If you and your partner/spouse both qualify you can claim for looking after each other and both receive the benefit. But if two people look after the same person only one of them can qualify. Also, you cannot get extra for looking after more than one disabled person.

You may be told that, because you receive another benefit, Carer's Allowance cannot be paid to you. If this should happen you will get a letter stating that you have an 'underlying entitlement'. Don't destroy this letter – it is very important because you:

- May qualify for the carer premium on other benefits, currently an extra £30.05 per week. (You will need to show the letter to the office that is paying your benefit.)
- Will automatically qualify for a Christmas Bonus.
- Can get a National Insurance class 1 credit.
- May be eligible for other benefits, so please have your benefits checked.

How to claim?

You need to complete the claim pack DS 700 which you can get from your local social security or Jobcentre Plus office or by ringing the Benefits Enquiry Line on **0800 882 200**. You can also complete it online at: www.direct.gov.uk/en/Dio1/DoltOnline/DG_4017542

Should I seek advice before claiming Carer's Allowance?

You should get advice if your right to stay in the United Kingdom depends on limitations or restrictions imposed by the Home Office, or if the person you are caring for gets any of the following:

- an extra severe disability premium paid with their Pension Credit;
- Income Support or income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Housing Benefit; or
- Council Tax Benefit – as they could lose money.

If you are unsure seek advice before you claim.

Gill Catherall

Manager, Camden's Income Maximisation Team

CARERS' SUPPORT GROUPS RUN BY CAMDEN CARERS CENTRE

For all carers – The longest-established support group run by Camden Carers Centre meets at 'Mind' in Camden, Barnes House, 9-11 Camden Road, NW1 on **alternate Wednesdays**, from **10.30 am – 12 noon**. Dates to the end of 2010 are as follows: **24th November, 15th December**.

For further information please phone Jean Wallace on 020 7586 5405 or Caroline Allouf on 020 7428 8956.

For Bangladeshi carers

Meets approx. every 8 weeks.

Please contact Razia Choudhury on 020 7428 8952.

For African and Caribbean carers

Meets on the first **Friday** of the month at 293-299 Kentish Town Road, in the first-floor meeting room, from **10.30 am – 1.30 pm**. Next meeting: **3rd December**.

Please contact Lucy Raymond on 020 7428 8950 or Angela Edwards on 020 7530 6431.



OTHER CARERS' SUPPORT GROUPS IN CAMDEN

For all carers

Friday is carers' day at **Kingsgate Resource Centre**, 208 Webheath, Palmerston Road, NW6.

For further information please phone Liana on 020 7328 7613.

You can also have lunch for £3 – to book, phone 020 7624 8818 by 11 am on the day.

Two carers groups meet at **Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre**, Belmont Street, NW1.

All carers group on the second **Thursday** of the month, from **10 am – 12 noon**, and a Self-help dementia carers group, run by carers for carers, meets **first Thursday** of the month, from **2.30 pm – 4 pm**.

Ring 020 7485 2968 for further information.

For carers of people experiencing mental distress

There is a support group for carers of people with mental health problems that meets at **Peckwater Resource Centre**, 6 Peckwater Street, Kentish Town, NW5, on the **second Tuesday** of the month between **10.30 am and 12.30 pm**.

Contact Angela Edwards on 020 7530 6431.

Mind in Camden provides a 'Carers Space' where carers of people with mental health issues can be supported by a qualified therapist. Carers Space will be open **every Monday** at Barnes House, 9-15 Camden Road, NW1, from **6.30 pm – 8.00 pm**.

Booking is necessary. Please text Richard Oliver on 07956 418 601 if you are interested and he will phone you back.



We welcome contributions to the Newsletter. Please send us your letters, poems or articles. Phone Deborah on **020 7428 8950** or email them to **info@camdencarers.org.uk** – or you can post them to the CCC office.

CAMDEN CARERS CENTRE STAFF

Staff based at Camden Carers Centre, 293-299 Kentish Town Road, NW5 2TJ

Chief Executive Officer

Ashley Barber 020 7428 8955 email: ashley@camdencarers.org.uk

Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Allegra Lynch 020 7428 8967 email: allegra@camdencarers.org.uk

Family and Carer Support and Development Workers

Caroline Allouf 020 7428 8956 or 07852 431 234 email: caroline@camdencarers.org.uk

Susan Burchell 020 7428 8957 or 07980 801 718 email: susan@camdencarers.org.uk

Razia Choudhury 020 7428 8952 or 07527 231 092 email: razia@camdencarers.org.uk

Prodeepta Okell 020 7428 8951 or 07527 230 132 email: prodeepta@camdencarers.org.uk

Carers Training and Volunteer Co-ordinator

Jill Pay 020 7428 8954 or 07508 420 210 email: jill@camdencarers.org.uk

Office Administration and Information

Deborah Knight 020 7428 8950 email: admin@camdencarers.org.uk

Carers Health and Wellbeing Project

Tracie Stevens, Project Manager 020 7428 8953 or 07531 172 233 email: tracie@camdencarers.org.uk

Lucy Raymond, Project Worker 020 7428 8964 or 07532 268 881 email: lucy@camdencarers.org.uk

Elaine Roberts, Administrative Co-ordinator 020 7428 8958 email: elaine@camdencarers.org.uk

Katie Stewart, Project Worker 020 7428 8965 or 07811 507 689 email: katie@camdencarers.org.uk

Sharleen Rudolf, Carers Nurse 020 7428 8963 or 07790 235 396 email: sharleen@camdencarers.org.uk

Carers Primary Care Development Co-ordinator

Gavin Williams 020 7428 8966 or 07929 882 137 email: gavin@camdencarers.org.uk

Staff member based at Swiss Cottage Community Centre, NW3

Family and Carer Support Worker

Jean Wallace 020 7586 5405 or 07969 626 106 email: jean@camdencarers.org.uk

Staff based at Royal Free Hospital

Family and Carer Support Workers – Hospital Discharge Project

Naomi Feather Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning
020 7794 0500 ext 36705 or 07951 586 334 email: naomi.feather@camden.gov.uk

Rosanna Thurlow Monday to Friday, ext 36705 or 07546 278 067
email: rosanna.thurlow@camden.gov.uk

Staff member based at St. Pancras and University College Hospitals

Family and Carer Support Worker – Hospital Discharge Project

Jo Standen 020 3317 3339 or 07805 253 641 email: jo@camdencarers.org.uk

Staff member based at Peckwater Centre, NW5

Family and Carer Support Worker – Mental Health

Angela Edwards 020 7530 6431 email: angela@camdencarers.org.uk

Camden Carers Centre also employs a counsellor, Evelyn Blumenthal, one day a week.
For information about counselling please ring 020 7428 8950.

CAMDEN CARERS CENTRE

Tel: 020 7428 8950

Email: info@camdencarers.org.uk

Web: www.camdencarers.org.uk

