Welcome to the February edition of News for Carers

Carers Kensington & Chelsea would like to say Happy 2014 to all of our carers.

Our 2013 concluded with an exciting Carers Rights Day in November (see page 1), during which our carers enjoyed pampering and information sessions. As we head towards spring and days get brighter (and longer) we all start to think about how we can take a break to enjoy the warmer weather and recuperate from the long winter. Vitalise and Simply Health have come together to create Before Breaking Point (BBP) – an initiative to provide a break for individuals and carers who have not had one for 12 months or over. To find out if you may be eligible and for information on other respite opportunities go to page 12.

See also pages 4-5 to find out more about new social activities for carers run by Hestia and go to page 11 for health and wellbeing services update – just in time for the inevitable ‘get fit’ New Year’s resolutions!

We are also unveiling the theme for Carers Week 2014 and will provide more details of events for carers during Carers Week in the next issue.

How we celebrated Carers Rights Day 2013

Carers Kensington & Chelsea would like to say a big thank you to all stall holders, workshop organisers, guest speakers and volunteers who joined in to make the annual Carers Rights Day on 29 November 2013 a very special one. Over sixty carers attended and celebrated the day with us.

Councillor Catherine Faulks, the Carer’s Champion in Kensington and Chelsea and Jean French, former Head of Advice and Information at Carers UK welcomed carers with their opening speeches and highlighted the great contribution all carers make not only to the care of their loved ones but also to communities as a whole. They also stressed the importance of carers accessing the right support in order to enable them to carry on with their caring roles.

Information on various subjects relating to caring was available from over 20 different organisations. Workshops on nutrition, managing finances and the Alexander Technique proved popular. Many carers joined in for a fun activity too and danced away in a Zumba session.

There was also a pampering corner where carers were able to enjoy free pampering sessions including hand and aromatherapy massages from Lush and nail treatments for the ladies.

It was an opportunity for all of us to meet one another, find useful information, share a tasty lunch and have a chat over a cuppa.

The next occasion for us to gather will be 9 – 15 June at Carers Week 2014. We hope to see you all then.
Carers Forum
Kensington and Chelsea Carers Forum meet each quarter and give carers a chance to have a say on local health and social care issues as well as the ability to shape the types of services available in RBKC. The forum is open to all carers in Kensington & Chelsea.

The next Carers Forum will take place on Thursday 10th April 2014 between 10.30am – 1pm at Isaac Newton Centre (108a Lancaster Road London W11 1QS). Michelle Atterbury from Hestia will be joining us to talk about new social activities for carers service in Kensington and Chelsea and it will be an opportunity for all carers to share their ideas and suggestions on what they would like to see happening.

For more information about the next Kensington & Chelsea Carers Forum and to book a place, please contact Carers Kensington & Chelsea by phoning us on 0800 032 1089 (freephone from land lines) or by emailing kandc@carersuk.org.

Carers Week 2014
Carers Week is an annual campaign that celebrates and recognises the contribution made by the UK’s 6.5 million carers who look after an ill, frail or disabled family member or friend. This year it falls between 9 and 15 June and the new initiative called Carers Week Quest will be launched. The aim of it is to reach out to the thousands of carers who are missing out on support and services that can help them with their caring role.

Kensington and Chelsea’s voluntary organisations and carer support services will join their forces to prepare a series of events for carers during Carers Week, so pencil it in your diary and keep that week free. The full list of events and activities will be published in the May edition of News for Carers.

Universal Credit on the Red Button
People who do not have internet access at home can now find information about Universal Credit (UC) by hitting the red button on their TV remote control.

The new UC information channels have now seen more than 30,000 hits since they were launched at the end of October 2013. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) designed it in the partnership with Looking Local. The aim is to give the public as much choice as possible over how they receive the information.

Sky and Virgin customers who have interactive TV can simply scroll through the menu to the relevant page to view a raft of information, including checking their eligibility for UC and learning how they can make a claim.

Sky viewers can access the service by going to channel 539 and pressing the red button; Virgin viewers do likewise on channel 233.

And those who use their smartphone to connect to the web, even though they might not have an internet connection in their home, can access the information via the new app, My Council.

The information can also be accessed via Facebook.

As well as information on UC, people can also access Universal Job Match and The Money Advice Service.

The introduction of UC will also see 6,000 new computers in Jobcentres across the country for claimants to look and apply for jobs online.
Disability Living Allowance is changing – how will this affect you?

You may already know that Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is being replaced for people aged 16 and over by a new benefit called Personal Independence Payment, or PIP for short.

PIP will be similar to DLA in some ways: you will get it if an illness or disability means you have problems with your daily living or getting around. There are different rates depending on your level of disability, and however much you get, it will not affect your entitlement to other benefits. If getting DLA means you get extra amounts (“premiums”) on your other benefits, then a similar rate of PIP will get you the same rates of premiums as you are now getting. If you care for someone getting the “daily living” component of PIP (like the “care” component for DLA), you will have the same entitlement to Carers Allowance as you do now.

There are some differences, though. Initial application will be through a phone call to the Disability and Carers’ Service on 0800 917 2222 (if you are deaf and have a textphone, the number is 0800 917 7777). They will then send out a form for you to complete. After the form is completed, you may be asked to go to a centre for a medical assessment of your disability. The biggest change is that there will be no equivalent to the “low” DLA care rate for the “daily living” component – meaning that, if you currently get £21 a week for help with your daily activities (not your mobility), you may not get any money for this if or when you claim PIP. Get advice from us or another advice agency if this affects you.

When will it happen?

New claims for disability benefit are already being treated as PIP claims. You have to claim PIP using the phone number above. You can still claim DLA for someone aged under 16 by ringing 0845 712 3456 (textphone 0845 722 4433) and asking for a “DLA in childhood” claim form.

If your current DLA claim runs out before 17 March 2014, make sure you make your new claim before it does, and you will still be claiming DLA, not PIP. However, if you have a DLA claim that comes to an end after this date, it is PIP you will have to claim to replace it.

Eventually, everyone claiming DLA will get a letter saying their benefit is going to stop, and asking them to make a new claim for PIP. When you get this letter and do nothing, your benefit will not automatically transfer to PIP: it will stop unless you ring 0800 917 2222 and claim PIP.

However, for people in London this will not happen for a while. The DWP started sending these letters to some claimants in some other parts of the UK in October 2013, but claimants in London will not be affected by this until at least October 2015.

It is worth remembering that at present, if your disability gets worse or improves and you register a change of circumstances with DLA, you are reassessed for DLA – not for PIP. At some point in the future, this will change and you will be reassessed for PIP instead. However, the Government has not yet said when this will be.

Don't forget

Carers Kensington & Chelsea are here to advise and support you and make sure you are getting the right benefits for yourself and those you care for. Ring us on 0800 032 1089 for information and advice.
News from West London Clinical Commissioning Group

Tell West London CCGs what you think

West London Clinical Commissioning Group would like to focus further on carers’ health in 2014/15 in addition to the existing support that it commissions for carers in Kensington and Chelsea and the wider Queen’s Park and Paddington area.

Current support includes:
- Carers Kensington and Chelsea
- The carers primary care navigator service
- Parent carers advocacy service
- Young carers fun and fitness.

They are looking at ways to improve carers’ health and would welcome feedback on how this might work best for you.

Please let us know of any ideas that you have that would improve the health of carers in Kensington and Chelsea.

You can contact Carers Kensington & Chelsea (T: 0800 032 1089; email: kandc@carersuk.org) or Peter Beard (T: 020 3350 4352; email: Peter.Beard@nwicsu.nhs.uk).

Carer Primary Care Navigators Project

Since September 2013, Carers UK have been working directly with six GP surgeries across Westminster, Hammersmith & Fulham, and Kensington and Chelsea to support primary care staff to identify patients who are carers, offer them support from the practice as well as their local carers support services. This project, which is funded by the West London Clinical Commissioning Group, aims to support primary care staff to enable positive health outcomes for carers.

Over the past 3 months, Carer Primary Care Navigators have been based directly in two Kensington and Chelsea practices – The Golborne Medical Centre and Emperor’s Gate Surgery – for one day a week, to work with the teams to review what they currently do to identify and support carers; encourage primary care staff to start thinking ‘carer’; facilitate carer awareness training as required; and implement and embed processes and procedures to support the identification of carers.

- Encouragingly, the GP practices have begun to identify patients who are carers and offer them a referral to their local support service – Carers Kensington & Chelsea;
- Each GP practice has an identified member of staff as a Carer Lead, or in some cases a ‘Carer Lead Team,’ to promote and champion carer awareness throughout the practice;
- After an initial audit and extensive clean-up of carer data, each practice has an updated Carers Register, and has committed to maintaining this register going forward;
- There is an increased awareness of carers’ support needs amongst the primary care team—staff at all levels (from receptionists to GPs) are being encouraged to ask routinely if a patient may be looking after someone, raise awareness of the support that is available to them, and directly refer patients to their local support service if that is their wish;
- Each GP surgery has now an agreed Action Plan to continue to take this work forward.

From January 2014, Carer Primary Care Navigators have started to work with their next group of GP practices over the next 3 months, which includes King’s Road Medical Centre and Earl’s Court Medical Centre.

Local Support Services Update

New Carers Social Activities Service run by Hestia in Kensington and Chelsea

Hestia is now offering support to carers in Kensington and Chelsea by running Carers Social Activities Service.

What’s on offer?

Carers Social Activities and Outings

Activities and outings will be run once a month for 12 months. There will be taster outings/activities offered from February to March. Come along and sample taster sessions of:
- comedy night;
- Brazilian night of salsa dancing, food and drink;
- dining evening;
- carer’s relaxation afternoon;
- outing to a gallery/museum.

Carers Support Group

The carers support group will be run once a month starting in February. This will be an informal gathering directed by carers. This can be anything you want it to be: peer support, training or a place to voice your concerns.
Carers Planning Group

Would you like to be part of an advisory panel? The steering group is for carers who are interested in playing part in shaping the service. Carers will meet quarterly, have a say on what they want from the service, work with staff to implement their ideas and be involved in future planning of activities within the Carers Social Activities service.

If you would like to know more about the service, have any questions or would like to get involved please contact: Michelle Atterbury or Mayra Stergiou by phoning 020 7221 0052 or by emailing Michelle.Atterbury@hestia.org or Mayra.Stergiou@hestia.org.

Time for Me North Kensington

‘Time for Me North’ provides free support and activities for carers who are over 50 and living in the north of the borough. The group, run by Open Age, meets on Fridays from 11am to 1pm at the Positive Age Centre in Dalgarno Way, London, W10 5JW.

The winter programme includes:

Friday 21 February – Stress management session
Friday 28 February – Card making workshop
Friday 7 March – Tai Chi session
Friday 14 March – trip to Ideal Home Show
Friday 21 March – Lunch at Little Bay Restaurant (Kilburn)
Saturday 22 March – trip to the Royal Albert Hall to see Classical Spectacular

All trips and lunch must be booked in advance as places are limited.

For more information and to book a place please contact Liz Butters on 020 8964 1900 or email ebutters@openage.org.uk

Time for Me South Kensington & Chelsea

‘Time for Me South Kensington & Chelsea’ offers support and activities for unpaid carers who are over 50 and living in the south of the borough. February and March activities and outings include:

Wednesday 26 February – trip to the movies. An afternoon cup of coffee and a cake followed by a trip to the cinema is planned for Wednesday 26 February. The title of the film will be confirmed closer to the date.

Thursday 20 March – trip to Leeds Castle. Fifteen places of £5 each are available for the trip to Leeds Castle in the Garden of England. The group will meet at New Horizons at 8am and will travel by minibus. The return is planned no later than 6pm.

Wednesday 26 March – Indian meal at Masala Zone. Eat with friends met through Time for Me at Masala Zone. The project will pay the first £15 of your bill and you will have to pay for anything over that. There will be 15 places available. The group will meet at 75 Bishops Bridge Road, London W2 6BG at 6pm.

All trips and outings must be booked in advance as the places are limited.

For more information and to book a place please contact Judy Graham on 020 7590 8970 or email jgraham@new-horizons-chelsea.org.uk.

Carers Network (previously Carers Network Westminster)

Activities and social outings

Carers Network has new programmes for unpaid carers who care for someone living in Kensington and Chelsea:

For 18 – 25 year old carers trips include:
Saturday 1 March, 3pm Natural History Museum Spirit Collection Tour
Saturday 15 March Group outing to Sea Life London Aquarium
Sunday 30 March 2.15pm Rock climbing taster session at Westway Sports Centre.

A support group will take place after each outing, with refreshments and discussions, to give carers a chance to share and learn from each other.

For 26 - 50 year old carers activities include:

Chair Yoga – Chair based Yoga is designed to be entirely accessible. The focus is on releasing tension in and moving the joints, practicing a series of flowing, stimulating and strengthening movements, and breathing and relaxation exercises.

26 February 11am-12pm at Beethoven Centre, 3rd Avenue, London W10 4JL (nearest tube station: Queen’s Park; buses 6, 187 and 316 stop nearby)
27 February 11am-12pm at Bishop Creighton House, 378 Lillie Road, Fulham, London SW6 7PH; nearest tube stations: Hammersmith, Fulham Broadway, Barons Court, West Brompton; buses 74, 190, 211 and 295 stop nearby).
Music Workshop – music session which includes breathing exercises as well as confidence-building voice exercises, all aimed at raising your mood and creating a calm space where you can express yourself.

5 March 11.30am – 1.30pm at Beethoven Centre (details as above).

Stress Management – Robin Grey, accredited counsellor/psychotherapist, who works with Carers of people who have Alzheimer’s in East London will be offering this session which focuses on stress management techniques for carers.

12 March 2-4pm at Beethoven Centre (details as above).

For further information and to book, contact Susie Yau on 020 8960 3033 or email Susie.yau@carers-network.co.uk.

Carers Support Group

If you are a carer for an older person, you may want to join a monthly carer support group meeting run by Age UK in the south and the north of the borough. This is an opportunity to socialise, share knowledge and experience with other carers and gain access to useful information. Each month, a guest speaker talks to carers about the topic of their choice and answers questions that they may have.

During the next two meetings Ginny Eastwood from the Public Health Team, Nutrition & Dietetics at Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust will lead the Malnutrition Awareness training sessions on:

Monday 24 March 2pm-4pm North Kensington Library, 108 Ladbroke Grove, London W11 1PZ

Tuesday 29 April 2pm-4pm New Horizons, Guinness Trust, Cadogan Street, London SW3 2PF.

If you would like to know more about any of the above, or suggest a topic which you would like to be covered in a session please contact Holly Corlett or Saba Vigneri by phoning on 020 8960 8137. They might also be able to arrange respite care for the person you look after in order to enable you to attend.

Lunch Groups

Lunch Groups are an opportunity to have lunch in a sociable setting and meet with old friends or make new ones. There are also restaurant trips and ‘Back to School’ lunches available across the borough.

Every Wednesday & Friday at 12-1.30pm at Isaac Newton Centre, 108a Lancaster Road, London W11 1QS

Every Tuesday at O’Neill’s Short Stories Group (takes place before the Lunch Group) 11am-12.30pm with lunch at 12.30-2pm. O’Neill’s Pub & Grill, 326 Earls Court Road, London SW5 9BQ (upstairs)

Thursdays during term time Back to School Lunch groups at 12.45-2pm, Queens Gate School, 131-133 Queens Gate, London SW7 5LE and 12.45-2pm, St Charles 6th Form, 12 St Charles Square, London, W10 6EY.

For further information about the Lunch Groups call Joleen King on 020 8960 8137.

Healthwise events

Wednesday 12 March 2014 (and every second Wednesday of each month thereafter) 2-3.30pm Pie & Mush Lunch at Cockneys Pie & Mash, 314 Portobello Road London W10 5RU; cost – £5 for pie and mash, pudding and a drink

Thursday 20 February (and every Thursday for the following 10 weeks) 2.30-3.30pm Exercise for the mind (for people with memory difficulties) at Kensington United Reform Church, Allen Street, London W8 6BL; this 12 week course started on 6 February but do join in if you are interested

Monday 17 March 2-3.30pm Arthritis Seminar–Joint replacement and bone health at Kensington United Reform Church, Allen Street, London W8 6BL.

For further information about Healthwise events contact the Health Wise team on 020 8960 8137 or email Health@aukc.org.uk.
Do you look after someone with dementia or memory problems?

My Memories Café
My Memories Café provides group based support for people with memory difficulties and their friends and family. The cafes provide a place for anyone having difficulties with their memory or who is concerned about someone close to them who is, to find out more about what services and support are available. It can also be a chance just to have a chat with someone who is going through something similar. The cafes are attended by representatives from other health care professionals who can give support, such as Admiral Nurses.

The cafes are held monthly in both the north and the south sides of the borough.

In the south, the group meets every last Friday of the month at New Horizons Centre, Guinness Trust Estate, Cadogan Street, London SW3 2PF.

In the north the group meets every first Tuesday of the month at St Peters Church, Kensington Park Road, London W11 2PN.

To find out more and arrange transport, if required, contact Kate Moffatt at Age UK Kensington & Chelsea by phoning on 020 8960 8137.

Young at Heart Group
Age UK Kensington & Chelsea’s Young at Heart Group is a monthly social group for younger people with diagnosis of dementia or mild cognitive impairment living in Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster.

Meetings to date included a boat trip to Greenwich, meeting for a drink in a local pub and a tour of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition at the Natural History Museum.

They try to arrange their meetings based on feedback and suggestions from those who attend.

Carers, family and friends are also welcome to come along.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 20 February** and the group will be taking a trip to the cinema to view a current film. The film choice will be decided closer to the date.

**Venue:** Gate Picturehouse, 87 Notting Hill Gate, W11 3JZ (please see enclosed map)

The group will meet outside the cinema at approximately 1pm but they will contact the group members to confirm so if you would like to attend please contact Holly Corlett on 020 8960 8137 or email hcorlett@aukc.org.uk.

Taster session for carers
The Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Foundation Trust’s Recovery College is running a workshop for carers, friends and family who may be supporting someone living with mental health difficulties: “Knowing your way around the system: Dealing with crisis”.

It will take place on Thursday 6 March 2014 from 2pm to 4pm at Latimer House (40-48 Hanson Street, London W1W 6UL).

Anyone can attend the CNWL Recovery College and courses and workshops are free to people using CNWL services and their carers, friends or family.

To book, call 020 3214 5686. CNWL Recovery College’s prospectus, timetable and registration from are available online. For more information, visit www.cnwl.nhs.uk/recoverycollege.
Are you a parent carer of a disabled child or an adult?

Full of Life

Full of Life Centre provides services for young people (13 – 25 years old) with complex needs. The Centre operates 6 days a week and its activities focus on communication, personal development, new experiences and learning new skills. Centre’s offer includes a day service, an afterschool club, Saturday club and half term and holiday activities.

This year Full of Life will be offering plenty of new informative training workshops and parent forums – free for all RBKC parent carers of disabled children/adults to attend. There will also be more of the popular Zumba classes with Paula dos Santos (again FREE to parent carers in Kensington and Chelsea).

Full of Life has also been working to ensure that all parent carers have the opportunity to feedback on the Local Offer – as part of the fast approaching Children and Families Bill. The Local Offer, as dictated by the new Bill, will be a comprehensive list of all available local services for disabled children/young people and their families.

In order to build this list there have been both national and local consultations and these have been a great opportunity for parent carers to share their experiences of these services. One of the main local consultations took place on 24 January; however Full of Life will be hosting two local offer consultation workshops on 25 February and 25 March. These will be independently facilitated by Alan Beresford, a renowned facilitator who has worked with the public and voluntary sector for over 20 years. Representatives from each sector of local services: Education, Health and Social Care will also be present at these workshops. All parent carers are welcome and lunch will be provided.

The dates for the training workshops, parent forums and Zumba classes are as follows, all will take place at Full of Life, Kensal House Annex, 379 Ladbroke Grove, W10 5BQ:

**Parent forums and training** (all meetings take place on Tuesdays):

- **25 February 10am – 1pm:** Alan Beresford, Local Offer Consultation
- **11 March 10am – 1pm:** Samantha Peters, Transition Workshop
- **25 March 10am – 1pm:** Alan Beresford, Local Offer Consultation
- **8 April:** Topic will be confirmed at a later date.

**Zumba classes** – please wear comfortable clothes, trainers and bring water (all classes take place on Tuesdays):

- **4 March** – 11.45am – 12.45pm
- **11 March** – 11.45am – 12.45pm
- **18 March** – 11.45am – 12.45pm
- **1 April** – 11.45am – 12.45pm
- **8 April** – 11.45am – 12.45pm

For more information about Full of Life and services they provide phone on 020 8962 9994 or email info@fulloflifekc.com.

New Disability Sports Coach Community Club K&C

Disability Sports Coach (DSC) is a small charity who provides sporting opportunities to people with disabilities.

It is a Paralympic and multi-sports club for those with a disability aged 11-25 which started on 8 February 2014 and will be running every Saturday from 11am – 1pm. There will be two specialist coaches and a handful of volunteers who will deliver fantastic sports such as Boccia, Goalball, Fencing, Judo, Trampolining and more.

Sion Manning RC Girls School, St Charles Square, London W10 6EL £2 per session
Do you look after someone with mental health problems?

Mental Health Carer’s Assessment
If you look after someone with mental health problems and provide regular support to them you are eligible for carer’s assessment.

- If the person you care for has a care coordinator (such as a social worker or a community psychiatric nurse) then the care co-ordinator should carry out your carer’s assessment. You need to contact them to arrange an appointment.
- If the person you care for only sees a lead professional (psychiatrist, GP or psychologist) then the Advice, Information and Assessment Team will carry out your carer’s assessment. To arrange this or to find out more please call Social Service Line on 020 7361 3013.

Kensington and Chelsea Mental Health Carers Association

Mental Health Carers Support Group
Kensington and Chelsea Mental Health Carers Association (KCMHCA) continues to run the Mental Health Carers Support Group meetings which are held on every third Thursday of each month, usually in the evening between 6pm-8pm. The guest speakers are invited to talk about the topic chosen by the carers. The venue is Committee Room 2, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, W8 7NX.

KCMHCA continues to offer carers break opportunity in their Alta Vista carers respite centre in southern Spain.

Alta Vista offers organised respite which includes travel, accommodation as well as a range of treatments, activities, counselling and residential training courses in carer advocacy and more.

For more information about both Mental Health Carers Support Group as well as respite opportunities including rates and reservations please contact Milton Martin by phoning 020 8960 3873 or emailing Milton.martin35@yahoo.co.uk.

Address:
KCMHCA, Office 9,
Canalside House,
W10 5AA.

Do you look after someone with visual or hearing impairment?

Befriending Services for people with a sight and hearing loss

Deafblind UK are setting up befriending services in Kensington and Chelsea for people with a combined sight and hearing loss. Their aim is to promote better mental health and wellbeing by reducing the feeling of isolation so often felt by deaf-blind people.

Without sight and hearing, which most of us take for granted, people can become lonely, socially isolated and detached from their local community.

The London Outreach Project aims to identify as many people as possible who are deaf-blind or have both sight and hearing loss and invite them to take up free membership of Deafblind UK. This will enable them to access Deafblind UK’s free information and advice line, support for carers and their befriender service as well as a quarterly magazine in accessible formats and tactile birthday and Christmas cards.

The goal of the Befriender Service is to enhance the member’s quality of life by linking them with someone to meet with them regularly for a chat. The Community Services Officer will meet with members in their home initially, to get to know them and find out how they would best like to be supported. They will then identify a volunteer to link with them.

Deafblind UK is currently recruiting volunteers to become Home Befrienders. This is an opportunity to become involved in a rewarding project in the community.

If you would like to volunteer or know anyone with a sight and hearing loss who is interested in finding out more about Deafblind UK and services they offer, please contact Sue Sinton Smith, Community Services Officer (T: 07940 836882; email: sue.sintonsmith@deafblind.org.uk).
Do you look after someone who has had a stroke?

Central London Community Healthcare and their Community Stroke services provide a number of stroke support groups across Kensington and Chelsea.

If you suffered a stroke, or you look after someone who had, and would like to talk with someone who has had a similar experience they might be able to offer you the support you need.

Access to the groups is by referral only – you or the person you look after can self-refer. Other professionals such as GPs and voluntary sector organisation workers can refer as well.

To request an application/referral form and for more information about the services below contact Eleanor Levi, Project Facilitator for Stroke Services at Central London Community Healthcare NHS. T: 020 7349 3240; email:kcrs.admin@nhs.net; address: Worlds End Health Centre, 529 Kings Road, SW10 0UD.

**Stroke Peer Mentoring Scheme in Kensington and Chelsea**

A scheme for people, who had a stroke and would like to talk to someone who has had a similar experience, and find out how they dealt with their life after the stroke.

The scheme provides Mentors, all of whom have had a stroke in the past, to support and share experiences of how they coped.

The scheme’s Mentors will visit patients up to once a week in their home or in an agreed venue.

If you would like to be matched with a mentor please contact Eleanor Levi, Project Facilitator for Stroke Services.

Tel: 020 7349 3239; email: kcrs.admin@nhs.net.

**Dysphasia Support Group in Kensington and Chelsea**

This is a weekly communication group which is held every Wednesday morning at the Community Training Room, Notting Hill Methodist Church, 240 Lancaster Road W11 4AH.

It is for people who have had a stroke that have communication difficulties. The group meets together to discuss communication strategies, and it is also a chance for people who may be isolated to socialise with those who are willing to share their own experiences.

There is always a Speech and Language Therapist present during the meeting.

You will need to fill in a referral form before you can attend. To find out more contact Eleanor Levi, Project Facilitator for Stroke Services.

T: 020 7349 3239/3227; email:kcrs.admin@nhs.net.

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**Health corner**

**Eye tests for adults with learning disabilities**

Did you know that people with learning disabilities are 10 times more likely to have serious sight problems than other people? And that 6 in 10 people with learning disabilities need glasses to correct their vision? Many people are missing out on important eye care checks and putting their eyesight at risk. The best way to look after our eyes is for to have an eye test at least every 2 years.

There is a new eye testing service for adults with learning disabilities in Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham. This is a pilot scheme so will be in operation for the next few months. This service offers longer appointments with opticians who have received recent training in working well with people with learning disabilities. The opticians will welcome people who have never had an eye test before or those people who have had difficulties with previous eye tests.

This service is a partnership between the charity SeeAbility, opticians and local learning disability services.

To find out which opticians are taking part in this scheme please contact Stephen Kill at SeeAbility on 07738 040307. For more information about eye care for people with learning disabilities, visit www.seeability.org/myeyecare.
Leisure and wellbeing services update

Community services working towards better health and wellbeing.

A number of voluntary and community sector services are currently working in Kensington and Chelsea to improve access to health and wellbeing support. They work to facilitate engagement, provide signposting and in some cases offer hands on support to people who may otherwise struggle to find the help they need.

If you feel that your health and wellbeing needs improving contact one of the service providers below to find out how they can help you reach your goals towards leading healthier and happier life:

Health Trainers is a service run by Westway Development Trust. Health Trainers can offer support with healthy eating, physical activity, quitting smoking, and mental or emotional well-being. Health Trainers can offer up to six, free one-to-one sessions to help you achieve your healthy lifestyle goals. The service is delivered in flexible community settings but not in people’s homes. For more information phone 020 8962 5730 or email healthtrainers@westway.org

Dalgarno Community Champions – service run by Dalgarno Neighbourhood Trust which provides signposting service, promotes local services and aims to help local residents by communicating health and wellbeing messages.

Healthworks – the Healthworks project is a unique health partnership led by the Dalgarno Trust with fourteen partners including 11 BME organisations. The team of community development workers engages with communities in Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster and surrounding boroughs and together, they provide a range of activities such as: fitness Classes (Zumba, African Dance, and general fitness); diet and nutrition (cook and taste sessions, weight management programmes, food projects); emotional well-being services (Happy Health Family Club); health workshops and open days; volunteer and training opportunities (Health Champion Volunteers); one-to-one support (employment opportunities, benefits advice, counselling and support). For more information about Dalgarno Trust services phone 020 8969 6300 or visit their website at www.dalgarnotrust.org.uk.

Primary Care Navigators and Wayfinders – both services are being provided by Age UK Kensington and Chelsea and they act as a bridge between GPs, community health and social care services with aim of preventing unplanned hospital admissions or re-admissions. Support on offer ranges from signposting to longer case work. The service is provided in patients’ homes, community settings or at GP surgeries. For more information phone 020 8969 9105 or email wayfinder@ackc.org.uk

Navigators and Wellbeing Coaches at Earl’s Court Centre for Health and Wellbeing – both services are delivered by Turning Point.

Navigators would be the first people you meet when you arrive at the Health and Wellbeing centre. They will listen to you and support you with help to access the right health or social care services – even if it’s not something provided at the Health and Wellbeing centre. They can discuss your health options and help you find out the information and practical support you need.

Wellbeing coaches support and guide you to help you make the necessary changes to improve your health and wellbeing. They aim to motivate you to identify your goals and build a wellbeing plan that will help you manage your concerns.

For more information phone 020 7341 0300 or visit their website at www.echwc.nhs.uk/Turning_Point.

Before Breaking Point

Vitalise and Simply Health have come together to offer funded breaks in January and February 2014.

Before Breaking Point (BBP) is an initiative that aims to provide funded breaks* to individuals and carers who have been unable to access a break for 12 months or more. BBP addresses the issues around affordability and transport.

Vitalise breaks offer 24 hour nursing care alongside life-enhancing experiences. Guests can enjoy freedom, choice, independence and restore hope that is lacking in their day-to-day lives. Vitalise believes that everyone, regardless of disability or financial capability needs a break. Living with a disability or caring for someone who does means facing enormous challenges on a daily basis. Without regular breaks many families are in danger of reaching breaking point.

To celebrate 50 years of providing essential breaks for people with disabilities, Vitalise is offering its services to those that need it the most. For more information or if you would like to book a break, please contact Vitalise’s bookings team on 0303 303 0145 or email mailtomailtobookings@vitalise.org.uk and quote BPE.

* Subject to availability some breaks are either partially or fully funded.
**Respite grants**

There are several charitable organisations and trusts that can help carers with funding their much needed respite break. If you haven’t had a break for a long time, cannot afford one and feel like being at a breaking point, the below organisations might be able to help you. If you would like help with applying for the respite grants contact Carers Kensington & Chelsea by phoning 0800 032 1089 or emailing us on kandc@carersuk.org.

**The Margaret Champney Rest and Holiday Fund**

provides grants to support respite holidays for carers. The primary aim is to give a complete break to a carer while the person cared for is receiving respite care. In exceptional circumstances they may assist where the carer and cared for wish to holiday together, provided they are husband and wife or partners, or an adult child caring for an aged parent or vice versa.

Typical grants range from £200 to £300.

Applications must be supported by a professional such as social worker, community nurse, key worker or an advisor and payment is made directly to that organisation.

Contact details: Ogilvie Charities, The Gate House, 9 Burkitt Road, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 4JJ; phone: 01394 388746; email: info@ogilviecharities.org.uk; web: www.ogilviecharities.org.uk.

**Saga Respite for Carers Trust**

provides free holidays for carers. To qualify you must be over 50, have been caring for someone for more than a year, not taken a significant holiday away from your caring responsibilities for more than a year, and not be a professional care worker. You need to nominate yourself or someone can nominate you.

The period for submitting nominations for 2014 is now open. Over the coming months nominations will be reviewed by the trustees and those successfully shortlisted will be contacted.

You can submit your nomination online by visiting www.saga.co.uk/saga-charitable-foundation/saga-respite-for-carers-trust/carer-trust-respite-nomination-form.

Nomination forms can also be obtained by post from January 1, 2014. Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The Trust Manager, Saga Respite for Carers Trust, The Saga Building, Enbrook Park, Folkestone, Kent CT20 3SE.

For more information phone Saga Trust on 01303 771 111 or visit their website at www.saga.co.uk/saga-charitable-foundation/saga-respite-for-carers-trust.

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**Carers UK News**

**State of Caring 2014 – register your interest**

Carers UK’s next State of Caring conference 2014 will be taking place on **Wednesday 7 May 2014** in London.

The event will focus on the huge changes that are underway for health and social care, and which will affect carers and the services that support them. With the Care Bill due to be implemented in April 2015, this event will help to prepare local and national organisations for changes to commissioning, service delivery, practice and the new rights that carers will have. The conference will also look at good practice around integration, NHS commitments to carers and changes within the health system.

Booking is now open – visit www.carersuk.org/professionals/state-of-caring-conference to find out more and book your place.

**Join Carers UK**

Carers UK is passionate about making life better for carers. With the help of their members they have fought for and won benefits and other legal rights for carers.

They need you to join them to strengthen their voice for carers. It’s a great way of showing your support for this important cause and in return you’ll be kept up to date on everything relating to caring, plus have the support of being part of a growing movement of carers.

You can join up online in just a few easy clicks by visiting www.carersuk.org/join

The Standard membership is **free** and you will receive:

- Instant access to our online support forum.
- Monthly email updates with all the latest news for carers
- Voting rights at our AGM

The Membership PLUS Costs a minimum fee of £12 a year and you will get all the benefits of free membership, plus Carers UK’s lively and informative members’ magazine, *Caring* delivered to your door.