

NEWS

CARERS

All the latest Carers information from around Rhondda Cynon Taf



find us on facebook.

Issue 54 • Summer 2015



Carers Week

8-14 June

All events are free of charge.

Young Carers Count

Friday 5th June • 6-10pm
Cynon Valley Indoor Bowls Club,
Mountain Ash CF45 4DA

This special event is being held in order to recognise and celebrate the role of Young Carers/Young Adult Carers and the help and support they provide their families. The event will also acknowledge achievements the young people have gained in the past year and showcase young carers talents.

DLA to PIP

Wednesday 10th June • 10-1pm
Heddfan, Ilan Avenue, Rhydyfelin,
Pontypridd CF37 5PN

An event specifically aimed at Parent Carers whose children are soon to be transitioning from Children to Adults or those wishing to find out more about the process. The workshop aims to provide information regarding welfare benefits changes and potential implications during the transition process.

BBC Good Food Show

Thursday 11th June • 8am – 7pm
NEC, Birmingham

A fabulous foodie day out. Packed with top speciality producers, free tasty samples, live cookery demonstrations on stage from top chefs including James Martin and Tom Kerridge, plus hundreds of exhibitors featuring some of the best produce in Britain. You will also have entry to the Supertheatre. Coach transport provided from Heddfan, Rhydyfelin to the NEC. This event is open to the Carer only.

Carers Vintage Carnival

Saturday 13th June • 11-3pm
Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre,
East Street, Tylorstown CF43 3HR

Guaranteed fun for all the family. Relive the old fashioned fete games by having a go at Splat the rat, Aunt Sally, Bullseye, Hook a Duck, the giant buzzer and much more. Get your face painted and learn the secrets of magic from a real life Magician. There will also be a bouncy castle and slide, candy floss and the incredible, must be seen, ice cream bar. No need to book just turn up!

All events are free of charge to Carers living in Rhondda Cynon Taf. To reserve a place please complete and return the booking form at the back of this newsletter.

care to
COOK?



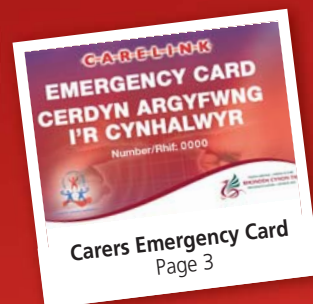
We would like to thank all the Carers who contributed to our Carers recipe book 'Care to Cook'. One of the recipes from 'Care to Cook' can be found on page 2.

Please call 01443 668813 to request a copy.

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STRONG HERITAGE | STRONG FUTURE
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
TRETADAETH GADARN | DYFODOL SICR

ARE WE GETTING IT RIGHT?

Carers Training Survey

Being a Carer can be a full time job often with little or no financial reward or training for the important job that you do. We at the Carers Support Project are seeking your views on what training you find beneficial and to look at how we can provide other training opportunities to support you in fulfilling your vital role.

Our aim is to see what works and what doesn't and how we can learn from this and work together in the future to offer a wider choice of activities and training for Carers.

The word training can be interpreted in many ways but we want to know what works for you whatever it is called. We are trying to find out what you find useful and if it is something that we do not currently provide it will be helpful to know about it- so if you're not sure whether you should include something- include it anyway.

We would be grateful if you could complete the enclosed survey and return in the freepost envelope provided along with your booking form.

Surveys will need to be returned to us by June 20th 2015.

Any questions just call Claire on tel: 01443 668813 or email Claire.L.Meredith@rctcbc.gov.uk

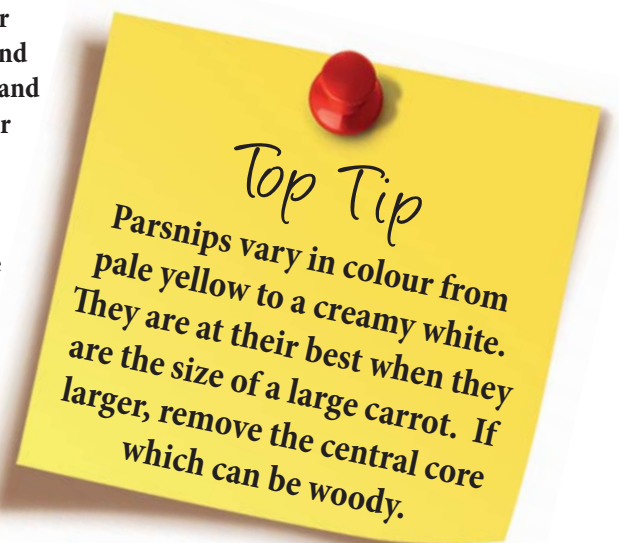
Curried Parsnip Soup

Ingredients:

1lb parsnips peeled and chopped
1¾ pint vegetable stock
2 tsp curry powder (or how ever much you like for your taste buds)
1 tsp oil
1 onion, peeled and chopped
1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed
1 cinnamon stick (or powder)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2-3 tbsp low fat yoghurt (to serve)

Method:

- 1) Heat the oil in a saucepan. Cook the onion until softened and starting to turn golden.
- 2) Add the curry powder and garlic to the pan. Continue to cook for a further minute.
- 3) Add the parsnips and stir well. Pour in the stock and bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until the parsnips are cooked.
- 4) Allow the soup to cool. Once cooled, remove the cinnamon stick (if used) and discard.
- 5) Blend the soup in a food processor until very smooth.
- 6) Transfer to a saucepan and reheat gently. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with fresh coriander and serve immediately with the yoghurt.



This service is for Carers who look after family, partners and friends in need of help because they are ill frail or have a disability.

Do you worry about what would happen to the person you look after if you were suddenly taken ill or had an accident?

If the answer is YES then the Rhondda Cynon Taf Carers Emergency Card Support Service may help to ease your concern.

What is the Carers Emergency Card?

It is a credit card size card that you can carry with you at all times. It is used as an instant source of identification in case of accident or sudden illness.

The Council's Carelink Service will hold your registration number and details where help can be co-ordinated to assist you both, while you are receiving attention. By making a brief phone call, help can be summoned for the person you look after. Carelink is staffed 24 hours a day 365 days of the year.

What is Carelink?

Carelink is a vital lifeline for people who are elderly, frail, disabled, who need reassurance, or are convalescing at home. Carelink offers a lifeline to people, allowing them to maintain their independence living at home. It means peace of mind, knowing that someone is at hand if anything should happen.

Why was the Emergency Card Support Service developed?

It was requested by local carers who were concerned about what would happen if they were out alone and had an accident or suddenly became ill. They wanted a service that would give them peace of mind and access to 24-hour, seven days a week assistance. They also wanted a service that ensured maximum security for the people they were looking after.

How does the service operate?

You register with the service by completing an enrolment form and sending it to the Carers Support Project. This form holds information about you, the person you look after and the action that needs to be taken in the event of an emergency. Carelink who are partners in the service, hold this information. You are then issued with the emergency card.

Is it a safe system?

The system is confidential. No personal details are held on the card, so that all identities are protected. The only means of identification is the number on the card. In an emergency Carelink responds by carrying out the instructions on the enrolment form.

Does the service work?

Yes, similar schemes are in operation elsewhere in Wales and carers like and use them. It is a simple and easy to use service and has proved successful in ensuring that help is quickly available when needed.

What are the benefits to Carers?

Carers are offered 24 hours a day emergency cover if they have an accident or sudden illness. Carers feel less anxious and more free to go out and have peace of mind if something happens to stop them getting home.

How do I join the service?

You can join the service by completing an enrolment form, which can be obtained from:

Email: carerssupportproject@rctcbc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01443 668813

What next?

Return your completed form to the Carers Support Project. On receipt of your form, the Carers Support Project will issue you with a card. Your form will then be sent to Carelink. You are then registered with the service.

How do I use the card?

Always carry the card with you. It is important that this identification is found quickly. It needs to be one of the first things that anyone who comes to your assistance sees or finds. If possible clip it to your coat, wallet or handbag.



Twelve Carers' Champions from GP practices in Cwm Taf have been awarded the Agored Cymru Award for gaining the skills and expertise they need to be able to confidently help and support carers in the community.

In June 2013, the Carers Measure Information and Consultation Strategy was introduced by Welsh Government. This strategy informed the public of the support carers can expect from the NHS and Local Authorities. As part of this implementation, it was decided that carers' champions would be appointed in all GP practices throughout Cwm Taf.

Cwm Taf University Health Board together with Rhondda Cynon Taff and Merthyr Tydfil Councils have successfully implemented the role of carers' champions into most GP surgeries throughout Cwm Taf. Along with this, 8 surgeries have been successful in obtaining the Agored Cymru GP Award.

Irene Burton from Aberdare is a carer for her 29-year old daughter Sarah. Sarah was diagnosed with autism at the age of six. Irene says: "GP surgeries are the frontline for many carers, I have experienced lots of problems over the years with medical appointments but since the implementation of the carers' measure and the appointment of a carers champion at our

surgery it has made life so much easier and less stressful.

"We now have a fast-track facility at our surgery and are seen in a far more 'autistic friendly' environment. We can wait in a room which has low lighting and is quiet and away from the crowds at reception, which is much more comfortable for Sarah. My recent experience at the surgery with Sarah was completely different to previous appointments. The doctor went out of her way to ensure the visit was as stress-free as possible, it made such a difference."

For more information regarding Carers Champions in GP surgeries please contact David Watkins on **01443 744800** or email **david.watkins@wales.nhs.uk**



Carers Wales Local Ambassador Volunteers



As a carer, you'll know how caring can cut some people off from the outside world. It's hard to meet other people who know what you're going through and it's hard to find out what help is out there in your local area.

That's why Carers Wales are creating a network of Carers Wales Local Ambassadors who use their knowledge and expertise to help other carers. We want a team of skilled volunteers who understand what caring is like in order to reach out to carers, raise awareness of carers' issues and improve local services.

They are recruiting volunteers as Carers Wales Local

Ambassadors who will represent Carers Wales in their local carer communities, recruiting and welcoming new members, raising awareness of the services and support available to carers and the issues affecting carers.

Want to know more?

If you would like to know more or would like to apply to be an Ambassador for your local area, visit our website <http://www.carersuk.org/how-you-can-help>

Or contact Julie Skelton

Julie.skelton@carerswales.org

029 2081 1370

Are you a Parent Carer?

The Parent Carer Network is able to:

Support parents/ guardians caring for children or young people who have a disability or additional needs aged between 0-25

We can help with:

- **Information Sharing**
- **Training / Workshops (group and 1-2-1)**
- **Guidance and Signposting**
- **Family events and fun days**

There is no eligibility criteria or charge for this service



For more information contact:

Parent Carer Support Worker

Tel: **01443 668845**

RCTParentandCarerNetwork@rctcbc.gov.uk

www.rctcbc.gov.uk/ParentandCarerSupportNetwork

Easter Eggstravaganza

The Parent Carer Network, which forms part of the RCT Carers Support Project, organised an 'Easter Eggstravaganza' on March 15th and 22nd at Daerwynno Pursuit Centre. The Parent Carer Network supports families in RCT who are looking after a child with a disability or additional need.

There were more than 30 families that expressed an interest in attending this fun activity day which catered for parents and children.

There were so many activities on offer including Rock Climbing, Craft making, Easter Egg hunts, Orienteering and team building. All families that attended had a wonderful day and really appreciated having the

opportunity to meet with other families that are in a similar situation to themselves. The Easter Bunny even paid an unexpected visit and left a little surprise for all children who attended.

Parents commented that it was a nice treat for children to be able to relax and play in a safe environment where parents could chat to other families in a friendly, accepting environment.

RCT Carers Support Project would like to thank the staff at Daerwynno for all their hard work. The days were really appreciated by all who attended.



Rhondda Cynon Taf
Parent & Carers Network
Rhwydwaith Rhieni a Chynhalwyr

YOUNGSIBS

For brothers and sisters of disabled children.

YoungSibs is an online support service for brothers and sisters of disabled children and young people.

It is for siblings who live in the UK and who are under 18 years of age.

For more information visit:
www.youngsibs.org.uk



BEST WISHES TO CARLY LEWIS

The young carers service would like to wish Carly all the best as she leaves us for a while to start her maternity leave. She will be missed but we hope she enjoys her time off with her family.

'TAKING CARE OF ME' RESIDENTIAL EVENT

During the school holidays, the Young Carer's Service organised a 2-night residential for 30 young carers and young adult carers thanks to funding from RCT Social Care Workforce Development Partnership via the Welsh Government training grant. Young carers spend a lot of time thinking and worrying about the person they care for and often overlook their own needs so we focussed the content of the residential on training needs that young carers had previously highlighted, and included some sessions relating to young people's personal development. While fun and relaxation was top of the agenda, the residential trip also added in healthy eating, cooking healthy meals on a budget, confidence-building, skills development

and health and wellbeing themes, to equip and support the young carers as they continue their caring roles. The young people also had the chance to try new ways of keeping themselves fit such as Zumba & caving.



FAMILY FUN TIME



The Young carers service has been working with Crossroads Care Cwm Taf to provide some respite time for young carers and their families. Thanks to funding from Carers Trust, we were able to arrange 2 day trips to London during the Easter holidays where the young people had a chance to explore Madame Tussauds and got to know some young carers from Merthyr. We have also been able to fund family activities for 7 young carer's families such as going to see a show or film and a family day out at West Midlands Safari Park. We hope to continue this collaborative working with Crossroads Care Cwm Taf to benefit more young carers in the future.

YOUNG ADULT CARERS NEWS



COMEDY CLUB

The Young Adult Carers group recently enjoyed an evening at The Glee Comedy Club, Cardiff.

Carers UK Royal Mail Christmas Treat Fund allowed the group, which consists of young people between the ages of 18 to 25, to enjoy a well earned night of fun in recognition of the commitment they show by caring for a family member who is suffering from ill health or disability. Young Adult carers in RCT often juggle school, college or university with what often equates to a full time job caring for a family

member. As a result these young people often find themselves socially isolated so an evening at the Glee Club was not only desperately needed but also very much appreciated by the young adult carers.

Many thanks to Carers UK for generously donating money to fund this trip. The young people really enjoyed the experience. The evening allowed young people time to relax, chat to others in a similar situation to themselves and have fun!

SAVE ENERGY SAVE MONEY

heat & save

HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS

Are you struggling to pay your energy bills?
Need free advice on how to reduce your energy bills?
Don't know where to turn?

Why not contact:
Tel: 01443 475725 or email
heatandsave@rctcbc.gov.uk
and find out the latest energy saving tips.

CARER'S ALLOWANCE

The Carer's Allowance Digital Service has been live since October 2013. It is a simpler, clearer and faster way to make a claim or report a change of circumstances. Over 150,000 Carers have now used the Service with excellent feedback. The digital service is:

- Available 24 hours a day 7 days per week
- Arrives immediately at the Carers Unit once submitted
- Can be used on a mobile phone or tablet
- Has significantly less questions than the paper claim
- Does not require a signature or a password
- Has mandatory questions to ensure carers provide the information needed to help pay claims quickly
- Has helpline numbers and help text if carers need to clarify questions
- Does not need to be printed or saved
- Is available in Welsh

The Carers Assessment Unit will start processing the claim and will write to the Disabled Person to let them know a claim by someone caring for them has been made. The average time to complete the claim is around 26 minutes, you will not be timed out for 60 minutes so once you have started to complete you can take a break and then return to complete. By including eligibility checks and mandatory question, Carers are able to supply the right information first time making a simpler, clearer and faster service.

The Carer's allowance Digital Service can be accessed at: www.gov.uk/apply-carers-allowance

The Money Advice Service Debt Advice locator aims to give people access to free and impartial debt advice so that jobcentre advisers and other organisations can now tell their clients about the service. For more information visit <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en>

HAFAL CARERS TRANSPORT SERVICE



hafal's carers' transport service is provided on alternate days for carers of individuals with a mental illness who are inpatients at

Royal Glamorgan Hospital, Llantrisant (RGH) and Ysbyty George Thomas Hospital, Treorchy (YGT). The service is open to carers of those receiving a service from adult mental health and older people's mental health wards. The service is provided by appointment: **Monday to Friday: 5pm to 10pm**
Saturday and Sunday: 1pm to 6pm.

The service alternates on a two-weekly rota:

Week One

Monday: YGT
Tuesday: RGH
Wednesday: YGT
Thursday: RGH
Friday: YGT
Saturday: RGH
Sunday: YGT

Week Two

Monday: RGH
Tuesday: YGT
Wednesday: RGH
Thursday: YGT
Friday: RGH
Saturday: YGT
Sunday: RGH

To book a transport appointment please contact Brian Robertson, Practice Leader at hafal's Merthyr Project on 01685 373322.



PENSION FLEXIBILITY 2015

Who is likely to be affected?

- Individuals who have reached the normal minimum pension age, (normally age 55), who have money purchase pension savings in a registered pension scheme or non-UK pension scheme;
- Individuals with drawdown pensions;
- Beneficiaries of people who have died with pension savings in a registered pension scheme or non-UK pension scheme;
- Scheme administrators of registered pension schemes; and
- Scheme managers of non-UK pension schemes.

General description of the measure

A number of changes are being made to pension tax rules to reflect the greater flexibility individuals will have to access their pension savings from age 55. The changes will:

- allow all of the funds in a money purchase arrangement to be taken as an authorised taxed lump sum, removing the higher unauthorised payment tax charges;
- increase the flexibility of the income drawdown rules by removing the maximum 'cap' on withdrawal and minimum income requirements for all new drawdown funds from 6 April 2015;
- enable those with 'capped' drawdown to convert to a new flexible drawdown fund once arranged with their scheme should they wish;
- enable pension schemes to make payments directly from pension savings with 25 percent taken tax-free (instead of a tax-free lump sum);
- introduce a limited right for scheme trustees and managers to override their scheme's rules to pay flexible pensions and lump sums from money purchase pension savings;
- remove some restrictions on lifetime annuity payments;

- ensure that individuals do not exploit the new system to gain unintended tax advantages by introducing a reduced annual allowance for money purchase savings where the individual has flexibly accessed their savings;
- increase the maximum value and scope of trivial commutation lump sum death benefits;
- provide new information requirements to ensure that individuals who have flexibly accessed their pension savings are aware of the tax consequences of doing so;
- restrict and reduce certain tax charges that apply to death benefits;
- enable persons other than dependants to inherit unused drawdown funds and provide that where the death occurred before age 75, lump sum death benefits and drawdown pension from these funds can be paid tax free, subject to the member having sufficient available lifetime allowance;
- allow annuities paid to a beneficiary on the death of the member before age 75 to be paid tax free; and,
- make changes to the rules for individuals who have received UK tax relief in respect of pension savings in non-UK pension schemes, so that the flexibilities and restrictions to relief will apply equally to them.

Further advice

If you have any questions about this change, please contact Samantha Skill on 03000 564149 or Neeta Ruparelia on 03000 564289 (email: pensions.policy@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk) or visit www.gov.uk



CHANGES TO YOUR LIFELINE

From May 1st, the Tier 1 Lifeline charge will increase to £2.50 per week, whilst the Tier 2 Home safety kit (consisting of Lifeline, 2 smoke detectors, 2 flood detectors, 1 CO detector, heat detector and bogus caller button) will increase to £ 4.90 per week. RCT Lifeline Service continues to be excellent value for money, with no installation or ongoing maintenance charges and it is literally a Lifeline for many vulnerable residents living in the community. The costs help to pay towards the 24/7 monitoring of the equipment

offering instant support when help is needed. For more information on the Lifeline or Telecare Services please visit

www.rctcbc.gov.uk/telecare which has downloadable fact sheets about each piece of equipment or alternatively contact the Safe at Home Team (01443) 239104.



THE DISABLED PARKING SCHEME



The Disabled Parking Scheme (Blue Badge) operates throughout the UK. It is designed to help people with walking difficulties, cognitive impairment or other mobility problems to travel independently, as a driver or as a passenger.

The Blue Badge scheme allows people who meet the eligibility criteria to park, when displaying their blue badge, where restrictions for other motorists may otherwise apply. The Scheme plays an important role in helping people with mobility problems to overcome some of the barriers they face when accessing jobs, shops and other important services.

In Wales, there is NO CHARGE for individual applications, although a charge of £10 can be made for organisational and replacement badges.

Eligibility criteria

Applicants will 'automatically' qualify for a Disabled Parking Badge by meeting any of the criteria listed below:

- Applicants who are blind (severely sight impaired) and can produce a signed Certificate of Vision Impairment
- Applicants who can evidence that they are in receipt of the Higher Rate of the Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance
- Applicants who can evidence that they are in receipt of the War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement
- Applicants who can evidence that they are in receipt of a qualifying award under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation) Scheme
- Applicants who are considered to have a permanent mental disorder and have been awarded tariff level 6 within the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme

- Applicants who can evidence that they are in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) that includes Mobility Activity 1 (descriptor f) or Mobility Activity 2 (descriptors c, d e or f)

If an applicant does not meet any of the 'automatic' qualifying criteria, they can still apply for a Disabled Parking Badge if any of the following can be evidenced:

- Permanent and substantial walking difficulties
- Severe disability in both upper limbs, regularly drive a car and have difficulty using parking meters, or similar equipment
- They are applying on behalf of a child under the age of 3 years old who is accompanied by bulky medical equipment at all times, or requires immediate access to a motor vehicle in the event of emergency treatment being required
- A cognitive impairment that affects a person's ability to plan and follow a journey, to such an extent that constant supervision is required

Organisations who transport service users, who would qualify for a Disabled Parking Badge in their own right, may also be eligible to qualify. To apply for an Organisational Blue Badge please download the relevant application form.

How Do I Apply?

If you would like an application pack sent out or if you think you or someone you care for needs help, contact our:

First Response Team

Telephone: 01443 425003

Email: FirstResponseTeam@rctcbc.gov.uk

Time out for carers!

Anyone could become a carer at any time of life. Crossroads Care Cwm Taf offers a wide range of services and support for carers of all ages in the Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil area. Crossroads Care Cwm Taf look after the cared for in the comfort of their own home, providing quality free time for carers to relax and recharge their batteries. Crossroads Care Cwm Taf is a charity and a network partner of Carers Trust. The highly motivated, qualified team of care support workers are available 24/7, offering a helping hand when it's needed most. For complete peace of mind all employees are also fully insured and police checked.

Crossroads supports parent carers of children with learning or physical difficulties, young adult carers, carers who look after family or friends who are elderly frail, have dementia, physical disabilities or are terminally ill. They also organise young carers clubs and Alzheimer support groups in and around RCT and Merthyr.

Most services are free but chargeable services are available where funding is not available or additional hours are required. If you would like to speak with a member of their dedicated care team to discuss how Crossroads Care Cwm Taf may be able to help you and your family please ring 01443 480484.

Email: info@crossroadscwmtaf.org.uk.



**GOFAL
CROES
FFYRDD**
Cwm Taf

**CROSS
ROADS
CARE**
Cwm Taf

Action on Stroke

cymdeithas
Strôc | Stroke
association

There are too many powerful myths about stroke, like it only happens to older people or that people can't recover. These myths stop people from taking action to prevent stroke and from supporting stroke survivors.

At The Stroke Association they believe in life after stroke and that together we can conquer stroke. They work directly with stroke survivors and their families and carers, with health and social care professionals and with scientists and researchers.

May is Action on Stroke Month, when they encourage communities to come together to spread an important message about stroke, while having fun.

They would like you to join their unique community that's changing the world for people affected by stroke. Whether it's holding a bake sale, dyeing your hair purple, getting your trainers on and stepping out in a Step out for Stroke event, handing out stroke information in your

local GP surgery, doing a sponsored fun-run or wearing a purple hat for the whole of May; there's a way for everyone to get stuck into Action on Stroke Month.

It's thanks to people like you, their supporters, that they can take action on stroke.

For more information about how you can **Make May Purple** visit www.stroke.org.uk/StrokeMonth



PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS



Wales Cymru

Pathways to success is an interactive guide that will take you on a learning journey through a range of free online resources from The Open University's award winning OpenLearn website. It will help you:

- tailor some informal study to your own interests and goals
- gain an insight into higher education study
- prepare for accredited learning



Why choose Pathways to success?

There are many reasons for enrolling on a higher education course. Perhaps you feel you haven't fulfilled your educational potential; maybe you need to develop your skills to improve your career prospects; or you might just want to learn more about a subject of interest.

However if you're not sure whether you're ready for accredited study or you can't decide what subject to take, or if you're uncertain about the cost, this guide can help you think things through and prepare for formal study – for free. All you need is access to the internet.

To get started, visit www.open.ac.uk/wales/pathways

Age Connects Morgannwg

Nail Cutting Service

Surgeries held at;

Aberdare: St Mairs Day Centre

Coychurch: Williams Memorial Hall

Gilfach Goch: Gilfach Goch Day Centre

Merthyr Tydfil: Keir Hardie Health Park

Pontypridd: Age Connects Morgannwg Office (directly opposite Ashgrove surgery)

Porth: Alec Jones ay Centre

£13 for finger nails *or* Toenails;

£17 for Fingernails *and* Toenails

Home visits are also available:

£14 for finger nails *or* Toenails;

£20 for Fingernails *and* Toenails per home visit

plus mileage from the nearest venue.

For further details please contact 01443 490650



age connects
morgannwg.

Western Power Priority Service Register

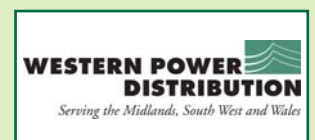
Sometimes power cuts can happen for reasons beyond the control of Western Power.

This can sometimes be particularly worrying if you rely on electricity for medical equipment, or if you are elderly, very ill or disabled.

If you join Western Powers Free Priority Service Register they can:

- Give you a direct number to call in the event of a power cut so you can get straight through to them

- Agree a password with you before they visit, so you feel safe
- Provide special help, if needed, working with the RVS or British Red Cross
- Ring and tell you about planned interruptions to your electricity supply
- Keep you as informed as possible in the event of an unplanned power cut



To join call 0800 032 0311, or register at www.westernpower.co.uk

RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICE



The British Red Cross offers short-term practical and emotional support at home to help people regain their independence.

If you would like a volunteering

opportunity that involves helping individuals remain independent and in their own homes please contact the Cwm Taf Locality Manager on

**02920 815694 or email
Samclark@redcross.org.uk**

Volunteering with Welcome Friends

Find out about volunteering with Welcome Friends.

Some elderly people never have any visitors or lack the confidence to joining an activity like a tea club or a craft group on their own.

Could you visit a lonely person in their own home for just one hour a week?

Could you help at an informal social activity group?

To get more information about volunteering with Welcome Friends please call Diane Matheson on 07788 310445, or email dmatheson@csv.org.uk

Training and travelling expenses are available.

Recovery College June 2015

Taff Ely Merthyr & the Valleys Mind YMCA Taff Street Pontypridd	Rhondda New Horizons, Apple Tree Stores, Dinas	Cynon New Horizons, 16 Dean Street Aberdare	Merthyr Tydfil Merthyr & the Valleys Mind Keir Hardie Health Park
Depression Workshop Wednesday 17th June 10.30-12.30	Decision Making 2 week course Tuesdays 12.30 – 3pm 16th & 30th June	Recognising and dealing with stress 5 week course Mondays 9.30am – 12pm 1st June – 29th June	Coping with Depression 2 hr. Workshop Thursday 10.00-12.00 4th June
Anger Workshop Wednesday 24th June 10.30-12.30	Youth Mental Health First Aid 8 week course Thursdays 4:30-6pm 18 June-13 August	Self-Advocacy 6 week course Wednesdays 9.30am – 12pm 3rd June – 8th of July	Coping with Anger 2 hr. Workshop Thursdays 10.00-12.00 11th June
		Youth Mental Health First Aid 8 week course Mondays 4:30-6pm 22 June-17 August	Coping with Stress 2 hr. Workshop Thursday 10.00-12.00 18th June

Get Online



Getonline@home is a Microsoft-backed digital inclusion initiative to provide low cost access to internet-ready, refurbished personal computers from £99 (subject to eligibility). This local promotion, brings together Microsoft's local PC refurbishment partner

(Computer Recyclers in Penygraig) and RCT's Credit Union (Dragonsavers) to also assist in spreading the finance costs of any purchases for its members.

To find out more visit:

<http://getrctonline.org.uk/get-online-at-home/>

DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

A new dementia support group started based at Llantrisant Church Hall, Swan Street.

To find out more please contact Viv Parkinson the vicar on

01443 223356 or

email: vivparkinson@parishofllantrisant.org.uk

Alzheimer's
Society

Leading the
fight against
dementia

Message in a Bottle

Aberdare Rotary Club funds the Message in a Bottle scheme, which ensures a person's vital medical information is stored in one place - usually the fridge - and can be accessed by paramedics, police and social services in the event of an emergency.

Message in a Bottle is a small plastic container with a green cross and emergency written across the front. It contains a form for people to write all their information which can include medical and personal information as well as next of kin and any other information they believe should be shared should they be unable to communicate in the event of an emergency at home.

The container is widely recognised with all emergency services including ambulance, police, fire, social services.

For further information please call 01685 873504 or email: alan.williams@kudos-technology.com



How to Comment & Complain about our services

If you are unhappy with your social care services, you have a right to complain.

We aim for high standards but sometimes things do go wrong. Unless you tell us we will not know that you are unhappy. If you contact us, we will be able to work with you to put things right as soon as possible.

We can only look at complaints that are raised within 12 months of the matter of concern coming to your attention unless there are exceptional circumstances. Depending on the nature of your concern your complaint may be dealt with under another process, for example, where someone may be at risk. Any decision to investigate your concern under an alternative process will be discussed with you.

We cannot look at your complaint where an investigation may jeopardise a police investigation or

an investigation being undertaken by the Care Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW). Also, we won't look at a complaint where you indicate that you are taking legal action or where there are legal proceedings.

A factsheet is available and explains how, with your help and that of the staff working with you, we can sort out your complaint.

To contact our complaints officer(s):

The Representation and Complaints Unit
Ty Elai, Dinas Isaf East,
Williamstown, Tonypany

Telephone **(01443) 425457** for complaints about adult services

Telephone **(01443) 425450** for complaints about children's services

Email: welisten.complaints@rctcbc.gov.uk

CARERS

DISCOUNTED ACCESS TO LEISURE SERVICES



Carers of all ages and interests can now have access to a world of leisure, social and relaxation opportunities at A REDUCED PRICE - from Aqua aerobics to Zumba and everything in between!

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council is offering all RCT Carers discounts off it's direct debits and it's pay-as-you-use prices. Pay as you go access to classes and swimming pools are discounted too for all Carers. Whats more it's really easy to join!

For more information
call Claire on
01443 668813



STRONG HERITAGE | STRONG FUTURE
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
TREFADAETH GADARN | DYFODOL SICR

CARERS MENTAL HEALTH FORUM



The Forum meets
quarterly at the YMCA
in Pontypridd

Do you care for someone with a
mental illness?

Do you have any queries or problems
regarding your caring role?

If so, join us, meet other carers, have
a chat over a cup of tea or coffee
and have a say in changes that may
affect you and the person you are
caring for.

The Forum is an informal group,
there's no need to book just come
along, get involved and influence
future developments.

Call the Freephone
Carersline on

0808 100 1801 or call

Claire on 01443 668813 or

Nanette on 01443 486856

for more information.



Dates for 2015

21st July 2015

20th October 2015

All Tuesdays and
from 10:30-12:30 pm



GET YOURSELF A CUPPA AND RELAX FOR A FEW MINUTES

The RCT Creative Writers Group sets itself a monthly writing task. The members agree on a 'headline' (usually something quite bizarre) and then each person has until the next monthly meeting to write a short story, poem or whatever related to that headline. The results are always fascinating as it is amazing how different writers react to the same headline and come up with very different stories or poems. A few months ago, someone came up with the 'headline' of 'What will happen to my shed when I die?' - below is one member's response.

What will happen to my shed when I die?

When Winston Churchill died the epitaph on his tombstone was copied from a reply he once gave to a reporter who asked him if he was afraid of dying: "I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter."

Mel Blanc provided the voices for many of the characters in the cartoons we have seen on TV and in cinemas; Bugs Bunny, Woody Woodpecker, Sylvester the Cat and many more. When he died, his tombstone simply read: "That's all folks!"

Martin Luther King's gravestone is inscribed with words from one of his most famous speeches: "Free at last. Free at last. Thank God Almighty I'm Free at Last."

When Hank Williams, the American Country and Western singer, died, one of the song titles inscribed on his gravestone was "I'll never get out of this world alive."

Wells Fargo agent, Lester Moore, was killed in 1880 by bullets fired from a 44-caliber pistol. He was buried in Boot Hill Cemetery, Tombstone, Arizona, where his own tombstone records "Here lies Lester Moore. Four slugs from a 44, no Les, no more."

Another resident of the same Boot Hill Cemetery is an innocent man called George Johnson who was hung after being wrongly convicted of being a horse-thief. When it was realised that Johnson was, in fact, innocent, someone gave him a tombstone with the

inscription: "Here lies George Johnson, hanged by mistake 1882. He was right, we was wrong, but we strung him up and now he's gone."

An epitaph for an unnamed atheist in a cemetery in Thurmont, Maryland, reads: "Here lies an atheist. All dressed up and no place to go."

The gravestone of Spike Milligan has an inscription written in Gaelic which translated into English is: "I told you I was ill."

A widow in Vermont, USA, wrote the following epitaph for her deceased husband: "Sacred to the memory of my husband John Barnes who died January 3, 1803. His comely young widow, aged 23, has many qualifications of a good wife, and yearns to be comforted."

What, you may ask, does all the above have to do with this month's writing task? Not a lot really, except that I think none of the above epitaphs could come even close to competing with one that read:

What Will Happen To My Shed When I Die?

Want to have a go yourself? The Writers Group, all carers and past-carers, meets on the first Friday of every month at 10am in Pontypridd Museum. Come and join us or if you would just like to know each month's writing task so you can have a go and email it in, please contact: jessmorgan@hotmail.co.uk or aaniel24@aol.com We would love to read your response to the task and will make you a Guest Member free of charge as well. Have a go!

Would you like to register as a Carer?

Rhondda Cynon Taf Carers Support Project provides information and support to Carers living in RCT. By registering with the Project you will receive regular newsletters, a Carer A-Z Directory, access to training & information sessions, the Carers Counselling service, discounted access to leisure services and support, advice and guidance from the Project.

To register please call RCT's Carers Project Officer on **01443 668813**



CARERS BOOKING FORM

Event/Training	Venue	Time	Date	Tick
May				
First Aid for Carers – A session to give you peace of mind at home and out and about. Refreshments provided.	Heddfan, llan Avenue, Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd CF37 5PN	10am-1pm	Tuesday 19th May 2015	
June				
Manual Handling – Learn to avoid hazards and limit the risk of injury to yourself and the person you care for. Refreshments provided.	Heddfan, llan Avenue, Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd CF37 5PN	10am-1pm	Wednesday 3rd June 2015	
Carers Week				
DLA to PIP – An event specifically aimed at Parent Carers whose children are soon to be transitioning from Children to Adults or those wishing to find out more about the process. The workshop aims to provide information regarding welfare benefits changes and potential implications during the transition process. A Behavioural Therapist will also be attending to discuss the transition process for young people who have a diverse range of additional needs.	Heddfan, llan Avenue, Rhydyfelin, Pontypridd CF37 5PN	10am-1pm	Wednesday 10th June 2015	
BBC Good Food Show – A fabulous foodie day out - Packed with top speciality producers, free tasty samples, live cookery demonstrations on stage from top chefs including James Martin and Tom Kerridge, plus hundreds of exhibitors featuring some of the best produce in Britain. You will also have entry to the Supertheatre. Coach transport provided from Heddfan, Rhydyfelin to the NEC. This event is for the Carer only.	NEC, Birmingham	8am – 7pm	Thursday 11th June 2015	
Carers Vintage Carnival – Guaranteed fun for all the family. Relive the old fashioned fete games by having a go at Splat the rat, Aunt Sally, Bullseye, Hook a Duck, the giant buzzer and much more. Get your face painted and learn the secrets of magic from a real life Magician. There will also be a bouncy castle and slide, candy floss and the incredible, must be seen, ice cream bar. No need to book just turn up!	Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre, East Street, Tylorstown CF43 3HR	11am-3pm	Saturday 13th June 2015	
Who am I? – Have you ever wanted to research your family history? This workshop is designed to help you find out about your ancestors and learn important family history techniques.	Llantrisant Library	10am-12pm	Wednesday 17th June 2015	
Autism Awareness Show – At The Autism Show you will be able to find information, advice, products and services on autism (including Asperger syndrome). Hear from the UK's leading Autism professionals, discover hundreds of features and services, learn new strategies and approaches, interact with innovative sensory products and get access one to one specialist advice.	NEC, Birmingham	8am-7pm	Friday 19th June 2015	
Assertiveness Workshop – Often your assertiveness skills as a Carer can be tested. Join this workshop and develop key skills, recognise different styles of communication, value yourself and your rights and express negative thoughts and feelings in a positive manor.	Feel Good Factory, Abercynon, CF45 4XZ	10am-3pm	Thursday 25th June 2015	

Event/Training	Venue	Time	Date	Tick
July				
Time out for Carers - Enjoy some you time. Join other Carers and share experiences of your caring role. Find out possible reasons for how and why certain situations provoke certain emotions in you. You will learn key relaxation techniques, along with learning about strategies aimed at helping you to manage your emotions.	YMCA, Duffryn Street, Mountain Ash CF45 4DA	10-3pm	Tuesday 7th July 2015	
Who am I? – Have you ever wanted to research your family history? This workshop is designed to help you find out about your ancestors and learn important family history techniques.	Tonypandy Library	10am-12pm	Thursday 9th July 2015	
August				
Family Cinema Day – Join other Carers and their families. Register your interest now.			August 2015	

***If you have any particular requirements to enable you to enjoy any of our events, please let us know

**Places for some events are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis

*Transport and respite can be provided if needed.

Name:

Address:

.....

Daytime Tel. No.:..... Date of Birth:.....

Email address:

Do you require respite? YES/NO Have you attended one of our events before? YES/NO

How many places would you like for the Cinema Day?

Do you have any special requirements? e.g. dietary, access, etc.:

.....

I confirm I am the Main Carer: Signed:

Return to:

Freepost No. RTKE-ACJL-JBUC Carers Support Project,
Heddfan, Ilan Avenue,
Rhydyfelin,
Pontypridd CF37 5PN

If you have any queries regarding an event, please call Claire on 01443 668813 or CarersLine Freephone on 0808 100 1801 or alternatively email CarersSupportProject@rctcbc.gov.uk