

Caring Matters

February 2024

Tel: 0300 005 1213

www.dccarers.org

 [durhamcountycarerssupport](https://www.facebook.com/durhamcountycarerssupport)

 [dccarers](https://twitter.com/dccarers)

Win a £100
Amazon Voucher -
complete our Carers
Survey to enter
(see pages 8-9)



Introducing Bella,
our Therapy Dog in training

Page 11



FINANCIAL SUPPORT | HINTS AND TIPS | COURSES | AND MUCH MORE INSIDE...

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We would love to hear from you:

If you have any ideas/topics, share your caring story or top tips for future editions of Caring Matters that you would like us to include, please email Sophie Johnson at sophie.johnson@dccarers.org

How to access our services and refer to us:

- Call or email the office using the details below.
- For Carer Support visit: dccarers.org/sign-up-for-support/
- Ask your GP or social worker to refer you

Contact us

Durham County Carers Support
Enterprise House,
Enterprise City,
Meadowfield Avenue,
Spennymoor,
County Durham, DL16 6JF

T. 0300 005 1213

E. admin@dccarers.org

www.dccarers.org

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and LinkedIn.

Advertising

If you would like to advertise your business that you think would be of interest to our Carers, please contact Sophie.johnson@dccarers.org for further information.

Household Support Fund

David has been caring for his wife who has COPD and mobility problems for a few years and recently her health has deteriorated, and she doesn't go out at all. David had to give up work as a plumber in January last year, due to his own ill health and to become his wife's full-time Carer.

David also has health concerns, his mental health has deteriorated and the GP has prescribed anti-depressants and sleeping tablets. We received a message from David to say that he was struggling financially and although he had applied for all the relevant benefits he was still waiting on decisions. David said that he wasn't managing and didn't want to ask for help but felt he had nowhere else to go.

Our Carer Support Coordinator, Helen contacted David to see how we could help. It was clear that David was finding times really hard, and he and his wife were living on very little money each month. Since David gave up work the savings, he had set aside had all gone.

We were able to support David with help toward his energy and food bill through our Household Support Fund as well as providing a slow cooker which would help reduce the cost of making meals. David was also referred to our Counselling service with support for his mental health and he was able to access our Carer Break funding to help him take some time off from his caring role.

"Thank you for taking the time to listen to me. I was embarrassed about having to ask for help but I'm so glad I reached out. I am now receiving counselling which is helping a lot. The funding through your Household Support Fund really got me over a sticky patch financially until I could get my benefits sorted out. I can't tell you how grateful I am, your help has made such a huge difference."

If you are in a similar situation to David, then please get in touch. We will do our best to help if we can. There are many ways you can contact us, if you are finding it difficult to make that call then you can email, or text and we will call you back.

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND?

We have been granted Household Support Fund Money from Durham County Council to support Carers in County Durham!



If you are in financial hardship we may be able to contribute towards energy costs including gas, electric and solid fuel, food, small cost saving cooking appliances and much more.

Get in touch with your Carers Support Coordinator for more info



Introducing our new Partnership and Engagement Co-ordinator Emma Thompson



Hello everyone...

I just wanted to introduce myself and explain a little bit about my new and exciting role, as Partnership & Engagement Coordinator with DCCS. I started my role in September 2023, prior to this I supported Carers in Middlesbrough for over 13 years, so I am very passionate about ensuring Carers have the support they need.

My role is new to the organisation and I can't wait to work alongside other organisations to raise awareness of hidden Carers and ensure all Carers are aware of the support available to them.

My role will also include engaging Carers to ensure their voices are heard when shaping our services as well as supporting other organisations to gather Carer feedback with a view to improving services for Carers and those they care for.

The highlight of my role so far has been meeting lots of fantastic Carers at our Carers Rights Day Events in November and at some of the amazing DCCS support groups. The support groups provide a warm welcome, friendly peer support, a wealth of advice and a nice cup of tea!... definitely worth a visit!!

If you are a Carer and you would like to be involved with any upcoming surveys or events around providing feedback and improving services for Carers, please don't hesitate to contact me to express your interest or to have an informal chat
emma.thompson@dccarers.org.uk or
0191 500 6011

Volunteer Corner

A summary since April 2023

Our newest project is the Welfare Benefits Volunteer role. We have already supported over 74 requests from Carers this year and around 300 Carers since the project began. The financial impact this has made is an extra £765,721.00 in awarded benefit and £225,982.36 in backdated awards.

Our Keeping in Touch Volunteers have made over 950 calls which resulted in Carers accessing services they might not have known about otherwise and getting vital support from our wider team.

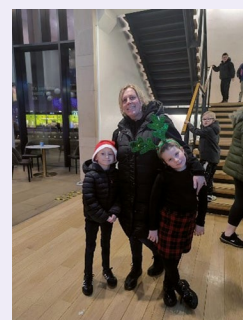
Our counselling service has taken over 400 referrals and we have over 250 Carers receiving sessions at any one time. Feedback included "I felt listened to, supported and given time to express my worries. I have learnt many ways to cope with my struggles as a carer and practice self-care".

To find out more about joining the team contact Jessica at jessica.howarth@dccarers.org for more information.

Our team also organise events and just before Christmas 85 families were able to see the Cinderella pantomime at the Gala Theatre in Durham, they had a wonderful time and kick started Christmas!!

"We just wanted to say a huge, huge thank you for our pantomime tickets. It was absolutely fabulous, and our kids loved every minute of it. We really appreciated the tickets. Many thanks"

"Thank you for organising the Panto we thoroughly enjoyed it, what a lovely treat for our family"



Are you caring for a child with additional needs

under the age of 18?

Parent Carer Needs Assessments (PCNA's)

Not everyone needs a PCNA but if you want one, we can complete a PCNA with you and develop a plan together addressing issues raised during the assessment with a view to providing appropriate support and information.

Parent Carers have a legal right to this assessment and can request it at any time (please note this assessment is only available for Carers in the Durham area). You may benefit from a PCNA to identify if an Early Help Request is needed, or other support can be put in place. It can also be useful to share with other professionals involved in supporting your family <https://dccarers.org/pcna-form/>

You don't have to have a PCNA to access other support we offer such as:

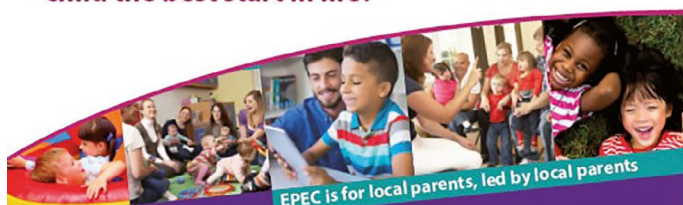
- Carer Breaks
- Carer Discount Card
- Help to claim benefits for you and your child
- Grants and bursaries
- Support at TAFsignposting and referrals to other support services
- Counselling
- Benefits check

PARENT CARER NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Online PCNA

Do it online! We will check it, add what's needed and send it to you for you to use when you need it

Could you help parents give their child the best start in life?



EPEC is for local parents, led by local parents

Becoming a parent group leader gives you the chance to help families gain the skills they need to give their children the best start in life. EPEC is a parenting approach that trains local parents to lead groups that support other local parents.

As part of the EPEC programme we are looking for mums, dads and carers to become group leaders to deliver parenting courses in your local area. As a volunteer group leader you will:

- Receive amazing free training and support from our local EPEC team.
- Learn to lead practical, caring groups for local parents.
- Share tried and tested methods that give children the best start in life.
- Join a group of like-minded parents to make a difference to your local community.
- Develop your skills and confidence.
- Gain experience that will help you fulfill your ambitions.
- Have your transport, meal and childcare costs paid for whilst undertaking and delivering training.
- You will have access to a varied career development programme.

By completing a short 12 week course one day per week (09.30-14.30) you could become a group leader.

Once you have completed your training, you and another parent group leader will deliver course(s) to other parents across County Durham over a 9 week period. You should allow 5 hours per week for course delivery, evaluation and supervision. We will work with you to make this work for you.

For more information please email EPEC@durham.gov.uk

* Watch Sue tell us about how she became a parent group leader

* See what parents get out of the courses, courses led by people like you!

* You may need to download Adobe Acrobat to view the above links.



Parent Carer Support Group on Facebook
- We have over 1000 Parent Carers in the group, and it is a great place to keep up to date with what is happening across the County as well as being a great way to get support with any questions you have that other Parent Carers may be able to help with. This is a closed group where only members of the group can view, post or comment. To request to join scan the QR code or click here **Parent Carer Support Facebook Group**



Daisy Chain Coffee Morning

Daisy Chain will be running coffee mornings in Family Hubs for parents and carers of children diagnosed, on the pathway or who have been identified by a professional as having a need relating to autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), sensory processing differences, anxiety and social and communication differences.

The groups will:

- listen, offer guidance and tell you about services that are available in your local area
- direct you to services that can make a difference and empower you
- increase your knowledge, understanding and skills to support your child

Dates and times - Sessions run during school term-time only.

Durham Family Hub (First Friday of the month from 10.00am to 12 noon) The Woodlands, Gilesgate, Durham, DH1 2EY

Chester-le-Street Family Hub (Third Friday of the month from 10.00am to 12 noon) Gray Avenue, Chester-le-Street, DH2 2EL

Peterlee Family Hub (Second Friday of the month from 10.00am to 12 noon) Ellison Road, Peterlee, SR8 5NJ

Bishop Auckland Family Hub (Fourth Friday of the month from 10.00am to 12 noon) Walker Drive, Bishop Auckland, DL14 6QL

Are you aged between 18 and 25?

Then find out the specific support available to “Young Adult Carers” like you

Caring for someone can be a challenging and emotionally taxing experience, especially when it comes to young adult Carers. Others often don't fully understand the demands it will place on your lives. Young Carers are often forced to grow up too quickly and miss out on many of the experiences that other young people take for granted. We are here to support you through your caring journey and aim to make your lives better.

Further Education Have you heard about Carers Scholarships? A scholarship covers undergraduate credit-bearing modules and qualifications, paying for the full tuition cost of your qualification, up to 120 credits each seasonal academic year and 360 credits in total. For more info call: 0300 303 5303

We have Carer Break Funding for you to take a break from your caring role. If you feel like your caring role is getting too much, you never get time to yourself, or miss out on spending time with your friends, we would love to help you with a Carer Break. What's your idea of a Carer Break? Axe throwing, bowling, football tickets, cinema vouchers, concert tickets, gym membership or something else? Tell your Carer Support Coordinator what you class as a Carer break and let's get you back on track!

Do you follow us? We're on Insta, Facebook, Tiktok & WhatsApp Community with private groups depending on your need. Our socials are filled with loads of information and advice about what's going on in County Durham for Carers like you! Except TikTok, that's mainly our Therapy dog Bella. We're always looking for support with our social media so if you'd like to be a social media ambassador then please let us know by emailing Sharon.bell@dccarers.org

Helping your CV: If you are looking for work or wondering about your future, then a volunteering role with us can help you to gain experience for your CV and give you opportunities to learn new skills. We can find a volunteering role built on your strengths, anything from social media, podcasting, admin, to talking on the phone through our keeping in touch project. We've got something useful to add onto your CV and help you to get on the right path into work. Find out more about volunteering visit dccarers.org/volunteer/

Would Learning to drive help your caring role?

We have funding to help Carers learn to drive



NOTE: This funding is means tested

Where do you want to go? Did you know we have funding for Carers to learn to drive? Driving can massively help your caring role as well as giving you time to yourself when you need it and independence. As a result, we can help you by funding driving lessons. Ask your Carer Support Coordinator for more information. If you prefer then this funding could be used to help you in a training programme you've always fancied instead, like dog grooming, floristry courses or more. If you have found a training course, you'd like to try, then just let us know and we will try and fund it for you if we can (NOTE: This Funding is means tested).

Why Volunteer?

Get out and about; it's great for your Mental Health

Make a difference to Carers Lives

Improve your CV

Enjoy yourself - have fun!

Improve your confidence by meeting new people

Gain new contacts and Networking for future job opportunities

Gain New skills, experience and knowledge

www.dccarers.org



Reach **Out**

Over the past few months, it has been great meeting Carers in East Durham and finding out more about the amazing services on offer in the area. As part of my role, I support Carers in East Durham who are caring for someone with mental ill health or who are themselves struggling with their own mental health.

At DCCS, we understand that no two caring roles are the same, but we also know that each caring role has the potential to have a massive impact on the mental health of the person providing care. In fact, the mental health charity Mind lists having a caring role as one of the factors that could potentially result in a period of poor mental health. There are many statistics which back this up. Each year, Carers UK conduct the State of Caring Survey and question over 11,000 Carers about their caring role. The most recent survey highlights that

‘27% of unpaid Carers have bad or very bad mental health’ and ‘more than three quarters of all Carers (79%) feel stressed or anxious, half (49%) feel depressed, and half (50%) feel lonely’.

Most people would agree that if someone is struggling with their mental health, it is vital that they reach out for support. However, many people often don't know who to reach out to. I'd always recommend Carers reach out to their friends or family where possible, but many Carers don't have this option. Also, some people need more specialist support than their friends and family can offer. The State of Caring Survey highlights that 'a widespread lack of support and recognition from health and care services is severely damaging unpaid Carers' mental health'. As a dedicated Carers' charity, we strive everyday to overcome this so that Carers feel recognized, valued and supported. So, who can you reach out to if your mental health is being affected by your caring role? Or if your mental health is impacting on your ability to provide the level of care that you want? I hope you already know the answer; **you can always reach out to us**. You can contact your support worker or get in touch via our website chat feature, our social media channels or our main helpline. You can also attend your nearest Carers' group (details can be found on page 13).

As an organisation, we take mental health extremely seriously. On a personal level, I have what is known as 'lived-experience', which means I have first-hand experience of mental health services in the county. Consequently, I understand how difficult it is to ask for help and how challenging it can be to find the help that you need.

Therefore, I have set up a Facebook Group so that I can update our Carers on the mental health support available across the region (just search 'Sharing is Caring' on Facebook). This will include links to other services, advice on staying well and the opportunity to link in with other Carers. I look forward to meeting you there!

Anthony Douglass 01325 524605
anthony.douglass@dccarers.org

In a mental health crisis, you should contact the TEWV crisis line on **0800 0516171** (it's available 24/7). If there is a medical emergency or a risk of violence, contact **999** immediately. The Samaritans helpline (116 123) is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for people who want to talk in confidence. <https://www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk/> provides a range of free online mental health educational courses and resources. The content of the site has been developed by people with experience of mental illness. As a service we can also support you to access a wide range of services from the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance or you can phone them on **0300 3045527** or click on this link <https://www.durhammentalwellbeingalliance.org/>



Focussed support

for Carers around hospital discharge.

We have been funded by Durham County Council to run a new project supporting Carers when the person they care for is being discharged from hospital. This can be a very difficult and worrying process and we recognise that having someone on your side to guide you through the first few weeks will make a big difference.

We are starting by focusing on University Hospital of North Durham and around the stroke, elderly and cardiovascular wards. We think we can make the most impact as this is often when people have life changing health issues and need the most support. We will also be starting a similar project in Darlington in early 2024 funded by Darlington Borough Council and based at Darlington Memorial Hospital.

Over the last few months, we have been meeting with the discharge teams, the patient experience team and making links with many other projects and professionals who are all keen to make this project happen. Our team will be based in UHND some of the week to speak to Carers and explain the support they can offer. Follow up meetings will be planned to ensure the right information and advice is available when Carers need it. A Hospital Discharge information pack is being developed.

Here at DCCS we know that Carers often struggle to access the support that they need. This is why we work so hard to ensure that we provide a service that recognises the priceless contribution made by unpaid Carers in our region.

As an organisation, we want to support all unpaid Carers in County Durham. To do this we must increase our visibility amongst marginalized groups and ensure that we appeal to all members of the communities we serve. We know that many LGBTQ+ Carers report feeling isolated and that they can struggle to access inclusive services. We also know from a CarersUK report released in Feb 2023 that Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Carers were 'more anxious about their current financial situation, and more likely to say that they were struggling financially, compared to heterosexual Carers. Additionally, the research revealed that LGBTQ+ Carers were more likely to feel lonely or isolated, and to have poor mental health.' I know from working at DCCS that it is an inclusive, supportive organisation. What I would like is to ensure that people outside of the organisation know this too.



HOSPITAL DISCHARGE PROJECT



Supporting unpaid family Carers when the person they care for is being discharged from Hospital

Durham County Carers Support (DCCS) is the local charity supporting unpaid family Carers across County Durham and Darlington. We have been commissioned by Durham County Council to run a project offering advice, information and support around hospital discharge, working across health and social care teams at University Hospital North Durham.

The intended outcomes are to identify unpaid Carers much earlier and to improve support for them before, during and after the person they care for is discharged. This aims to reduce readmission and Carer breakdown.

Carers will be given one to one support from one of the two full time posts for up to 4 weeks and after that by the wider DCCS team. This will include support based on their needs but including: A named person, Benefits, grants and financial support, Advice to understand the language and processes, Information and advice, Emotional support and access to counselling, Access to support and referrals to voluntary and community support locally, regionally and nationally.

Our team are currently in UHND outside the restaurant from Monday to Friday between 12 and 3pm if you would like to speak to us. Alternatively you can email us on admin@dccarers.org (put Hospital discharge in the title) or phone 0300 005 1213 or to make a direct referral via our [website](https://www.dccarers.org).



HOSPITAL DISCHARGE A5 LEAFLET

You can find these leaflets on noticeboards throughout UHND with spaces for Carers to fill in their details and pass them to us.

OR click to download and print.



If you or someone you know is a Carer for someone being discharged from Hospital and you want support email us on admin@dccarers.org with hospital discharge in the subject or call us on 0300 005 1213.



We need to ensure that all Carers feel welcome to access our services and to highlight that we offer tailored support which is reflective of the fact that no two caring roles are identical.

If you feel you would like to support us to increase our visibility across the LGBTQ+ community, please get in touch. Maybe you would be interested in accessing specific LGBTQ+ support group. Or perhaps you would be interested in specific social events. Or maybe you would like to let us know of any barriers you have had to overcome to access our support. Over the coming months, I will be looking at ways to increase our engagement with LGBTQ+ Carers. Keep an eye out on our social media for details.

Contact Anthony Douglass on 01325 524605 or email anthony.douglass@dccarers.org

Durham County Carers *Survey 2024*

Please take 5 to 10 minutes to tell us what you think about the support we offer. Our Carers Survey is your chance to feedback on the support and services we offer. We want to hear about what works well for you and if there is anything we could do differently or need to change in the future.

Please help us shape our service by completing the survey below and return to us by Friday 1st March 2024. The Freepost address as follows: **FREEPOST RTXA-HHGH-SAGE, Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House, Enterprise City, Meadowfield Avenue, Spennymoor, County Durham, DL16 6JF** (you don't need to attach a stamp).

You can also complete this survey online by clicking on the link <https://forms.office.com/e/jz8qsJU2jA> or scanning the QR code opposite.

The survey is anonymous, however if you wish to be entered into our prize draw to win an Amazon voucher then you will need to provide your details at the end. Prizes are as follows: 1st prize £100 Voucher, 2nd prize £50 voucher and 3rd prize £50 voucher. Winners will be notified by 1st April 2024. Thank you.



About your caring role

1. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

2. How old are you?

- ☐ 18-24 years
- ☐ 25-49 years
- ☐ 50-64 years
- ☐ 65-84 years
- ☐ 85 years and above

3. Do you care for a child, adult or both?

- ☐ Child (under 18 years)
- ☐ Adult
- ☐ Both

4. What is your postcode?

Postcode:

5. How many hours to you spend caring per week?

- ☐ Under 10 hours
- ☐ 11-34 hours
- ☐ 35-50 hours
- ☐ 51-99 hours
- ☐ 100 plus hours

6. How many people do you care for?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 or more

7. How many years have you been caring for?

- ☐ 0-2 years
- ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ Over 10 years

8. Do you provide care during the night?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9. Have you informed your GP about your caring role?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. Where does the person you care for usually live?

- ☐ With me
- ☐ Their own home
- ☐ Residential / Care / Supported Living
- ☐ Somewhere else

11. What is your working situation?

- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Self employed
- ☐ Unable to work due to own ill health
- ☐ Unable to work due to caring role
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Unemployed and looking for work
- ☐ Unemployed and not looking for work
- ☐ Other

Our Services

12. Thinking about the services we provide, how would you rate the one's you have used? (tick all that apply)

	Not used	Very Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Didn't know about
Help with completing forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to grant funding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Benefits advice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Face to face support groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online support groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carer Breaks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counselling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carer Discount Card	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Courses Training/ information sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wellbeing events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent Carer Needs Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent Carer Specialist support and information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support/referrals to other services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A listening ear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning for the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with digital technologies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appointments outside of 9 -5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Of the above services and support which are the most important to you? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Practical information when I have a problem
- ☐ A listening ear
- ☐ Signposting to other services
- ☐ Planning for the future
- ☐ Support Groups
- ☐ Counselling session
- ☐ Carer breaks
- ☐ Activities for me as a Carer
- ☐ Activities for me and person(s) I care for
- ☐ Help and support with digital technology
- ☐ Employment, education, training support
- ☐ Carer Discount Card
- ☐ Appointments outside of 9-5hours
- ☐ Benefits advice
- ☐ Help with completing forms
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Parent Carer Support

14. Are there any other services or support you would like to see us provide in the future?.

.....

.....

.....

15. How do you prefer to be supported? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Face to face ☐ Telephone ☐ Email ☐ Text/WhatsApp
- ☐ Website ☐ Live chat

16. How can we improve our service?

.....

.....

.....

17. Would you recommend our service to another Carer?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. How satisfied are you with Durham County Carers Support? (please tick a number)

1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied 3 = Neither satisfied or dissatisfied 4 = Somewhat Satisfied 5 = very satisfied

- ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

19. Any other comments

.....

.....

.....

COMPLETE IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE ENTERED IN TO PRIZE DRAW

Name: Address: Contact Number:



Just for a **giggle**



Dorothy* has been looking after her husband who has dementia for about 10 years. Her husband is fit and well physically and likes to get out and about to the local Sainsbury's to help with the shopping.

He always has a list but where the list ends up is anyone's guess as he just buys whatever he fancies. The staff now know him very well and look after him and he is so much of a celebrity that they even bought him a tin of biscuits for Christmas!

He always buys a bottle of prosecco for Dorothy, everyday! This means their garage is full of prosecco, but he still goes on buying. His daily trip to the shops gives Dorothy a little break for which she is very grateful and she accepts the prosecco gratefully.

Dorothy went to the GP surgery for a checkup and told the nurse the story about her husband who bought her a bottle of prosecco every day. I don't think the nurse was paying much attention to the story and only heard,

"A bottle of prosecco a day."

Next thing she knows Dorothy had a request for her to go to the surgery for an appointment with the doctor. Dorothy duly obliged. She sat down and the kindly GP leaned over the desk and gently took hold of her hands and said, "I hear you have a problem with prosecco." Dorothy replied, "Yes, why, do you want some?" The GP was startled, the look on his face was priceless, which set Dorothy off laughing and soon they were both falling about laughing. Tears and everything.

When they came to their senses, she then explained about her husband having dementia and buying her a daily bottle of prosecco and the garage being full of the stuff. However, the doctor, who had now mainly recovered from his hysteria and being cautious sole, arranged for her to have a scan on her liver, just to make sure.

She trotted off for the liver scan and told the radiologist the story. After the scan Dorothy asked, (as you do), "Is everything OK?"

To which the Radiologist replied, "Well I can't find any sign of Prosecco, but I can see some rum and coke. "But I haven't drank rum and coke for years," said Dorothy. "Ah my mistake" said the radiologist, "It's gin and tonic".

Dorothy giggled all the way home.

*Carers name has been changed

Carer Recommendation

I took my elderly mother out and we decided to visit Haystax coffee shop which is surrounded in beautiful countryside. Rob and Dawn gave us a warm welcome. The staff were all friendly and couldn't do enough for us. The cafe is inclusive and caters for everyone. They have two sensory rooms which are fabulous. Rob showed us round the lodges, they are beautiful with all facilities in place for disabled clients. We had our lunch which was very tasty and well presented, we even got discount off with my Carers Discount Card. We will definitely be returning.

Haystax Inclusive Farm Experience Centre and Lodges in Lanchester, Durham is designed with the needs of those with a wide range of disabilities and neuro diversities in mind but is open to all.

Carer Friendly Discount Card

Here is a wide selection of Health & Beauty organisations are offering discounts to Carers, for up-to-date information on their individual offers, please visit our website: www.dccarers.org

- Bella Vita Beauty Salon - Shildon
- The Peach Apothecary - Annfield Plain
- Make by Taylor Lea Davison - Consett
- Kalplans Turkish Barber - Seaham
- Just the Skin Bar - Ferryhill
- Shauna's Hair Beauty - Consett
- Chambers Hairdressers - Shotton Colliery
- Long Locks - Seaham
- Legendz Barberz - Seaham
- Elixa Salon - Seaham
- Phoenix Male Grooming - Consett
- All Dolled Up - Seaham
- The Beauty Room - Easington Lane
- Neo Beauty - Darlington
- Imago Beauty & Holistic - Shotley Bridge
- Coco Beauty - Coxhoe
- Elysian - Consett
- Unity Wellbeing - Darlington
- The Skin Renewal and Therapy Clinic - Chester-le-Street
- The Reiki Room - Newton Aycliffe/Chester-le-Street
- Forever Young Massage & Beauty - Wingate
- Jojoz Reiki Magick - Consett
- Sue Vidler Back Flower Remedies - Chester-le-Street
- Tranquil Treatments - Chester-le-Street
- Hypnotherapy for Health - Newton Aycliffe
- Holistic Health & Footcare - Consett
- Authentic Self-Health - Durham
- Rachel's Podiatry - Consett
- Grange Road Podiatry - Darlington
- Ashcroft & Associates Podiatry - Durham
- Coxhoe Chiropody - Coxhoe
- Holistic Health & Footcare - Consett
- Caring Hands Holistic Therapy's - Darlington
- Spoilt by Sam - Stanley
- Gentle Touch - Hunwick
- Rose Bud Holistics - Whitburn
- Holistic Health by Andrea - Ferryhill
- Holistic Harmony - Easington
- Silvia Sutton Healing Hands - Bowburn
- Tranquillity Therapies - Consett

Have you got your discount card? We currently over 130 businesses across County Durham & Darlington offering discounts to Carers who have our Carer Friendly Discount Card. To apply for a card, use this QR code or visit our website <https://dccarers.org/request-a-card/>

If you are a business and would like to join our scheme to offer a discount to Carers, follow the link to add your business to our website. <https://dccarers.org/add-listing/places/>



Therapy Dog

Bella is our Therapy Dog, in training. We are working with The Paws Therapy Dog Certification Programme to train Bella to become our Therapy Dog so that she can offer support to Carers in County Durham and Darlington.

For years, it's been proven that Animal Assisted Interventions and Animal Assisted Therapy for adults and children can effectively reduce anxiety and stress, help with blood pressure, foster positive emotions, improve social interactions and boost the quality of life to name a few.

Once the training is complete, our trained dog handler and therapy dog can come to events and Carers Support groups. Her handler is an employee here so don't be surprised if you see Bella occasionally if you pop into our offices in Spennymoor.

Bella has just received some supervision and here's the latest update on her training... "Bella loves other dogs but is still a little shy. She walks downstairs far too fast, and she needs to master this to qualify. She's quick to learn new tricks and enjoys one to one interaction. She's been a little off her food recently so trying to get her interested in training is a little difficult without the food incentive. We are learning to replace treats with play time. Bella's favourite toy is her ball, but she absolutely loves the snow and would play outside all day in it if she could. In fact, it has proven to be quite a distraction, but she's so fun to watch in it, we just couldn't stop her"

Follow her progress on: TikTok



Meet Bella

Our Therapy dog (in training)

We have funding* available through the NHS Carer Break scheme to provide new opportunities for Carers. These include:

- Learning to drive
- Learning to ride a Motorcycle or Moped
- Accredited courses such as dog grooming, beauty, barber, hairdressing, forklift training.
- Equipment to help with becoming self-employed, for example: sewing machines, Cricut makers, barber & hairdressing equipment, nail bar equipment.

Please get in touch to find out more and see if you meet the criteria. www.dccarers.org

*Funding is means tested.



NHS

North East and North Cumbria

Investors in Environment Award

Building on our success of attaining the Investors in the Environment Bronze Award, we are working towards the Silver Award.

We are developing organisational change by analysing data, making measured improvements through performance tracking and working towards wider sustainable development.

- Setting and achieving targets to reduce resource use.
- Establishing a travel plan.
- Minimising waste.
- Improving the Environment Management System.
- Reducing our carbon impact of operations.
- Engaging people in sustainable improvement.



Great North Run 2024

Would you like to be a part of the world's biggest half marathon? The Great North Run has 60,000 runners taking on the challenge of the 13.1 mile event and will take place on Sunday 8th September 2024.

To run the GNR, you'll need to pay a registration fee of £50 and fundraise a minimum of £250 for Durham County Carers Support. By running and raising a minimum of £250, you will help us to provide Counselling for Carers living in County Durham and Darlington. You will receive support from our dedicated team and receive a running goody bag before the race.

We have 10 places available, visit our website for more information www.dccarers.org



Durham County Carers Support

Own place entries

If you have a place through the ballot, why not use this to raise funds for Durham County Carers Support? Simply select us as your chosen charity on the Great Run website www.greatrun.org/events/great-north-run

Carers Rights Day Raffle

Congratulations to the lucky winners below from our Carers Rights Day raffle which was drawn on Friday 24th November 2023. The raffle raised an amazing £631 which will be used to help run our FREE Counselling Service for Carers living in County Durham & Darlington.

- 1st Prize - iPhone Candi Edwards
- 2nd Prize - Spa vouchers Kylie Lyons
- 3rd Prize - Spa vouchers Paula Stanyer
- 4th Prize - Afternoon Tea for Two Karen Gallaher
- 5th Prize - Large Hamper Gillian Crane
- 6th Prize - Small Hamper Jill Wardle



50:50 Club Monthly Lottery

You could win 1 of 3 great cash prizes every month. As the name suggests, 50% of the money supports our Carers Wellbeing Fund and 50% is paid out in cash prizes. Club members pay £12.00 per year to be entered into 12 monthly draws. Winners are notified by post, announced on our Facebook page and in this newsletter.

To enter fill in and return the slip below or join online www.dccarers.org

Name:

Mobile Number:

Address:

.....

Postcode:

Email:



JOIN TODAY

ONLY £1 PER STAKE

I would like _____ numbers at £12.00 per year and enclose a cheque made payable to: Durham County Carers Support.

I would like _____ numbers and would like to pay by Standing Order (we will send you a form to complete).

Please cut out and send this completed form to: Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House, Meadowfield Avenue, Spennymoor, DL16 6JF.

50:50 CLUB WINNERS

October 2023

1st Maureen Legender

2nd Lesley Stephenson

3rd Yvonne Best

November 2023

1st G Richmond

2nd Jean Spence

3rd Yvonne Hillard

December 2023

1st Thomas Pennick

2nd Angela Barron

3rd L Ninham

AVE 1st PRIZE £113

AVE 2nd PRIZE £75

AVE 3rd PRIZE £37

What's On

Here you'll find all the courses, training, groups and events that we have planned for Carers over the next few months. Please keep an eye on our website as new events, courses and training are added regularly. Check for updates on our website: <https://dccarers.org/groups-and-events/>



Support Groups

Bishop Auckland Carers Group

- **Where:** Four Clocks, 154a Newgate Street Bishop Auckland County Durham DL14 7EH
- **When:** 3rd Thursday of the month, 10.30am – 12noon

Contact: for further information contact Louisa Collin on 0191 500 6030 or email louisa.collin@dccarers.org

Stanley Carers Group

- **Where:** The Venue, Community Centre, Wear Road, Stanley, DH9 6AH
- **When:** 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10.30am – 12noon

Contact: Janice Coulson on 01833 600577 or email janice.coulson@dccarers.org

Chester le Street Carers Group

Join us for a cuppa and a chat.

- **Where:** Bullion Hall, South Approach, Bullion Lane, Chester- Le-Street County Durham, DH2 2DW
- **When:** 1st Friday of the month, 10am-12noon

Contact: for more information contact Steve Gillgallon on 0191 500 6013 or email steve.gillgallon@dccarers.org

Teesdale Carers Support Group

Join us for a cuppa and a chat.

- **Where:** Woodleigh (Council Offices), Flatts Road, Barnard Castle, DL12 8AA
- **When:** last Thursday of each month, 10am - 12noon.

Contact: Gill Taylor on 0191 917 4708 or email gill.taylor@dccarers.org

Consett Carers Support Group

Join us for a cuppa and a chat.

- **Where:** Masonic Hall, John Street, Consett, DH8 5AS
- **When:** 2nd Tuesday of the month 10.30am – 12 noon

Contact: for more information contact Dawn Mallows on 01207 263491 or email dawn.mallows@dccarers.org

Horden and Easington District Carers Group

- **Where:** Horden Youth and Community Centre, Eden Street, Horden, County Durham, SR8 4LH
- **When:** 2nd Friday of the month, 10am – 12noon

Contact: for more information contact Adele Blair on 01388 439748 or email adele.blair@dccarers.org



Durham County Carers *Support Training Program*

We recently sent a questionnaire via email to Carers to gather information on which training Carers feel will help them in their caring role. Using this feedback, we have tailored the training to meet Carers specific needs and make it more effective. We have also provided training in the areas where it is most needed.

If you receive the Caring Matters Magazine via email and would like to attend any of the sessions simply click on the link provided below the information. If you receive your Caring Matters by post, you can call Alison Dixon on **0191 5006031** email alison.dixon@dccarers.org or use a digital device to scan the QR code at the bottom of this article to express your interest.

Everything in its Place 8 weekly sessions

For most of us thinking about death and dying isn't easy at all. Understandably, we shy away from the topic and change the subject. The Everything in Place project helps make talking about death and our own future wishes as easy as possible. We want to help break the taboos that surround death and dying and support these conversations. If we don't talk about these things with those close to us, it can make it more difficult to cope for the dying and also for those who will be bereaved once the time comes. Getting Everything in Place now can make it all a little bit easier when the time comes.

8 weekly sessions on a Thursday starting 18th April 2024 to Thursday 6th June 2024 9.30am- 11.30am Bullion Hall, Chester le Street, DH2 2DW

<https://forms.office.com/e/WA1ebYM54u>

If you are unsure Everything in its place will benefit you, you can join an Introduction to Everything in its Place

This is a one-off Zoom session to hear the course overview for the 8-week sessions.

Thursday 28th March 2024 2.00pm - 3.00pm on Zoom

<https://forms.office.com/e/UUcmxKi3tg>



First Aid Training

This course will cover the most common accidents and medical emergencies and will give Carers the knowledge to be able to prioritise injuries, establish if something is seriously wrong and give immediate first aid.

Tuesday 20th February 2024 10am – 1pm at Durham County Carers Support, Enterprise House, Spennymoor, DL16 6JF

Wednesday 22nd May 2024 10am – 1pm at Blackhall Community Centre, Hesleden Road, TS27 4LQ

<https://forms.office.com/e/f8mBXqex5X>

Making Sense of Caring

Making Sense of Caring helps you understand what help and support is available for all Carers who care for an adult in County Durham. It helps you find your way through the maze of services that make up the Health and Social Care system. Lunch will be provided on the face-to-face sessions, so it is essential you book your place. Places are limited.

Wednesday 20th March 2024 10am – 12noon DCCS, Enterprise House, Spennymoor, DL16 6JF

Wednesday 24th April 2024 10am – 12noon Bullion Hall, Chester-Le-Street, DH2 2DW

Tuesday 11th June 2024 6pm - 7.30pm on Zoom

<https://forms.office.com/e/8zr7kte8Gp>



Parent Carer – Making Sense of Caring

Making Sense of Caring for Parent Carers helps you understand what help and support is available for all Parent Carers who care for a child in County Durham. It helps you find your way through the maze of services including CAHMS and SENDIAS. Lunch will be provided on the face-to-face sessions, so it is essential you book your place. Places are limited.

Wed 8th May 2024 10am-12noon The Venue, Wear Road, Stanley, DH9 6LU

<https://forms.office.com/e/Aq2a1KuBvP>

Mental Health- Making Sense of Caring

Making Sense of Caring is for Carers looking after someone with mental health issues. It helps you understand what help and support is available for all Carers who care for someone in County Durham with a mental health issue. It helps you find your way through the maze of services including mental health services and health and social care. Lunch will be provided on the face-to-face sessions, so it is essential you book your place. Places are limited.

Thurs 21st March 2024 10am -12noon Belmont Community Association, DH1 2LL

Tues 14th May 2024 5pm - 6.30pm over Zoom

<https://forms.office.com/e/s2Aj1ZMFKU>



Mindfulness

Mindfulness aims to help you become more self-aware, feel calmer and less stressed, feel more able to choose how to respond to your thoughts and feelings, cope with difficult or unhelpful thoughts, be kinder towards yourself.

Mindfulness Taster with TEWV

28th May 2024 10.30-12.00 Woodleigh Barnard Castle, DL12 8AA

Mindfulness with Lynn Moor

17th July 2024 Enterprise House Spennymoor DL16 6JF

<https://forms.office.com/e/zMqJ35SqVH>

Mindfulness for health and social care staff - Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (tewv.nhs.uk) or call 01325 552017

Moving and Handling

Moving and Handling course will be tailored to meet the Carers needs. It will cover bed to chair and chair to chair transfers, wheelchair safety, falls prevention and much more.

Mon 17th June 2024 10am- 1pm Fane Ltd, Unit 12 & 13, Derwentside Business Centre, Consett, DH8 6BP

<https://forms.office.com/e/1Aj4m9dff5>



Paediatric First Aid

This 3-hour course will be tailored to meet the Carers needs. The course will cover most common accidents and medical emergencies. It will give Carers peace of mind that they can help in a medical emergency.

Friday 10th May 2024 10am - 1pm Fane Ltd Unit 12 & 13 Derwentside Business Centre Consett DH8 6BP

<https://forms.office.com/e/Zh27GhhgrU>



Pilates - Online

TAKE TIME OUT FOR YOURSELF. Pilates improves flexibility, builds strength, and develops control and endurance in the entire body. It emphasises alignment, breathing, core strength, improving coordination, and balance.

Thursday 6th June – Thursday 11th July 2024 6.00pm - 7.00pm

<https://forms.office.com/e/6nBH6VF1Rq>

Positive Behaviour Support

Do you support an adult with a learning Disability with behaviours you find challenging? These workshops will be delivered by qualified and experienced NHS staff and help you identify more about tools that could help you and the person you support live a better life.

Tuesday 27th February, Tuesday 5th March and Tuesday 12th March 2024 -10am -3pm St Catherines Community Centre Crook, DL15 8NE

Tuesday 16th April, Tuesday 23rd April and Tuesday 30th April 2024 10am – 3pm at Bowburn Community Centre, DH6 5AT

<https://forms.office.com/e/4E6BaZrEds>

Yoga – Online

TAKE TIME OUT FOR YOURSELF. Yoga is linking the body, the breath and the mind. Whatever your circumstances, yoga can help to reduce aches & pains, help you feel physically stronger, deal with stress and maybe even help you sleep better.

Monday 18th March – Monday 22nd April 2024
6.00pm - 7.00pm

<https://forms.office.com/e/9ZardOQzuz>

Use a digital device to scan the QR code at the bottom of this article and complete the form to express your interest in the training.



POA, Wills and Trusts - Online

POA -Creating a Power of Attorney in advance ensures that if the worst were to happen, you can rest assured that both your financial affairs and personal welfare are in safe hands. Wills - Making a Will enables you to plan exactly what will happen to your property (estate) following your demise. This ensures that those you would like to benefit actually do so, in accordance with your wishes and also avoids disputes between relatives. Trusts - The strategic use of Trusts might ensure that your children and grandchildren are able to benefit from the inheritance you want them to receive and at the same time, protect the family home and other assets from the costs of Long-Term Care.

Wednesday 6th March 2024 6pm-7pm on Zoom

Tuesday 21st May 2024 6pm-7pm on Zoom

<https://forms.office.com/e/dg347rFHu6>

Scam Awareness Sessions

Andy Hampson from the North East Regional Organised Crime Unit will explain how to keep yourself safe from criminals and raise your awareness of the scams the criminals are using. This awareness session will last for 40 minutes.

Monday 1st April 7pm Online Via Zoom

Friday 12th April 2024 - 10am - 12 noon at Horden Youth and Community Centre Horden SR8 4LH

Wednesday 8th May 2024 - 10.30am - 12 noon at The New Venue Community Centre, Stanley DH9 6AH.

<https://forms.office.com/e/mR6qi7vqhG>

Positive Approach to Care

Positive Approach to Care™ training focusses on what skills remain, rather than what is lost. It explains the changes in the brain and why people living with dementia may behave in a certain way and supports the care giver to appreciate what it is like to live with dementia, to accept the person with dementia is unable to change but that the caregiver can be flexible in their approach to make care giving easier by matching the approach with the specific needs of the individual.

The course is made up of 3 sessions:

Wednesday 6th March, Wednesday 13th March and Wednesday 20th March 2024, 9.30am -12.30pm at Lanchester Road Clinical Skills Room, DH1 5RD

<https://forms.office.com/e/xrmGeVqNjB>



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