



GWASANAETH CYNNAL GOFALWYR
CARERS OUTREACH SERVICE

bywyd

The Carer

Registered Charity No: 1066262

Issue 95 Autumn 2020

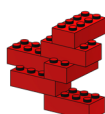


A new dawn

Established 1991

Supporting unpaid carers during and after the pandemic
The way forward, building blocks for the new normal

We have started holding groups by zoom video calls.	Keeping in touch - Unpaid carers can contact us to request support and information. See inside.
We will work in line with the Welsh Government guidelines to ensure that unpaid carers' needs and entitlements are met.	When it is safe to do so we will re-open our hubs and activities.
We will continue to support unpaid carers. Make us your first port of call for all your caring concerns.	



We have a solid foundation to build upon



Translated into Welsh by
Angharad Edwards



Our Chief Officer reflects on...

Moving forward and what we can expect of the new normal

When we went into lockdown, normal life stopped. We hoped this would just be for a short while, but here we are 3+ months later and now we are looking at planning for a new normal.

When our old normal life came to an abrupt halt, the usual avenues of support were withdrawn, leaving everyone to adapt to the new rules and to manage and cope in their own way.

Each time the restrictions are eased we get a little more freedom - to shop, or form 'bubbles' etc. However, the virus is still present so perhaps the new normal means that we must now adapt to living in a world that includes Covid-19.

For individual carers there will be anxiety and soul searching about whether to re-instate services such as home care, sitting services and schooling. At times it is harder to reach our own decisions than it is to have them made for us.

We must be mindful that people will react in individual ways to the easing of lockdown. At Carers Outreach we will always be sensitive and flexible to the feelings of carers.

Services may not look the same for a while; this could be a good time to evaluate and look at our old lives. What worked and what didn't? Has there been anything that you haven't missed?

I used to drive many miles to meetings, most of which have now been replaced by zoom video calls, saving everyone involved time and money.

What else have we learnt from lockdown? Community support has been excellent. Some parent carers have told us they enjoyed spending more time at home as a family.

Of course many carers will have been hard hit by the removal of services and they should now have the opportunity to discuss what they need going forward.

There have been profound losses too - bereavement, job losses, livelihoods, these are major events with lasting effects.

The problem is, we don't have a crystal ball to see into the future. We didn't see this coming and it is difficult to see past it. Perhaps the most difficult thing is trying to plan for the unknown.

We have spoken to thousands of carers, all with individual concerns, and the overwhelming message has been one of gratitude for our service.

I truly believe we need to move forward with sensitivity, compassion and hope. I'm mindful of the need to be flexible and I'm confident that Carers Outreach will adapt well to ensure we support carers now and in the future.

~ Llinos

'O brave new world, that has such people in't' ~ William Shakespeare



Update from Carers Outreach

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) for carers

Welsh Government has produced guidelines about the supply of PPE to unpaid carers. According to the guidelines, unpaid carers are entitled to request PPE if their caring role warrants it. If you feel that you would benefit from PPE in your caring role, contact us to explore your options.

<https://gov.wales/covid-19-guidance-unpaid-carers-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Grants and respite funds

Unpaid carers in Gwynedd are eligible to request a grant from the Gwynedd respite pot. Due to lockdown restrictions the respite is looking a little different this year. If you would like to know how you can benefit from this fund - and you live in Gwynedd - contact Helen Evans on the number below.

Anglesey families can apply to the Family Helping Out Fund. **See the next page for more details.**

Grants for essential items

Carers from all 3 counties can contact us to request help to find funding for essential items such as cookers, washing machines and fridges. Or for items that will beneficially impact on their caring role. There is limited funding available and priority will be given to those with greatest need.

Community support

Most communities now have volunteer groups. The support offered ranges from shopping, collecting prescriptions, dog walking, provision of meals - this varies from area to area. If you feel you would benefit from this type of support, contact us and we will put you in touch with any community support groups in your local area.

Carers support groups by zoom

Several groups are now meeting this way. Contact us if you would like to be part of a carers' zoom group.



Stay in touch



By phone:

Gwynedd & Anglesey: 01248 370797

Conwy: 01492 533714

Email: help@carersoutreach.org.uk

Website: www.carersoutreach.org.uk

Contact Carers Outreach Service for information or support in your caring role



A carer's story

I am so grateful for all the support I have received from Carers Outreach.

Lockdown has been hard going with 3 children, especially when one of them has additional needs.

When you have a diagnosis that isn't so well known it can be difficult to know where to turn for the right help. Just being able to speak with Eirian has been an enormous help to me and it was good to feel that someone was really listening to my worries and concerns.

As a parent carer you sometimes have to fight for the service that you know your child needs and is entitled to. This can be exhausting! It is good to feel that I have someone who is ready to

speaking up for me and chasing up referrals that I have been waiting for.



The icing on the cake was a grant from the Anglesey Family Helping Out Fund. This enabled me to buy outdoor play equipment to keep the children occupied during the long summer

days of lockdown. You can see from their smiling faces that they are really happy too.

~ Heather Hughes, Anglesey Carer

Anglesey Family Helping Out Fund

Last year we advertised a fund to pay for activities and respite for Anglesey families who have a child or children with additional needs.

Families who applied to the fund were provided with family passes to Greenwood Forest Park, tickets to Chester Zoo, riding lessons and more.

We are delighted to report that this fund has been extended for another year. We have

processed some referrals already, such as the one above.

Obviously in the current climate some activities may not be viable. However, we are happy to have conversations with families about what would make a difference to them. We will try to accommodate your wishes if at all possible.

Please contact Helen Evans for more details.

If you never did you should. These things are fun, and fun is good. ~ Dr Seuss





Live laugh love

Autumn days



A good summer can set us up for the winter. This year has been unusual to say the least! So many of us have been deprived of our customary days out and holidays, and even in some cases our paid work! As autumn approaches and the days grow shorter, what can we do to lift our spirits?

One sports commentator turned his attention upon his 2 dogs and began making short films with commentary of their daily activities. He posted them on social media and soon had a fan base from all around the world, including film stars. He now has a thriving secondary career that just grew from him finding magic in the everyday exploits of his beloved pets.



Finding the magic in the everyday could be as simple as seeing your loved ones' smile, or hearing children's laughter. Whatever yours are, please tell us, we would love to share them in this newsletter.

Carers Caravan news

Due to the pandemic we were unable to open our caravans this year. Where possible we have allowed bookings to roll over to next year. We are in the process of returning deposits for those who do not wish to delay their stay.

Congratulations

The winner of the prize draw from Issue 93, a cookery book by Cerys Matthews, is Jane Goddard. Well done Jane and happy cooking!

Love is at the heart of it

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, patient visiting at hospitals has been severely restricted, which can be both stressful and upsetting.



The 'Matching Hearts' initiative aims to provide a connection between very sick patients and their

loved ones. Some of our volunteers kept busy during lockdown by knitting hearts for this scheme.

App corner

How many times do we have the best intentions to exercise but then forget? Regular reminders would be good! 'Squeezy' has been designed by chartered physiotherapists specialising in Women and Men's health working in the NHS. It is suitable for those who want to improve pelvic floor muscles by exercises. It costs £2.99 to download.

Men's app



Women's app



Always remember: you are beautiful, you are loved, you are needed, you are strong,
You are enough!



Have you got a Blue Badge?

It is important to remember that the Blue Badge does not automatically renew. It is your responsibility to renew it.

During the lockdown, the government has allowed Blue Badges with an expiry date of 1 January, 2020 to remain valid for an extended period. This is set to continue until 30 September, 2020.

Some carers have told us that their Blue Badge application has been refused. You can get in touch with us if you are having any problems filling in the forms or feel you have been unfairly refused a badge.



Council Tax Discount

You may be entitled to a Council Tax discount if you are a carer and you:

- live in the same property as the person you are caring for
- provide at least 35 hours a week of care

Also, the person you care for must have one of the following:

- higher rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance
- higher rate of Attendance Allowance
- an increased Disablement Pension
- an increased Constant Attendance Allowance

The person you are caring for can't be your spouse, partner or a child under 18 years old.

This can be a complex issue; visit your local council website for more information or contact Carers Outreach to discuss your situation.

3 ways to save money

HelpU tariff fixes charges at an affordable rate for low income households on means-tested benefits.

Metered **WaterSure Wales** tariff fixes charges for low income households that have a medical condition or large family.

Save £25 by paying water charges through your benefits with the **Water Direct** scheme.

📞: www.dwrcymru.com

☎: 0800 052 0145



Priority services

By joining the Priority Services Register you can get extra help with:

- Bottled water if your supply is interrupted
- Alternative ways of getting information
- Reassurance against bogus callers

Those eligible to join include, parents of young babies, dialysis patients, people with sight or hearing difficulties or those who are elderly or disabled.