

# INFORM

THOSE WHO CARE

**SUPPORT  
FOR CARERS  
LEICESTERSHIRE**

Voluntary  
Action South Leicestershire

Leicestershire  
County Council



**Merry Christmas - From Support For Carers!**

## A quick reminder...

The Support for Carers service is run by the community-based organisation Voluntary Action South Leicestershire with funding from Leicestershire County Council.

The service aims to bring support services for carers under one roof to make it easier for you to find information, advice and support.

The service is for all carers in the county and it covers Charnwood, Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, Melton, North West Leicestershire and Oadby and Wigston.

Voluntary Action South Leicestershire has a long and successful history of supporting carers so we hope you'll be happy with our service!

### Like us on

Find new friends online - whilst keeping up to date with what's happening for carers in the county.

### Follow us on

[@supportforcarers](https://twitter.com/supportforcarers) for an easy way to follow all our latest news.

### Call us on:

**0845 689 9510**

Please note : Calls are charged at local rates, although calls from mobiles may be higher.

### Email us on:

**[maureen@supportforcarers.org](mailto:maureen@supportforcarers.org)**

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Voluntary Action South Leicestershire, The Settling Rooms, St Mary's Place, Springfield Street,  
Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 7DR. Registered charity number 1141274

# Winter help for carers

Welcome to the second newsletter from Support for Carers, which we hope you'll find interesting, informative and entertaining!

As Christmas is fast approaching we thought we'd start with top ten tips for carers - to help Christmas go as smoothly as possible. The tips are based on advice from the national charity, Princess Royal Trust for Carers, with a few hints of our own.

1. Make sure you have emergency contact details to hand for organisations such as Social Services and your GP/Hospitals.
2. Save money by making festive cakes, biscuits or decorations as presents or organise a 'Secret Santa' with your friends and family - so you only have to buy one present and can set a limit such as £5.
3. Ask family and friends to share the workload if you're making Christmas dinner - one person can bring a starter, another the turkey etc.
4. Use Christmas to think up some New Year's Resolutions for YOU! They could be 'make a point each day of thinking about yourself and ask if you're OK' or 'take 5-10 minutes a day to breathe and rest'.
5. Don't think that you're alone - there's a whole community of carers in the same situation as you. Find out more about our carers support groups in this newsletter or get in touch with us to find your nearest group or for more details of our Telephone Befriending Service for carers.
6. If you rely on public transport and can't visit family and friends on Christmas Day, move the festivities to another day!
7. Save money on Christmas cards by sending e-cards to everyone you know who uses email.
8. Remember to treat yourself over Christmas - sit down and watch a film or have a soak in the bath.
9. Make the most of the season and have fun with the person you care for. There are loads of free events going on around Leicestershire including the chance to make your own festive gifts for instance.  
  
Visit the Leicestershire County Council website [www.leics.gov.uk/events](http://www.leics.gov.uk/events) or call County Hall Library on **0116 305 6988** for a free events guide.
10. Think ahead and try to make a plan for dealing with the extra stress that Christmas may bring. For example, plan some 'me time' or look into relaxation techniques. Find out more by visiting the **NHS Carers Direct** website or call the Carers Direct helpline free on **0808 802 0202**

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# Carers' Emergency Response Card Scheme

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If you're worried about what would happen to the person you care for if something should happen to you, or you have an emergency, help is at hand.

Leicestershire County Council and the social enterprise for older people, Housing 21, have teamed up to provide a FREE Carers' Emergency Response Service for carers in the county.

The service provides carers with support to help you plan for emergencies, together with a Carers' Emergency Response Card.

The card is the size of a credit card, so you'll be able to carry it around with you.

If something should happen that means you're unable to look after the person you care for, you or someone on your behalf, can call the number on the card and Housing 21 will organise the support you've asked for in your emergency plan.

Alternatively, it will care for your loved one/ friend directly until alternative arrangements can be made (for up to 48 hours or 72 hours over a bank holiday weekend).

**To find out more and to see if you qualify for the scheme please call the Carers' Emergency Response Team at Housing 21 on:**

**0116 255 5122 or alternatively email [emc.leicestershire@housing21.co.uk](mailto:emc.leicestershire@housing21.co.uk)**

## How will the scheme benefit you?

- You'll feel more supported
- Less anxious about going out
- Have peace of mind that your individual situation is understood
- Emergency care is available 24 hours a day
- The service is free to you and the person you care for
- The scheme is run in partnership with organisations across Leicestershire so it can provide a range of emergency support

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# Support for Carers



## Update Update Update Update

The Support for Carers team has been very busy over the last few weeks attending 10 different support groups around the county and several flu clinics at GP surgeries.

It has been a real pleasure for us to get out and about and meet so many carers face to face. Some of the groups have continued to thrive from the previous service and are run by volunteers.

Others are new groups or have been re-established and we are supporting them in the early stages by booking rooms, finding guest speakers and helping with funding.

It has been interesting to see how the different groups have evolved to meet the needs of the carers who attend. Some meet for lunch and social contact, others prefer to have speakers and information brought to the meetings.

The one thing they all have in common is that it gives the carers who attend the opportunity to meet like-minded people who really understand what they are going through. The wealth of knowledge, tips and experiences of caring passed around at these meetings is amazing. As well as the chance to sit down for an hour or so with a cuppa and a biscuit!

## Take a look at the next page for a list of Carers' Groups.

(For details of even more groups visit [www.supportforcarers.org](http://www.supportforcarers.org) or call us on 0845 689 9510).

**Top Tip - if you don't already attend a Carers' Support Group why not make a New Year's Resolution to join one in 2012?**

Pat, Jacqui, Diane, Gurjit.

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## Charnwood District

### Loughborough Well-Being Group

meets at John Storer House, Wards End, Loughborough, LE11 3HA on 1st Thursday of each month from 1.30pm to 3.30pm Contact Joanne Clarke on 01509 631 782

### Shepshed Well-Being Group

meets at Charnwood Road Community Centre, 47a Charnwood Road, Shepshed, LE12 9QE on 3rd Tuesday of each month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm Contact Joanne Clarke on 01509 631 782

### Sileby and District Group

meets at the Boat House, 14 Bridge Street, Barrow upon Soar, LE12 8PN on last Thursday of each month from 12.00pm to 2.30pm Contact Joanne Clarke on 01509 631 782

## Oadby & Wigston District

### Carers for One Another

meets at Central Avenue Church, Central Avenue, Wigston, LE18 2AA on 3rd Thursday of each month from 10.00am to 12.00pm Contact Bernadette on 07905 558 412

### Oadby & Wigston Carers' Group

meets at the Barnabus Centre, 7 Paul's Close, Oadby on 3rd Monday of each month from 1.30pm to 3.30pm Contact Bernadette on 07905 558 412

## Blaby District

Caring Friends - meets at Palmers Garden Centre Cafe, St John's, Enderby, LE19 2BS on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 10.30am to 12 noon Contact Alan Hooton on 0116 284 1982

## Centre 88 Group

Mental Health Carers - meets at General Elliot, Willoughby Waterleys on 1st Thursday of each month at 7.30pm Contact John Bird on 01455 284 702

### Rethink Mental Health Carers' Group

meets at the Cedar Centre, Cedar Avenue, Wigston, LE18 2LA on 3rd Thursday of each month from 1.00pm to 3.00pm Contact Nicky Daily on 01530 276 525

## Harborough District

### Carers' Break

meets at the Bower House, 32 Coventry Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9BZ on 4th Thursday of each month from 1.30pm to 3.00pm Contact Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

### Knit and Natter

meets at Bower House, 32 Coventry Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9BZ on 3rd Thursday of each month from 1.30pm to 3.00pm. Contact Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510

### Lutterworth & District

#### Carers' Support Group

meets at Hazeland Court Residential Lounge, Guthlaxton Avenue, Lutterworth on 4th Wednesday of each month from 7.00pm to 9.00pm Contact Sheila on 01455 208 857

### Mental Health Carers' Support Group

meets at the Bower House, 32 Coventry Road, Market Harborough, LE16 9BZ on 2nd Wednesday of each month from 1.30pm to 3.00pm Contact Denise Bosworth on 07918 196 106

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# New Carers' Support Groups now running!

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## Hinckley & Bosworth District

### **Hinckley & Bosworth Carers' Group**

meets at the Community House, Peggs Close, (off Candle Lane) Earl Shilton, LE9 7BP on fourth Thursday of each month from 10.30am - 12 noon. Please note there is no December meeting. Next meeting 26th January 2012. Contact Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510 for more details.

## Melton District

### **Melton Carers' Support Group**

meets at the Carnegie Museum, Thorpe Way, Melton Mowbray on alternate months. Contact Diane on 0845 689 9510 or email [diane@supportforcarers.org](mailto:diane@supportforcarers.org) for more details. Next meeting 19th January 11am.

### **Time Out for Carers Group**

meets at Bottesford Village Hall, Belvoir Road, Bottesford. Contact Diane on 0845 689 9510 or email [diane@supportforcarers.org](mailto:diane@supportforcarers.org) for more details. Next meeting 31st January 10.30am.

## North West Leicestershire

### **North West Leicestershire Coalville Carers' Support Group**

meets at the Marlene Reid Centre 85 Belvoir Road, Coalville, LE67 3PH monthly. Contact Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510.

### **North West Leicestershire Ibstock Carers' Support Group**

meets at the Wesleyan Reform Church, Melbourne Road, Ibstock, LE67 6NQ on the second Tuesday of every month from 12.30pm to 2pm. Contact Support for Carers on 0845 689 9510.

**To find out more about any of the Carers' Support Groups above, or if you would like to set up a group near you, please feel free to get in touch on 0845 689 9510.**

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**We can give new groups help, support and advice to set up free of charge.**

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Rethink  
Mental  
Illness.

# Do you care for someone with a mental health issue?

We met with the organisation Rethink Mental Illness recently, to talk to its Leicestershire and Rutland County Carers' Service.

Rethink Mental Illness is the largest national voluntary sector provider of mental health services, with about 250 services and over 150 support groups. It directly helps almost 60,000 people every year across England.

The Leicestershire and Rutland County Carers' Service offers support to carers of adults suffering from severe and enduring mental illness. Its aim is to recognise and respect, as well as support the role of carers, family and friends.

The service can help you review what is, or what is not, working for you and can help you look at various coping strategies for example. It can also provide you with information; signpost you to other sources of help; put you in touch with local support groups, carer education and training programmes; provide face-to-face support at a venue of your choice or via telephone or email; and let you know about activity days and events.

## The service has this message for carers:

"The way forward will be guided by your views about what is needed and what helps you to make your own life choices and to take back control of your life."

We'll be working in close partnership with Rethink to make sure we can offer the best possible service to carers who look after someone with a mental health issue.

**If you'd like to get in touch with Rethink please call  
01530 276 525 and leave a message on the answer phone  
and they'll call you back.**

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# Take care of yourself this winter with our top tips!

**As a carer, it's more important than ever that you look after yourself, particularly at this time of year when there are a lot of cold and flu bugs around. Here are a few hints and things to think about.**

## Flu vaccinations

Tell your GP you're a carer. It's not just the cared for person who needs protecting. If you are ill it will impact on your caring role so you should be entitled to receive the vaccination in your own right.

## Don't struggle on through illnesses

Take time to rest. It might be difficult to find the time but you will recover quicker from minor colds and viruses than if you try to struggle on. Don't be afraid to ask for help from friends and family, it will only be temporary.

## Eat well

Sometimes you may not have the time or energy to cook nutritious meals but trying to ensure you get a balanced diet with fresh fruit and vegetables provides essential vitamins and minerals to help you stay healthy. Eating regularly also helps your energy levels, which means you feel less tired.

## Sleeping well

Sleep is essential for our bodies to rest so we can be refreshed both physically and mentally. If you are struggling with sleep or have disturbed nights because of your caring role there are things you can try such as cutting down on tea, coffee and alcohol in the evenings, getting some fresh air and exercise during the day and having a regular bedtime routine. If you still have problems, talk to your GP.

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## Take a break

This could be anything from an hour a week to a whole week away. There are several ways you can do this:

- **Ask family or friends to help**
- **Use a care agency**
- **Employ a sitter directly**

If you need financial assistance to do this you should ask Social Services for a Carers Assessment. Or enquire about local charities and benevolent funds.

## Recognise stress

It is almost inevitable that there will be times when you become stressed with your caring role either through fatigue or frustration. It's essential that you recognise the point where you may need some extra help and support. Start by talking to your GP, Social Services or contact Support for Carers who will be able to tell you how to access appropriate information.

# Did you know?

**You can use your Carers Support Grant for gym or leisure club membership or for a course of complementary therapies such as Reflexology or Indian head massage.**

**For more detailed advice on looking after yourself this winter why not visit the NHS Carers Direct website or call them free on 0808 802 0202.**

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# Meeting carers face to face

We held our first ever Carers' Forum in Huncote on 27th September and it was very well attended, with both carers and representatives from various organisations coming along. The event included a presentation from us - to explain how our service supports carers and how people can access our website and online directory of local services. It also gave representatives from other organisations a valuable chance to promote the work they're doing, direct to carers. Most importantly, it gave carers the chance to ask us questions and talk to us face-to-face.



Many people travelled from other parts of the county to attend the event so thank you to everyone for making the journey - it was great to meet you. We'll be holding similar events in the future so watch this space for more news coming soon!

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## FREE training for carers!

**Do you help the person you care for in and out of bed or chairs? Do you worry about doing it the right way or about hurting your back?**

We've arranged a 'Safer Moving and Handling' training session for carers, which is taking place on Monday 9th January 2012 from 2pm to 4pm at Cordate Healthcare Ltd, Unit A, Sandown Court, Station Road, Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8BT.

The course is designed to give carers confidence in moving and handling the person they care for. It will cover back care, transferring the cared for in and out of bed, assisting in and out of chairs and the use of hoists.

**Please book early as there are only 8 places available!**

**Call us on 0845 689 9510 or email [maureen@supportforcarers.org](mailto:maureen@supportforcarers.org)**

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# Do you look after someone with cancer?

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Coping with Cancer in Leicestershire and Rutland is a local charity that offers practical and emotional support to cancer patients and their carers.

Support includes free complementary therapy support groups, which are open to cancer patients, carers and family members. The groups offer the chance to enjoy a complementary therapy treatment in a calm and relaxing environment, plus the chance to meet other people in your situation over refreshments.

You don't have to book a treatment, simply turn up to a group near you. Treatments available include aromatherapy, reflexology, Indian head massage and Reiki. There is no cost for treatments or refreshments, all groups are free of charge.

## Find a group near you:

**Melton Mowbray** - meets on the first and third Tuesday of the month from 10am to 1pm at the Samworth Centre, 8 Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1AE (please note from January 2012 the group will run from 1.30pm to 4pm)

**Hinckley** - meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 1.30pm to 4pm at the St Francis Centre, Tudor Road, Hinckley, LE10 0EQ

**Leicester** - meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month from 1.30pm to 4pm at Helen Webb House, 35 Westleigh Road, Leicester, LE3 0HH

**Birstall** - meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 1.30pm to 4pm at Birstall Village Hall, Birstall Road, Birstall, LE4 4DH

**Market Harborough** - meets on the second and fourth Thursday of the month from 10am to 1pm at the Congregational Church Hall, Bowden Lane, Market Harborough, LE16 7JD. As from 23rd February 2012 the group will run from 1.30pm to 4pm and will be held at Lubenham Village Hall, Laughton Road, Lubenham, Market Harborough.



**To find out more about any of the groups or about the charity:**  
**Please call Lucy Pugh on: 0116 223 0055**  
**or email [lucy.pugh@c-w-c.org.uk](mailto:lucy.pugh@c-w-c.org.uk)**

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# Useful numbers for carers over Christmas & New Year



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**Leicestershire County Council - Adult Social Care**

**0116 305 0004**

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**Leicestershire County Council - Adult Social Care Emergency Team**

**0116 255 1606**

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**NHS Carers Direct**

(Calls are free from UK landlines & mobiles or you can request a free call back)

**0808 802 0202**

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**NHS Direct (Health advice & reassurance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year)**

**0845 4647**

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**Age Concern**

**0800 169 6565**

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**Support for Carers Christmas opening times:**

**0845 689 9510**

**26<sup>th</sup> Dec - closed, 27<sup>th</sup> Dec - closed, 28<sup>th</sup> Dec - 9am-5pm**

**29<sup>th</sup> Dec - 9am-5pm, 30<sup>th</sup> Dec - 9am-4.30pm**

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## Would you like to get fit & healthy in 2012?

Active Together is a Leicestershire-wide initiative to provide adults aged 16+ with opportunities to get active and improve their health and wellbeing. The scheme offers fun, affordable, supported activities such as dancing, walking, jogging and badminton, with all activities being suitable for complete beginners.

**To find out more contact Support for Carers - 0845 689 9510**

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