



March 2019

Welcome to Signpost's monthly e-bulletin.

This is just one of the ways that you can stay up to date with what's going on at Signpost and the world of carers and caring in Stockport and beyond. Don't forget to visit our website regularly and follow us on social media too (you can find us on twitter, instagram and facebook). This bulletin is available electronically or printed upon request, and we would encourage you to share it far and wide to anyone that would find it useful.

Signpost team news

- We are excited to be welcoming three new members of staff to Signpost in March. Paula and Natalie will be joining our carer support team, taking a lead on our Moneywise project (benefits information and money management) and working with our Changing Times and wellbeing and engagement work respectively. We are also pleased to be welcoming a new finance manager to the Signpost fold!
- We are however very sad that some of our members of staff will be retiring at the end of March. Julie Pinchin has worked at Signpost for more than 16 years, and is one of our longest serving colleagues. In her time with us she has had several roles, always giving 100%, and has been an absolute asset to the organisation. June Wilson has been with us for almost 3 years and has worked with hundreds of carers, supporting them to apply for the benefits that can help to relieve some of the financial stresses of caring. Both have been fantastic colleagues and great sources of support to many carers across our borough and shall be greatly missed. We are sure you will join us in wishing them all the best for the future - we look forward to receiving the postcards from their adventures!
- Our thanks and very best wishes also go to Katie Smith who left Signpost at the end of February for pastures new. Katie has been integral in the smooth running of Signpost and The Heatons Centre, and supported the organisation through some of its toughest times. Catherine is taking the reins of the Heatons Centre room bookings; if you have any enquiries about using one of our lovely rooms please email her at info@signpostforcarers.org.uk . Please note there will be a slight increase in our room hire rates from 1/4/19.

Signpost's Counselling Service for Carers

Caring for someone can be a demanding, lonely and isolating experience at times. Signpost are proud to be able to offer a counselling service to Stockport's carers and ex-carers. Counselling can support carers by giving them a safe and confidential space where they can talk openly about what they are going through, and the impact caring is having on them and their lives.

Our counsellors will actively listen, support and care for the carer, encouraging them to take time out and explore their own feelings and experiences. This can enable carers to feel stronger and more able to cope by enhancing self-awareness, increasing resilience and developing strategies to go forward. Counselling also encourages individuals to think about their own needs and goals, and ways they can sustain their own wellbeing. This is essential if they are going to keep caring.

The feedback about our counselling service is really positive. This has meant that we are about to extend our provision and attract additional funding for the service - we have recently received funding from Awards for All to be able to extend this offer to the parents of our young carers.

We have a relatively short waiting list for counselling and are actively seeking referrals. If you, or someone that you know or work with is (or has been) a carer, and feels that counselling might be helpful, please contact Gayner on **0161 442 0442** or email gayner@signpostforcarers.org.uk.

Services in Stockport

A key role for Signpost is working with partners to find out about new and developing services in Stockport that can benefit our carers. Here's one that we recently heard about...

Active Ageing

The Active Ageing programme supports over 65's to become more active at times in their lives when circumstances can mean that remaining physically active can be particularly challenging. **This includes being a carer.** One aspect of the programme is matching local volunteers with participants who want to become more active - we all know it's much nicer (and more motivating) to go for a walk around the park with someone rather than on our own! For more information and to get involved contact Age UK Stockport on 0161 480 1211. You can also find out more, and see some great examples of the service in action here - <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/stockport/our-services/active-ageing-stockport>

If you know of a service, group or activity that you think would be good for us to feature, please email Julia@signpostforcarers.org.uk .

What's on for Stockport carers in March 2019?

For more information about any of the sessions below, and to book a place, please ring 0161 442 0442 or email carersconnect@signpostforcarers.org.uk. Free to attend, with free light refreshments (a brew and a biscuit or two), unless specified otherwise.

What	When	Where
Carers' art and craft group (£5 per session for all materials. Group is led by a professional artist).	10am – 12noon every Wednesday	The Heatons Centre
SMILE gentle exercise class (open to all. Free for carers, £3 for non carers).	1.30pm – 2.30pm, every Wednesday	The Heatons Centre
Complimentary therapy sessions with Elsie Lamb (carers only, £8 for 30 minutes) – Not available on 12 th March.	Sessions every Tuesday, from 10am – 3pm	The Heatons Centre
Gardening for carers	Monday 4 th March, 10.30am -12 noon.	Woodbank nursery, Offerton
Perfect Pancakes! Carers, ex-carers and cared for welcome for light hearted fun and choice of pancakes. Suggested £3 donation.	Tuesday 5 th March, 11am – 1pm	The Heatons Centre
Heart to heart – a friendly, sociable group for carers and cared for.	Wednesday 13 th March, 2pm – 4pm	Salvation Army Church, Cheadle Heath
Carers' drop in	Thursday 14 th March, 10am – 1pm	Heald Green Village Hall
Creative Writing for Carers A fun and informal drop-in group for carers with an interest in writing. Guided by our volunteer Jayne, who shares her passion for the written word!	Thursdays 14 th and 28 th March, 2pm – 4pm	The Heatons Centre
Coffee Morning – Tax and Toy boys! A representative from Co-op Estate planning is coming to talk to the group about making practical arrangements for the future.	Friday 15 th March, 10.30am – 12noon	The Heatons Centre
Carers Network Meeting – Nicole Alkemade (Stockport CCG Commissioning manager for dementia, frailty and end of life) and Gill Owen-John (Service Manager – preventative services, Stockport Council).	Monday 18 th March, 1pm – 3pm (Light buffet provided at 1pm, business to start at 1.30pm)	The Heatons Centre
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Supporting Carers in Employment – See more info below. An awareness session for line managers around supporting those employees that have a caring role.	Monday 25 th March, 10.30am – 12 noon	The Heatons Centre
Time for a pint – male carers and ex-carers only.	Wednesday 27 th March, 1pm – 3pm	The Ashlea pub, Cheadle village
Life After Loss –this session is helpful for understanding the grieving process and thinking about coping strategies for the time ahead.	Thursday 28 th March, 1pm – 3.30pm	The Heatons Centre

Coming up ...Spring Walk, Gatley Carrs, 10.30am – 2pm, Thursday 25th April

A gentle, guided walk with Dave, our resident nature enthusiast. Guaranteed to be one of the best walks you've ever had! Open to carers, ex carers and cared for.

To book your place at any event, just get in touch!

Supporting Carers in Employment

More than 600 people quit work to look after older and disabled relatives every day

- 1 in 7 of the UK workforce caring for a loved one
- 2.6 million have quit their job to care

You may have seen or heard the above figures in the news in early February, when Carers UK released their new [report](#) around the challenges for carers in employment. Their findings show that almost 5 million workers are now juggling their paid job with caring.

The research emphasises the need for UK employers to support the rapidly increasing number of staff with caring responsibilities to stay in the workforce. Signpost are keen to work with employers in Stockport and are offering a short awareness session **for anyone with line management/HR responsibilities**. This is an opportunity to find out how carers can be supported in the workplace, and how small steps can make a big difference.

To find out more, or to book a place on this session contact us on 0161 442 0442 or email carersconnect@signpostforcarers.org.uk .

Thank you for reading this edition of the Signpost monthly bulletin. Comments and feedback are always welcome – just give us a ring!