

Hello! It's been a few months since we last popped through your letterbox so we're delighted to bring you this end of year update to let you know what we've been up to and how you can get involved to brighten up your Winter months.



We've adapted our service to continue supporting carers and right now this support is needed more than ever. Throughout the year, hundreds of you have joined us online at events and carer support groups and our telephone advice line has been busy helping you

navigate this challenging time.

Our new digital project is here to help you take advantage of all the online support we and other organisations have on offer. If you're new to the world of digital, we can help. To get

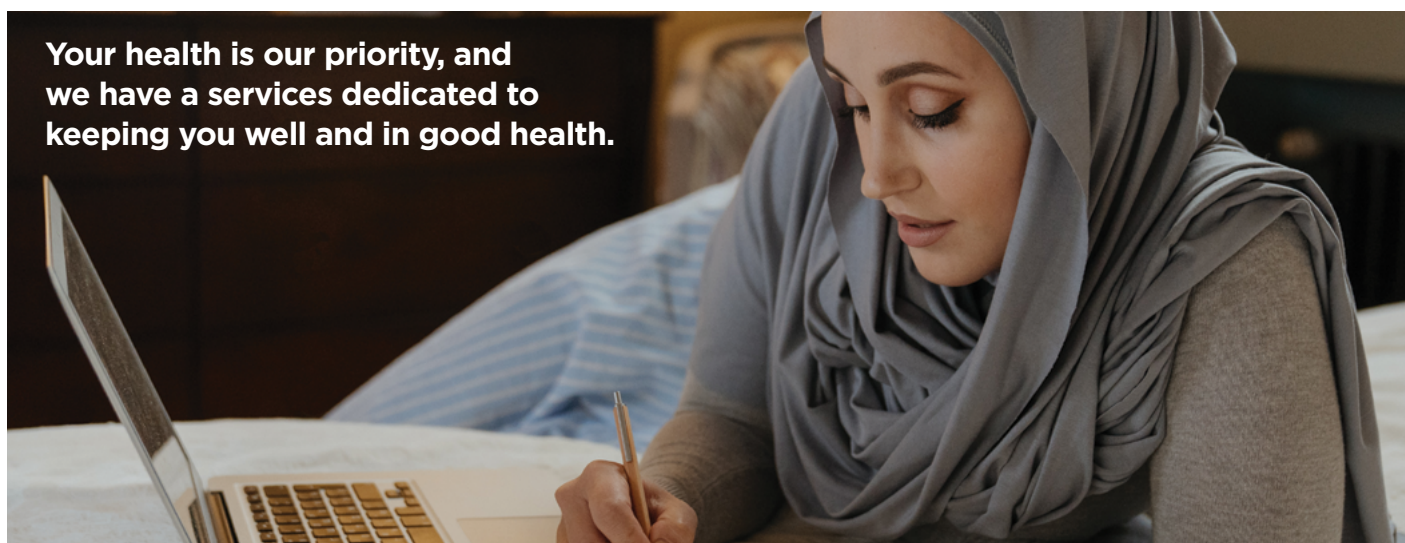
started, give our advice line a call and they'll discuss what you'd like to do online and what you need to get there.

Then our digital team will contact you with your options and support to help you get started.

"It was nice to see you all on our Zoom meeting. Getting online has been so helpful in these difficult times. I have learned to use WhatsApp which means I have managed to keep in touch with family and friends. Many thanks for all your help. Look forward to the next Zoom"

Carer after receiving a tablet and training

Supporting carer health and wellbeing



Throughout this year our Health and Wellbeing worker Jo Foster has brought you online wellbeing sessions ranging from stress management to healthy eating and we're delighted to continue working with you in 2021 to make little changes that will give you a lasting impact.

Kerri joined us recently to continue our work in partnership with Live Well Leeds. Kerri has lots of experience in mental health and is supporting carers to develop a care plan and set goals for improvement to their mental health.

Join Jo and Kerri in this series of online wellbeing events which will be

varied and insightful. You will gain information and coping strategies, along with lots of creative input and enjoyment.

Each session take place over Zoom and you can join at 11am. To book a place, e-mail jo.foster@carersleeds.org.uk

Getting energised

Tue 12 January

Try out a variety of short techniques, including stretching and breathing exercises, which are guaranteed to give your mind a break and your energy levels a boost.

Conversations and story telling

Tue 02 February

Join us to explore story telling through the use of household objects. Just bring your imagination!

Your feelings and needs

Tue 19 January

Come along and explore how to recognise how you might be feeling, along with learning creative and useful ways to help you to fulfil your needs.

Self care

Tue 09 February

"You cannot drink from an empty cup". Discover the importance of self care and how you could add small acts of self care into your day.

Feeling connected

Tue 26 January

Join this guided discussion on our experiences during COVID-19 and how we can respond to feeling isolated or "cut off". Also explore the various options for helping yourself to feel connected.

Stress and relaxation

Tue 16 February

In this final session, we will discuss stress, what it feels like, and learn how we can learn strategies that will help us to live with it.



Our events take place over the internet using Zoom so you'll need access to a computer, smart phone or tablet.

No device? No problem, get in touch and let us know. If it's your first time using Zoom we can help with that too.

All events can be booked online through our website. Visit www.carersleeds.org.uk/events

If you need any support e-mail info@carersleeds.org.uk or call 07985 259 144.

Staying well through winter

This winter coronavirus will still be circulating and there's a risk that more people may become infected. The symptoms are:

A high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you don't need to measure your temperature)

A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you can't smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Anybody with symptoms needs to self-isolate for at least 10 days and get tested as soon as possible. Other people in the household need to self-isolate for 14 days.

**We must
keep on protecting
each other.**



HANDS



FACE



SPACE



Top 5 tips to survive winter

1. Heat your home to 18°C
2. Wear suitable clothing, several layers are better than one thick jumper
3. Take a vitamin D supplement
4. Stay connected - Attend our festive zoom events
5. Get some fresh air by taking a daily stroll

Self care with Linda Sage

Thu 10 December at 10.30am

Join local author Linda to look at self care, share tips with other carers, join discussions and exercises to plan the positive changes that you can make.

Moving & handling training

Tue 05 January at 10am

Learn how to safely handle the person you care for, whilst taking care of your physical health.

Building emotional resilience

Thu 14 January at 2pm

Linda Sage joins us for a second workshop, this time looking at building our reliance to manage stressful events.



Yoga

Tue 19 January at 11am

Join Gillian for a nourishing and soothing yoga class, the perfect opportunity to stop for an hour and gift yourself some TLC. The class is accessible to everybody, complete beginners and those who have practiced yoga before. No specialist equipment required.

My mental health

Thu 04 February at 11am

Join experienced mental health worker Elaine to learn more about coping with your mental health and learn to spot stress, anxiety & depression.



Female carers group

Thu 04 February at 10.30am

Holly Birkinshaw from One You Leeds will be joining us to look at healthy lifestyles and making small changes with a big impact on your health..

Taking a break

Caring for another person can be fulfilling, exciting, enjoyable, but also tiring and stressful. Taking a break from your responsibilities is important so you can recharge and look after your health.

Breaks can take many different forms. You could take half an hour out of your daily routine to read your favourite book or maybe even take a trip away to see the sea!

If you'd like some help to take a break, call our advice line on 0113 380 4300 for support and practical tips on how you can get some time away from your caring role.



If your finances are preventing you from taking a break, you can apply to the time for carers grant scheme. The time for carers fund can provide an unpaid carer with a payment of up to £250 so that they can have a break from caring.

Visit our website to apply online.



"Thank you so very much for the grant you have given me! It couldn't have arrived at a more needed time. I used it to buy new hobby equipment and honestly it's the first time since I can remember that I have taken time out for myself and I feel thoroughly relaxed now."

Carer in receipt of Time for carers grant

Make time for me

**Mondays at 11am
Zoom ID: 895 1885 9902
Passcode: monday**

Join us for 30 mins of relaxation. Using zoom, we will practice a range of relaxation techniques, including breathing exercises and meditation.

Getting colourful

**Thu 14 January at 10.30am
or Tue 19 January at 6pm**

Enjoy the therapeutic benefits of colouring in at this informal and relaxing session. All materials provided. To book, email jo.foster@carersleeds.org.uk

Creative carers

Fri 18 December at 1pm

Every month we run a different creative session with carers over zoom. Join us at this social zoom catch up to tell us what crafts you'd like to try in 2021.



Mindfulness Relaxation

Mon 01 February at 2pm

Come and take an hour out just for you...to relax, rest and reconnect to yourself. An introductory talk followed by some simple, guided exercises using awareness and the breath to help ground you in the here and now.

Festive fun

Christmas cuppa

**Mon 14 December at 10am,
Tue 15 December at 4pm,
Thu 17 December at 12pm,
Fri 18 December at 1pm
Zoom ID: 863 8011 2344**

Take a quick break from the stresses of the season and join Jo for a cuppa. No booking is required, just bring yourself and something to drink.

Managing through Christmas

**Wed 16 December at 6pm
Zoom ID: 830 5647 3218**

A group for Concerned Others to focus on the challenges of Christmas for families with someone using drugs or alcohol. We will look at practical and straightforward strategies to help manage the festive period.

Live music with the Retrosettes

**Thu 17 December at 1.30pm
Zoom ID: 925 7317 1511
Passcode: 881668**

Log in to hear live music from your living room this Christmas! Music in Hospitals & Care bring the UK's leading kitsch cover band to your home as part of the #musiceveryday programme.



Festive pub-less quiz

**Thu 17 December at 8pm
Zoom ID: 857 8435 4324**

Join Jo for this quick fire quiz. Just bring yourself, a drink, a pen and paper. There will be a prize for the winner!

Dance with us!

**Fri 01 January at 2pm
Zoom ID: 830 5647 3218**

Join dance tutor Maria every Monday afternoon in January at 2pm on zoom and enjoy music from across the decades and a good old dance.



Coffee morning and games

Mon 21 December at 11am

Join Angie for a cuppa and for some festive fun favourites.

Messages from Leeds City Council for carers

For up to date information visit www.leeds.gov.uk



Protect yourself and the person you care for from flu.

If you are looking after someone who otherwise couldn't manage without your help, one of the most important things you can do at this time of year is to have the seasonal flu vaccine.

4 November 2020

This is particularly important this winter because of the coronavirus pandemic. You can have the free NHS flu vaccine if you:

- receive Carer's Allowance
- are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you become ill
- live with someone who is at high risk of coronavirus (on the NHS shielded patient list) or you expect to be with them on most days over winter

GP practices and pharmacies are doing their very best to ensure people who are at the greatest risk from flu are vaccinated as early as possible, in line with their supply. In Leeds, practices are running flu clinics in a variety of ways, including at surgeries, in community venues and at special drive-through facilities to ensure that this year's vaccination programme is carried out in a Covid-secure way.

GPs are currently working through their lists of patients who are eligible and contacting them to invite them for their flu jab. If you are registered as a carer, they will be in touch and will be able to advise when you may be able to access the vaccine. If you are not registered with your GP as a carer, you should contact them to let them know you are a carer.

The Department of Health and Social Care have produced a leaflet explaining why you may be asked to wait – details can be found here; <https://bit.ly/3kz4ATi>

Alternatively, you can ask your local pharmacist if they can give you a free flu vaccination and if so they will then let your GP know that you've been vaccinated.

Yours sincerely,

Cath Roff

Director of Adults and Health

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

– people in the shielding group



The government has recently written to people who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), outlining specific advice for staying safe whilst COVID-19 transmissions rates are high. Leeds City Council have followed this up with a letter explaining what support is in place locally to help CEV people follow their advice.

If you or the person you care for received these letters, you are strongly encouraged to follow the advice that says for an initial 4 week period, CEV people should not go to supermarkets or pharmacies in person; not to attend work if work cannot be done from home; to limit all non-essential contact and to avoid public transport.

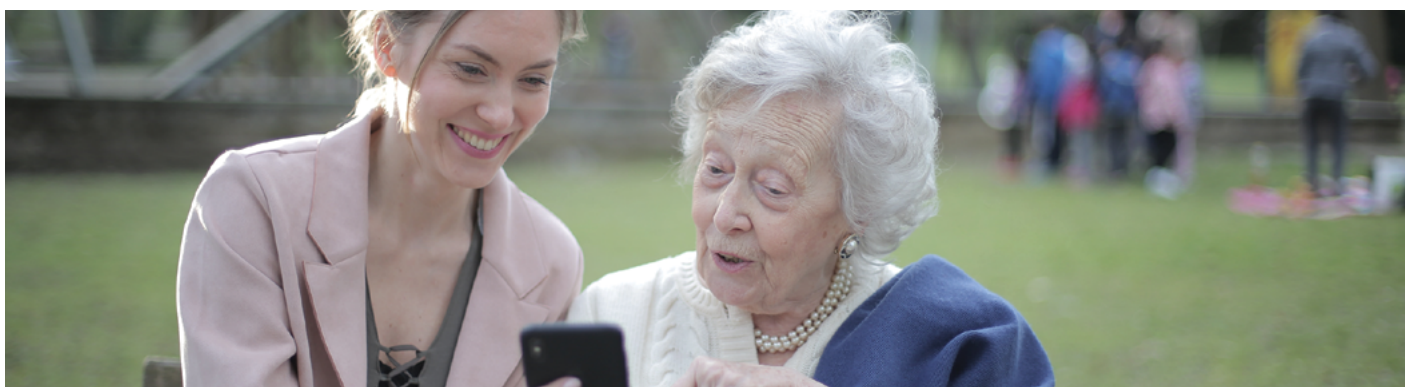
In balance with following this guidance – is the clear advice to also focus on staying physically and mentally well – spending time each day outdoors,

continuing to exercise and eat healthily. Keeping in contact with others – through a support bubble, through telephone contact, video chats or widow visits are all really important ways of staying connected to loved ones.

A frequent question from carers is how to manage receiving or delivering care within the advice. Wherever possible care and support should continue in the usual way. This can be done by forming a care bubble – where, for example relatives or friends who might usually provide help making meals, or doing housework and laundry – can continue to do so as long as this is exclusive between you and them.

For more information you can look at the web page: www.leeds.gov.uk/shielding or call 0113 376 0330 if you think you need practical help to follow the advice from government.

Clinically Vulnerable – people with long term conditions or who are over 60



We are an Age Proud city and people aged 60 and above continue to make a valuable contribution to life in Leeds but being over 60 also raises your risk of falling severely ill from COVID-19. We want to help you stay connected and active while reducing your risk of catching COVID-19 by reducing physical contact as much as possible.

If you are still working, there are precautions you can take and your employer could help you reduce your risk. If you're self-employed you need to consider the risks of taking on jobs that bring you in close contact with people especially if working indoors.

Planning your leisure time including

when you leave the house around quieter times of the day, will mean you can reduce your risks of being in close physical contact with others

If you need support, services in Leeds are here to help you – even if it's just a friendly voice at the end of a phone. You can call us on call us on 0113 376 0330.

What's new?

Are you new Carers Leeds or have never joined one of our zoom groups?

Thu 17 December – drop in 9.30 – 11.30am

Zoom ID: 967 4874 1723

Passcode: 234892

If so, this is the event for you. Meet some of the Carers Leeds team, sample a wellbeing session, ask one of our advice workers a question or just pop by for a cuppa and chat. Booking not essential but advisable so we can help you join if needed.

Book group

Interested in joining our monthly book group? Get in touch with us to sign up for a new year of literary adventures. E-mail info@carersleeds.org.uk to find out more or call Valerie on 07985 754 570.

New weekly bereaved carer support group

Starting in January, using zoom, over six weeks. Don't worry if you feel about anxious about using zoom - we can help with that.

Contact Sue for details on 07539 101 014 or email susan.sutton@carersleeds.org.uk

Q&A with our hospital based carer support team

Thu 21 January at 6pm

Zoom ID: 951 5601 1578

Passcode: 664755

Our hospital team answer your questions about hospital admissions, who the various hospital professionals are and what they do.

Useful contacts

Carers Advice Line

0113 380 4300

Adult Social Care

0113 222 4401

Leeds City Council COVID-19 helpline

0113 378 1877

NHS non emergency

111 / www.111.nhs.uk

Leeds Domestic Violence Service helpline

0113 246 0401 / www.leedswomensaid.co.uk

Health

NHS 24 hour mental health helpline

0800 183 0558

MindWell (mental health support)

www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk

One You Leeds (help to stop smoking or weight management)

0800 169 4219 / www.oneyouleeds.co.uk

Forward Leeds (alcohol dependency)

0113 887 2477 / www.forwardleeds.co.uk

Active Leeds

0113 3783680 / health.programmes@leeds.gov.uk

Leeds Malnutrition Helpline

0113 843 0905 / Ich.malnutrition@nhs.net

West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership Bereavement Support Line

0808 196 3833

Home

Home Plus (Leeds)

0113 240 6009

Leeds Directory

0113 378 4610 / leedsdirectory@leeds.gov.uk / www.leedsdirectory.org

Finances

Welfare Rights Advice Line

0113 376 0452 / welfare.rights@leeds.gov.uk

Leeds Citizens Advice Bureau

0113 223 4400 / www.citizensadviceleeds.org.uk

Turn to Us

www.turn2us.org.uk

Re-use!

There are 75,000 people in Leeds who look after a friend or relative who relies on their support due to illness, disability, dementia, mental health problems or substance misuse. And we are here to support them!

If you have a friend or neighbour who looks after someone, please pass them this newsletter when you've read it.

Stay in touch

Make sure you're signed up to receive our new exciting monthly e-bulletin.

Every month we'll pop into your inbox packed with up to date, useful info. Subscribe on our website, call our advice line or e-mail info@carersleeds.org.uk