



carers news

March 2021

Carers Leeds
Advice Line
0113 380 4300

Useful news, information, and events for carers in Leeds.
A carer is someone who looks after a friend or relative living with an illness, disability, dementia, mental health problems or substance misuse.



Are you new to caring or new to Carers Leeds?

Since the start of the pandemic more people than ever have starting looking after someone who relies on their help. We have lots of ways to support you in your caring role. Join in one of our monthly drop in sessions to see how we can help you. Find out about our groups, relaxation sessions, specialist advice, holiday grants, crafting sessions, benefits...the list goes on! Our friendly team are here for you, you're not alone.



**Carers
Leeds**

**CARERS
TRUST**

A Network Partner

Until we can meet face to face again, our monthly drop in sessions are online. Meet the team and sample some of our activities.

You can drop in at any point during the session and stay for as long (or as short) a time as you like! You can even bring a cuppa and we'll owe you a biscuit when we meet face to face.

Thursday 25 March

12.30 – 2pm

Meet our carers group co-ordinator, have a 10 minute slot with one of our friendly advice workers, take a tour of the services we offer, sample a wellbeing relaxation session and meet our connections team who offer support to carers aged 50+ who are feeling isolated.



Thursday 08 April

5.30 – 7pm

Meet our carers group co-ordinator, dementia team leader, and learn how you can get involved and have your say. Have a 10 minute session with one of our friendly advice workers, take a tour of the services we offer or sample a wellbeing relaxation session.

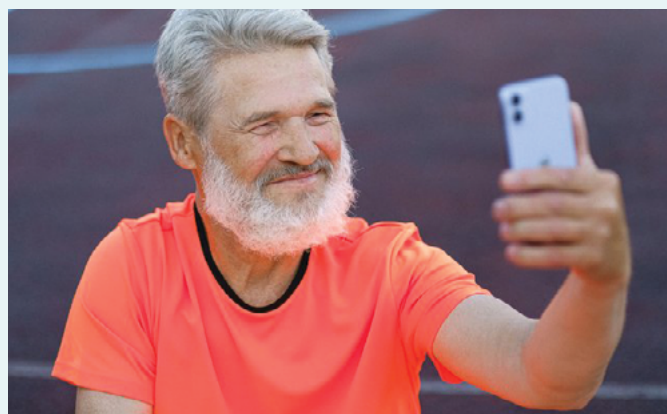
Never used Zoom before? No problem, we can help!

Using Zoom for the first time can be daunting but once you get the hang of it, it can really open up a whole new world. Why not book on our 'New to Zoom' info session where we can have a practice using it?

Wednesday 10 March

1 – 2pm

Join Lydia and Nikki to talk through any problems you may have experienced in joining a Zoom session, how to turn your camera off, how to change the name that appears and any other questions you may have.



No smartphone or tablet to get online?

We can help with that too! Call our friendly advice line team on 0113 380 4300 and ask for a digital assessment.

If you'd like to know more about these drop in sessions or want to join in, contact Nikki on 0750 888 5898.

Carers and the COVID-19 Vaccination

With the roll-out of vaccines now firmly underway, there are many questions around who will be prioritised and when.

In December the vaccination programme started, with those considered most at risk being contacted first including those aged over 80, those living in care homes, and frontline health and social care staff.

Carers will be invited as part of priority group 6, although if you are over 65 or clinically extremely vulnerable you will be invited earlier.

Carers Leeds welcomed the advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which recognised unpaid family carers and your health and wellbeing as a priority within our communities.

What can I do as a carer?

Please don't contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, they will contact you. Don't be worried if you haven't been invited yet, it will take some time to get through everyone in the earlier groups.

Your NHS Patient Record can identify you as a carer—and it is these records that are used to coordinate both the COVID-19 and seasonal flu vaccination programmes.

If you haven't already, let your GP Practice know that you care for someone who cannot manage

without your help. Given the current circumstances, your GP surgery is likely to be very busy so contact them through their website or by e-mail if possible.

Or request a Carers Yellow Card from your GP Practice or by calling Carers Leeds on 0113 246 8338. The Carers Yellow Card is a short form to complete and hand back to your GP Practice.

COVID-19 vaccine scams

Please remember the COVID-19 vaccine will always be available free of charge and the NHS will never ask you to share bank details to confirm your identity.

You may want to think about what will make the experience as easy as possible for you and the person you care for, such as taking warm clothing, a snack or a fold down seat.

Help for people aged over 60

Attending a medical appointment can be difficult when someone else relies on you for care and support.

Carers Leeds has been given funding to help with any financial barriers preventing carers aged over 60yrs (or caring for someone aged over 60yrs) from attending their COVID-19 vaccination appointment.

Perhaps a taxi would save you time and reduce some of the risk that public transport may bring or maybe you need someone to sit with and keep the person you care for safe. To find out more, call us on 0113 246 8338.

COVID-19 Vaccine Priority Groups

1. residents in a care home for older adults and care workers
2. all those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers
3. all those 75 years of age and over
4. all those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals
5. all those 65 years of age and over
6. all individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality

This also includes those who are in receipt of Carers Allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.

7. all those 60 years of age and over
8. all those 55 years of age and over
9. all those 50 years of age and over

Those aged under 50 will be offered it later.

Helping you feel good...

Feeling lonely can be something we all experience at times.

At present our usual ways of meeting people or seeing our friends has been changed. Sometimes being lonely can affect our mental health so we want to share some things carers have told us they do to prevent loneliness.

- Find new ways to stay in touch with others. Stay in touch with video calls, texts or just making regular phone calls is a good idea!
- Keep up your routines where possible
- Writing letters is a lovely way to show someone that you're thinking of them
- Join events with Carers Leeds

Here are some great creative ways to feel good:

- Take photographs
- Make up a story
- Doodle - All you need is paper and a pen
- Draw - anything you want
- Dance - Put on some good music and dance around the living room
- Do some baking
- Colour
- Sing - Put your favourite song on and sing along
- Collage - Grab some pens, glue, and a magazine full of pictures
- Textiles - Find some material, even old clothes, and rip or cut them up and make something from them
- Get into nature - Go for a walk - bring a camera or maybe a sketch book
- Print - Make your own drawing and printing tools

This could feel like a lonely time, but it will pass. For now, let's be as kind as possible to ourselves as we are to others.



International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The theme for International Women's Day 2021 is 'Choose To Challenge'. A challenged world is an alert world, and from challenge comes change.

According to the last census, 58% of carers are women so choose to challenge with Carers Leeds at our online event on 08 March at 10:30am. We're hosting a morning of discussion, workshops and conversation. We will be joined by panellists sharing their personal perspective on the theme of challenge. Our workshops will provide smaller spaces for us to connect and share. A welcoming Zoom morning celebrating women, female carers are invited join in as much or little as you like. You can ask questions, take a moment for yourself and connect with others.

To book a space, call our event booking line on 0113 380 4300.

You can also get involved with the Carers Leeds Challenge for International Women's Day. Complete a sentence and send it back. This could be written, a picture or made into something arty!

You can choose "The biggest challenge I have overcome is..." or "I will challenge myself to..."

Responses can be sent to Lydia by e-mail lydia.crosland@carersleeds.org.uk, by calling 0743 202 3823 or by post.



Inspiring change

We are delighted to introduce inspiring change, a series of workshops delivered by Leeds Mind which aim to improve the wellbeing of carers aged 16 - 25.

This project is funded in partnership with the Carers Trust and The Quilter Foundation and topics for the workshops include:

- Me and my sleep
- Social media
- Exploring guilt
- Managing anxiety
- Looking after myself
- Identity and self image

The workshops will take place online over Zoom and will run every Friday for six weeks. To take part, or for more information please contact Farrah on 0785 448 1061.

Would you like to meet other carers in similar situations?

Join one of our friendly carer support groups. These usually run face to face but are temporarily online until its safe for us all to meet again. We have lots of groups to choose from. Some are specific to the condition of the person you are caring for e.g. memory loss/dementia and others are open to all carers in Leeds. We often invite guests from another organisation to talk about useful topics such as power of attorney or keeping active and the groups take place on different days and times so whatever your caring role, there will be a group for you.

If you have never been to a group before and are not sure what to expect or are feeling nervous, our group co-ordinator Angie can get in touch with you beforehand to explain more about the group and what to expect. To speak to Angie, find more information about the groups, or to tell us if a particular group would be useful for us to set up, contact our event booking line on 0113 380 4300.



Tell us!

We'd love to hear from you to find out what type of events and information sessions you would find most useful.

These are some of the suggestions that carers have given us so far. If you would be interested in any of these topics or have topics to suggest, get in touch!

- What is Attendance Allowance and who can claim it?
- What is a Lasting Power of Attorney and who should have one?
- What is respite, who is eligible and how can I access it?
- Social media for beginners

To tell us what events you'd like to attend and what days / times would suit you best, contact Nikki Pattinson, Carers Engagement Lead on 0750 888 5898.



Carers Connections

Our connections project is a great way to connect with others and meet people at your pace.

We bring carers aged over 50 together to share experiences, hobbies and laughter. We offer both one-to-one and group activities.

Every Wednesday at 2pm we have a connections catch up. Join us to check in, have a natter and try something new. A relaxed group that encourages everyone to do something together. We have made scrapbooks, listened to radio dramas and talked the day away. Tell us what you would like to try!

Every Tuesday in March we're running Dance On - dance sessions led by professional dance artist Rachel Clarke and coordinated by Yorkshire Dance. Shake your hips, get your groove on and dance along to all

your fave tunes. The classes are all adaptable to different mobility levels and most of all, are lots of fun! The person you care for is also welcome to join in.

On the last Friday of each month we're hosting a games night. Join us for a host of old favourites and try some new games too. Have a go at Countdown, Name That Tune and more! Points make prizes but they also make smiles, laughter and an evening of fun.

To book any of these events, call our



event booking line on 0113 380 4300. Our events will be face to face when we're safe to meet again but for now, they are on Zoom.

Need a friendly face when you are joining something new? Lydia can come along with you. She can join you at choir, art class, wellbeing session and more. Get in touch and tell us how we can help.

For a friendly chat about the connections project and to see how we can help you, contact Lydia on 0743 202 3823.

Are you looking after someone who is living with dementia or memory problems?

Our dementia hub has lots of useful events, information and support to help you. We run workshops which cover understanding dementia, coping with unusual behaviours, mental capacity and legal matters, maximising income and support for the future.

Our dementia carer support groups take place on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and are a good way to share experiences and get emotional support from other carers in a similar situation.

Every Friday at 11am we run a coffee morning, giving carers an opportunity to have an informal catch up with other carers.

We can also share useful resources and products which can be useful for you or the person you are caring for.

To book any of these events, call our event booking line on 0113 380 4300. These events will be face to face when we're safe to meet again but for now, they are on Zoom. If you need help to get online, let us know by calling our friendly advice team on 0113 380 4300 and ask for a digital assessment.



What's happening in Leeds?

Age UK

Age UK Leeds Help at Home provides a reliable and tailored service, which will enable you or your loved one to continue to enjoy living at home.

The service costs £17 per hour and can be used on a regular, short term or ad hoc basis. They can help with things such as:

- Respite support for carers
- Support to make a light meal or snack
- Light cleaning and organising your home
- Laundry and ironing
- Shopping

This service is not restricted to older people, all support workers have enhanced DBS checks and they currently provide support in LS5-13 and LS16-20 plus LS28.

If you would like more information or to arrange some help at home, contact Julie Skelton, Help at Home Service, Age UK Leeds by phone (0113 389 3000) or by e-mail (helpathome@ageukleeds.org.uk).

Leeds Recovery College

Leeds Recovery College offer a wide range of free courses that focus on keeping us mentally and physically well. The courses will help you to learn more about mental health, work out what keeps both you and the person you care for well and find ways to enjoy life more.

To take a look at their online and distance learning timetable visit LeedsRecoveryCollege.com, or call 0113 885 5127.

Linking Leeds

Linking Leeds is a free city-wide social prescribing service. They can link you with services and activities within your community to improve your social, economic and mental wellbeing.

If you think you would benefit from this service or have any questions, you can call the social prescribing service on 0113 336 7612.

Give you an opportunity to discuss what is important to you. Link you with appropriate services within your community to support you to achieve your goals. Provide you with your own wellbeing coordinator who will help you plan your next steps.

They can link you in with services to improve housing matters, money management skills, social activities, emotional and mental wellbeing and a healthy lifestyle.



Free PPE for unpaid carers in Leeds



Unpaid carers in Leeds are eligible to receive free personal protective equipment such as face shields, masks, and gloves.

Apply online at www.carersleeds.org.uk



**carers advice line
0113 380 4300**



/carersleeds



@carersleeds

www.carersleeds.org.uk

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 or call 0113 380 4300.

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.

Useful contacts

Carers Advice Line

0113 380 4300

Adult Social Care

0113 222 4401

Children's Social Care

0113 222 4403

COVID-19 Helpline

0113 378 1877

NHS Non Emergency

111

Domestic Violence Helpline

0113 246 0401

Bereavement Support

0808 196 3833

NHS 24 Hour Mental Health Helpline

0800 183 0558

Leeds Directory

0113 378 4610

Welfare Rights Advice

0113 376 0452

Citizens Advice Bureau

0113 223 4400

Silverline

0800 470 8090