

# Carers In Touch



*The free newsletter for family  
Carers in Staffordshire*

## Spring 2022



**Welcome to the Spring edition of our newsletter.** Spring is the time of renewal and new beginnings. With fresh buds blooming and animals awakening - it's like the Earth comes back to life again. But with that we understand that the fall out from Covid brought many worries to Carers - 'will the services still be there for me / when will I get a break again / is it really safe to go back out yet?' We are ensuring your voice is getting heard across Staffordshire's Health and Social Care services.

In this newsletter we have our CASS service update, a chance to read about our trip to Medequip and important information on Covid vaccines, especially for those with younger children. Carers Cookery Corner is back with a chicken fajita pasta bake recipe, as it's time to add some colour back onto our plates to match the spring. Let us know if you cook up a storm in the kitchen—we'd love to see how you get on.

We are looking forward to celebrating Carers Week in June and over the next few months we will outline the details of how we hope to tie in the celebrations for Carers Week and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee together. Check page 2 for a save the date message.

Our Digital Buddy scheme is helping Carers become more confident in using technology. Many people switched to go online during the pandemic to help access information, communicate with and see family and friends, shop and help manage their health problems (booking tests!). But for others this world can still be scary. If you are inspired to get online but still require some help or advice, ask about our digital buddy scheme.

If you would like any further information on any topics covered in this issue, call our communications officer on 01785 222365.



## CASS The Carers Association

### Carers Advice Line

# 01785 606675

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 10am - 4pm  
Free information, support and advice for family Carers in Staffordshire



# CASS Services . . .

We want to hear from you! The views of our Carers are so important to us in ensuring we are delivering the best support to you. We are looking at what works well and what needs to be improved. If you access our services and would like to leave feedback please email:

[enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk)



## Queen's Jubilee Celebration

**Wednesday 15th June 2022**

You are cordially invited to our summer celebration! We're back with a double celebration to tie in with Carers Week and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, after not being able to hold a summer celebration for 2 years.

There will be a talk on all things Royalty by Kath Reynolds, refreshments, an optional red, white and blue dress theme and an opportunity to be altogether again.

Please keep an eye on your inbox for an invitation arriving shortly. Booking will open soon and will be done on a first come first served basis.

So save the date—15th June!



06-12 June 2022



## Caring and Support Skills Workshops

We are delighted with how the Caring and Support Skills workshops have gone so far, having introduced them towards the end of 2021. So far we have covered men's and women's carers, managing changes and dementia.

If you are looking to refresh your caring skills, learn new techniques and see how CASS and the community can support you—please join us on our next set of workshops covering Caring Day to Day.

There is a weekly workshop over 4 weeks held via Zoom. These are tailored to include specific information relevant to your situation. We have purposely kept the group sizes small, to ensure we have enough time to address individual challenges if they arise and want to be shared. The next workshops are as follows:

**Caring day to day:** Wednesdays throughout April

**Mental Health & Wellbeing:** Wednesdays throughout May

**Moving on:** Wednesdays throughout June

## Carers Together

The Carers Together online group meets weekly on Tuesday between 2pm – 3pm. This is a relaxed hour to catch up with others over a coffee from your own home. The conversation is Carer led and often diverts off from caring—giving you an opportunity to think of something else even if just for an hour.

What Carers Say...

“The workshops have been really interesting and opened me up to new things. It's nice to know what is out there that is free and available. Since I've been on the workshop I've taken up one of the offers and signed up to a new 12 week diet plan from Everyone Health. Wouldn't have known about that unless I'd done this”

*Female Carers Workshop Attendee*

# Local Life . . .

## Working with Medequip

Our Chief Operating Officer and Carers Advisor and support Officer have visited the local Medequip branch in Stafford. Medequip are the leading supplier of community equipment to help you stay safe and independent at home for longer.

Karen, Chief Operating Officer at CASS, said, "It was great to meet the team and we were amazed at the size of building and all of the equipment that can be supplied. The range is fantastic, ranging from the smallest of 'gadgets' to hospital type beds. Medequip can be contacted on: 01785 273950 or [stafford@medequip-uk.com](mailto:stafford@medequip-uk.com)



## Booking a Coronavirus Vaccination—it's not too late!

Everyone above the age of 12 is now eligible for a Covid Vaccine and the vaccine has begun to rollout for children aged between 5 and 11 years old, who are most at risk of getting COVID-19. Parents and guardians, of these children, should wait for the NHS to contact them for when is it their child's turn to get the vaccine, with local NHS teams already contacting those who are eligible. If you are supporting a young child who has a learning disability you can [visit the Mencap website for more information](#) and to contact their learning disability helpline on 0808 808 1111. A reminder that free lateral flow testing will conclude on April 1st 2022.

## Dementia Action Week

*Dementia Action Week* is a national event that encourages people to take action to improve the lives of people affected by dementia. This year dementia action week will be running from Monday 16th— Sunday 22nd May.

One in three of us born in the UK today will go on to develop dementia in our lifetime, and there will be one million people living with dementia by 2025 making dementia care one of the greatest challenges facing our society. Nearly all of us will be effected by dementia, whether we end up having it or caring for a loved one living with it, therefore we all have a role to play in making the UK a dementia-friendly place to live. Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends programme is the biggest ever initiative to change people's perceptions of dementia. Join the initiative this dementia action week by becoming a dementia friend. Join in person at the MHA Communities South Staffordshire, Old Mining College, Queen Street, Burntwood WS7 4QH on 19th May at 2pm by calling 01543 674257 or join an online session by visiting the [dementia friends website here](#).



### Can you refer a friend?

Do you know a friend, neighbour, other family member or even a colleague in a caring role, who's not yet signed up with us? Could you let them know what's available from help with by talking to CASS.

Get them to call us on 01785 606675

### TRUSTEE VACANCY

Are you looking to make a difference to the lives of Carers? We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers to join our Board of Trustees. Our Board contributes to the development and vision of CASS. The board meet up quarterly, at the moment this is virtually.

Call 07740418648 (Monday—Friday)

## Impact Futures - qualifications fully funded

Impact Futures are delivering the below qualifications **FULLY FUNDED** through their Adult Education Budget, to anyone aged 19+ and regardless of their employment status. The courses are specifically designed to raise knowledge and awareness of the subject area to support others. They offer qualifications in childcare & education, healthcare, business, IT and team leading -

- Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Children and Young People's Mental Health
- Level 2 Certificate in Awareness of Mental Health Problems
- Level 2 Certificate in Self Harm & Suicide Prevention Awareness
- Level 2 SEND
- Level 2 Autism Awareness
- Level 2 Certificate in Equality and Diversity
- Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Nutrition & Health
- Level 2 Certificate in Understanding the Care and Management of Diabetes
- Level 2 Award in the Prevention and Control of Infection
- Level 2 Certificate in Principles of Team Leading
- Level 2 Certificate in IT User Skills
- Level 2 Certificate in Principles of Business Administration
- Level 2 Certificate in Principles of Customer Service

Courses are delivered via their online learning platform with support from fully qualified, experienced Tutors, and can be completed any time throughout the day or evening. Learners can complete as many courses as they want, and they will receive a nationally recognised certificate from the Awarding Body upon completion of the course(s).

**The funding expires at the end of July; therefore, they are encouraging everyone to access the training as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. They cannot guarantee that they will secure further funding to offer the courses beyond this date.**

To book your spaces on the courses please email / call:

**Andrea Swales** on T: [01753 596004](tel:01753596004) | M: [07706 324 181](tel:07706324181) | [Andrea.Swales@impactfutures.co.uk](mailto:Andrea.Swales@impactfutures.co.uk)

IMPACT FUTURES

## Coming up next at CASS

# CARING AND SUPPORT SKILLS

## Caring Day to Day Workshops



Let us empower you with skills to support you in your day to day role as a Carer.

Caring can be physically and mentally demanding, but enhancing your support skills can help you feel more confident in your caring role. Get support with the different daily aspects of caring in the latest workshops with CASS.

**The workshops will be held online over 4 weeks on:  
Wednesday 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th April 2022  
10am - 12pm**

For more information and to book call our Carers Advice Line on **01785 606675**



The free online workshops will cover:

- challenges as a carer
- financial support including benefits, blue badge, utilities & carers discounts
- medication made easier
- getting the most out of health care professionals
- assistive technology for your home
- manual handling techniques
- trips and falls prevention





## Carers Assessments FAQs

A Carers Assessment is a way of measuring the impact caring has on your own life and explores options to support you. It is an assessment of your needs as an unpaid Carer.

### Who can ask for an assessment?

It is the council's duty to carry out a Carers Assessment for anyone providing unpaid care. It is important to note that if you receive Carers Allowance, this is NOT considered as being paid to provide care.

### How do I get an assessment?

To request a Carers Assessment, please call Staffordshire Adult Social Services on 0300 111 8010.

### What happens during a Carers Assessment?

The assessment is a conversation about your caring role, including questions about your physical health, mental health, work life balance, free time and relationships. There may be specific questions about topics so that the assessor can identify the support that you require. It is usually held face to face but can also be carried out over the phone.

### How do I prepare for my Carers Assessment?

It can be worthwhile jotting your thoughts down for a few weeks leading up to your Carers Assessment. This can help identify specific areas, times or patterns that you may need further support with.

### How can a Carers Assessment help me?

The assessment may identify aspects of your caring role that are causes of stress for you, or which indicate where you may need additional support. Having a Carers Assessment could lead to you being offered support such as breaks from caring, information and advice, adaptations or equipment around the house.

### Do I have to pay?

The actual Carers Assessment is free of charge, and any support that comes of the assessment is subsequently free. However, any support that the person that you are caring for requires may be charged.

### Can I have another Carers Assessment?

You can have a review of your Carers Assessment annually; you can ask for an early review if your circumstances or caring situation significantly changes.

### What happens afterwards?

A support plan will be drawn up to meet the needs identified in your assessment. You will have the opportunity to look over all the information and to confirm the accuracy of the notes.

### What if I am unhappy with the outcome?

Speak to a member of the CASS team who can help you file a complaint or appeal in regards to your Carers Assessment.

## Carers Cookery Corner— Chicken Fajita Pasta Bake



Prep time: 5 mins    Cook time: 30 mins    Serves 4

#### Ingredients:

- 250 g Pasta
- 2 tbsp Olive oil
- 500 g Chicken breasts Chopped into small chunks
- 30 g Fajita seasoning mix
- 3 Cloves Garlic Peeled and crushed
- 1 Onions Peeled and sliced
- 3 Peppers Deseeded and sliced
- 250 g Cream cheese
- 400 g Tinned tomatoes
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 100 g Cheddar cheese

Meal can be frozen —please be careful when reheating.    Recipe can be found on: [www.tamingtwins.com](http://www.tamingtwins.com)

#### Method:

Cook the pasta until just cooked through, drain and set aside. Heat half of the olive oil in a frying pan. Add the chicken and half of the fajita seasoning. Cook for about 10 minutes until cooked through. Remove from the pan and set aside. Heat the remaining olive oil in the pan over a high heat, add the garlic, onions, peppers and remaining fajita seasoning and cook until slightly blackened at the edges. Add the chicken back to the pan with the cream cheese, tinned tomatoes and plenty of salt and pepper. Stir through and pour into a shallow dish. Top with cheese and put under a hot grill until cheese is melted. Enjoy!

## Emergency Advice and Support Contacts

If you need support over the winter period, there are several support numbers you can contact

### Staffordshire County Council Contacts

Social Care team: 0300 111 8010

First Response Team: 0800 1313 126

Reporting Abuse (adult): 0345 604 2719

Emergency Duty Team: 0345 604 2886

*(Out of office hours 5pm - 9pm, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays)*

**NHS Non Emergency: 111**

*In an emergency call 999*

**Carers UK Helpline: 0808 808 7777**

*(Mon - Fri 9am - 6pm)*

**Family Line: 0808 802 6666 (9am - 9pm)**

**Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline:**

0808 800 2234 *(open 24 hours)*

**Samaritans: 116 123 (open 24 hours)**

**Southern Staffordshire Urgent Mental Health Helpline:**

0808 196 3002 *(open 24 hours)*

**Staffordshire Women's Aid Helpline: 0300 330**

5959 *(open 24 hours)*

**Citizens Advice: 0808 278 7874**

**Crime Stoppers: 0800 555 111**

**British Red Cross Support Line: 0808 196 3651**  
*(10am - 6pm)*



## Contacting CASS

To speak to a specific member of our team - please see the contact numbers below

**Chief Operating Officer: 07740418648**

**Carers Wellbeing & Advice Officer & Carers Together Online: 01785 606675**

**Carers Skills Coordinator (Workshops): 07740418643**

**Digital Buddy Scheme / Communications Officer: 01785 222365 / 07793579012**

**Carers Together in the Community (Penkridge): 01785 606675**



01785 606675



[enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk)



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contact our team  
on 01785 606675*