



A message from Director Alan Corry Finn

Dear Carers,

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and to express the Trusts appreciation for all for the amazing and selfless work you do in supporting your loved ones. I have had the pleasure and privilege of attending a number of Carers events in recent years. At a number of these events I have heard individual carers tell their stories of the challenges that the caring role brings. We have also heard how new developments in carer support, particularly in the area of personal development, has inspired and supported carers.

As the Director with corporate responsibility for Carers and I have delegated the operational responsibility for Carers to Mr Aidan Gordon. Mr Gordon chairs the Western Trust Carers Steering Group and represents the Western Trust at the Regional Carers Strategy Implementation Group. Whilst the Trust faces both financial and operational challenges, the time and effort you all put in to support your loved ones energises and inspires staff in the Western Trust and helps us rise to those challenges.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cathy Magowan, Carers Coordinator and the members of the Carers Support Team, Laura Ritchie and Carmel Corrigan, who have worked tirelessly over the past year to implement as much of the Carers Strategy as possible with the limited financial resources available to us.

An example of innovative and creative developments within the world of carers support is the establishment of carers walking groups in Fermanagh and Derry/Londonderry. I have been moved by the personal experiences shared by carers via the carer's newsletter and impressed by the benefits carers have gained through participation.

As we approach the New Year with a challenging financial situation with increasing numbers of people requiring care and support, more than ever we need to work in partnership with you and to support you in any way we can.

I look forward to attending more carer events over the coming year; meeting some of you and learning from you how we can best support you.

Alan Corry Finn
Director of Primary Care and Older People's Services.



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Brief Background of Improving Benefit Uptake

Part of our responsibility is to ensure that every individual in NI is receiving all the benefits, supports and services that they and their families are entitled to. One of our targeted groups is Carers, in particular reaching out to people who do not view themselves as Carers. They can also be a key influencer to encourage others and potentially those they care for to have a benefit entitlement check and use the services of our team. We can help them find out if they are getting the right financial support using several mechanisms;

Our **Service Delivery team** – this is the **quickest** (first point of contact) way to get a response to **general benefit enquiries by:**

calling **0800 232 1271** – **at the end of the phone you will get through to a local experienced Benefit Advisor***

Lines open 9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday

The Benefit Advisor can help assess a customer's potential entitlement to a wide range of benefits, services and support including;

[Bereavement](#)

[The Social Fund](#)

[Warm Homes grant scheme](#)

[Boiler Replacement Scheme](#)

[Cold Weather Payment](#)

[Winter Fuel Payments](#)

[Blue Badge Scheme](#)

[Free/Concessionary Transport](#)

[Free TV Licence](#)

[Free school meals/transport or uniform grants](#)

[Child Benefit\(external link\)](#)

[Help with Health Care Costs](#)

[Hospital Travel Costs](#)

[Maternity Grants](#)

The Benefit Advisor can also help you make that first step to making a claim.

A textphone can also be used and the number is: 0800 232 1715.

To request a call back: Text CHECK to 66101

Our service delivery team **can also attend benefit awareness clinics delivering talks and information sessions.** Attendees at such events can also have a personal benefit entitlement check.

For more information, please contact an Outreach Service Manager

by telephoning on 028 9013 8891 or 028 9013 8892 or

by emailing: [Community Outreach Team](#) (WH SCT area contact details on page 3)

Our internet site hosts a range of information on our services and can be accessed on www.nidirect.gov.uk/unclaimed-benefits. Specific information relating to Improving Benefit Uptake can be found on www.dsdni.gov.uk, select Social Security Agency tab and then select Improving Benefit Uptake tab.

***If calling on behalf of someone, customer consent is required**

Benefits Information

Social Security Agency
Improving Uptake of Benefits
Community Outreach Officers

Name	Office Base	Telephone	e-mail
Derek Moran	Enniskillen	028 6634 3311 077 3977 3727	derek.moran@nissa.gsi.gov.uk
Sharon Scott	Strabane	028 7138 1003 077 3977 3716	sharon.scott1@nissa.gsi.gov.uk
Steven Horner	Foyle Lisnagelvin Limavady	028 7185 5433 077 3977 3719	steven.horner.nissa.gsi.gov.uk
Thomas Corey	Omagh	028 8287 4078 077 3977 3722	thomas.corey@nissa.gsi.gov.uk

From April 2015 the Earnings Limit for Carers Allowance will rise to £110 a week.

Not sure what benefits you are entitled to or need a benefits check?

For independent advice and support contact: -

Omagh Independent Advice Service

Tel: (028) 8224 3252

Dove House Resource Centre, Derry

Tel: (028) 7126 9327

The Resource Centre, Derry

Tel: (028) 7135 2832

Churches Advice Centre, Spencer Rd, L'Derry

Tel: (028) 7134 2536

Rosemount Community Resource Centre, Derry

Tel: (028) 7128 2829

Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI)

Tel: (028) 7776 5438

Citizens Advice Bureau:

(Fermanagh) Tel: (028) 6632 4334 **(L/Derry)** Tel: (028) 7136 2444

(Strabane) Tel: (028) 7138 2665

Carers NI also provide advice and support via a helpline Tel: (028) 9043 9843

Benefit Rates

(April 2014)

CARER'S ALLOWANCE

£61.35

Carer premium - £34.20

Earnings limit - £102

(rising to £110 in April 2015)

ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE

Higher rate - £81.30

Lower rate - £54.45

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

Care Component

Highest - £81.30

Middle - £54.45

Lowest - £21.55

Mind the Gap Carers Champions

The Carers Trust is a new charity which was formed by the merger of The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Crossroads Care in April 2012.

Mind the Gap is a new project managed by Carers Trust, in Northern Ireland. Carers Trust works to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. We do this with Network Partners - a unique network of Carers services. Together we are united by a shared vision for carers - to make sure that information, advice and practical support are available to all carers across the UK. Network partners in Northern Ireland are Belfast Carers Centre, Carers Trust - Southern Regional Carers, and All HSC Trust Areas.

Mind the Gap is a project aimed at Carers aged 60+. The project is aimed at identifying carers over sixty who need help, advice and support in their caring role. Each Health Trust area has a Carers Outreach support Worker. In 2013 volunteers were recruited to assist the support workers at information days, the distribution of leaflets and other information. Their help will depend on their caring role, therefore the level of help they can give will depend entirely on when the individual has time, they will be asked to help in their own area only. These "Carers Champions" are all past and present carers themselves. Their experience as carers is exceptional and unique as each different caring role brings with it many different challenges. We currently have Carers Champions, in Fermanagh, Omagh, Derry/Londonderry, and Strabane. All covering the Western Trust Area, there are also Champions in Armagh, Dungannon, Lisburn, Downpatrick, and Newtownards.

Our Carers Champions will be invited to join a steering group, to discuss Carers Trust issues. They will have the opportunity to take part in any training that they feel may help them with their role as Carers Champions or indeed in their caring role. We will begin with Media Training in December 2014, we would also aim to have a celebration day, in an area that suits all. Each Support Worker will be having a 'get together' in their area to thank our Carers champions for their valuable support and to show our appreciation for taking time out of their very busy caring roles.

If you are a carer over 60 who would like some help support or advice, or if you would like to become a carers champion. Please contact:-

Rosaleen Quigley, Carers Support Outreach Worker for the Western Trust Area

Tele 07827 014 687 Email: rquigley@carers.org

Or Sean Caughey, NI Development Manager. Tel 07791 230694 Email: scaughey@carers.org



Neighbourhood Links Celebrates First Year

A year has flown in, according to Nicola Reid, the Red Cross Service Manager in charge of the charity's Neighbourhood Links project. Delivered in partnership with the South West Age Partnership (SWAP) and funded by the Big Lottery Fund, Neighbourhood Links aims to offer support to older people living in isolated, rural communities. She says;

"We've met a lot of people during the first year of this five-year project, and we've done a lot of listening. We've got a very clear idea now of where the needs lie and what we can do to make a difference to the lives of individuals. We've run a number of successful events, bringing older people together for social gatherings, and we've developed relationships with existing clubs run by and for older people."

One of the challenges facing the Neighbourhood Links team as they move forward with the project is the recruitment of volunteers. Nicola continues;

"Volunteers are absolutely critical to the success of our project. People's reasons for volunteering are so generous and caring and this really comes across to our service users. Older people value the human contact and sense of friendship and appreciate that it is being provided by someone who genuinely wants to spend time with them."

"This human aspect is almost more important than any practical support that we can provide. While the project is partly about helping people with day-to-day things like mobility, shopping trips etc.. we particularly want to help anyone suffering the detrimental effects of loneliness and isolation, which can be so harmful to health and wellbeing."

Allison Forbes, Project Manager with SWAP is pleased with the success of Neighbourhood Links, 'I have been out with clubs that have welcomed new members as a direct result of our Neighbourhood Links project. I have seen first-hand the difference this has made to people's lives, they are taking part in club activities, maybe trying something new; meeting new friends and in many cases getting to know old friends again. This all helps reduce the isolation felt by many older people in our local communities and we are keen to continue this vital work with the Red Cross.

The Neighbourhood Links team is actively recruiting volunteers and would like to hear from anyone with an interest in contributing a few hours a week for the benefit of elderly neighbours. Enquiries are also welcome from anyone who feels that they, or a friend or relative, would benefit from involvement with the programme. Please contact Laurence Harte (Omagh) 07860715719 and Isobel Cleary (Fermanagh) 07860715720.

Regional Emergency Social Work Service (028) 9504 9999

The regional emergency social work service operate an emergency response service after normal working hours – i.e. after 5pm each day and all day at weekends and public holidays. Carers who find themselves in a crisis may contact the service to discuss their situation and ascertain if any advice or practical help may be available. Carers are advised that this service is designed to cover *emergency* situations only and staff will not be able to deal with routine matters that can wait until carers are able to contact their keyworker (Social Worker) on the next working day.

What is 10 thousand voices about?

Patient /Client experience is recognised as a key element in delivery of quality health care. The Public Health Agency PHA is carrying out an extensive piece of work across all the health care Trusts with the aim of introducing a more patient/client focused approach to services and to shape future healthcare in NI.

What happens now?

We want to read about **your** overall experience and how it made you feel. It gives you the opportunity to have your say and to highlight what you particularly liked or disliked about your experience.

We want to hear stories either from yourself, family, carers from **MARCH 2013** onwards.so we can understand the impact this experience has had on you (or the person in your care)

Do I have to take part?

No. If you choose not to take part, this will be respected and will not affect your care in any way. If you do take part you are consenting to your anonymous information being used with that of others in the development of reports on patient/ client experience.

Will my personal information be kept confidential?

Yes .We do not need to know your name. When you tell your story remember not to record any family members, carers or professionals. Information is protected under the Data Protection Act 1998.

We are unable to follow up on individual cases. However if poor or dangerous practice has been identified, the project team will feed this back immediately to senior manager so that appropriate action maybe taken.

How do I take part?

Request a paper version from Christine Armstrong/ Brona Shaw at **028 9032 1313 ext 2497 (office hours)**. This is then returned free of charge in the envelope provided with the survey.

If you would like some help completing the survey/ or need an alternative version please use the contact details who will arrange for a project team member to assist you.

What happens to the information gathered?

The information recorded and main themes are identified using a software package called Sensemaker. A report and recommendations will be sent to the Health and Social Care Board on completion of the project.

Contact us

Any queries please contact Christine Armstrong Christine.armstrong@setrust.hscni.net

Or Brona Shaw brona.shaw@hscni.net

028 9032 1313 ext 2497

Thank you for taking the time to share your experience with us. We welcome feedback from all sections of the community.

Vitalise Breaks for Carers

A break from caring can be very hard if finances are a stumbling block. Some may be eligible for help through a fund run by Vitalise, a charity offering breaks for disabled people and their carers. Carers who do not qualify for statutory funding, haven't had a break for a year and have no more than £23,000 in savings may qualify. Call 0303 303 0145 or visit www.vitalise.org.uk

Saga Carers Respite Breaks

The nomination period for 2014 has now closed and carers short-listed by the Trustees will be contacted by the Trust.

Nominations will reopen on 1st January 2015 and paper nomination forms will also be available from this date.

Nominees who were unsuccessful in 2014 will be able to reapply from 1st January 2015.

<http://www.saga.co.uk/saga-charitable-foundation/saga-respite-for-carers-trust.aspx>

Tel: 01303 774421

Do you enjoy singing?

We are keen to encourage Carers to attend the Carers Carol Service. For those of you who are keen singers we are holding a pre-carol service rehearsal **Thursday 4th December, 10.30—12 noon in Coleshill, Enniskillen.**



The Carers Support Team

Wish to invite you to attend the Carers Carol Service

Venue: The Lecture Theatre (Level2), South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen.

Date: Wednesday 17th December 2014

Time: 10.20 am—11.15 am

11.15—12.15 Tea, Coffee and Shortbread.

Please RSVP by Thursday 11th December 2014 to the Carers Support Team

Tel: 028 6634 4180/028 6634 4163

Email: Carers.Support1@westerntrust.hscni.net

There are a few carers travelling from Derry to this event. Please contact Carmel for more information about travel arrangements.

Laura Ritchie (Mrs)

WHSCCT Carers Development Worker
Community Services Dept
2 Coleshill Road
Enniskillen BT74 7HG
Tel:028 66344000
Direct Line:02866 344180
Email:Laura.Ritchie@westerntrust.hscni.net

Carmel Corrigan (Mrs)

WHSCCT Carers Development Worker
Shantallow Health Centre
Racecourse Road,
Londonderry BT48 8NL
Tel: 028 7135 5023
Email:
Carmel.Corrigan@westerntrust.hscni.net

Carer Support Co-ordinator

Cathy Magowan



Cathy Magowan
Carer Support Coordinator
Western Health and Social Care Trust
2 Coleshill Road, Enniskillen
Co. Fermanagh BT74 7HG

Tel: (028) 6634 4000 Direct Line (028) 6634 4163

Email: Cathy.Magowan@westerntrust.hscni.net

Carers Northern Ireland

Carers Database /Register

 **Advice Line**
028 9043 9843

Please use the slip below to **notify us if your details have changed**. If you are no longer a carer you can remain on the database for as long as you wish. However, at any time should you wish us to remove your name please telephone or email.

If you are **not** already on the Trust Carers Register and would like to be included please fill in your details below and return to Carer Support Office, WHSCT 2 Coleshill Road, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh BT74 7HG.

I give permission for my details to be included on the Carers Register with the WHSCT

[Change of details](#)

Title: *Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms (*please delete)

First Name _____ Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____ Mobile _____

Email: _____ D.O.B. _____

Signature: _____

Ethnic background: White Asian Black

So that we can make sure information being sent to you is relevant , we need some information about who you care for.

Please tick below

Age 0–18	<input type="checkbox"/>	18–65	<input type="checkbox"/>	65 and over	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	ASD	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dementia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arthritis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alzheimer's	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart condition	<input type="checkbox"/>	CVA/Stroke	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renal/Kidney disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	MS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parkinson's disease	<input type="checkbox"/>
Old and frail	<input type="checkbox"/>	Downs Syndrome	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brain Injury	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	_____			Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/>