Reading and West Berkshire Newsletter

December 2018





Are You Providing Much Needed Care and Support for a Loved One?

Friend or Family Member?

Come and Meet **Other Carers** Access Information & **Support**

Free Hot Drinks See Back Page For a Support Group Near You

Festive Period Opening

Mon 24th Dec 9am-1pm Tues 25th Dec Closed Wend 26th Dec Closed Thurs 27th Dec 9am-5pm Fri 28th Dec 9am-5pm Mon 31st Dec 9am-1pm Tues 1st Jan Closed



Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS)

If you're referred to hospital or other NHS premises for specialist NHS treatment or diagnostic tests by your doctor, dentist or another primary care health professional.

You may be able to claim a refund of reasonable travel costs under the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS).

Who can claim for help with travel costs?

To qualify for help with travel costs under the HTCS, you must meet 3 conditions:

- 1. At the time of your appointment, you or your partner (including civil partners) must receive one of the qualifying benefits or allowances listed on this page, or meet the eligibility criteria for the NHS Low Income Scheme.
- 2. You must have a referral from a healthcare professional to a specialist or a hospital for further NHS treatment or tests (often referred to as secondary care).
- 3. Your appointment must be on a separate visit to when the referral was made. This applies whether your treatment is provided at a different location (hospital or clinic) or on the same premises as where your GP or another health professional issued the referral.

What are the qualifying benefits and allowances?

You can claim help with travel costs if you or your partner (including civil partner) receive any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit (WTC) with Child Tax Credit (CTC)
- WTC with a disability element or a severe disability element
- CTC but aren't eligible for WTC
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- You receive Universal Credit and meet the criteria.

You can also claim for help with travel costs if:

- You're named on, or entitled to, an NHS tax credit exemption certificate.
- You qualify if you get child tax credits, working tax credits with a disability element (or both)
- Have income for tax credit purposes of £15,276 or less
- You have a low income and are named on certificate HC2 (full help) or HC3 (limited help)

Patients who aren't in receipt of a qualifying benefit but are on a low in come and whose savings are less than £16,000 (or £23,500 if in a care home) may be eligible for assistance with their NHS travel expenses. For more details see;

https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/healthcare-travel-costs-scheme-htcs/

Thames Water

Keep safe and secure when answering your door

When your door bell rings, do you know who's calling?

On most occasions an appointment will have been made with you in advance. At all times keep safe, use your door chain and carefully check the caller's uniform and identity card.

Ask yourself:

- Does the photograph match the person?
- Is the card out of date?
- Can you clearly see the company logo?

A genuine caller from **Thames Water**, including one of our contractors, is always happy to confirm their name and which company they are from. They are also happy to wait outside while you call us to confirm who they are.

If you are unsure about a caller at your door, ask them to wait outside, keep the door locked and call us on our 24 hour Bogus Caller Line on 0800 316 9800.

Keep extra safe and join our password scheme today.

Choose a password, of no more than eight characters, that only you and our authorised representative will know.

Call us on 0800 009 3652 and we will set up your password.

When we visit, our representative will either quote your password automatically, or you can ask them to provide it.

If they don't know your password, do not let them into your home.

Healthcare from the heart of your community







INTERESTED IN ONLINE SUPPORT FOR CARING FOR A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER AFFECTED BY PSYCHOSIS?

EFFIP (E-Support for Families & Friends of Individuals affected by Psychosis) A randomised controlled trial of a co-produced online intervention for carers

About the EFFIP Project

The EFFIP Project (E-support for Families & Friends of Individuals affected by Psychosis) aims to develop and evaluate an online resource providing peer support, information on psychosis and ways for carers to look after themselves. The online resource is called **COPe-support** (Carers f**O**r **P**eople with **P**sychosis **e-support** resource).

What is the study about?

COPe-support is accessible via http://cope-support.org and is ready for use! We want to find out if COPe-support works to improve carers' wellbeing and how well they cope with caring. We do that by comparing wellbeing and coping for people using COPE-support with people who have access to online information that is usually available on the internet.

What does taking part involve?

If you decide to take part you will have access either to usual internet resources on caring or to COPesupport for 20 weeks. We will also ask you to fill in some questionnaires online to see how you are feeling at the start, half way through, after 4 months and 8 months of using the resource. We will also invite some carers for an individual interview afterward.

Who can join the study?

We are inviting carers supporting a loved one affected by psychosis to join the study. Carers can be parents, partners, siblings, other relatives or close friends. All participants need to be aged 18 or above, living in England, able to communicate in English, and have regular access to the internet.

If you'd like to find out more

Please read the <u>information sheet for participants</u>, and contact Jacqueline Sin who is leading the study, on o7817027035 or <u>jasin@sgul.ac.uk</u>, or Heather Hopkins (Research Nurse) o7827 840558 / <u>Heather.Hopkins@berkshire.nhs.uk</u>. You can visit our website http://cope-support.org, or via Twitter @COPe-support

Participants will be paid £30 in total for their time

Universal Credit

How to claim

You need to apply for Universal Credit online.

- You have to apply as a couple if you and your partner live together. You do not need to be married.
- You might also need to phone the Universal Credit helpline to book an interview with a work coach. You'll be told if you need to do this after you apply.
- You will not get Universal Credit if you do not attend the appointment.

What you need to apply

- You'll need: your bank, building society or credit union account details (call the Universal Credit helpline if you do not have one)
- An email address
- Your National Insurance number
- Information about your housing, for example how much rent you pay
- Details of your income, for example payslips
- Details of savings and any investments, like shares or a property that you rent out
- Details of how much you pay for childcare if you're applying for help with childcare costs

If you do not provide the right information when you apply it might affect when you get paid or how much you get.

You also have to verify your identity online. You'll need some proof of identity for this, for example your:

- Driving licence
- Passport
- Debit or credit card

Help with your application

Contact the Universal Credit helpline to:
get help making your claim online
make a claim in Welsh
Universal Credit helpline
Telephone: 0800 328 5644
Welsh language (make a claim): 0800 012 1888
Textphone: 0800 328 1344
Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Due a council tax discount for 'severe mental impairment'?

By law, someone who has been medically certified as having a permanent condition that affects their intelligence and social functioning (eg, Alzheimer's or severe learning difficulties, but many other conditions may apply) is 'disregarded for council tax purposes' in England, Scotland and Wales. It means you can claim:

- A 25% discount if you live with someone with a severe mental impairment and no other adults, or
 only adults who have also been disregarded for council tax purposes.
- A 100% discount if you have a severe mental impairment and live alone.

Who is eligible for the severe mental impairment discount?

Both of the following must apply for someone to qualify for a severe mental impairment (SMI) council tax discount:

They've been medically certified as being severely mentally impaired. For example, this may be the case if they have dementia, Parkinson's, severe learning difficulties or have had a stroke. It will depend on each individual's case though and simply having been diagnosed doesn't automatically mean they qualify - a doctor must also certify they are severely mentally impaired.

They're eligible for (but NOT necessarily actually receiving) at least one of the following benefits:

Incapacity benefit

- Attendance allowance
- Severe disablement allowance
- Disability living allowance (higher or middle-rate care component)
- Increase in disablement pension (due to constant attendance being needed)
- Unemployability supplement or allowance
- Constant attendance allowance
- Income support (which includes a disability premium)
- Personal independence payment (standard or enhanced daily living component)
- Armed forces independence payment

How to claim the discount

The process for making a claim varies by area, so you'll need to check your local authority's procedure.

- First, you'll need a doctor's diagnosis. A registered medical practitioner must have diagnosed a condition causing severe mental impairment. In some cases you'll need to attach a written diagnosis to your claim – in others you just give your doctor's details and they'll be contacted for confirmation.
- Then get a claim form from your council. You'll need to contact your local authority for a claim form to register for a council tax discount (find contact details via the Government's 'Apply for Council Tax Reduction' service).
- Fill the form in and send it off to your council. You may be asked to attach some supporting evidence, such as the doctor's diagnosis or evidence of eligibility for relevant benefits.

Procedures vary by council, so if you want to know how long it will take for the discount to be applied, it's best to check with yours.

More details see

https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2017/09/due-a-council-tax-discount-for-severe-mental-impairment-heres-how-to-claim/

If you would like your newsletter by Email Please let us know!

Email us at: ask@berkshirecarershub.org

SH

FLU VACCINATION IS IMPORTANT FOR CARERS

Carers are people who are in receipt of a carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an older or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.

The flu jab is the best way to protect yourself and the person you care for from flu.

The flu can be far more serious for the person you care for than you think. It can lead to serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia, and could even land them in hospital.

Contact your GP or pharmacist if you think you, or someone you care for, should be eligible for a free flu jab.

There's further information about flu and the flu vaccine on the flu pages of the NHS Choices website.

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/

Get help with savings if you're on a low income (Help to Save)

How it works

Help to Save is a type of savings account. It allows certain people entitled to Working Tax Credit or receiving Universal Credit to get a bonus of 50p for every £1 they save over 4 years.

You get bonuses at the end of the second and fourth years. They're based on how much you've saved. You can save up to £50 each calendar month.

Help to Save is backed by the government so all savings in the scheme are secure.

You can pay money into your Help to Save account by debit card, standing order or bank transfer. You do not have to pay money in every calendar month. You can pay in as many times as you like, but the most you can pay in each calendar month is £50.

You can only withdraw money from your Help to Save account to your bank account.

After 4 years your Help to Save account will be closed. You will not be able to reopen it or open another Help to Save account. You'll be able to keep the money from your account.

You can close your account at any time. If you close your account early you'll miss your next bonus and you will not be able to open another one.

What you'll get

You can earn 2 tax-free bonuses over 4 years. You'll get any bonuses you've earned even if you withdraw money.

After your first 2 years, you'll get a first bonus if you've been using your account to save. This bonus will be 50% of the highest balance you've saved.

After 4 years, you'll get a final bonus if you continue to save. This bonus will be 50% of savings you pay into your account above the highest balance you saved in the first 2 years. If your highest balance does not increase, you will not earn a final bonus.

The most you can pay into your account each calendar month is £50, which is £2,400 over 4 years. The most you can earn from your savings in 4 years is £1,200 in bonus money.

Your bonus is paid into your bank account, not your Help to Save account.

Example

You pay in £25 every calendar month for 2 years.

You do not withdraw any money.

Your highest balance will be £600.

Your first bonus is £300, which is 50% of £600.

In years 3 and 4 you save an extra £200 to grow your highest balance from £600 to £800.

Your final bonus is £100, which is 50% of £200.

Even though you withdrew some money after your balance was £800, this doesn't affect your bonus.

What happens if you withdraw money

If you withdraw money it will be harder for you to: grow your highest balance earn the largest possible bonuses Withdrawing money could mean you are not able to earn a final bonus - depending on how much you withdraw and when.

Eligibility

You can open a Help to Save account if you're either: entitled to Working Tax Credit and receiving Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit payments

claiming Universal Credit and your household income in your last monthly assessment period was £542.88 or more

Payments from Universal Credit do not count as part of your household income.

You also need to be living in the UK. If you live overseas, you can apply for an account if you're either a:

- Crown servant or their spouse or civil partner
- member of the British armed forces or their spouse or civil partner

If you stop claiming benefits

You can keep using your Help to Save account.

How it will affect your benefits

Saving money though a Help to Save account could affect your eligibility for certain benefits and how much you get.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PAYING YOUR HEATING BILL

It's worthwhile claiming what you are entitled to.

Winter Fuel Payment -

a tax-free benefit of up to £300 to pay for heating. People born on or before 5 May 1953 will qualify this year. The exact amount depends on your circumstances including your age, whether you live alone, get Pension Credit, or income-based Jobseeker's or Employment and Support Allowances.

https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/how-to-claim

Cold Weather Payment -

made during periods of very cold weather, to help pay for extra heating costs. The average temperature where you live must be recorded or forecast below 0° C for seven days in a row. You may be eligible if you are getting Pension Credit, Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance or you receive Child Tax Credit that includes a disability element

https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment/how-to-claim

Warm Home Discount Scheme -

helps low-income and vulnerable households with energy costs. Participating energy companies will be providing a discount of £140 on the electricity bill of certain customers, as well as discounts to a broader group of low-income customers.

https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme



West Berkshire Council is consulting on budget proposals affecting public services in the district.



Read our proposals and have your say online by 23 December.

www.westberks.gov.uk/budgetproposals

Berkshire West Your Way

Berkshire West Your Way is a community mental health support service supporting over 18s in Berkshire West (Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire) who experience mental health issues.

The service provides:

short-term 'recovery focussed' 1:1 support to support you as you make changes in your life that are important to you;

self-management groups which are run by peer supporters and give you the opportunity to share things that help you cope and improve your wellbeing

peer support with a trained volunteer with their own lived experience of mental health (subject to availability);

activities such as table tennis, gardening group, social coffee and social meet up

signposting and linking in to other organisations in the local area

Any adult with mental health issues in the Berkshire West area can be referred by their GP or local CMHT or self-refer into the service. Please call 0118 9660240 or email berkshirewest-yourway@together-uk.org and a member of our friendly team will give you more information.

NHS

Are you claiming free prescriptions?

Don't assume you're entitled. You could have to pay up to £100 – as well as your prescription charge.



NHS

Over 1 million

people received a penalty charge notice after claiming free prescriptions last year.

Don't assume you're entitled.

Check at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/freeprescriptions



Social prescribing

A social prescribing service in Reading links people to activities in the community to help improve their health and wellbeing.

Funded by Berkshire West CCG, the service is operated and run by Reading Vountary Action(RVA).

Social Prescribing, the benefits—

- Improved health and wellbeing
- Support for health and lifestyle change
- Improved self-esteem and confidence
- Find local groups and meet new people
- Practical support in the community
- Tailored to a patients' wants and needs
- One stop information service

Social Prescribing can help by sign-posting to activities or services that patients may not know about but could benefit from and informing them about what's available.

The idea behind social prescribing is that it complements the care that people might be receiving from their GP practice. This approach gives patients of any age the space to talk about some of the non-medical underlying issues that affect their wellbeing and to take steps to tackle them.

On referral to the service, patients attend an hour-long individual appointment with a social prescriber at the patient's GP practice. Patients are helped to identify the improvements they want to make, including;

- feeling positive
- lifestyle
- looking after yourself
- managing symptoms
- money management
- where you live
- family and friends
- work, volunteering and other activities

There are a number of ways to get referred to the social prescribing service:

- requesting a referral from your GP,
- emailing social.prescribing@rva.org.uk, or
- calling RVA on 0118 9 372273 and ask for the social prescribing team

Carers Grants – What we can help with...



Carers Fund

Carers Funds is open to carers aged 16 and over.

Carers can apply for grants of **up to £300** for items or activities that will **benefit them in their caring role** e.g.:

- Breaks for carers, with or without the person they care for
- Items for the home including cookers, fridges, beds, washing machines etc. (please refer to table for standard costs that will be allocated unless exceptional circumstances have been identified)
- Driving lessons and other travel costs relating to caring roles
- Courses and materials to develop carers skills and personal development
- Home repairs
- Short term or time limited replacement care

The following costs WILL NOT be funded from Carers Funds:

- · General living expenses e.g. rent, food, bill payments
- Debt repayments
- Costs of regular, long term replacement care
- Specialised equipment or home adaptations
- Motorised vehicles including scooters, cars or motorcycles
- Computer and mobile phone equipment
- Requests where the item has already been purchased or a deposit placed

The Grants Management Team will review these exclusions at regular intervals

Points to Note

- Priority will be given to carers who have not been awarded a grant from the Fund previously
- There must be a clear link between the request and the carer's role.
- The request must make a positive difference to the carer's life.

Requests for driving lessons:

- The carer needs to be able to drive to enable the person in receipt of care to be able to regularly access medical appointments, school, the local community, etc.
- The person in receipt of care was the sole driver in the household but, due to their condition, can no longer drive.
- The carer lives in a rural area where there is little access to regular public transport.

Continued from page 17- grant...

Requests for courses and skills development:

- Allowing the carer to find employment that they can fit around their caring role enabling them to work from home or to work flexible hours.
- Giving the carer a new focus and a break from their caring role e.g. a creative writing course or a flower arranging course

Requests for costs of a break

- The carer would like to have some time away from their caring role.
- The carer would benefit
- The person you carer for must have suitable care in place if not going with you.

Cost of request

 We need to know how any significant differences between the request and total cost, will be covered.

Household financial information statement

- Carers Trust needs to ensure that charitable funds are distributed, to those most in need, both financially and because of the impact of their caring role.
- Carers Fund applications are not assessed solely on the financial situation of the carer; however, this information does form a vital part of the assessment process.

Items for the home – standard price list (incl. VAT)	2018 standard price cost allocation
Washing Machine	£200
Tumble Dryer	£200
Washer Dryer	£300
Gas Cooker	£300
Electric Cooker	£200
Double Bed (mattress and frame)	£300
Single Bed (mattress and frame)	£250
Fridge-Freezer	£200
Fridge	£150
Freezer	£150
Microwave	£60
Dishwasher	£200
Vacuum Cleaner	£100
Sofa Bed	£250
Mattress Double	£200
Mattress Single	£140

Falafel with Beetroot and Apple Slaw



Make sure your lunch is full of colour with this vibrant falafel recipe that tastes as good as it looks. These healthy wraps are filled with creamy houmous, gorgeous green pea and coriander falafels and a crunchy beetroot and apple slaw, for an easy lunch.

PREP: 20 MINS EASY SERVES 4

COOK: 18 MINS

INGREDIENTS

- 140g garden peas, defrosted
- 400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 40g self-raising flour
- 4 spring onions, roughly chopped
- 30g fresh coriander, leaves picked
- 200g houmous
- 4 Wholemeal Tortillas

FOR THE SLAW

- 150g raw beetroot, peeled and grated
- 2 Granny Smith apples, grated
- 100g red cabbage, finely shredded
- 2 lemons, 1 tbsp juice plus extra

- Preheat the oven to gas 6, 200°C, fan 180°C. Line a large baking tray with baking paper. Add the peas, chickpeas, cumin, flour, spring onions and most of the coriander leaves (reserving a few to serve), to the bowl of a food processor. Season and then pulse for 30 secs or until the mixture just comes together.
- Scoop out 2 tbsp portions of the mixture and roll into balls with damp hands. Put on the lined baking tray and flatten slightly. Repeat with all the mixture to make about 12 falafels.
- Bake for 15-18 mins or until the falafels are firm to the touch and lightly golden at the edges.
- Meanwhile, add all the ingredients for the slaw to a large bowl and toss together with a little seasoning.
- To serve, spread the houmous over the tortillas, then top with the slaw and falafels. Garnish with a few coriander leaves before folding in the bottom and sides to enclose the fillings.

 $\label{lem:https://realfood.tesco.com/recipes/falafel-wraps - with-beetroot-and-apple-slaw.html \\$





Berkshire West Timetable

READING and WOKINGHAM Sessions

Day	Time	Activity	Contact	Venue			
Mon	12.00 - 1.0pm	Badmin- ton/ Table Tennis	Gill	Woodford Park Leisure Centre, Haddon Dr, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4LY			
Mon	2.00 - 3.0 pm	Yoga	Julie	Meadway Leisure Centre, Reading RG30 4BZ			
Mon	5.00 - 6.0 pm	Badmin- ton	Tony	Theale Green Recreation Centre, Theale RG7 5DA			
Mon	6.30 - 7.0 pm	Jog/ Walk	Laura	Near changing rooms Prospect Park, Reading RG30 2ND			
Mon	7.30 8.30p m	Badmin- ton	Gill	Emmbrook Secondary School, Emmbrook Rd, Wokingham RG41 1JR			
Tue	12.00 - 1.0pm	Women's Football	Laura	Prospect Park Astroturf Pitches, Reading RG30 2ND			
Tue	2.00 - 3.0pm	Football	Ashley	Prospect Park Astroturf Pitches, Reading RG30 2ND			
Wed	12.00 - 1.0pm	Table Tennis	Gill	Rivermead Leisure Centre, Reading RG1 8EQ			
Wed	1.00 - 2.0pm	Badmin- ton	Gill	Rivermead Leisure Centre, Reading RG1 8EQ			
Thu	12.00- 2.0pm	Tennis	Gill	Outdoor Tennis Courts, Reading University, Shinfield Rd, Reading, RG2 7BW			
Fri	12.00- 1.0pm	Walk	Paul	Near changing rooms Prospect Park, Reading, RG30 2ND			

WEST BERKSHIRE Sessions



Mo n	2.30 - 3.30pm	Yoga	Helen	Northcroft Leisure Centre, Newbury RG14 1RS
Tue	3.00 - 3.45pm	Yoga	Helen	The Lambourn Centre, Close End, Lambourn RG17 8NJ
Tue	3.00 - 4.00pm	Football	Mark/ Tony	Northcroft Leisure Centre, Newbury RG14 1RS
We	6.00 -	Badmin-	Tony	Kennet Leisure Centre, Thatcham, RG19
We d	7.30 - 8.30pm	Football	Tony	St Bartholomew's School, Andover Road, Newbury RG14 6JP
Thu	3.00 - 4.00pm	Badmin- ton	Mal	Northcroft Leisure Centre, Newbury RG14 1RS
Fri	4.00 - 5.00pm	Table Tennis	Mal	Thatcham Parish Hall, Chapel Street, RG18 4JP

Contact: Laura Brooks on: 07341 267740 or info@sportinmind.org

www.facebook.com/sportinmind
www.twitter.com/sportinmind
www.virginmoneygiving.com/sportinmind



West Berkshire Upcoming Support Groups



For further details call 0118 324 7333

Area	Location / Time	Dec	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Of Every Month		
Carers Support Group for carers of people with any disability or illness							
ll amhourn	Lambourn Memorial Hall, Oxford Street, Lambourn, RG17 8XP. 10-12 pm	20th	17th	21st	Every 3rd Thurs		
Danghaiirna	Pangbourne Small Village Hall, Station Road, Pangbourne,RG8 7DY. 12 noon -2 pm	5th	Venue and Date to be Confirmed	6th	Every 1st Wed		
Newbury	Winchcombe Place, Maple Crescent, Newbury RG14 1LN 10am -12pm	To be Confirmed	24th	28th	Every 4th Thurs		
Hungertord	Hungerford Community Fire Station, Church Street, Hungerford. RG170JG 10:30 am - 12:00 pm	18th	15th	19th	Every 3rd Tues		

Carers Support Group for carers of people with all Types Of Mental Health Conditions

Thatcham	Taste of England Pub, Lower Henwick Farm, Thatcham, RG193AP 10am - 12PM	19th	16th	20th	Every 3rd Wed
Thatcham	Hillcroft House, Rooke's Way, Thatcham, RG18 3HR. 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	12th	9th	13th	Every 2nd Wed

Reading Upcoming Support Groups

Area	Location / Time	Dec	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Of Every Month
Whitley	Stroke-Whitley Community CAFÉ, 252 Northumber- land Av RG2 7QA (10-12pm)	6th	3rd	7th	Every 1st Thurs
Caversham	General- Caversham Heights Methodist Church, 74 Highmoor Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7BG (11:00- 12:30pm)	3rd	7th	4th	Every 1st Mon
Tilehurst	Dementia- Emmanuel's Methodist Church, 448 Oxford Roads, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 1EE (10:30-12:00pm)	To be advised	22nd	26th	Every 4th Tues
Whitley Wood	General -Whitley Wood Community Centre, Swallowfield Drive, Reading, RG2 8UH (10:00-12pm)	17th	21st	18th	Every 3rd Mon
Cemetery Junction	General -Palmer Park Library, St Bartholomes 20 Rd, Reading, RG1 3QB (10:30- 12pm)	Cancelled: bank holiday	23rd	27th	Every 4th Wed