

# Mental Health Carers Newsletter

We support people who care for family, partners or friends who struggle with their mental health. Our Service is a partnership between Bromley Well and Bromley, Lewisham & Greenwich Mind

## Supporting you this season

A snapshot of our events over Winter

### Green Parks House Family & Carers Drop-In Group

Fortnightly drop-in group run at GPH for carers of people being seen by the acute units at GPH or the Home Treatment Team

### Carers Skills & Information Workshops

We're joined by Oxleas clinicians for workshops on mental health medication, understanding personality disorders and understanding ADHD. We are also hosting an Active Listening workshop this season

### Carers Connect

Join us for a monthly zoom to chat to other carers from the comfort of your own home



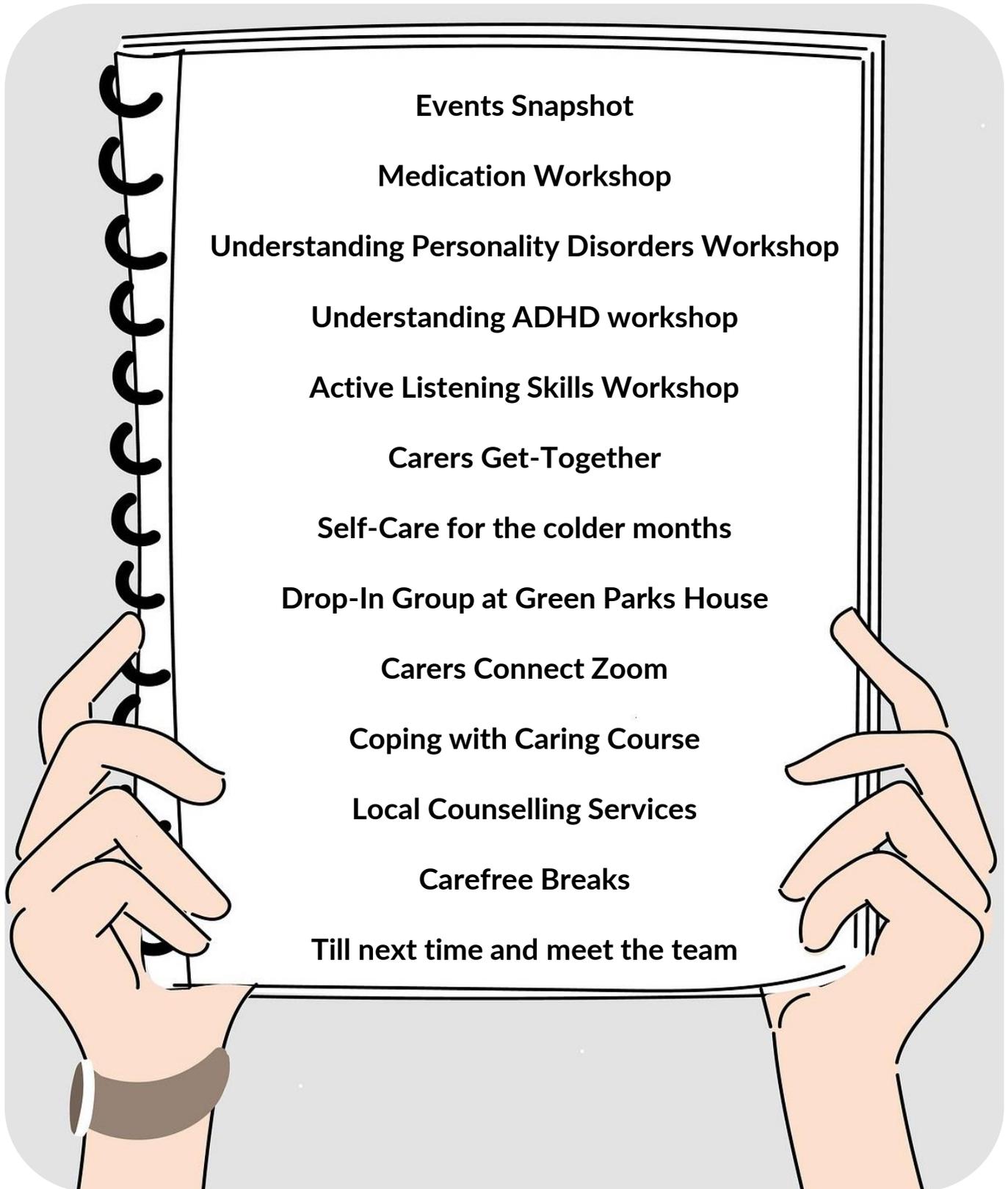
### Peer Support & Self Care

Join us in March for a social get-together. A chance to meet other carers & practice a little self-care together

### Coping with Caring

Our interactive 6 week course for mental health carers... Next course starts in January

# Inside this issue



**Events Snapshot**

**Medication Workshop**

**Understanding Personality Disorders Workshop**

**Understanding ADHD workshop**

**Active Listening Skills Workshop**

**Carers Get-Together**

**Self-Care for the colder months**

**Drop-In Group at Green Parks House**

**Carers Connect Zoom**

**Coping with Caring Course**

**Local Counselling Services**

**Carefree Breaks**

**Till next time and meet the team**

If you are seeking support, wish to sign up to one our events or have any questions please refer to us by emailing [MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk) or by calling Bromley Well Freephone 0808 278 7898 and asking for the mental health carers service

# Skills & Information Workshops

This winter we are bringing you more skills and information workshops, in partnership with Oxleas NHS



**January**

**In Orpington**

## Medications in Mental Health

We're joined by Oxleas NHS pharmacists Krishna Coopamah and Ebehi Edeko for an overview of the medications used in mental health and how they work. The second half of this workshop will be a chance for you to ask any questions you may have about medications.



**Online Zoom**

**Oxleas**  
NHS



**January**

## Understanding Personality Disorders



We're joined by Consultant Clinical Psychologist Kim Griffiths from Oxleas NHS for a talk on understanding personality disorders. Kim works in the Bromley Acute-Crisis team and the ADAPT team. This is a zoom version of Kim's workshop last year.

If you would like to join us for these events, please RSVP to book your place by emailing us at [MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk)

For workshops held in Orpington, our address is 5 Station Road, BR6 0RZ. Please note there is no parking on-site, however there is parking available nearby in Orpington town centre or for 3 hours in the Tesco's opposite. Orpington Station is a 10-minute walk from the premise.

# Skills & Information Workshops

Oxleas  
NHS



**February**

**Online Zoom**

## Understanding ADHD

Joining us is Lead ADHD Consultant Psychiatrist Dr Khurram Sadiq & Trust Wide Adult ADHD Team Manager in Oxleas NHS, Tim Sowter. They will be discussing some of the science behind this neurological difference and how this translates to everyday life. Dr Khurram Sadiq is a TEDx Speaker on neurodiversity & has lived experienced of having both ADHD and autism himself.



**In Orpington**



**March**

## Be Curious: Active Listening Skills

Carers Advisor Aimée will be leading this workshop on active and reflective listening skills. Aimée first trained in active listening in her time as a Samaritans Volunteer and has used it ever since in various roles in NHS mental health work. This session will focus on holding safe space for your loved one and opening gentle conversations about mental health.



If you would like to join us for these events, please RSVP to book your place by emailing us at [MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk)

For workshops held in Orpington, our address is 5 Station Road, BR6 0RZ. Please note there is no parking on-site, however there is parking available nearby in Orpington town centre or for 3 hours in the Tesco's opposite. Orpington Station is a 10-minute walk from the premise.

# Carers Get-Together

Join us in March for a get-together with other carers to chat and practice a little self care together too!



**5<sup>th</sup> March**

**1pm – 4pm**

**Orpington**



**Our address is 5 Station Road, Orpington, BR6 0RZ**

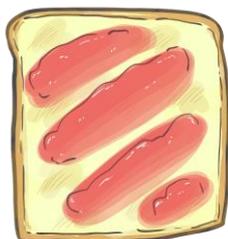
Please note there is no parking on-site, however there is parking available nearby in Orpington town centre or for 3 hours in the Tesco's opposite. Orpington Station is a 10-minute walk from the premise.

# Self Care For the colder months

This time of year can be so hard for so many reasons. As carers, you may be feeling a mix of emotions.

It's okay if you feel exhausted; if you're grieving, if you're just hoping for this season to be over.

If you can embrace a little light and joy, that's amazing! If you're feeling it's all too much, we're by your side.



Self care isn't always lavish holidays and spa breaks. Sometimes it's just reminding ourselves to stay hydrated, eat and rest and be easy on ourselves.

It sounds cliché to say 'be kind to yourself' and often people aren't sure what this means. Being kind to yourself means treating yourself like you would a friend.

Eat toast for a meal if it all feels too much. Take a few moments at night to read a chapter of a favourite book, or listen to a song that holds good memories.

Self care is often those simple, small things... that just bring you a small moment of time for yourself in the chaos of life.



# Green Parks House Family & Carers Drop-in Group

Our fortnightly drop-in group for carers of people being seen by the acute units at Green Parks House (Princess Royal University Hospital) or Home Treatment Team.

This is a friendly, confidential group to support carers who currently have a loved one on the acute units at GPH or are under the Home Treatment Team.

Every fortnight the group will have in attendance a Mental Health Carers Advisor from Bromley Well and an experienced professional from Green Parks House such as a senior nurse, psychiatrist, psychologist or pharmacist.

**Starting again in the new year on the 16<sup>th</sup> January**

Oxleas  
NHS

Tuesdays  
Fortnightly

3:30pm  
- 4:30pm

Green Parks House  
Princess Royal  
University  
Hospital

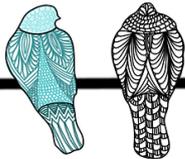
Jointly run between Bromley Well Mental Health Carers Service and Oxleas NHS Bromley Adult Mental Health

A chance to meet others going through similar experiences and learn more about carers support available to you through Bromley Well

An opportunity to talk to a professional about any worries you have and ask questions related to the units at Green Parks House or other areas of mental health

# Carers Connect Zoom

Join us online to chat to other carers from the comfort of your own home!



On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month, feel free to join us for catch-up and chat! A space to connect to fellow mental health carers, share stories with others who truly 'get it' and chat in a safe space. Get in touch for the link to join the zoom!

6pm – 7:30pm on the following dates...

**15<sup>th</sup> January**  
**19<sup>th</sup> February**  
**18<sup>th</sup> March**





# Coping with Caring Course

Our Coping with Caring course is a free six-week course for mental health carers. Have a read of the session overviews below.

## Introduction and The Emotional Impacting of Caring

Getting to know each other and thinking about the complex nature of being a mental health carer

## The Body Keeps the Score

Looking at how the body holds stress, anxiety and overwhelm and techniques to manage the physical effects of this; including mindfulness, grounding and muscle relaxation that we'll practice together throughout the course

## Coping with Distressing Conversations and Situations

Discussing the nature of mental health and what recovery means to individual people. Exploring different communication ideas, de-escalation techniques and the complex area of boundaries. We'll look at the emotional impact of distressing situations and explore together ways to cope and look after your own wellbeing

## Carrying What Can't Be Fixed

Using acknowledgement, self-compassion and realistic self-care. We'll explore creative ways to cope and express yourself and how to build a self-care toolkit

## Growing Your Life Outside of Caring

Exploring how many carers find they're feeling a loss of identity, as feelings become intertwined with the one you care for and it's hard when you take on their emotions too. We'll explore how to grow your life outside of caring and create a balance between your caring and your own life

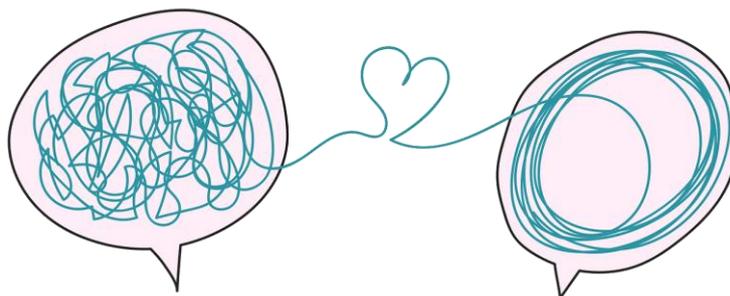
## Looking Forwards

Looking at what the course has covered and how to bring the techniques practiced with you moving forwards. Here we will also look at future planning (for you as a carer and the one you care for) and navigating the mental health system, as well as advocacy and carers' rights.

# Counselling – Your Guide to Local Services

If you're seeking counselling, it can be confusing finding out what is available and what might be the right fit for you.

Below we outline the local NHS counselling service available as well as the two low cost counselling services for Bromley.



**Talk Together Bromley** is the free NHS talking therapy support in Bromley. This is part of the NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapies service (IAPT) and free to those living in Bromley.

They offer talking therapies for people experiencing depression, general anxiety and worry, health anxiety, panic attacks, social anxiety, traumatic memories and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

They offer Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), guided self help, computerised CBT, therapeutic CBT based workshops, employment coaches and counselling. They usually work on a 6 sessions basis.

If you're aged 18 or over and registered with a Bromley GP, you can self refer to Talk Together Bromley by calling 0300 003 3000 or completing their form online. For more information on what support they offer and self-referral, visit their website at [www.talktogetherbromley.co.uk](http://www.talktogetherbromley.co.uk)

**If you are looking for a counsellor from an under-represented community please try the [Black, African and Asian Therapy Network](#), [Metro](#), or [Pink Therapy](#)**

# Counselling – Your Guide to Local Services

**Westmeria Counselling** offers a low cost counselling service, whereby they ask clients to make a contribution towards the cost of their counselling. This amount is set by you at the start (minimum fee for each session is £10).

They offer up to 24 sessions and they have also just started a range of workshops each month for £15 (on topics such as anxiety, menopause and more).

All of their counsellors are members of the counselling governing body BACP. You can self refer by calling 0208 467 9693 or through email - [enquiries@westmeriacounselling.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@westmeriacounselling.co.uk)

For more information on what support they offer and self-referral, visit their website at [www.westmeriacounselling.co.uk](http://www.westmeriacounselling.co.uk)



**Bromley Community Counselling Service** offers a low cost counselling service, whereby they ask clients to make a contribution towards the cost of their counselling. This amount is set by you at the start (minimum fee for each session is £20).

They offer up to 24 sessions and offer psychodynamic therapy, psychological therapy, humanistic therapy, gestalt, transactional analysis and existential.

All of their counsellors are members of a nationally recognised professional counselling/psychotherapy register, such as those held by BACP, UKCP, BPS, or BABCP. You can self refer to by calling 0208 460 7711 or through email - [contact@bccs.uk.com](mailto:contact@bccs.uk.com)

For more information on what support they offer and self-referral, visit their website at [www.bccs.uk.com](http://www.bccs.uk.com)

# Carefree Breaks

We are a partner of the charity Carefree. Carefree offers free breaks within the UK for unpaid carers. They have deals with hotels to offer free accommodation (one or two nights) for carers, you can even bring a friend!

The stay at the hotels is completely free, you only have to pay the cost of your travel and your food and drink (however most hotels do include breakfast) and a small admin fee.

If you're interested, please do contact us so we can refer you for a break – [MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:MHcarers@bromleywell.org.uk)

**Carefree transforms vacant accommodation into vital breaks for unpaid carers.**

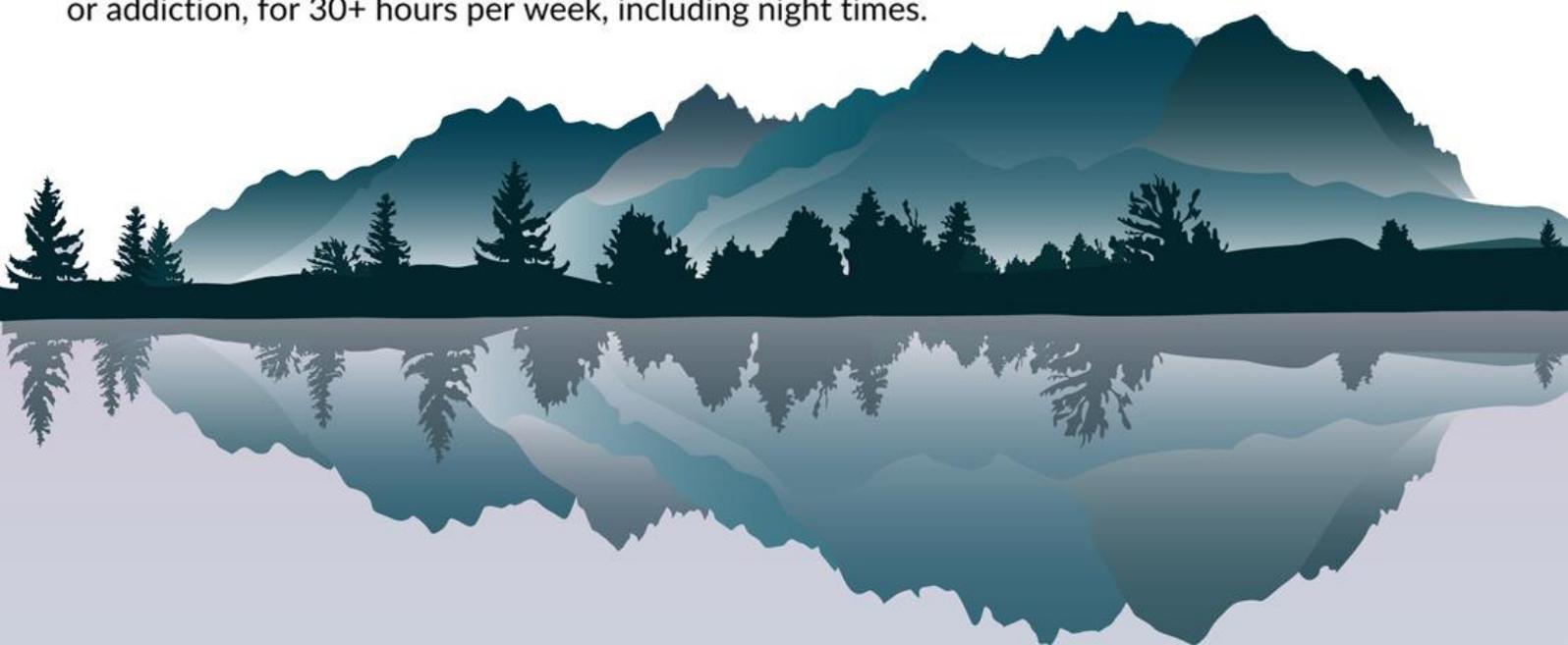
To qualify for a break carers must be:

- Aged 21 or over
- Full-time unpaid carer (30+ hours per week)
- Able to arrange interim care
- Able to pay for extras (£25 admin fee, transport, food etc)

The break is for the carer only. You are welcome to take a companion but not the person(s) you care for as this is a break and respite for you.

**What do we mean by unpaid care?**

At Carefree this means anyone who looks after a family member, partner, friend or neighbour who can't cope alone for reasons including frailty, illness, disability, mental health problem or addiction, for 30+ hours per week, including night times.



# Till next time...

**We hope you have a peaceful time over the festive period and the new year treats you well!**

Your next newsletter will arrive with you in March and share news about future events in April, May and June.

## Christmas opening hours:

The service has limited cover on the lead up to Christmas (18<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup>) and is closed the week commencing the 25<sup>th</sup> December

We re-open on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024



# Meet the team



Lucy Blake



Aimée Roberts

**We're a team of two mental health carers advisors and we're passionate about the support that carers deserve.**

## Our Service Provides...

Emotional support and a listening ear on the phone

Information and Skills Workshops in partnership with Oxleas NHS

Wellbeing and Self Care Events in person

Coping with Caring – Our six-week course for mental health carers

Carers Connect Zoom – Monthly peer support zoom

Wellbeing advice and relaxation tips

Coping techniques for stressful situations

General mental health information

Information on further support services for support for yourself and the person you care for