



# Adult Carers Newsletter

## April – June 2026

Welcome to the **Spring - SUMMER** edition of our newsletter!

**We can't quite believe it's nearly the end of April – where has the time gone?**

**It's been a busy start to the year for us.**

**Following the success of creative activities in our peer support groups, we launched a new monthly mindful creativity group in Beckenham which has been a hit with our carers. They have enjoyed activities such as making coasters, felt flowers and painting wooden wreaths. Most importantly, it's a welcoming space to meet, chat and relax.**

**Our new monthly Coffee & Chat at Waitrose in Bromley has also quickly become a favourite with our carers, bringing together new and familiar faces in a lovely space for a cuppa and a natter.**



**In March, we were lucky to secure funding for a special trip to Windsor, where carers and their cared for enjoyed a fantastic, sunny day visiting the castle.**

**We have lots more planned for the rest of the year, but in the meantime, in this edition of the Adult Carers Newsletter, you will find an update on some recent activities, information and tips to support you with filling in an essential care diary, some tips to help you get some rest and a chance to get to know the Adult Carers Team a little better.**

**Grab a cuppa and enjoy!**

**Adult Carers Team x**

# Carer's Team Update...



We've had a busy few months running our monthly groups, including our Bromley peer support group, Waitrose Coffee & Chat, Beckenham Mindful Creativity sessions, and our online group for carers who can't attend the in-person groups. It's been fantastic to see the groups grow and to welcome so many new faces.

The biscuit decorating was a lovely distraction, focusing the mind away from caring whilst creating something.

Our Advisor Megan ran a fantastic biscuit decorating session at one of our afternoon peer support groups, and we were also pleased to welcome Keri from Safety First, who delivered a First Aid course tailored specifically for carers. Carers really enjoyed the session and the opportunity to gain practical skills to support them in their caring role.



Thank you so much for organising such a lovely, memorable day out x



Our trip to Windsor in March was a wonderful day out. For some carers, it was a special opportunity to share the experience with their cared-for - something they don't often get to do. For others, it provided valuable respite from their caring responsibilities.



# How to keep a care diary

When you care for someone, you juggle appointments, medication, personal care and your own life. It's easy to lose track of how much you do. A simple care diary helps you record your role, making assessments easier and ensuring you receive the right support.



## Why Keep a Care Diary?

Days merge into one and it is so difficult to remember what has happened each day when you are so busy. A care diary helps you:

- **Be prepared:** It is useful for GP visits, hospital admissions, care planning or assessments
- **To show the full picture:** It helps professionals understand your daily responsibilities
- **To track changes:** Highlighting patterns, increased needs or workload
- **To support claims:** Providing evidence for benefits like PIP or Carer's Allowance
- **Protect your wellbeing:** Helps you recognise when you need support or a break



## What to Record:

Your diary can be anything that suits you - a notebook, diary or a phone app. Include:

- **Daily tasks and support you provide**
- **Key conversations with professionals (names, dates and outcomes)**
- **Medication lists and routines**
- **Challenging times or changes in the condition of your cared for**
- **Anything showing how caring affects your day**

There's no set format - keep it simple and consistent.

# How to keep a care diary

## What to Include:

- Record activities such as:
- Preparing meals and helping with eating
- Managing medication or treatments
- Personal care (washing, dressing, toileting)
- Communication and understanding
- Social activities and appointments
- Managing money or paperwork
- Mobility and getting out and about



You don't need to record every minute detail of your day, just note key points that have happened and any difficulties.

## Here is a simple example:

Time	Task	Notes
7am	Helped out of bed	Used hoist
9.30am	Medication	Recorded doses
12pm	Lunch support	Encourage eating
3.30pm	Calls & paperwork	Arranged care visit
9pm	Bedtime routine	Toileting, settled

Short, factual notes are enough to build a clear picture over time.

## Final Thought...

A care diary may feel like extra work, but it helps you evidence your role, remember key details and access the support you deserve.



# Better Sleep...



Having a regular routine helps to improve sleep. It's sometimes called sleep hygiene and as a carer, looking after yourself and getting a good night's rest is essential.

We aren't trying to teach you how to suck eggs! But good sleep habits are often overlooked, especially when you have little time to think about yourself. The principles are quite simple. Even if you just put a couple of these things into practice, it might help you rest more easily.

## Routine...

Try to maintain a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at roughly the same time every day, including weekends. This helps regulate your internal body clock and makes it easier to fall asleep and wake up naturally.

## Wind down...

Remember, your sleep routine starts before you get into bed, so build in time every evening to relax as much as you can.

We know it is hard not to check your phone but try to avoid electronic devices at least an hour before bed, as mobiles, tablets and computers all throw out blue light that stops sleep.

Reading, listening to soft music or a podcast, or sleep meditation can all help if you have trouble sleeping. If you have time for a warm bath or shower with a lavender based bath or shower oil, treat yourself, it will relax you and help you feel drowsy.



## Creating the right sleep space...

This can be as simple as making sure you have blackout curtains to keep unwanted light out, wearing some good earplugs if you are able, turning your phone off or putting it on flight mode.

Everyone is different and of course, we know that some of our carers need to be alert and listen out for their cared for. But creating the right environment for you is essential to give you the best opportunity for rest.

Try to keep your room ventilated, good air flow will help you sleep better.



# Better Sleep...



## Mindfulness for sleep...

We all use the term 'mindfulness' a lot but think about it from the perspective of understanding factors that can stop you from sleeping.

Anxiety, worry and stress can affect how well we sleep. There are things you can do to manage your worries and concerns.

You can talk to someone you trust – a good old natter to get things off your chest always helps. If you do lie awake worrying about everything, you could leave a notebook by your bed and make a to-do list for the next day, you could also write your notes in your care diary – writing it all down clears it out of your head and makes you feel more on top of everything.

## Don't force sleep...

We have all been there, we know we have a lot to do, an early start, feel knackered, but sleep won't come. Then the anxiety, tossing and turning creeps in which stresses you out, raises your heart rate and sleep goes out of the window.

If you can't sleep, don't force it. Get up and do something relaxing in a comfy space. Read, listen to calm music. Only go back to bed when you feel calmer and sleepier.



## Little steps that can improve sleep...

We all know this and we are sorry to bore you, but a good diet and regular physical exercise can make a massive difference to how you sleep.

You don't have to be extreme to make a difference. Even small changes to adopt better eating habits, getting yourself out for a walk each day to clear your head for 30 minutes will give you much needed headspace and can also help you sleep better – remember, don't go for that long run or to the gym straight before bed – that will be counterproductive!

Avoiding eating large meals, ditching that late night tea of coffee (sorry and wine!) will help too. All stimulants stop your body relaxing and stop you sleeping soundly.

# About Your Adult Carers Team

**We are here to support you, and we understand that your carer journeys are all different, complicated and personal to you. Between myself and the team, we have at one point either been carers for loved ones ourselves or supported/worked in a care environment. We thought we would introduce ourselves so that people who are new to our service know a little bit more about the team and know that we understand what you are going through day to day.**

## **Vicky Graham - Adult Carers Coordinator**

**My dad was my best friend - we were partners in crime! He was a hardworking plasterer/builder who worked 6 days a week to support us (I am one of 5 - we are a close family unit) He was my world.**

**We knew things weren't right for a while and it took years to get a diagnosis of rigid Parkinsons. It seemed like the decline in his health, especially after a couple of falls and hospital stays escalated so quickly. From being fit and healthy - our superman who could solve everything, became unable to do anything. We all became his carers. One minute he could walk with a frame, the next he could barely stand on a Sara Steady and then he became bedridden.**

**We saw to every element of his care from washing, toileting him, feeding him, giving him his medication, to being his advocates and making sure we fought his corner. All the time, even when he couldn't speak, I couldn't hear his voice, or hear his laugh, he remained the most positive man in the world!**

**We lost him in February 2024, and my heart was broken forever. My mum is 80 but thankfully is fighting fit and makes me laugh every day!**

**We never knew there were any support services in the borough when we were carers - I feel privileged to be part of a team who can hopefully provide support to people who are going through a similar experience.**



# About Your Adult Carers Team

## Tammy Sugita - Advisor

One of the things I enjoy most about working here is that we're all pulling in the same direction. We're always looking at how we can improve the service and reach more carers so they feel supported. It's a really positive team to be part of.

Before joining, I worked in a frontline health and support role, which gave me a good understanding of the challenges individuals and families can face. I also volunteered as a call taker for a family support service, where I spent time simply listening to people going through difficult situations. That experience really showed me how much of a difference it can make to feel heard.

I'm currently working towards a diploma in counselling, which I'm really enjoying and which fits well with the work we do.

Outside of work, I like journalling, playing video games, visiting theatres and museums, and keeping up with geopolitics. The creative activities in Adult Carers also introduced me to painting, which I've completely taken to and now love doing in my spare time.

I'm looking forward to continuing to learn and to support carers in any way I can.



# About Your Adult Carers Team

## Megan Kennedy-Cahoon - Advisor

Family has always been my main focus, and over the last 10 years my grandmas both had various health issues - we have always been close, and they were my best friends.

I helped with care for both and even moved in with one of them for a while during Covid to provide 24 hour care when she was unwell. This was my first real insight into the stress and strain that comes with caring for others.



My lovely Mum Carol was first diagnosed with cancer in 2019 - after life changing surgery and treatment she got the all clear, but in 2022 we found out it was back and terminal. I had just had my first baby at that stage so used part of my maternity leave then left my HR role to care for her at home. It was the hardest thing I have ever done and sadly in July 2023 my mum passed away.



After taking some time out I decided I wanted to start working again but in a role that was relevant to the hands-on caring experience I have, supporting others and making meaningful change. I saw this role advertised and went for it!

# About Your Adult Carers Team

## Debbie Lee - Advisor

Before I started in this role, I was a home help for 9 years. I mainly worked with older people who needed support to stay in their own homes.

For the role, I had to complete Dementia training at Orpington College, along with other extensive training courses on mental health, alcohol and drug abuse and Parkinson's.

Most of the clients I worked with had Dementia or had mental health issues.

I have seen most things in those 9 years, and nothing surprised me. Sadly, I had times when I found clients had fallen, on one occasion the client had been on the floor for three days. I also arrived at a client's home minutes after they had passed away.

I got to know GP's, paramedics, district nurses, care home staff, and clients' families very well. Most importantly I got to know my clients. This was the most important part of my job as I noticed if anything had changed with the client and I could then escalate it. I had great relationships with my clients, sadly attending a lot of funerals. It was a very rewarding experience to be involved in people's lives knowing I was helping to make a difference.

In my own life, my mum died very unexpectedly last year. My brother and I now keep an eye on our dad who is fiercely independent. He is very active and manages to keep up with all he needs to, but we make sure (to his great annoyance at times) that he's eating real food and generally okay!



# Events for Adult Carers

## May – June

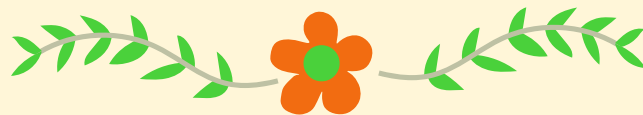
**01/05/2026 – Adult Carers Online Peer Support Group**  
Online – Friday – 11am – 12pm (Subject to interest)

**06/05/2026 – Adult Carers – Waitrose Coffee & Chat**  
Waitrose Café, Masons Hill, Bromley  
– Wednesday 11am – 1pm

**11/05/2026 – Adult Carers Peer Support Group**  
Azelia Hall Beckenham – Monday 10am – 12pm

**20/05/2026 – Adult Carers Mindful Creativity**  
Azelia Hall Beckenham – Wednesday 1pm – 4pm

**27/05/2026 – Adult Carers Peer Support Group**  
Community House – Wednesday – 2pm – 4pm



**Events are for carers who are registered with the Adult Carers Team. Contact the Team for more information and to book your place: [carers@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:carers@bromleywell.org.uk)**

**Don't forget to check the events pages on the Bromley Well website too:**

**<https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/events/>**



# Community Contacts

**The Silver Line** – 0800 470 8090 – <https://www.thesilverline.org.uk/> Run by Age UK is a free, confidential telephone service for older people. Providing friendship, conversation and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Citizens Advice Bromley** – <https://www.bromleycab.org.uk/> – 0808 278 7898

**Bromley Borough Foodbank** – <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/> – [Info@bromleyboroughfoodbank.org.uk](mailto:Info@bromleyboroughfoodbank.org.uk) 0800 920 2324

**Bromley Adult Services** –

Support for Carers: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/carers/support-carers>

Support for Adults: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/help-adults>

**Safeguarding:** Office Hours: 020 8461 7777 – Out of hours Emergency Number: 0300 303 8671

**Community Links Bromley – Events in Bromley** –

<https://www.communitylinksbromley.org.uk/calendar/>

**Adult Carers** – 0208 315 1925 – [carers@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:carers@bromleywell.org.uk)

<https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/our-services/carers/>

**Age UK Bromley & Greenwich** – 020 8315 1850 – [info@ageukbandg.org.uk](mailto:info@ageukbandg.org.uk)

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/bromleyandgreenwich/>

**Carers Trust – Transforming the lives of carers** – <https://carers.org/> –

Email – [info@carers.org](mailto:info@carers.org)

**ACAS – Carer's Leave – Your Rights at Work** –

<https://www.acas.org.uk/carers-leave> – Helpline: 0300 123 1100

**Care Choices – Information and Guidance** – <https://www.carechoices.co.uk/>

**Primary Care Network Teams** – <https://bromleygpalliance.org/primary-care-networks-pcns/>

**Bromley Well** – <https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/> – 0808 278 7898

