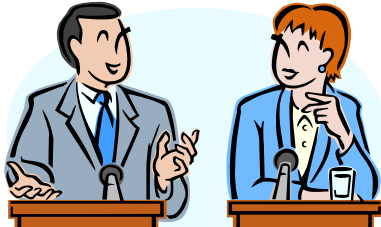


**JUNE 2009
50 + FORUMS**



**YOUR VOICE
YOUR CHOICE**

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For further information on anything in this newsletter please contact:

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Free Mini Health MOTs

NHS Health Trainers will be attending several forums this month to give mini health MOTs. They include height, weight and blood pressure checks as well as advice on a healthy lifestyle.

Direct Payments

What are Direct Payments?

Direct Payments are cash payments made to an individual to allow them to arrange and purchase the care and support they have been assessed as needing by the Local Authorities Health, Housing and Adult services (formally Social Services).

They provide people with an opportunity to take control over the decisions that affect their lives, and the flexibility to receive services which really suit their individual needs and lifestyle, often allowing people to live much more independently.

Lesley Carberry, Independent Living Manager and Mel Roberts, Direct Payments Co-ordinator, Manager, will be attending forums this month to tell you more about this system. Come along and hear what she has to say about this under publicised service.

8th – 12th June Care Week of Action

Age Concern and Help the Aged are holding an action week to promote the need for quality care for older people.

While our current care system is failing, leaving many older people

with poor quality care, politicians are still refusing to accept the need to take responsibility and commit to improving the care system.

Here are some ideas for becoming involved:

- Visit your MP at their surgery and talk to them about care
- Tell 5 friends about the week of action and get them to join in
- Share your experiences of care, either good or bad.
- To share your story you can fill in a form at: <http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/quality-care-experiences.asp> or write to Esmee Russell, Age Concern and Help The Aged, Astral House, 1268 London Road, London. SW16 4ER

June 8 -14 Diabetes Week Spotlight on Diabetes

There are currently 2-3 million people in the UK with diabetes. However it is estimated that more than half a million people have the condition but are unaware of it.

What Causes Diabetes?

Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas gland in the abdomen. It controls the use of glucose in the body.

The blood sugar will rise if:

- The pancreas produces little or no insulin (Type 1 diabetes)
- The pancreas produces insulin, but it is inadequate for the body's needs and it's

effectiveness is reduced (Type 2 diabetes)

It is thought Type 2 diabetes is related to factors associated with Western lifestyle, since it is common in those who are overweight and who don't get enough exercise.

Common symptoms of diabetes:

- Increased thirst
- Frequent urination
- Tiredness
- Weight loss, although appetite often increases (especially in Type 1 diabetes)
- Itchiness, especially around the genitals
- Recurrent infections on the skin e.g. boils

If you experience any of these symptoms on a regular basis see your GP.

People with Type 1 diabetes usually develop these symptoms within days/weeks.

In Type 2 diabetes, these symptoms often don't show for years. Many are diagnosed by chance through routine checks.

Heredity plays a part in diabetes, but only 10% of people with Type 1 have a family history of diabetes. For Type 2, this rises to 30%.

Treatment

Diabetes is treated in two ways.

- A combination of healthy diet and exercise
- Medication with tablets or insulin

Managing Diabetes

In the long term, diabetes is monitored through routine checkups by your doctor and/or annual checkups at the hospital on an outpatient basis.

The purpose is to determine if the treatment is satisfactory and look out for any evidence of long term complications such as eye or kidney disease.

Tests for these complications are usually carried out at the annual check-up. Routine checkups measure blood sugar levels, blood pressure, and weight and are carried out every 3 – 6 months.

June 23 is Falls Awareness Day.

Just a note to remind those of you who attended our recent Falls Workshops to pass on the information and advice to family and friends.

Other Information

Sunderland Heritage Forum Guided Walks.

All walks start at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated and last approximately 2 hours. The walks are suitable for all the family and are provided free of charge.

Wednesday 10 June – Alexandra Bridge

Follow this guided circular tour of Alexandra Bridge and the buildings and industry that built up along side it. Discover how and why it was built, and how the people lived and worked in the shadow of this one time heaviest bridge in the world.

This will be a chance to view the anniversary of the Bridge.

(This walk forms a part of the 100 year Anniversary of the opening of the Bridge)

Please meet outside Webster's Ropery. – 7pm.

Wednesday 17 June – Washington

Follow this guided walk discovering the historic riverside village of Fatfield to the historic Washington Village itself, the ancestral home of George Washington, including a tour of Washington Old Hall. Discover an area steeped in history. (Refreshments available, for a small charge, kindly provided by The Friends of Washington Old Hall).

Please meet outside The Biddick Inn, Fatfield – 7pm.

One last note.

This will be my final newsletter as I leave Age Concern Sunderland in the middle of June to take up a new post at Sunderland North Community Business Centre.

We have built groups whose opinions are respected and listened to by the statutory bodies of our city and by doing so we are paving the way to make Sunderland an 'Age Friendly' city of the future.

I would like to thank all of you for the support you have given over the last three years and I know you will continue to do so with my successor.

Please turn over for a list of June forums.

June 2009

50 + Forums

AREA	VENUE	TOPIC	DATE/TIME
Coalfields	Gillwood Court, Station Road, Penshaw	Direct Payments	Tuesday 2 nd 10.30am
North	Chillingham House, Mulgrave Drive, Monkwearmouth	Age Concern Sunderland Good Neighbour Project	Thursday 4 th 2.30pm
West	Bellingham House, Pennywell	Direct Payments	Tuesday 9 th 2.00pm
East	Beaumont Lodge, Toward Road	Sunderland LINK	Thursday 11 th 10.15am
North	Chillingham House, Mulgrave Drive, Monkwearmouth	Keep Able	Thursday 11 th 2.30pm
Washington	Knoulberry Road, Blackfell	Public Involvement	Wednesday 17 th 10.30am
East	Carisbrooke Court, Chester Terrace	Direct Payments	Wednesday 24 th 10.30am
North	St Margaret's Court, Castletown	Sunderland LINK	Monday 29 th 9.30am