

Minutes

READING WEST PCN'S PPG OPEN MEETING WITH READING & WEST BERKSHIRE CARERS HUB

Wednesday 6th November 2019 – 7pm – Tilehurst Methodist Church

TALK FROM CHRISTINE FROM READING & WEST BERKSHIRE CARERS HUB

Reading and West Berkshire Carers Hub was set up in 2016 to provide advice and guidance to unpaid carers. They have a phone line which is open from 9-5pm Monday to Friday (0118 324 7333).

The Carers Hub offer:

- Information, advice and guidance
- Signposting to other organisations
- Short break accommodation
- Access to Carers support groups (i.e. dementia, stroke, etc)
- Free access to local leisure, health and well-being facilities
- 'CarerSmart' benefits and discount
- Free training and caring support
- Access to Carers breaks
- Carers grants
- Peer support

1 in 7 working people are carers too and 1 in 5 are expected to give up jobs to care for loved ones.

There is an access to grant system in which up to £300 can be claimed for the carer to assist them in their caring role. For example, they can apply for a household item, they can apply for a break or they could apply for some training. They will need to complete what is called a 'care assessment' form, to do so you need to call the helpline who will ask you a few details to get you registered – they can post the form out to you or if you need assistance completing the form you will be allocated a support worker who can meet you to help you complete it. The support worker can also give you guidance if you want to know what day centres are available or if you need a handyman to help around the house. The Carers Hub will help you as much as they can and then forward your details to the council who will give you a budget to help with your caring role.

The Carers Hub are holding a 'Carers Rights Day' on Thursday 21st November between 2-6pm at the Wycliffe Baptist Church on Kings Road in Reading. There is limited parking at the venue, however it is on the regular number 17 bus route. If you would like to attend you need to call the hub (0118 324 7333).

They send out a monthly newsletter to around 800 people in the Reading and West Berkshire area – some get it by email and others by post as they do not have access to email. These newsletters contain a timetable with

information and dates for events and support groups. If you would like to receive the newsletter all you have to do is call the hub.

The Carers Hub is a registered charity who is funded by Reading Borough Council and 3 CCGs. A carer is anyone who is looking after someone, there is no minimum of how many hours you care for them.

When you reach pension age you are unlikely to get carers allowance. Carers allowance does not interfere with attendance allowance (attendance allowance is money for people aged 65 or over who have care needs because of physical or mental disability). If you give up work to look after someone you will still get pensions credit.

Google 'Reading Services Guide' if you require assistance finding a particular service e.g. Help from social services, health advice, respite care. You can use the website 'turn to us' to do a benefits check which will give you a list of benefits you will be entitled to and how to get them. Again, if you don't have access to a computer a support worker from Carers Hub can come to you with a laptop and help you run the check.

They can also assist you to complete a contingency plan – to create a plan of who can look after your cared for person if anything happens to you.

There are Carers Hubs all over the country, Reading is thought to have around 12,000 carers yet there are only 1400 people on their books. They are trying their best to advertise – they have leaflets in all of the doctors' surgeries and a stand at the Royal Berkshire Hospital once a month.

Patients who attended the meeting advised it would be worth the doctors having the leaflets on their desks to hand out to patients and would also be useful to feedback to the CCG that the RBH aren't telling patients about these services upon discharge.

Thank you to Christine for coming to speak to us.

Park Run –

As discussed in our previous meeting Western Elms, Circuit Lane and Tilehurst surgeries are now working together as a Primary Care Network.

Dr Oji (GP Partner, Western Elms Surgery) explained as a PCN we are encouraging all staff and patients from the surgeries to take part in community events, starting with Prospect Park Parkrun on Saturday 23rd November 9am.

AJ (Prospect Parkrun organiser) and Mary (parkrunner) attended with Dr Oji to give further details. The park runs take place every Saturday - you don't have to run, you can volunteer or walk. They explained how it becomes a part of your life and is extremely friendly and encouraging. Mary explained how she has made friends for life by taking part in Parkrun and does is across various different countries. Even if you are not running you are part of the joy when people cross the finish line. Afterwards some people head

	<p>up to the Mansion House (Harvester) for a coffee and a chat. It is a free event and it takes around 25 volunteers to make it happen each week. If you would like to take part please visit the Parkrun website!</p> <p>A patient from Tilehurst surgery explained that they currently have a walking group who meet on Monday mornings at 10.30am. If Western Elms or Circuit Lane patients would like to join then please ring Tash at Tilehurst Surgery.</p> <p><i>Are there any suggestions for a speaker for our next open meeting?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire Service• South Central Ambulance Service re CPR• Adult Social Services <p>Thank you everyone for coming and see you next time ...</p>		
	<p>Date of next open meeting: Wednesday 5th February 7pm</p>		