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C.C.S.G. Newsletter Issue Three 2011

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The family day trip to Chester zoo on the 5th of March went down well again, all 36 people on the trip had a very nice day out, we even had some new members attend, the pictures below are not the new members, they are animals in the zoo.

If you would like to find out more about Chester zoo or plan your own visit just visit their website at: <http://www.chesterzoo.org>



In recent weeks, a phony email claiming to come from the IRS has been circulating in large numbers to people in America. The subject line of the email often says that the email is a notice of underreported income. The email may contain an attachment or a link to a bogus web page directing taxpayers to their "tax statement." In either case, when the recipient opens the attachment or clicks on the link, they download a Trojan type virus to their computer. Malicious code (also known as malware), of which the Trojan is just one example, can take over the victim's computer hard drive, giving someone remote access to the computer, or it could look for passwords and other information and send them to the owner of the virus.

They will then be able to use whatever information they get to commit identity theft, gain access to bank account and more.

Editorial. I think it's just a matter of time before this scam is converted to something for the UK market so watch out, make sure your computer is protected with a good virus checker and firewall and make sure you keep it up to date.

Carers Allowance.

The Government's Welfare Reform Bill, now confirms that Carer's Allowance will remain outside of Universal Credit, this means that Carer's Allowance will remain a non means-tested benefit.

The Government were considering drawing Carer's Allowance into the new system and if this had been the case, hundreds of thousands of carers would have faced a means-test and the risk of losing their Carer's Allowance.

The Government is still making major changes to the welfare system which will affect carers, carers who already receive means-tested benefits will be moved onto Universal Credit, families are facing major reforms and in some cases reductions to disability benefits.

Prescriptions to Rise.

I take it that everyone knows about the prescription rise on the first of April, if you don't they are going up by 20 pence to £7.40 for each item, this happened just a few days after the prescription charges in Scotland got scrapped, this has brought them in line with Wales where prescriptions have been free for some time.

Special Event.

Age Concern in Wigan are holding a celebration event for its highly successful Starting Point Service. It will be held at Wigan Town Hall on Tuesday 24th of May between 10.00 a.m and 3.00 pm.

The day will be filled with various information and support services showing what help is available for people aged 50 and over, including home fire risk assessments, benefits advice, body MOT's and lots of other things.

There will be refreshments, raffle prizes and entertainment throughout the day. Everyone is welcome so just pop along and have a good time.

Welfare Reform Bill.

Carers and disabled people are extremely worried about the Government's plans for reforming the benefits but what does it mean for carers. Carers UK have put together a list of answers to key questions, this is a 9 page document in PDF format but because of copyright restrictions I can't publish it, if you would like to read it just email me on the group address: ccsg.group@hotmail.com saying you want the Welfare reform Bill and I will email you back with a copy of it.

Special Announcement.

Please note, due to a special church meeting we have to change the October coffee morning to the first Wednesday in the month instead of the second, that's the 6th of October instead of the 12th, please make a note of this so you don't turn up on the wrong day, you might be a bit lonely if you do.

Coffee Morning.

MS Week 23 – 29 May 2011

MS Week is a chance for the MS Society to get loud about multiple sclerosis (MS), raising awareness of it by reaching out to people who don't know much about the condition.

The latest newsletter from Paveways Plus & Starting Point called Helping Hands is now out and on our website in the library.

Larger Tax Allowances for Over 65s.

People aged over 65 can look forward to a rise in personal tax allowances as part of changes that's due to come in on the 5th April.

The start of the new tax year now means that people aged 65-74 can now earn £9,940 before they have to pay tax, and for the over 75s the new amount will now be £10,090.

It seems that a lot of people are unaware of the changes to the personal allowances that start with the new financial year.

The Basic State Pension will increase by £4.50 to £102.15. Pensioners on a low income will benefit because most people who receive Pension Credit will get a £4.75 increase in guarantee credit. Cold Weather Payments will be permanently increased from £8.50 to £25.

The majority of working age benefits will increase by 3.1 per cent.

The new benefit rates will apply from the week beginning 11 April 2011.

I have a 16 page list in PDF format that covers just about every benefit or allowance you can think of, as you can imagine it's too large to put in the newsletter, if you would like your own copy just email the group address saying you would like the benefit listing and I will email you a copy back.
John.

Nice work if you can get it.

The latest edition of the Health and Care Together newsletter is now out, you can find it in our library on the groups website.

NHS bosses in charge of hospitals are being forced to sack thousands of staff yet have seen their pay increased by up to 50% in the past five years.

The chief executives at trusts are facing the worst cutbacks yet are on salaries far higher than Prime Minister, some of them are earning more than £200,000.

Most handed themselves comfortable pay rises just last year even though hundreds of their own staff were being made redundant to reduce costs.

The NHS has been ordered to make up to £20 billion of efficiency savings by 2014 and hospitals have resorted to axing hundreds of posts to meet the targets.

Figures released on the 28th March show more than 50,000 jobs have been earmarked to go over the next three years, including frontline doctors, nurses and midwives.

Those NHS workers lucky enough to keep their jobs are facing a two year pay freeze, which effectively amounts to a pay cut once inflation is taken into account.

It emerged from the figures that over the past five years the hospital chief executives laying off the most staff have seen salaries rise by as much as £70,000.

Sue Wareing is doing a sponsored Skydive at Grange over Sands for our group, weather permitting this will take place on the 1st of May, please give Sue your support and help her raise some funds for our group, sponsor forms are available at the coffee mornings.

Thank you.

Trip Information

We have been having a bit of trouble with the bookings for Patshull Park in May, I am sorry to say that we have once again had to change the date. If anyone has a problem with this please see Brian or John at the next coffee morning and we will sort it out for you.

The trip date is now Friday 6th to Sunday 8th May.

Website address: www.ccsupport.com

I don't know the origin of this. But it makes lots of sense.

A young lady confidently walked around the room while leading and explaining stress engagement to an audience; with a raised glass of water, and everyone knew she was going to ask the ultimate question, "half empty or half full?"..... She fooled them all...

"How heavy is this glass of water?" she inquired with a smile.

Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.

She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance. In each case it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes." She continued, "and that's the way it is with stress. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on."

"As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden - holding stress longer and better each time practiced. So, as early in the evening as you can, put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night... pick them up tomorrow. Whatever burdens you're carrying now, let them down for a moment. Relax, pick them up later after you've rested. Life is short. Enjoy it and the now "supposed" stress that you've conquered!"

Thousands of disabled people as well as family and friends will be marching to express solidarity and anger at the cuts threatening our benefits, services, jobs and rights.

These events are being organised by UK Disabled People's Council, some big organisations are involved with UKDPC like Mencap for one, you can find out more and read all about the planned events by using the link below, this will take you to the events page.

<http://www.ukdpc.net/index.asp?GetPress=TRUE&id=150&sid=76&ssid=0&ssid=0>

Our Email address: ccsg.group@hotmail.com



Manchester North's Summer Charity Ball for C.C.S.G.

Nicola Burtonwood-Barker and
Mark Taylor would like to formally
invite you to our Summer Charity Ball.
It's taking place on Saturday 11th June,
7.30pm, at the Palace Hotel in Manchester

The Itinerary

Drinks reception with lots of party games

Manchester North H1 Successes &
Award Presentation Charity Auction
with some amazing things to buy!

Raffles and more party games

Hot and cold buffet

Live Band & DJ

Bar open until late



The Dress code is 'Black Tie and evening dress.'

This year they are supporting C.C.S.G, yes our
charity, to help fund young carers activities.

Any money raised Santander will double.

If you'd like to purchase a ticket please
speak to Janet Burtonwood at a coffee morning.

Changes to Local Housing Allowance.

There are important changes to Local Housing Allowance from April 2011. These changes will affect people getting Housing Benefit who pay rent to a private landlord.

Who is affected?

If you are making a new claim for Housing Benefit, these changes will apply to you from this 1 April 2011.

If you are already claiming Housing Benefit, the changes are likely to affect the amount of money you get towards your rent. If you are already claiming Housing Benefit, you may have more time before these changes apply to you.

If your circumstances don't change, you will continue to get the same rate of Local Housing Allowance as you get now. This will continue for nine months after your local authority next assess your Housing Benefit, after 1 April. The information here will help you work out how the changes will affect you, or you can contact your local authority.

Changes from 1 April 2011

From 1 April 2011 the rates for Local Housing Allowance will be reduced across the country:

Weekly excess

The maximum £15 weekly excess that some customers can get will be removed.

Limits on payments

A limit will be introduced so that Local Housing Allowance does not exceed:

- £250 a week for a one bedroom property (including shared accommodation)
- £290 a week for a two bedroom property
- £340 a week for a three bedroom property
- £400 a week for a four bedroom property

The maximum rate of Housing Benefit will be limited to the rate for a four bedroom property. Courtesy of Crown Copyright.

Our phone number is: 07807 210913

Carers Week in 2011 will be all about The True Face of Carers.

How hard is life as a carer? Or how easy? How much help do carers actually receive from statutory agencies and government, local and national? Or should that be how little?

How do carers think society sees them? What is the reality of caring in the UK in 2011?

What are the biggest surprises that you and I encounter when we become carers?

What can really make a difference to carers lives? Is it money? Or something else?

Is caring a perpetual struggle with no thanks and no recognition? Or a richly-rewarding experience that brings out the best in the human spirit?

All this and more will be revealed during 13-19 June 2011 Carers will be centre-stage during the biggest awareness week in the UK.

They hope to reveal the truth and sweep away the myths.

Carers UK have produced several fact sheet booklets aimed at carers, you can go to their website and download a free copy, why not go and have a look they are quite good, this is the link that will take you to the download page:

http://www.carersuk.org/Professionals/Orderpublications/Factsheetsbooklets?dm_i=74C,DCAQ,PESFA,11ZIA,1#UK1018

If you have anything you would like to see in the next newsletter, a poem or a story, an article, your favourite recipe.

Please Email it to:

ccsg.group@hotmail.com

or contact us on 07807 210913

All the views expressed in the publication are individual and not necessarily the view or policy of the support group or its supporters.

Editor. John Booth.

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The latest edition of Health and Care Together is now out, you can find it in our library on the groups website.

www.ccsgsupport.com

Our coffee mornings are held at

Kingsleigh Methodist Church,

King Street, Leigh.

Coffee morning start time is 11.15 Am. on the second Wednesday every month.



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