



News from Carers Together in Hampshire April 27th, 2009

Carers Together helps people plan for emergencies

No-one likes to imagine things going wrong, but when you're caring for someone else or might need help looking after yourself it pays to plan ahead for unforeseen emergencies or events.

Carers Together in Hampshire has been piloting just such a scheme and it has been so successful that the programme – Clear Action Planning for Emergencies (CAPE) – is being rolled out across the whole county.

The scheme is not only for carers – it can also be invaluable for older or disabled people or for anyone who feels they might need help in an emergency.

Carers Together is holding a series of free introductory sessions on CAPE all over Hampshire in the next few months and anyone caring for an older person, a disabled person or someone with long or short term health needs or who feels the scheme might be useful for them is invited to come along.

The CAPE sessions help people to think about why they need a plan, when to do the plan, what kind of plan they need and where to keep it so that it can be put into action in an emergency. The sessions also include information and advice on telecare systems, benefits, emergency support, companionship, respite care, personal care and initial legal advice.

“If you're caring for or supporting an older person, disabled person or someone with long or short term health needs it can sometimes be hard to think about what might happen in an emergency, such as if an older relative had a fall. If you're not a carer you might equally need an emergency plan if something went wrong or if you needed health treatment,” said Anne Meader, Chief Executive of Carers Together in Hampshire.

“Sometimes people don't want to think about it because they don't know where to get help, or because it makes them feel anxious. But our pilot

scheme with CAPE has shown that preparing in advance for unforeseen events can ease worry and make the whole process of dealing with emergencies much less stressful.”

CAPE sessions are free, confidential and unbiased – Carers Together can signpost people to all the local support services and give them time to make considered choices about what would be the best course of action for them. As well as the sessions there’s also a pack to help people prepare their plan and a one-to-one service is also offered for anyone who feels they need further help.

“Even if emergencies never occur, it is still comforting to know that you are prepared for all eventualities and that you or the person you care for would be properly looked after in any unforeseen situation,” said Anne.

Carers Together in Hampshire is the largest carers’ support organisation in Hampshire and supports over 40 local carers’ groups and forums across the county.

Carers Together is a charity and social enterprise run by carers, for carers and is one of the few carers’ organisations run largely by volunteers, including its management team and chief executive.

The charity organises outing for carers, runs an advocacy service, organises regular information, advice and support sessions and also runs a free helpline, the Carers Active Listening Line, on 08000 3 23456, where carers can get immediate emotional support and advice. The helpline is available from 9am to 11pm every day of the year.

Further information about the CAPE sessions is available from Carers Together in Hampshire on 01794 519495 or at www.carerstogether.org.uk

Media contacts:

We would be very happy to do interviews and to tell your readers, viewers and listeners more about what it’s like to be a carer. For further information contact Janet Chierchia, Chair of Carers Together in Hampshire, on 01489 893381 or Lindsey Darking on 01425 617175/ 07775 891715 or email lindseydarking@btconnect.com.