

# Carers Newsletter

## December 2020

### **Welcome to our Winter Carers newsletter**

A lot of people have found 2020 has not been the easiest of years, levels of uncertainty due to Covid 19 can cause increase stress especially when you feel responsible for the welfare of another person as well. A CarersUK study in the Autumn found 64% of carers reported their own mental health had worsened as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

We in the Involvement Team, have lived experience of mental health issues ourselves – both of caring or experiencing mental health distress ourselves or indeed both, and we have all found this year more challenging than most too.

We bring you this newsletter, in the hope that the information and news it contains may help those of you who have felt their wellbeing has been impacted or those who have experienced an increase sense of loneliness feel more connected to others who may be feeling the same.

Lets hope that 2021 brings more stability but in the meantime, we in the Involvement Team, wish you all the best during the holiday period.

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## Letter from Sharon Spain Director of Nursing

Dear Carers,

You may have found that being a Carer in 2020 has meant an increased sense of isolation within a background of additional stress and caring responsibilities. It has been a tough year for many of you and we are aware that this year's holiday period may feel less of a celebration and more of something just to get through, with the hope that 2021 will bring better things.

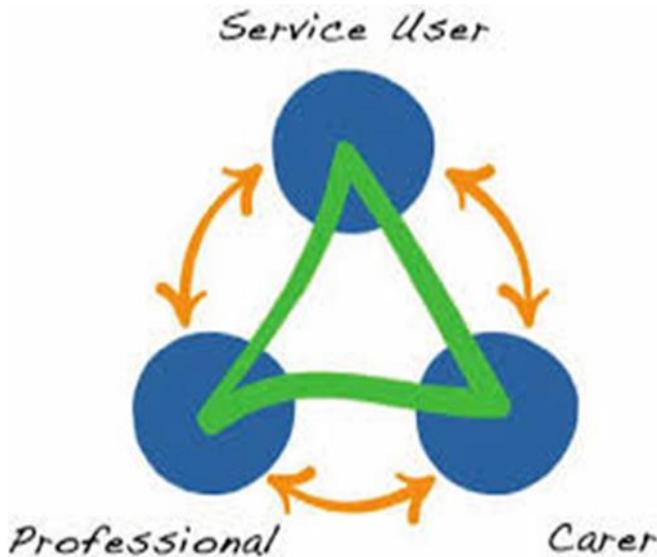
The Involvement Team have produced this newsletter to ensure you have up-to-date information of what is going on in the Trust and contact details of all the local organisations that are there to support you and/or the person you care for should you need it.

During the Autumn we were delighted to have been awarded stage two membership of the Triangle of Care – the first Trust in the country to complete the peer review virtually (for details see pages 3-4) and we want to thank the carers and the carers organisations across the five boroughs that helped us achieve this. It is not a time for complacency and we want to ensure that with this foundation we are able to continue to develop consistency across all services for identifying, recognising and supporting carers – we know that anything less than this is not good enough and we aim to be outstanding.

I would like to say a big thank you to you all for your continuing work and send best wishes for the holiday period.

Best Wishes,  
Sharon Spain (Director of Nursing)

# Triangle of Care



## What is it?

The Triangle of Care is a framework containing six key standards and a system of audit, that aims to promote shared working between Carers, professionals and people using services.

It was first developed over 10 years ago by a carer who wanted to improve the engagement of staff in mental health services with carers: it is a really strong example of coproduction and as such has stood the test of time.

The Trust adopted the framework and in 2014/15 became Stage 1 members of the scheme.

## Stage 2 membership

In late 2018 there was a renewed focus from Trust staff and it became a Trust strategic priority to try and improve the experiences of Carers within our services. This resulted in an increase in resource and an aim to achieve Stage 2 membership.

In the Autumn of this year, SWLSTG were the first Trust in the country to achieve Stage 2 membership by a virtual peer review.

Although we are delighted to have achieved this, the aim of the Triangle of Care is about what is achieved along the journey, not the destination itself. Cultural change can feel like a slow process and it is the ongoing and continuous application and consistent attention to detail, as well as the acknowledgement that improvements are needed alongside planning towards addressing areas of inconsistency that the Trust are committed to sustaining for the long term that will make a difference to the experience of Carers.

# Triangle of Care

## Who helped us?

We are well aware that what has been achieved so far would not have been achieved without significant help from a lot of other individuals and organisations including the 5 Borough Carers Centres and colleagues from the SE & London Regional ToC Group.

Most of all we have benefited from the persistent energy, support and constructive feedback of our Carer members, many of whom, find time and energy in pursuit of improving services for the people they care for as well as other carers, friends and families who may face the same challenges they have. They guided us within the Task and Finish Group calling us to account when needed.

Allies within the Trust were essential and nominated staff 'Carers Champions' helped embed the principles of the Triangle of Care.

Together we have started the journey towards cultural change.

## A selection of achievements...

- Self assessment of 100% of eligible Trust services
- Development of a Carers Champion job role for staff
- Development of a Carers Charter
- Re-establishing the Carers, Friends & Family Group with a non-executive director as Chair who is a Carer
- Carers receiving training to enable involvement in recruitment within the Trust
- Carers supported to deliver training and be involved in staff induction

## What next?

- Services to review their self-assessment action plans and work towards achieving identified targets
- Roll out of an e-training module for staff on Carer Awareness
- Updating our external website with Carers resources and information
- Continuation of a regular newsletter and Carers Coffee morning



# Enjoying and Coping with Major Festivities



Seasonal and religious celebrations provide opportunities for families and friends to come together. These can be special times but they can also be stressful and hard work. Here are some coping strategies, provided by families using Trust services that may help you cope.

## LOTS OF HYPE, SHOPPING!

Make lists!

**Stagger** shopping times or request homemade presents – this may help those with low incomes feel less pressure and more able to give.

**Consider** doing things differently

- have a Christmas picnic
- change the usual venue
- get others to cook a course
- stay in bed watching old films
- attend religious ceremonies to break up the season

## SERVICES CLOSED

**Renew** prescriptions early.

**Encourage** everyone to help with pre-, during and post- festival activities.

**Find out** what is open

Check you know crisis line numbers and how to get help if you need to.

**Share** your concerns with care-coordinator.

Compile a list of things to do and share this with family members

## SERVICE USER FEELS LEFT OUT OR UNDER PRESSURE

**Share plans** about who will be visiting and when

**Negotiate** what activities guests could be involved in. For example: “do you would want to join us for the main meal and then have time to yourself?” or “who would you rather sit next to?”

**Practise conversation ideas** to help you handle difficult relatives.

**Stagger visitors’ arrival and leaving times** through the holiday so you don’t have to cope with too many people at once.

## ROUTINE DISRUPTED

Try to **maintain as ordinary a routine as possible**. If you can’t, avoid being overly critical if some people don’t feel like joining in.

**Make sure your request for help is heard and is specific.**

Try looking at the person directly, saying exactly what you would like them to do and explain the benefits this would bring.

**Have a break or take time out.**

**Examples:**

- go to another room/space
- take the dog for a walk
- give somebody a call, Facetime, Skype or dreaded zoom meet up!

# Involvement and Coproduction

## What are they?

Some people have said to us that although they know they are a member of the register they don't really know exactly what that means.

Involvement & Coproduction are two slightly different elements, designed to ensure that people who use services are enabled to contribute to the development of services.

**Involvement** is providing opportunities that ensure the Trust can listen to the voices of people who have first hand experience of using services.

**Coproduction** is an approach to working together in equal partnership and for equal benefit towards shared goals.

The Trust uses the "ladder of participation" as a framework for measuring Involvement.

To find out more go to:  
<https://www.swlstg.nhs.uk/documents/related-documents/605-service-user-carer-involvement-final-plan/file>



Co-production

Co-design

Engagement

Consulting

Informing

Educating

Coercion

## The Involvement Team

We are a team of six people (three work part time), who have lived experience of mental health issues and experience of working in mental health services. Our responsibility is to implement the objectives of the Involvement Plan (a plan which was coproduced with service users and carers in 2018) and are:

**To change the Trusts culture & To increase service user & carer influence and control** – so that if service users and carers aren't involved in a project or development then we think "why not"?

**To provide personal opportunities for people to be involved** – for example on recruitment and selection panels and **to extend the reach of involvement**, so that the people involved reflect the diversity of our community.

To do this the Involvement Team work alongside you, as our members, partner organisations and Trust staff.

Please get in touch if you want to know more.

# Borough Information- Kingston

**Kingston Carers Network** remains committed to supporting carers. In these unprecedented times.

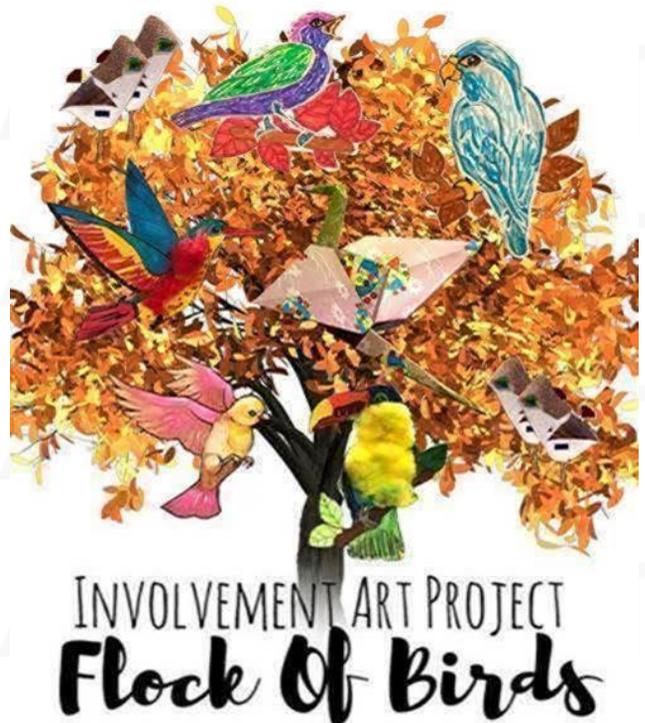
Email [info@kmhcf.org.uk](mailto:info@kmhcf.org.uk) or on 020 3031 2757.

They will be closed from **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> December until Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Please find below some useful contacts during this period:

- Social Services: 020 8547 5005 (Out of hours 020 8770 5000)
- Kingston Stronger Together 020 8547 5000
- Kingston Foodbank <http://kingston.foodbank.org.uk/> 020 8391 1100
- Mind in Kingston [www.mindinkingston.org.uk](http://www.mindinkingston.org.uk) / 020 8255 3939
- Carers UK Advice Line 0808 808 7777

For information around carers assessments please see here; [https://www.kingston.gov.uk/info/200182/social\\_care\\_and\\_assessments/137/social\\_care\\_and\\_assessments/4](https://www.kingston.gov.uk/info/200182/social_care_and_assessments/137/social_care_and_assessments/4)



**Kingston Carers Forum** is a small local registered charity, which offers advice, support and training to those who care for someone with a Mental Health problem, as well as campaigning on their behalf, a role recognised by the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) MH Trusts and Royal Borough of Kingston

For further information, advice or membership application, please contact:

Kingston Mental Health Carers' Forum  
c/o 55 Selwood Road, Hook, Chessington  
<https://kmhcf.org.uk/>

# Borough Information - Merton

**Carers Support Merton** is an independent charity that provides information, advice, and support services to local carers via the Carer's Hub. To see the full range of services and support on offer, please visit the website.

The Vestry Hall, 336-338  
London Road, Mitcham, Surrey  
CR4 3UD

Tel: 020 8646 7515 (Mon-Fri  
10am-4pm)

E-mail: [info@csmerton.org](mailto:info@csmerton.org)

Carers Support Merton will be closed over the festive period from 4pm on **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 until Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021** at 10am

## What's on:

- Facebook carers support group.
- Coffee and conversations – Thursdays including 17<sup>th</sup> December
- Yoga for carers online.
- Online workshops around benefits

**Befriending in Merton & Sutton** 2020 has proved to be a challenging time for all of us, but particularly for those who suffer from social isolation and exclusion due to mental health issues.

APCMH Merton & Sutton run a voluntary befriending scheme to support adults who otherwise would be isolated, excluded and alone.

For further details please contact [kmarkusova@yahoo.com](mailto:kmarkusova@yahoo.com) or [geoffshorter61@gmail.com](mailto:geoffshorter61@gmail.com)  
More information is available on their website:  
<http://www.apcmhmerton.org/>

And also the national charity:  
<https://beingalongside.org.uk/apcmh-merton-and-sutton/>

**Merton Carers Strategy 2021-2026** is due to be launched in January 2021 Coproduced with carers and including representatives from SWLSTG it sets the agenda for support for carers in Merton.  
<https://www.merton.gov.uk/social-care/adult-social-care/carers/carers-strategy>

# Borough Information - Richmond

**Richmond Carers Centre** offers support to all carers.

You can contact the Carers Support Team on 020 8867 2380 or [support@richmondcarers.org](mailto:support@richmondcarers.org)

For Young Carers Support please call 020 8867 2383 or [youngcarers@richmondcarers.org](mailto:youngcarers@richmondcarers.org)

Both Carer Support Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-3pm but will close for Christmas on **23<sup>rd</sup> December until 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

Please leave a message. and the team will call back as soon as they can.

## What's on:

- Mindful Mondays online sessions
- Wellbeing webinar is now available to view online
- Free exercise classes available to unpaid carers through Don't Tone Alone.

**Carers in Mind, Richmond** offer groups and workshops to all carers registered with the Carers in Mind service. They will take place online via Zoom unless stated otherwise.

If you would like to join one of the below groups and are not currently registered, please contact [carers@rbmind.org](mailto:carers@rbmind.org)

## What's on:

### Peer Support Groups:

- Carer Coffee morning: 1<sup>st</sup> Weds of the month  
10:30am-12:00pm
- All carers group: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month  
6:30pm-8:30pm
- Caring for partners group: 2<sup>nd</sup> Weds of the month  
6:30pm-8:00pm
- Carer walk in East Sheen: 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month, days and times vary

### Walk & Talk Group:

- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December  
2:00pm-4:00pm

# Borough Information - Sutton

**Sutton Carers Centre** offers a range of information, advice and support to unpaid Carers, including: help to navigate the mental health system, benefit checks, assistance with form-filling, practical advice around contingency planning, wellbeing advice, emotional support and access to psychological therapies.

They also offer a number of support groups for Adult and Young Carers online, using Zoom. Currently their digital service offer includes:

## For Adult Carers:

- Mental Health Carers Support Group
- Complex Needs Carers Support Group
- Carers Relaxation Group
- Male Carers Group

## For Young Carers:

- Chill & Learn
- 14+ Peer Support Group
- Kidstime Multi-Family Group

For more information please contact them on: 020 8296 5611

or [enquiries@suttoncarerscentre.org](mailto:enquiries@suttoncarerscentre.org)

or visit their website:

[www.suttoncarerscentre.org](http://www.suttoncarerscentre.org)

Sutton Carers Centre will be closed for the Christmas period between **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021**.

However they are still here for carers, **operating a daily helpline from 12:00pm-2:00pm** between Christmas and the New Year (**29<sup>th</sup>- 31<sup>st</sup> Dec**).

Please contact: 020 8296 5611 and leave a message if you would like someone to give you a call during this time.

The service will resume usual operating hours from **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021**:

- Mon, Wed, Thurs & Fri  
10:00am-6:00pm
- Tues 10:00am-8:00 pm
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat of the month  
11:00am-1:00pm

INVOLVEMENT ART PROJECT



# Borough Information - Wandsworth

**Wandsworth Carers Centre** are still open and will continue to deliver support over the phone and email wherever possible.

They are also offering the following workshops via zoom.

## **Managing Wellbeing During Lockdown – Cultivating Strength and Resilience**

**Part 1: Tue 15<sup>th</sup> December  
12:00-13:30**

**Part2: Tue 22<sup>nd</sup> December  
12:00-13:30**

You can attend either part 1 or part 2 independently.

## **Reaching Your Potential**

Tue 19<sup>th</sup> January 12:00-13:30

## **Monthly Accessible Yoga**

Held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 10.45am – 11.45am.

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
10.45am – 11.45am**

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
10.45am – 11.45am**

**Writer's Group will be  
10.30am-12pm on**

**Thurs 17<sup>th</sup> December  
Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> January**

To find out more see their newsletter on the website:  
<https://mailchi.mp/wandsworthcarers/dec-jan-newsletter>

They are closed from 5.30 on Christmas Eve 24<sup>th</sup> December and reopening on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January at 9.30.

Contact them on either 020 8877 1200 or email [info@wandsworthcarers.org.uk](mailto:info@wandsworthcarers.org.uk)

**With special thanks to the following for their help with this newsletter:**

- David Hobbs (Involvement Member)
- Catherine Gamble (Head of Nursing Education, Research, Practice – SWLStG)
- Members of The Involvement Art Project
- The Triangle of Care Steering Group

# Borough Wide Recovery Cafes

SWLStG have commissioned two Recovery Cafes for residents in South West London.

They offer safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces for people who are struggling to cope with their mental health.

**The aim** is to support people to reduce their immediate crisis and anxiety, and to safety plan, drawing on strengths, resilience and coping mechanisms to reduce the need to use crisis services in the future.

## Who are the Cafés for?

Adult residents (18 +) of **Kingston, Richmond, Wandsworth, Sutton** and **Merton** who are experiencing difficulties with their mental health and feel unable to cope.

**Opening hours:** Monday - Friday 6pm - 11pm and Weekends and Bank Holidays 12pm - 11pm

## Sunshine Recovery Café

296a Kingston Road, SW20 8LX

**Phone:** 07908 436 617

We also have currently a 24 helpline number—**07944 506036**

**Email:** info@cdars.org.uk

## From Wednesday 9th

## December to Friday 8th

**January 2021** the Café will be

open **from 4pm daily** on

weekdays and running a Café

**every Wednesday 11am-3pm**

## Hestia Recovery Café

966 Garratt Lane, SW17 0ND

**Phone:** 07794394920

**Website:** www.hestia.org

**Open for extended hours from Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December to Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021 from 12pm to 11pm including Bank Holidays.**

A Christmas meal will be served on Christmas Day and taxi's will be provided. Time slots will be bookable, only 5 customers will be allowed in the building at once to maintain social distancing.

South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust  
Springfield University Hospital, 61 Glenburnie Road, London SW17 7DJ  
**Telephone: 020 3513 5000**  
**Website: www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk**

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