

Carers' Chronicle

Issue 23 | December 2007

Brisbane North Metro / Pine Rivers

Manager's Musings

Hi All,

Welcome to the festive season. Whilst this is a time for holidays, family and celebrations, some carers tell us that this is also a time for stress. There are many reasons for this including disruption to routines, hot weather, family dynamics, services closing down and extra stress relating to Christmas and New Year events.

We recommend that carers plan well for this period to ensure that everything runs as smoothly and stress free as possible. Some tips to consider are:

- Plan Christmas events as early as possible and consistent with your energy levels. Try not to over extend or commit yourself if you feel you don't have the energy or time to do so
- Take the opportunity to build in some time out for yourself where you can, i.e., visiting family who may be able to help out for a few hours over the holidays so you can do some nice things for yourself
- Plan respite early, be proactive - don't leave to the last minute. Speak to your usual service provider about the need for continued respite during the holidays. If there are no options speak to the CRCC on Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (except from mobiles)
- Anticipate any emergencies or difficulties that may arise and plan for them
- Ensure your ACAT assessment is up-to-date if you are likely to need or intend to utilise residential aged care respite
- Keep well exercised, eat and sleep well, keep cool and hydrated, socialise with people who you like and add to your wellbeing

Some carers find it difficult to plan and think of these things when their caring role brings them back to the here and now, but planning as much as possible for this period may help carers to cope just that little bit more - remember to be kind to yourself and to enjoy the festive season.

I'd like to wish our readers a happy holiday season from the team here at CRCC.

'Till next time

Stephen Gamble
Manager



Demystifying Aged Care Placement

NEW!! Carers Information Sessions for 2008

Following our popular tours of residential aged care facilities and as part of our continuing efforts to assist and support carers, CRCC is planning to conduct a series of newly developed information sessions. We will be inviting guest speakers who will address a number of topics, including:

- ACAT Assessments - Why and How
- Costs - Daily Care Fees, Bonds, Concessional and non-Concessional Beds
- Support During Transition - Emotional Aspects
- Community Care - HACC, CACPs, EACH

There is potential for further sessions on legal or financial issues for older people considering aged care placement or packaged home care. Topics covered here could include:

- Enduring Powers of Attorney
- Powers of Attorney
- Advanced Health Directives
- Wills
- Consent
- Public Trustees
- Centrelink Payments

Following the sessions carers would be able to do a tour of the residential aged care facility of their choice. We are able to assist with transport and will provide morning tea.

We would like to determine the general interest in running these sessions combined with the tours for carers in our area (Brisbane North Metro & Pine Rivers). If you are interested in attending the information sessions, would like to know about other topics of interest to you or want to discuss anything else please call Kerry on Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (except from mobiles).

Overnight High Care Program

If you are caring for someone with dementia or who is frail aged with high care needs, you have very little formal or informal supports and you are having interrupted, broken sleep on a regular basis we may be able to assist by providing at least one good nights sleep each week for up to a three month period. Please contact Judy at CRCC for more information / assistance on Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (except from mobiles)

Recovery Training for Carers

Planning for a series of Carer Education Workshops with world renowned recovery trainer, Helen Glover is well under way. The first workshop will be held on Thursday, 28th February 2008 with three further workshops to follow at regular intervals over the forthcoming year. Carers who attend the workshops will get the chance to discuss and workshop a range of strategies which can enhance and assist with their caring role. Carers will also have an opportunity to share ideas, plans and needs they may have in their caring roles and their own lives.

Helen Glover has conducted her workshops in a diverse range of forums, working with carers and mental health professionals alike and we are fortunate to be able to have Helen share her skills, experience and insight in these training sessions.

The Mental Health Respite Team will be issuing expressions of interest letters to carers in December and January with final invitations being sent out in early February, 2008. We hope to be sharing this opportunity with other services in our region as well as with neighbouring Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centres.

Training will be from 9.00am to 4-00pm with lunch and refreshments served. The sessions will be conducted at our office at 10 Walkers Way, Nundah. We look forward to running these sessions and hope to see many carers keen to participate.

Article written by Peter van Fleet MHRT Coordinator

Calendar of Events

25 December Christmas Day (CRCC Office Closed)
26 December Boxing Day (CRCC Office Closed)

2008

1 January New Years Day (CRCC Office Closed)
23 January **Service Providers Breakfast**
24 January **Open Forum for Disability Cottage Respite**

February Carer Education Workshop 3 (date TBA)
28 February Recovery Training for Carers

Note: If you have an emergency respite need, please ring Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (except from mobiles) while the office is closed over the Christmas break

Service Provider Breakfast

We are once more holding an informal Service Providers Breakfast on Wednesday, 23rd January 2008 between 8-00am and 9-00am here at our office, 10 Walkers Way, Nundah.

If you are a service provider who works with us, or would like to know more about what we do, or would like to network with other service providers to tell them what you can do for carers, then please come along.

Please diarize and RSVP on Freecall™ 1800 059 059™ (except for mobiles) by Monday, 21st January 2008 for catering purposes.

Carer Education Workshop 3 - February 2008 (exact date to be determined)

Topic: Behaviour Support - An Introduction to Positive Support for People with "Challenging Behaviour"
Presented by: CRU Facilitator, Fiona McGill

The Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre will run this workshop in conjunction with the Community Resource Unit (CRU). The aim of this workshop is to provide carers who support someone with an Intellectual Disability, Autism, Aspergers Syndrome or high complex challenging behaviours with informative theoretical and educational support combined with practical strategies for understanding the rationale for behaviour support. Please contact Sheryn to register your expression of interest or, to find out more about the workshop - Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (except from mobiles). Priority will be given to those carers with limited formal support services. **At the present time we are seeking expressions of interest only to attend.**

Residential Respite

The festive season is almost here. This is a time for family, friends, celebrations and, of course, STRESS!! Have you thought about planning some time just for yourself?

If you care for an older person, have you considered planning a block of residential respite? The Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre manages several respite rooms at various aged care facilities. We can provide respite within dementia secure units, general care units as well as the new cottage style units.

We still have some vacancies available over the Christmas and New Year period. Any carers who are interested in finding out more can call Kerry or Anne-Maree as some guidelines do apply. We can be contacted on Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (except from mobiles)

Men's Recreational Group

NOVEMBER

The Brisbane North Metro Men's Recreational Group (MRG for short!) met here at Toombul for a presentation by Caroline from the Office of the Adult Guardian. There was a lot of information about Powers of Attorney and Advanced Health Directives to digest and everyone got the chance to ask some questions, however time was short. We could have spent lots more time with Caroline. Maybe next year we will have another session about this very important subject.

After that we set off in the bus down to Wellington Point to have a great lunch at the Sportys Club and then to have a wander along the pier. It was a lovely spot right on the water and we all enjoyed the experience.

DECEMBER

This month the Toombul MRG had their Christmas break-up which was a Mystery outing. We had a lot of new men (hope you come again!!) join us for the fun, games, good food and great company!! There was a lot of sneaky ploys to get us to spill the beans but both Judy and I stood strong and no-one knew where or what we were going to be doing.

There was a lot of guessing about where we were going and Juan the bus driver teased everyone by driving in unexpected directions. Our first stop was to Nudgee Beach where we picked up Judy (from Pine Rivers MRG) who had gotten there early in order to "bags" the shelter shed, decorate it and jam the scones which were for morning tea. Kira helped out as well - thanks, Kira.

After morning tea we jumped onto the bus again, this time for some Christmas carols ... what good voices the group has!! ... and we headed for Scarborough for games and the secret santa. We played bingo here and there were prizes for the winners of the "best game is a fast game"!!!

Again back on the bus to do the scenic drive to our final destination - Hogs Breath, Redcliffe. There was more guessing and it wasn't until the last minute that Alan guessed where we were headed. Food was good, staff were very helpful and friendly, and we all had a great time. Everyone had the opportunity to tell the group an interesting fact about themselves so we all learned a bit more about each other ... thanks for the drooling dog story, Judy!!

Thankyou to the group for the Christmas wishes and gift, being such a fun group and also for the great year we have had together. Both Judy and I wish you all the best for you and your loved ones over the Christmas break (don't forget to ring us if you need a break during our little "holiday"), and we hope to see you in the new year. The MRG will be starting again in February (*second Tuesday*).

Sins of omission are those we have overlooked committing.

Young Carers Program

If you are regularly caring for a family member, a friend or neighbour, are struggling to stay at school and you are aged from 12 years up to 25 years we may be able to support you to continue with your secondary education and caring role.

Please contact our Young Carer Program Officer who can chat to you about some options, such as domestic assistance, tutoring, counselling, advocacy and fun activities. Kira can be contacted on Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (*except from mobiles*) or you might like to check out our new website:

www.suncare.org.au/young.htm

Mental Health Short-term Packages for Carers

The Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre Brisbane North Metro / Pine Rivers has several mental health packages of support available to carers at the present time. The focus of these packages is to assist people with a mental illness who are socially isolated to engage with their community, thereby reducing pressure on their carer and creating a "respite" effect. Other individualised options to assist carers will also be considered. Priority is for carers aged over 65 years, however all carers are welcome to enquire.

Contact the Mental Health Respite Team for further information on Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (*except from mobiles*).

Out of the Mouths of Babes

Six year olds were given the first half of a proverb & asked to finish it.

Strike while the ... insect is close
Never underestimate the power of ... ants
Don't bite the hand that ... looks dirty
Better to be safe than ... punch a grade 7 boy
It you lie down with dogs, you'll ... stink in the morning
A miss is as good as a ... Mr
Children should be seen and not ... smacked or grounded
An idle mind is ... the best way to relax
Where there is smoke there is ... pollution
A penny saved is ... not much
Happy the bride who ... gets all the presents

Young Carers Program Holiday Activity

Young carers from the Young Carers Programs (see *article at left*) at Maroochydore, Caboolture and Toombul will be participating in a fun-filled overnight adventure from Friday, 11 January to Saturday, 12 January 2008 which is during the school holidays.

The adventure will start with a canal cruise on the Mooloolaba River, sleeping with the fishes at Underwater World and then next day some race time at the Big Kart Track. This is going to be a great experience for young carers and will also mean that they are getting a bit of a break from their caring role.

If you are a young carer, want more information and/or are interested in coming along please contact Kira on Freecall™ 1800 059 059.

*Sports do not build character. They reveal it.
Heywood Bround*

Weekend Disability Cottage Respite

CRCC is looking into the feasibility of developing a weekend options program for carers of people with Autism, Aspergers and Intellectual Disabilities in the Brisbane North region. This is in response to the extremely limited respite options available to this group of carers.

This initiative is in the early stages of planning. We seek input from carers and service providers to gather information and ideas around needs, service models of delivery and service providers who may be able to work in partnership with us.

We would also welcome information on suitable available accommodation options where the program could successfully operate.

We are holding an open forum on Thursday, 24th January at 10-00am at CRCC, 10 Walkers Way, Nundah. Please feel free to come along, participate and have some morning tea.

RSVP for catering purposes by Tuesday, 22nd January on Freecall 1800 059 059 (except from mobiles). If you would like further information about the forum or to comment on this issue, please call Stephen on Freecall™ 1800 059 059 (except from mobiles).

In this time of joy and festive cheer have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year!!



The staff of the Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre - Brisbane North Metro / Pine Rivers would like to wish you all a very



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Do you know about: Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a condition in which our bones become fragile and brittle. This occurs when bones lose minerals such as calcium at a faster rate than our body can replace them. This loss of calcium leads to a higher risk of fractures than in normal bones.

Did you know that it is estimated that in Australia someone is admitted into hospital every eight minutes with an osteoporosis related fracture. These figures are expected to rise as the population ages.

There are several ways we can decrease the risk of becoming another statistic and these include:

- a diet high in calcium
- giving up smoking
- avoiding excessive alcohol
- maintaining a healthy body weight
- participating in regular physical activity (exercise can maintain and increase bone strength by increasing bone mass)

Tai Chi, for example, promotes muscle strength, flexibility, balance and coordination which are beneficial for falls prevention. Studies have found that people who regularly practice Tai Chi can almost halve their risk of falls - therefore reducing the risk of fracture.

Be aware that exercise needs to be ongoing. Any positive gains in bone strength are lost when you stop exercising. So keep it simple and keep it going. For more information on Osteoporosis or Falls Prevention contact Osteoporosis Australia on Freecall™ 1800 242 141 (except from mobiles) or ask your Health Care Professional.

(Information sourced from Osteoporosis Australia)

Article written by Kerry (Supports Facilitator - Residential)

OOOOOO

Friends are angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly. Anon.

Contact Details

**Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre
Brisbane North Metro / Pine Rivers**

ATTENTION WRITERS

We are always looking for interesting stories, poems or articles for our newsletter.

If you think you have something that might fit the bill or would like to suggest a specific article, please call Jacq at the Centre.

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