

CARING TOGETHER IN BELFAST

SPRING 2022

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Carer Support Service

T: 028 9504 2126

E: CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Web: <https://belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/carers-services/>



Dear Carers

Welcome to the first Carers Newsletter of 2022.

In this edition, we share a range of activity and information to help you in your caring role. I am delighted to welcome the new Information and Support Officers who joined the Carers Support Team in early January. Jacqui and Susan will work to co-ordinate the monthly carer activity programme and we are seeking carers input to help continue to shape and grow this programme. The feedback from carers attending our current activities has been really positive and carers are enjoying getting involved in various activities from information sessions to relaxation and also participating in craft, cookery and dance and movement classes. Our feedback also shows that carers would like face to face sessions to restart and we are continually reviewing how we may do this.

In this edition, we focus on support for carers of people with dementia and share both the Belfast Trust and also the community and voluntary sector support available. As for any condition, we support carers to access information and also continue to raise awareness about a carers right to have a carer assessment to identify support that will help you.

I want to thank carers who completed the questionnaire to tell us how we can improve how we communicate. We received a great response which will help us to develop a plan to guide how we share information in future.

I hope you enjoy this edition and encourage you to join an activity session. We are also starting to prepare for Carers Week in June and encourage you to get involved to help us to shape the Trust Carers Week programme to raise awareness and draw attention to how important caring is within families and communities.

Claire Fordyce. Senior Manager - Carers



It is with great sadness that we share the news that Lesley Johnston, Carers NI's Advice and Information Officer of almost 20 years, has passed away.

Lesley worked at Carers NI for almost 20 years and during that time was an integral part of their advice and information service, where she provided information, advice and support to thousands of carers in Northern Ireland and Belfast. She did so with kindness, empathy and respect.

Her knowledge of carers issues and her passion and commitment to her work were invaluable and she will be sorely missed by all her colleagues and those that worked with her.

MEET THE NEW INFORMATION AND SUPPORT OFFICERS

We are delighted to welcome Jacqui and Susan our new Carer Information and Support Officers to the team. Over the coming months I hope you will get a chance to meet them online and face to face as they co-ordinate the monthly activities programme.

Susan Campbell

Hi I'm Susan. I am one of the new Carer Information and Support Officers and I look forward to working with the Carer Support Service. I have spent the past 10 years working as a Speech and Language Therapy Assistant within schools to support children with learning difficulties and speech and language difficulties. However I began my studies in nutrition and health promotion and began my career as a Dietetic Assistant where I worked within the hospital setting. I have also worked in community settings within Health Promotion.

In my free time I enjoy Pilates and I have always enjoyed a dance class! I also enjoy leisurely walks with our dog, Penny, pottering about in the garden in the sunshine and spending time with family.



Jacqui Nesbitt

Hi I'm Jacqui. I am the other new Carer Information and Support Officer. I have experience of working with vulnerable adults in both residential and community settings but began my career as a clerical officer within the health service many years ago!

I enjoy reading, blogging, listening to music and podcasts, crafting and walking my dog. I write short stories and poetry in my spare time, and have spent the last year planning and writing my first creative memoir. With three daughters to look after, life is never boring! I look forward to working within the Carer Support Service.



The next pages share some of the activities that you may get involved in, which will be organised by the Carer Information and Support Officers.

CURRENT CARER SUPPORT

Monthly Coffee Mornings

The Carer Support team invite you to our monthly Coffee Mornings on the **last Friday of every month at 10.30am.**

Currently they are on zoom, but we hope to start face to face groups in the near future. The meetings last an hour, but if you don't have an hour come for as long as you have time.

Face to face Carer Groups

We hope to hold sessions in person as soon as we are allowed. We would like you to tell us how you feel about attending a coffee morning in person, or whether you prefer online sessions. Your feedback will help to develop carer groups. If you are happy to attend in person, where would you like to meet? Would you prefer to meet in a coffee shop, on a Trust site or community organisation site, or have you any of your own suggestions?

We are also working to compile a list of Carer Groups in the Belfast area. If you know of any in your area or any that you have attended, please forward the details to us by T: 9504 2126 or E: CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net.



Walk and Talk Wednesdays

Every Wednesday the Carer Support Service will be hosting a walking group. It will be an informal 'walk and talk' around various parks in the Belfast area. The walk will last around 1 hour and we will set off from our meeting point at 10.30am. We will aim to cover each of the 4 areas of Belfast, North, South, East and West, on a weekly rotation.

Walking can help to improve our physical wellbeing and mental wellbeing. Being active outdoors, in nature, can really help to lift our mood and calm our anxiety. It can also allow us to build friendships and support networks with people who may understand what its like to be a carer.

You can register for the walk on

T: 95042126 E: CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Date	Meeting Point	Location
30th March	Car park beside bowling green	Falls Park, BT12 6AN West Belfast
6th April	Ozone car park, Ormeau Embankment	Ormeau Park, BT7 3GG South Belfast
13th April	Main car park	Victoria Park, BT4 1JT East Belfast
20th April	Park on Cavehill Rd, Street parking only	Waterworks, BT14 6NG North Belfast

CARER IDENTIFICATION CARDS

If you are caring for someone in the Belfast Trust area, you can ask for a Carer Identification Card. The main purpose of the card is to acknowledge and recognise carers. Carers are finding it useful in other ways too. For example, did you know that Carers go free at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum when they present their Carers Identification Card? It may also help you to gain access to other local attractions as well.



If you would like a card please contact the service for more information. If you already have one, let us know how you have used and any benefits or discounts you have received with it and where you have found it useful in daily life.



Men's Pamper Hamper



Women's Pamper Hamper

We are offering hampers to carers who haven't been able to access our online support and who have not previously received one.

To request T: 9504 2126 or
E: CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Monthly Activity Programme

The carers monthly activity programme enables carers to get involved in a range of activities. These include, craft sessions, cookery, yoga, relaxation and self-care sessions. Check out the monthly programme on-line at <https://belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/carers-services/carers-activities/> or telephone and ask for the programme to be sent to you if you are not on-line.



Carer cookery and craft makes

CURRENT CARER SUPPORT

DRUMALIS CARER AWAY DAYS

We are delighted to announce that we are planning 5 Carer Days to Drumalis in Larne in 2022.



These are wonderfully relaxing days in a beautiful old Victorian house with a modern conference centre down by the sea in Larne. It's a day for you to focus on yourself and meet other carers for craic and peer support. It's also about letting yourself be pampered and cared for.

The first session of the day is group relaxation, and then carers start having their scheduled individual complementary therapy sessions. Therapies include indian head massage, aromatherapy massage, neck and shoulder massage and reflexology. After a 3 course lunch carers can choose to have a guided walk around the gardens and seafront with our trained walk leader or relax in one of the many seating areas in the beautiful Drumalis setting.

Transport to Drumalis from Belfast City Centre is available for carers if required.

Dates for 2022

- Wednesday 27 April
- Friday 17 June
- Wednesday 24 August
- Thursday 20 October
- Tuesday 13 December

We are now accepting bookings for **Wed 27 April and Fri 17 June. Due to limited places, carers who have not been able to access on-line support or have not previously attended a Drumalis away day will be prioritised.**

To book your place contact the Carer Support Service on T: 9504 2126
E: CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net.

All attendees are asked to comply with Covid measures in place.

I had a fantastic day and so pleased that I went... pass my thanks on to all the staff and volunteers who made it such an enjoyable day

Male Carer

Dementia Navigator Service supports carers

The Dementia Navigator Service not only provides information and support for those living with Dementia but also their carers, families and anyone significant in that person's life.

If a referral is for a carer or family member, the dementia navigators will make contact promptly to establish what their particular needs are at any given time. They complete a holistic needs assessment to identify all concerns for the person with dementia and their families/carers. This could be to determine how they are feeling and provide emotional support. It could also be to find out what the carers know about dementia and provide individualised support and education depending on the needs identified at the time of contact.

The navigators can signpost or refer carers to other resources which they have agreed. This could include apps for dementia, Carer Support Programmes from the Alzheimer's Society, Dementia NI, Carers Cafes or some of the Dementia Friendly Belfast events and other non dementia specific opportunities across the city. The Dementia navigators work alongside their colleagues within the Connected Community Care Service and collaborate with their contacts in the city so that they can keep abreast of what's going. This helps to connect carers to opportunities in their communities that can support them.

They can advise Carers on how to access statutory and voluntary services to meet their needs or make onward referrals on their behalf and explain who does what and how they can help them.

The service can provide face to face or telephone support dependent on the needs of the service user and their families.

The Dementia Navigator service can be a single point of contact for carers, families and people living with a dementia diagnosis and can be accessed by telephoning Single Point of Referral in the Belfast Trust on T: 02895042700 or by E: info@ccchub.co.uk

(Note- excluding criteria is if a service user is an open case to the Community Mental Health team for Older People)



Emma McClelland Dementia Navigator
North & West Belfast
M: 075 5775 5547
E: emma.mcclelland@belfasttrust.hscni.net



Rebecca Dorrian Dementia Navigator
East & South Belfast
M: 078 08878168
E: rebecca.dorrian@belfasttrust.hscni.net

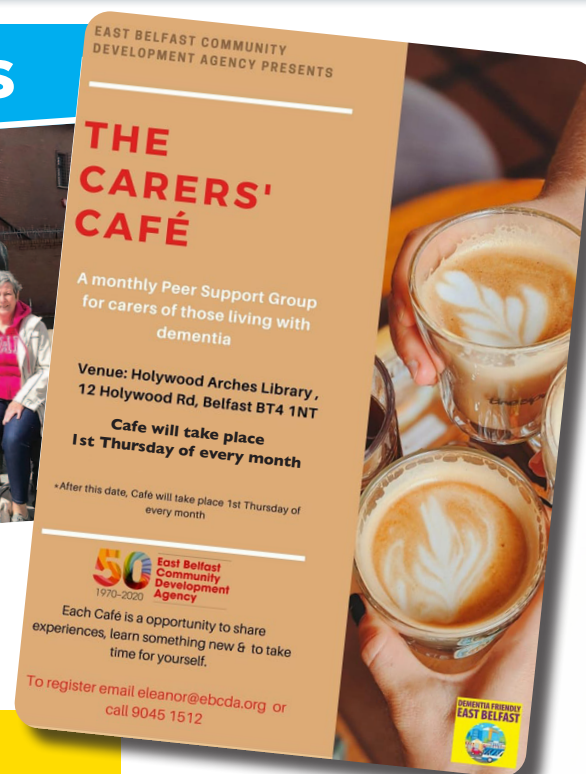
FOCUS ON SUPPORT FOR DEMENTIA CARERS

Dementia Friendly Groups

Engage with Age is setting up activity groups for people living with dementia and their carers. Group activities include crafts, walking groups, and social groups. Fancy getting involved?



Phone **07436 174793** or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk



Telephone Befriending for Dementia Carers

Are you a carer for someone living with dementia and fancy having a chat and a bit of craic? Or would you like to become a Volunteer Telephone Befriender?

Join up to Engage with Age's Telephone Befriending scheme specifically for carers of people living with dementia.

Phone **07423 701721** or email befriending@engagewithage.org.uk

This initiative is possible from a grant from the LFT Foundation.



LFT CHARITABLE TRUST

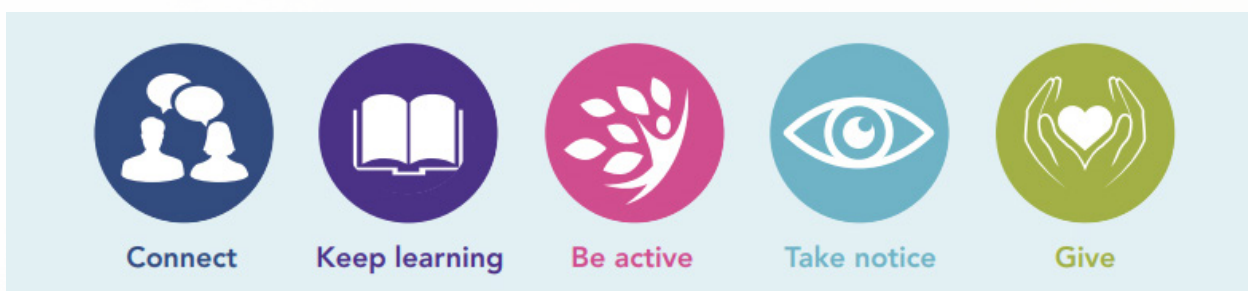
Engage with Age, East Belfast Network Centre, 55 Templemore Avenue, Belfast BT5 4FP.
Tel: 028 9073 5696 Email: info@engagewithage.org.uk
www.engagewithage.org.uk www.facebook.com/EngageWithAgeBelfast
Charity Registration Number: 100718 Company Number: NI039665



TAKE 5 STEPS TO WELL-BEING

Most of us know when we are mentally and physically well, but sometimes we need a little extra support to keep well. These are 5 simple steps to help improve and maintain your well-being. Try to build these into your daily life – think of them as your 'five a day' for wellbeing.

What Take 5 activities do you do?



In this edition of the Carer Newsletter we ask you to keep learning about how you can promote your well-being through self-care and eating a more balanced diet. Trying or learning something new can be fun and improve your well-being so try a new recipe or our self-care tips.

MYTHS ABOUT SELF-CARE

-  Self-care is an indulgence
-  Meaningful self-care includes making mindful changes in patterns of thoughts and behaviours that do not contribute to your wellbeing.
-  Self-care is selfish
-  When you make time for yourself and get sufficient rest & exercise, you feel more energetic and will be able to do more - for yourself as well as for those around you.
-  Self-care is a one-time experience
-  Looking after yourself is an ongoing practice in building resilience to face hardships and in preventing burnout.
-  Self-care is time consuming
-  Self-care does not require you to take out a huge chunk of time from your busy day.

www.mymindoesis.com

SELF CARE FOR CARERS

Self-Care...

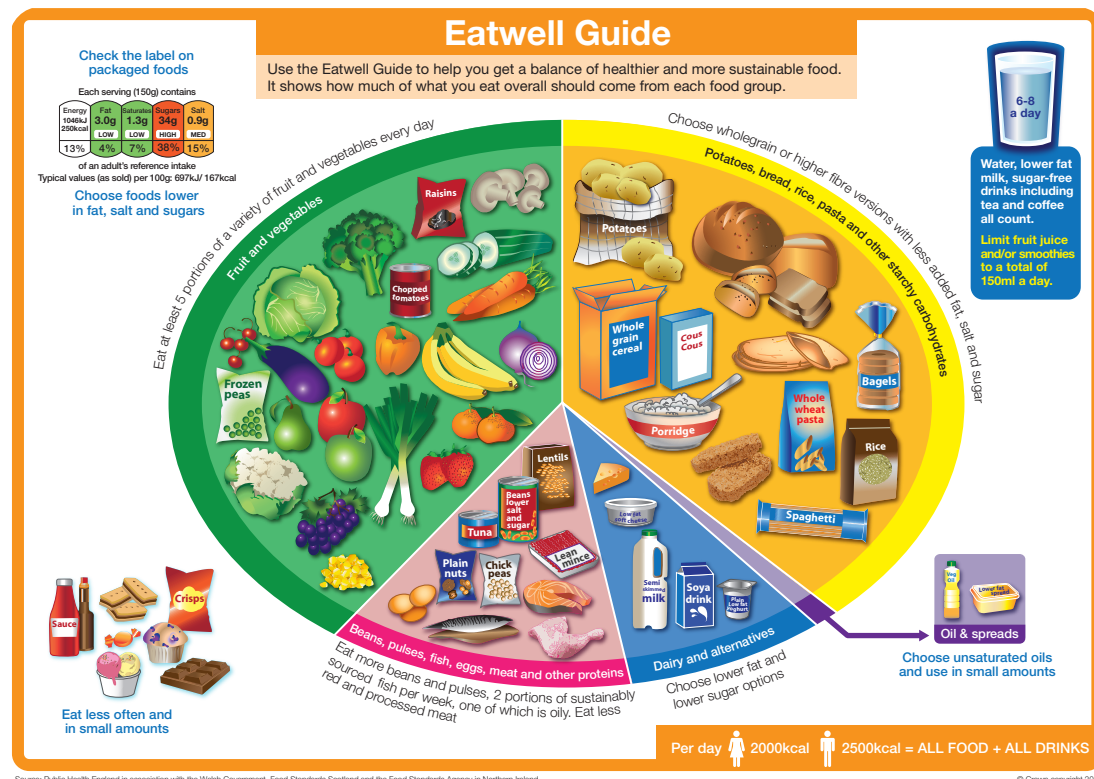
A daily foundational wellbeing skill that helps us to meet our own emotional, mental and physical needs.

What is Self-Care?

Self-care is the daily process of being aware of and attending to our basic physiological and emotional needs – it includes shaping one's daily routine, relationships, and environment as needed to promote self-care. It is a foundational wellbeing skill that refers to activities, and practices that we can do on a daily basis to help reduce stress, create an inner state of calm and ease so that we may maintain and enhance our physical, emotional and mental health. It is not something we force ourselves to do, or something we do not enjoy doing – it is something that refuels us, rather than takes away from us.

A Few Simple Guidelines for Self-Care:

1. **Self-Care is not self-indulgence** - It is a radical act of kindness to oneself and those around us to care for ourselves.
2. **Self-Care can take time** - When we truly begin to take care of ourselves, it can take time. Yes there are quick fixes out there but if our intention is to create longer term habits that nourish and sustain us it is worth the wait. Having strong and stable roots allows us to grow strongly and steadily. Start with something small and manageable that you can do - practicing taking a few deep breaths before you get out of bed in the morning can help to start the day with stability and calm.
3. **Self-Care is not a one size fits all** - What works for one person will not work for another. Explore what works for you and if possible approach the idea of self-care with a little lightness, curiosity and playfulness.
4. **Self-Care is inclusive** - Unfortunately, in the media self-care has become associated with having to spend lots of money on expensive products that are indulgent and frivolous. This is one of the reasons self-care can be seen as an 'occasional' practice. However, self-care is for everyone men, young people, minorities, people of colour, and individuals who are struggling to make ends meet.
5. **Self-Care does not need to cost money** - Get regular exercise, drink enough water, learn to ask for help and receive it when offered, practice regular relaxation (e.g. systematic relaxation, walking, meditation), connect with family & friends, practice saying no more often (this is a challenging one but play around with it!), keep a journal, create a regular sleep routine, be a little kinder to yourself, nourish your body with wholesome foods, and have a laugh.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

For many of us we might know what we should be eating and drinking to help look after our bodies and minds, however, the challenging part is actually doing it.

If any of us have any specific health issues or dietary requirements we must always follow the advice of our dietitian, GP or health professional. The Eatwell Guide allows us to eat healthily and achieve a balanced diet. It divides our food into 5 main groups and shows us how much we should be eating from each food group over a day or week. We are encouraged to eat a variety from each group. Fruits, vegetables and starchy foods should make up most of our diet, with some dairy and protein foods also, while fats, sugars and salty foods should make up the least of our diet. We shouldn't forget that we should also be drinking 6-8 glasses of fluid a day; just take care with fruit juice and smoothies.

If we can try to follow this guidance then it will benefit us physically, helping us to, for example, maintain a healthy body weight, benefit our heart health, muscles, bones and teeth, as well as benefitting our mental health. Our physical and mental health can be particularly important when we are caring for our loved ones.

The Carer Support Service hosts a range of monthly self-care sessions on a range of topics. You can register your interest or let us know what topics would interest you by T: 9504 2126 or E: CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net



FOCUS ON YOUNG CARERS

Young Carers enjoying some time away from their caring responsibilities



For more information
on Young Carers
Contact Young
Carers Team
niyoungcarers@Actionforchildren.org.uk
02890 460 500

What is a young carer?

A young carer is someone aged between 8 and 18 who looks after a member of their family, or a friend.

Young carers may care for a parent, sibling or relative who has a disability, mental health condition, long-term illness, drug or alcohol addiction.

The Action for Children Young Carers Service works with young people in the Belfast, South Eastern and Southern Trusts in Northern Ireland. Our job is to provide the practical and emotional support young carers need, when they need it.

What do young carers do?

Being a young carer can be hard, and each person's responsibilities are different. A young carer may:

- | Listen to and keep the person they are caring for company.
- | Keep the person they care for safe.
- | Help with personal care and medication.
- | Care for siblings.
- | Do domestic chores, like shopping, cooking and housework.
- | Translate or use sign language.
- | Respond to challenging or unusual behaviour.

The impact on a young person's life

The responsibility of caring for a loved one can affect a young person's education, friendships, physical health and emotional wellbeing. They may:

- Feel stressed and worried
- Struggle to concentrate at school
- Feel tired, low and their health may suffer
- Miss out on time with friends
- Not get the attention they need from parents
- Feel lonely and isolated.

"I joined when I was 11. My dad suffers from severe epilepsy and various mental health problems. Action for Children has been amazing for just giving me the opportunity to make friends, have fun and talk if needed. They have made a massive difference in my life. I have learnt so much from various groups and will take these lessons with me into the future."

Improving how we communicate with carers

In the last newsletter, we asked carers to complete a questionnaire to help us improve how we communicate and share information with unpaid and family carers.

Thank you to everyone who completed a questionnaire and we received 237 responses. Some feedback is shared below.

The best ways to share information

Carers found helpful:

- Email
- Post
- Text
- Website
- Information shared via an on-line or face to face session
- Social media - Facebook

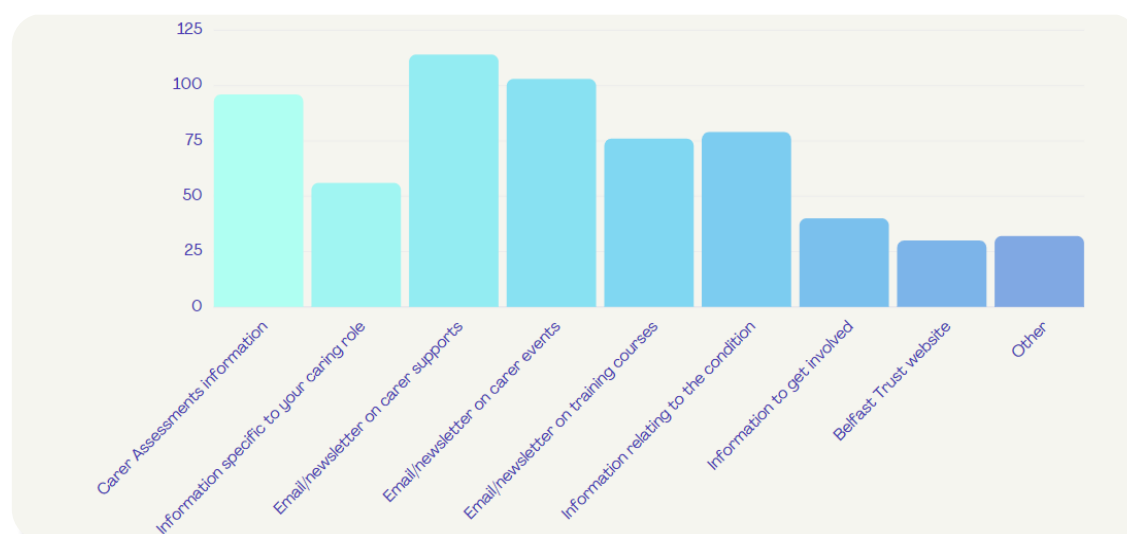
Carers least liked:

- Telephone
- Online clips
- Social media - Instagram

What information would be helpful and responses included

- Services available
- Support available
- Carers rights and benefits
- Support groups or events
- Carer Assessments
- Information on conditions of the cared for person
- Direct payments
- Connecting with other carers
- Caring breaks
- Knowing who to contact for help or support
- Self-care for carers
- End of life

What information Carers would like to receive to help them in their caring role



We will review all the responses to the questionnaire and develop a plan to improve how we share information.

CARER INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Belfast Trust Carers Network will work with the Trust to identify carer priorities and develop the next Carers Strategy. We linked with carers to help develop the Carer Network structure through 2 carer information sessions in November 2021.



We have received Expressions of Interest from carers who wish to join the Carer Network. We will now work with the members of the Carer Network, to provide an induction to both the Trust and the Carers Strategy. Work will then begin to renew the Carers Strategy, to identify carer priorities and the action that we need to take to support carers over the next 3 year period.

Further information on the work of the Carer Network may be found at **Carers' Services | Belfast Health & Social Care Trust (hscni.net)**

Belfast Trust's New Good Relations Strategy - We want to hear from Carers!

Belfast Trust is working on its 3rd Good Relations Strategy - Healthy Relations for a Healthy Future 3. We know how important the role of a Carer is and we know that Carers use our services regularly and often support loved ones to use our services. We would be delighted to get your views, to inform our next strategy. We want to ensure that we will promote 'Good Relations' and meet the needs of service users, carers and staff in this respect, whilst promoting better outcomes for people from different ethnic origins, religious beliefs and political opinions.

Belfast Trust plans to have a focus group for Carers and Carers will also have the option of completing our online survey. To get involved contact

Caroline McMenamin - E: caroline.mcmenamin@belfasttrust.hscni.net T: 02895044053

You can also complete the online survey at -

<https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/hsc/belfast-trusts-new-good-relations-strategy>



**06 - 12 JUNE 2022**

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. It also helps people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support.

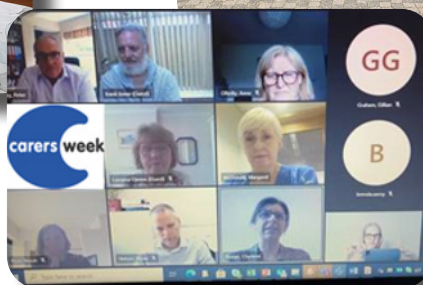
The campaign is brought to life by individuals and organisations who come together to provide support for carers, run activities, highlight the vital role carers play in our communities and draw attention to just how important caring is.

In the Belfast Trust we run a week long programme of events from Monday through to Sunday. We want you to participate in the events but we would also like you to suggest what kind of events you would like to see this year. Last year we held a Carer Family Day, Chat with the Trust Chairman, a quiz, and also sessions on skincare, craft and cooking to name a few examples.

We invite you to tell us what face to face and on-line events you would like to join and help us plan Carers Week 2022. You can share your suggestions with the Carer Support Service on T: 95042126 or E: CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net. 

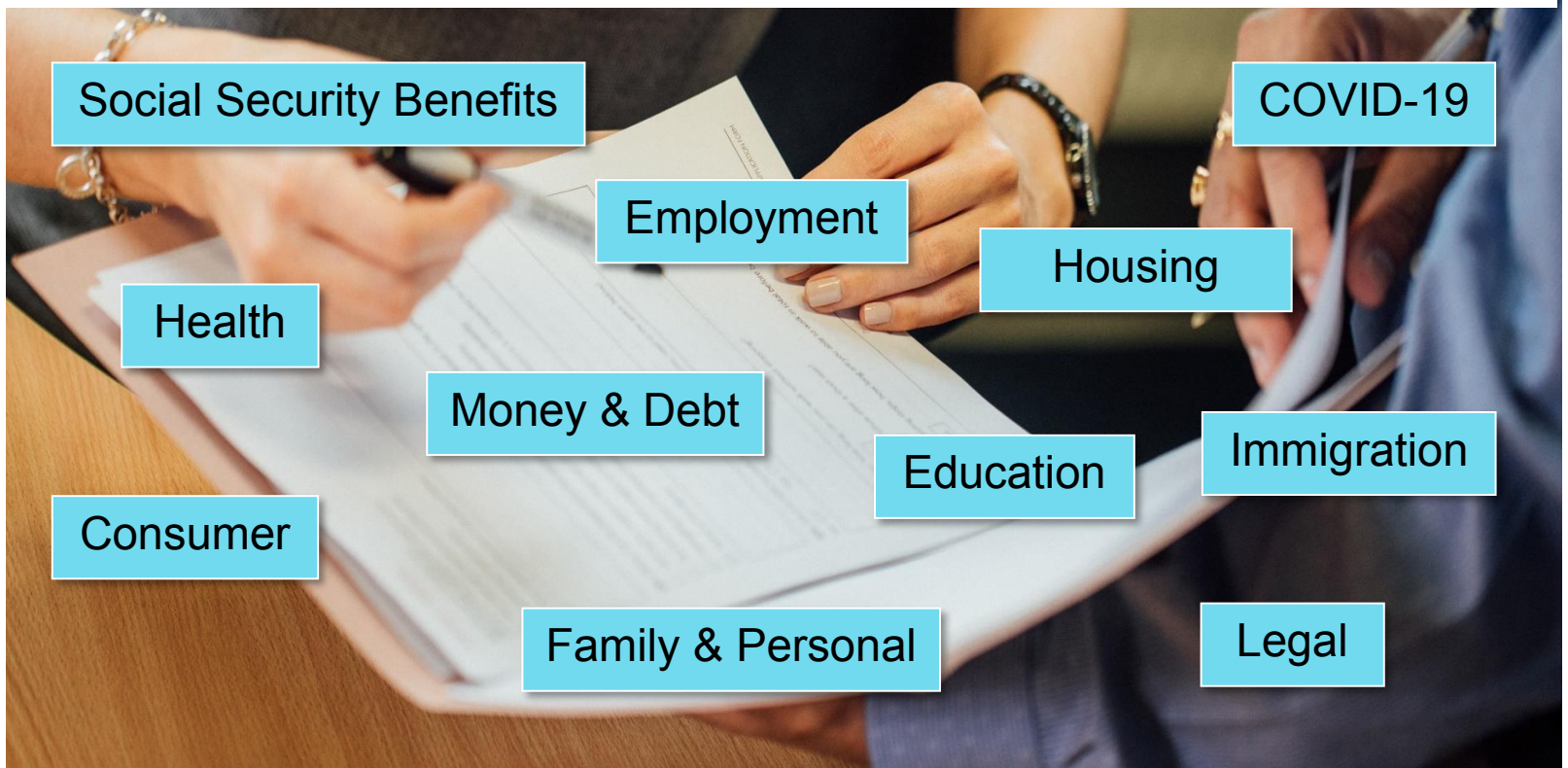
CARERS WEEK 2021

These are some examples of the activities held in Carers Week 2021



advice space

support & guidance



*Are you 18+ with a physical disability?
Do you care for someone with a physical disability?
Do you live in Belfast?*

For advice and support, contact the
Physical Disability Team at Advice Space.

0300 123 3233

Mon – Fri
9am – 12.30pm and 1pm – 4pm

www.advicespace.me