



The **MASE** Monthly Newsletter

December 2015

Winners of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service



A Christmas Message from The Trustees of the MASE

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for supporting the MASE during the year and wish you all
A Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

To our wonderful Volunteers 'Thank You' for all the time you graciously give to the Groups during the year!

We also appreciate that Christmas can be a difficult time for many people, so in the true spirit of the Season, please spare a thought for the people who have lost someone recently and who will be spending their Christmas without that special person. Offering the hand of friendship and support to those who may be struggling can mean so much..

We look forward to seeing you in January 2016 - in the meantime, wrap up warm, watch out for those slippery pathways and stay safe until we see you again in the New Year.

Daphne, Elaine, Jim and Richard



Count down to Christmas.....



The countdown to Christmas is well and truly under way and, as families make plans to come together over the festive season. Here is some timely advice for Carer's of loved ones living with dementia to help make this Christmas a special time for all.

Get involved

Where possible, involve those living with dementia in preparations for the Christmas festivities, so they feel part of the celebrations, retain some personal independence, and feel as though they have a role to play. This approach can give people a great sense of self-achievement and may well improve their mood. From Christmas baking to decorating the tree and even wrapping gifts – think about how you can make traditional, seasonal activities as collaborative as possible.

Take a trip down memory lane

Dealing with the loss of memories can be a very frustrating part of living with dementia. Try to ask questions about how your loved one used to celebrate Christmas and what their family traditions were. You could then try to recreate some of these to encourage a sense of comforting nostalgia, or perhaps make a Christmas memory box together to store their memories and help with reminiscence.

At Christmas play and make good cheer, for Christmas comes but once a year

When it comes to evoking memories, raising cheer and bringing people together, the power of music is incredibly strong; and what better way to get into the Christmas spirit and connect with loved ones than carol singing. Many people living with dementia can recall favourite tunes from years ago, so why not gather the family and enjoy a Christmas sing-a-long.

Lower stress, raise the joy

Repetition may seem tedious to the rest of us but it can often be reassuring to someone with cognitive impairment. You could get crafty and make Christmas decorations; the simple action of repeatedly putting the cloves into an orange can conjure up feelings of accomplishment and pride, or why not try threading popcorn, dried fruit and cinnamon sticks onto string? The decorations can then be hung around the home, where they will not only look festive but their scent may evoke calming, happy memories.

Just have fun!

It's Christmas, a time for fun and laughter and it doesn't have to be stressful or complicated. There are a number of games and activities which can be played to stimulate minds and, if possible, get people living with dementia moving – for example, a simple "pin the nose on Rudolph the reindeer" game. Velcro can be used instead of a pin and the game can be made portable for those unable to stand – a great way to get everyone involved.

Fundraisers

Thank you to Rosemary one of our valued volunteers, and Sylvia an ex-Carer from our Stafford Group, who together with their team of helpers, Gill, Julie and Ian, managed to raise £335.00 with a fantastic Tombola at the Hednesford and Rugeley groups. They put so much time and effort into individually wrapping each gift and we are so grateful to everyone involved for their kindness and support.

The Carers Hub - A new service for Carers

This new service started on 1 October 2015 and took over from CASS. For more information on the Service. Please contact the Carers Hub direct on **0330 1231937**



What is The Silver Line and why does it exist?



The statistics about older people and loneliness are frightening. More than half of all 75 year olds in the UK live alone and one in ten suffers "intense" loneliness but is reluctant to ask for help. In a poll conducted to mark the national launch of The Silver Line on 25 November 2013, 9 out of 10 older people said that "a chat on the phone" is the most helpful solution when they feel lonely but 1 in 4 older people say they never or seldom have someone to chat to on the phone.

About the Silver Line Helpline

The Silver Line is the confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK* open every day and night of the year. Specially trained helpline staff:

- ★ Offer information, friendship and advice
- ★ Link callers to local groups and services
- ★ Offer regular befriending calls
- ★ Protect and support those who are suffering abuse and neglect

Who is it for?

The Silver Line is a helpline for older people – the Silver Generation. We have no strict age limits but most people we speak to are over 65. So, if you think it's for you, it's for you.

Are All Calls Free?

The Silver Line Helpline is free to callers.

We rely on charitable donations from organisations and individuals who care about the welfare and safety of older people to fund this vital new service.

Are all calls confidential?

The Silver Line is a confidential helpline.

Callers are free to express their feelings and describe their lives honestly, and can trust us to respect their privacy. In cases of abuse or neglect, with the callers' permission, we will involve specialist safeguarding organisations such as Action on Elder Abuse or Social Services.

Silver Line Friends and Silver Circles

If callers would like to be put in touch with Silver Line Friends, they can receive a regular weekly friendship call. Or they may like to join a Silver Circle and take part in a regular group call on subjects that interest them.

Silver Line Friends are volunteers who have contacted The Silver Line because they enjoy talking to older people. They are vetted and trained, and work in pairs for safeguarding and support.

If you have a computer please take a look at our website which covers all MASE activities: www.themasegroup.com

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