



# The MASE Monthly Newsletter

## December 2016

### Winners of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service



### Seasons Greetings to everyone



Daphne, Elaine, Jim and Richard, Trustees of the MASE, would like to take this opportunity to let you know we think you are all very Special and would like to wish you

***A Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year***



'Thank You' to all our fantastic Volunteers for the time they give so generously to the MASE 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 during the year and will be spending their Christmas without that special person. Let us all offer the hand of friendship and support to those who are less fortunate than we are.

Let us also think about older people who are living on their own, and who perhaps do not attend the MASE Groups. Just a five minute chat with someone either in person or on the telephone can mean so much and such a kind gesture could really help to make someone's day.

To all the wonderful Carers and other people who have tirelessly raised/donated money for the MASE throughout the year 'Thank You' so much; you have made a huge difference to our Groups.

We look forward to seeing you in January 2017 - 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*

### A Merry Christmas ... .. Please think on!!

Always remember: It can be very distressing and confusing for a person with dementia when their routine changes, such as it does over the Christmas/New Year period, so it is worth thinking ahead to ensure everything runs smoothly during the festive season.

People with dementia often sense that something is going on, which may make them feel insecure, frightened and add to everyday confusion. But by taking this basic outline of ideas and tailoring it to your loved one you can give them a happy, healthy Christmas.

#### 1. Routine

It is important that you do your best to maintain a routine, such as getting up and going to bed at the same time and keeping mealtimes regular.

#### 2. Visitors

When there are a lot of people in the house it can be overwhelming. Keeping visits to small family groups over the two week period rather than a big family gathering can help. If visiting family members make sure the visit is dementia friendly and planned well in advance.

#### 3. Noise

It can become quite noisy during the celebrations so trying to keep noise levels to a minimum may be a good idea. It is also important that there is the opportunity for some quiet time, perhaps with just one person, and that there is someone available to explain gently what is going on.

#### 4. Christmas Dinner

Keeping to normal meals can help avoid a catastrophic reaction, though some treats are always appreciated. Remember a table with crackers, coloured napkins/serviettes can become very confusing and the noise from a cracker being pulled can actually frighten a person with dementia.

#### 5. Alcohol

Alcohol is probably best avoided. Alcohol-free wines are an option so that everyone feels included.



Should you need support over Christmas Ring this helpline Number 0808 800 2234



Silverline Service Ring 0800 4 70 80 90

Alzheimer's Society Dementia Helpline 0300 222 1122 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday & Saturday and Sunday 10am - 4pm.

Elaine Dunlop ☎ 01785 823110 or 07812 440226  
Daphne Sharp ☎ 01785 211140 or 07939 505455

**MASE Co-ordinators**

✉ Elaine.dunlop12@btinternet.com  
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## Dementia and Christmas

Perhaps you are having a visitor with dementia over at Christmas:

- \* Plan ahead: If the house is unfamiliar to your guest, putting **labels on doors** could help – for example, the bathroom, the kitchen.
- \* Think about safety: make sure you leave lights on and doors open so the person with dementia is less likely to get confused if they're up at night. Remind people to close outside doors securely if needed.
- \* Food and mealtimes: Don't overload your guest's plate. Although many people eat a lot at Christmas, a full plate can be quite daunting for someone who has difficulties eating.
- \* The person with dementia may feel self-conscious at a large dinner table, so avoid making them feel centre of attention.
- \* Drinking excessively can cause arguments and accidents. Ensure drinking stays within sensible limits.
- \* Emotional needs: Think of some activities the person may enjoy doing in quieter moments. Do you have any old photos you could look at together? Try to involve people in your own activities, such as walking or cooking and cleaning.
- \* Think about their usual or past religious attitudes. Would they like to go to church or listen to hymns?
- \* If the house becomes very busy, designate a 'quiet room' and to agree not to watch television or listen to music in there.
- \* It might be enjoyable for the person to sing carols – it's good to do something jointly with other people but singing also stimulates both mind and body.
- \* Remember your needs! Congratulate yourself for coping, and for being there for someone who needs you. Try to pace yourself and set realistic goals and remember to take time for yourself

## Things you can do to stay safe and keep out the winter chills

Cold weather can be a worry for those of us in later life. As we get older, our bodies respond differently and this can leave us more vulnerable in cold weather.

However, with a little preparation, and by following some simple suggestions, we can help ourselves to stay healthy, safe and as comfortable as possible in winter. Keeping warm both inside and outside your home can help reduce your risk of serious health problems that are more common in the colder months, such as chest infections.

Have plenty of warm drinks, make sure your pantry has plenty of items in stock so that you can always make a meal without having to go out into the cold. Keep your freezer topped up with essential items. Getting ready for the cold weather means that you're more likely to keep warm and well.

### REMEMBER:

- \* Flu injections are available from your doctor before the really cold months set in.
- \* Update and keep all your emergency numbers next to your telephone
- \* Keep a list of your medication available, then in case of an emergency people will know immediately what you are taking and if you have any allergies.



If you have a computer please take a look at our website which covers all MASE activities: [www.themasegroup.com](http://www.themasegroup.com)

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