

The MASE Monthly Newsletter

May 2015

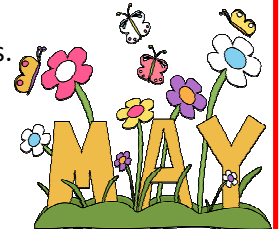


Winners of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

The Month of May

A new month is with us; the month of the flowers, the fifth month of the year and also, the month in which huge and important celebrations take place! **Welcome May!** Each month of the year has stories to tell and May, is an outstanding one! Here are 5 Interesting facts about the month of May that you may not know!

1. The month May was named for Maia, the Greek goddess of fertility.
2. In any given year, no month ever begins or ends on the same day of the week as May does.
3. May's birthstone is the emerald which is emblematic of love and success.
4. May was once considered a bad luck month to get married.
There is a poem that says "Marry in May and you'll rue the day".
5. The United Kingdom celebrates May as the National Smile Month.
Lets hope that will be the case after our General Election!



A New MASE Group is Opening in Stafford



Trustees of the MASE Groups, Daphne, Elaine, Jim and Richard, are delighted to be opening a new MASE Group in Stafford on 11 May 2015.

The new group will take place on the **second Monday** of each month from 7:00 pm - to 9:00 pm and will be held in: **The Northfield Centre, Magnolia Avenue, Stafford ST16 3DU.**

We need people to spread the word about our Group and to reassure them that it is a Group which helps Carers to talk openly about the illness, build up vital networks of support and enable them to form friendships outside of the MASE. This can really help Carers to avoid social isolation and anxiety.

We hope it will have the success of our other groups and that the people in Stafford and surrounding areas, will come along and enjoy an evening with us at the MASE.

MASE is a local Charity supporting local people

Things to talk about after a diagnosis of Dementia has been

Dementia:	What to expect as things progress
Money:	Managing finances in the future (Wills, Power of Attorney)
Where to live:	Where to live if more help should be needed
Type of Care:	Wishes and preferences about how to be cared for
Emergencies:	What will happen to the person with Dementia in an emergency?

Why Talk about it?

Caring:	Many Carers' and families' lives are on hold. The future can be daunting.
Reduces anxiety:	Knowing what to expect and how to respond.
Informed decisions:	It's not unusual for loved ones to have to make decisions on behalf of the person with dementia. This is much easier if their wishes are clear.
Peace of Mind:	Knowing that everything possible has been done to ensure quality of care for the person with dementia.
Not being a burden:	Knowing that things are taken care of, to save families and loved ones unnecessary stress and cost.
Getting on with living:	Having a clear sense of someone's wishes and doing as much as possible to plan ahead to give freedom to get on with living.

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The New Care Act is the biggest reform of social care in 60 years

The Care Act comes into force in May 2015. It changes the way the social care system will work in the future.

You've probably heard about the biggest change: a care cap that means no-one will spend more than £72,000 of their own money on their care needs.

If you need care, or look after someone who does, you'll need to know how care is changing.

Ways it may affect you from April 2015:

1. You will have a right to a free needs assessment from your council, even if it thinks your finances are too high or your needs are too low to qualify for help.
2. All councils will use a new national eligibility criteria to decide whether someone can get help from them.
3. If you get social care support, you will now have a right to request a personal budget if you're not offered one. This is a summary of how much the council thinks your care should cost. This might be useful if you want to pay for your own care. This will become more important when you have a care account from April 2016 (see below).
4. If your needs assessment shows you don't qualify for help from the council, they must advise you how the care system works and how to pay for your own care. So if you just need a hand with housework, for example, the council should assist you in finding this.
5. You can defer selling your home to pay your care fees until after your death.
6. If you're paying for your own care, you can ask the council to arrange your services for you. It can only charge you as much as someone whose care they are funding.
7. If you're a Carer, you have a legal right to a care assessment from the local council. You can also get support services if you qualify for them.
8. If you find it difficult to communicate or to understand the issues being discussed, the council must provide an advocate to help you when discussing your care. They will represent your interests if you don't have a friend or relative who can help.

The council must provide preventative services that could reduce or delay your need for care. For example, intermediate care at home after a hospital stay could help keep you independent for longer.

Ways it may affect you from April 2016:

1. It becomes even more important to get a needs assessment, as the council will then set you up with a care account. This tracks the amount of money spent on your eligible care needs. The word 'eligible' is important as it only includes the needs covered by your assessment. So if you decide to hire a cleaner but the needs assessment doesn't say you need this help, the cost of that won't be included.
2. There will be a cap on how much you have to spend on your care needs. Anything you or the council spend on your eligible needs will be added up in your care account. Once it reaches £72,000, the council will pay for all your eligible needs. This excludes your daily living costs, which include things like your food and accommodation in a care home.
3. The council can reassess your care needs, even if you pay for your own care. This is because the council works out how much your care should cost to meet your eligible needs, and adds this up in your care account. It needs to check every so often that the amount it thinks you should be spending is still right.
4. New rules about top-up fees in care homes mean you may be able to pay them yourself. Top-up fees may apply if you move into a care home that costs more than the council can pay.
5. If you're not happy about a decision, you have a new right to complain and appeal it, and for this to be independently investigated.

(Information from Age UK Digital Team)

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www.themasegroup.com

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

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