



# MASE Monthly Newsletter - December 2018



Proud recipients of The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service & the British Citizen Award for work in the Community

## Christmas Wishes To You All



On behalf of the Trustees and everyone associated with the MASE, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for supporting the Groups each month and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

To our fantastic Volunteers - we would like to say you are all 'Very Special' and we are so grateful to you for the work that you do; for caring enough to turn up each month and for always having a friendly, welcoming smile to greet people attending the MASE.

To the special people who have donated funds to our MASE Groups throughout the year and to everyone involved in the many fundraising activities - we send our sincere thanks and gratitude to each and every one of you. It is through your kindness and incredible generosity that we are able to continue to offer the services to Carers and their cared-for.

We also appreciate that Christmas can be a difficult time for some people, so in the spirit of the Season please spare a thought for those that are in trouble, and let us all offer the hand of friendship and support to others who are less fortunate than we are.

We look forward to seeing you in January - watch out for those slippery pathways and stay safe until we see you again in the New Year. Calendars and magnetic dates are available for you with the dates for 2019 please be sure to pick one up.

*Daphne, Richard and Dave*

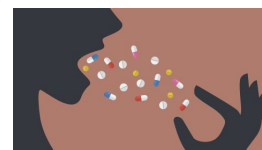
## Cold? Flu? Take care - not anti-biotics

In preparation for the winter months, leaflets are being distributed to GP practices and pharmacists across the area in a bid to help people to make the right choices when it comes to keeping well.

Taking antibiotics when they are not necessary will not help you. They are NOT effective against infections caused by viruses such as common colds or flu and incorrect use in recent years has caused the development of bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics. Only a medical doctor can make the correct diagnosis and decide whether your condition needs treatment by antibiotics.

### Please Remember!

- \* Antibiotics won't work in the case of a cold or the flu
- \* Take antibiotics responsibly and only when prescribed by your doctor
- \* Keeping antibiotics effective is everybody's responsibility



### In case of an emergency:

Please Carers ensure :

- \* Emergency telephone numbers are up-to-date and always accessible
- \* Your list of any medication is up-to-date and accessible
- \* Always be prepared for the unexpected— keep a small bag packed with essential items in it for both you and your cared for. Just in case a trip to the hospital is needed.
- \* Remember waiting times at hospital can sometimes be endless, so in your bag make sure you have a drink, something to read and always keep some small change in the bag so that you can access hot drinks and something to eat should you need it.



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

Daphne Sharp ☎ 01785 211140 or 07939 505455

MASE Co-ordinator /Trustee

✉ themasegroup@gmail.com

## Christmas and Dementia

Christmas celebrations and religious festivities are traditionally a time for family gatherings, the exchange of gifts, sharing food and drink, and general holiday cheer. However, it can also be a stressful time because it represents a break from normal routine.

### Tips for families, friends and carers

Try and make holiday times easy upon yourself and others so that you can relax and enjoy the time together. The following tips often refer specifically to Christmas time, but they are also a useful guide for other family gatherings.

**1. Modify the environment** - Look for triggers that may cause confusion for the person with dementia and change the environment if necessary. For example, at Christmas, these triggers may be in the form of edible looking artificial table decorations such as fruits, sweets or blinking Christmas lights. Consider a Christmas tree without lights, and place a tray underneath if the person with dementia is likely to water it.

**2. Share the caring** - Create opportunities for family members and friends to share the caring role. They may assist by hosting an event in their home. Or, go out as a group for a specific activity, like a small local carols by candlelight or a church service.

**3. Aim for flexibility** - Consider the best time to share a celebratory meal, bearing in mind that a change in routine may be confusing for a person with dementia. Try to stick to the routine of the person with dementia to minimise possible feelings of insecurity and stress that may occur.

**4. Rest and quiet times are important** - Taking on too many tasks or trying to maintain past traditions may increase the feeling of being overwhelmed by the demands of the occasion. Pace yourself and allow time and space in your day for rest and quiet times. People with dementia may also need quiet times and to be around smaller groups of people.

**5. Gift giving and receiving** - Encourage the person with dementia to be involved in gift preparation and giving, according to their interest and their ability. Bake biscuits and pack them in boxes, wrap gifts or write cards together. It's also helpful to suggest gift ideas to family and friends.

**6. Involve the person with dementia** - Assisting with simple event or meal preparation activities is important in maintaining a sense of well-being for the person with dementia. If attempts to provide assistance cause anxiety or confusion, modify the task or provide an alternative activity such as folding serviettes.

**7. Reminiscence supports shared memories** - The festive season may trigger memories of past family events spent with loved ones. Listening, sharing recollections with each other and encouraging reminiscence can be a reassuring and validating experience for everyone involved. Singing Christmas carols and traditional songs and watching old movies can be enjoyable for young and old.

**8. Seek emotional support** - Christmas is a time when both the person with dementia and family members may feel a sense of loss. This may impact more strongly upon those people without family members or those who may be living away from their family. Recognising emotional needs and seeking support during this period may reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

### Carers Final thought for 2018 - Love is...

*Love* is when you choose to be at your best when someone else is not at their best.

*Love* is when what you want is never important. But what someone else wants is paramount.

*Love* puts music in laughter, the beauty in song, the warmth in a shoulder, the gentle in strong.

*Love* puts the magic in memories, the sunshine in skies, a gladness in giving, the starlight in eyes.

When you truly *Love* someone, these definitions will ring true.

*MASE Carers you are very special - we salute you!*

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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