



The **MASE** Monthly Newsletter

March 2017

Winners of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service



Spring is finally here!



It makes us all feel happier seeing the daffodils in full bloom, the snowdrops peeping through the soil and knowing that hopefully Spring is around the corner. The rays of the sun stream through the windows, and for some of us we realise the time has come to do some general spring cleaning in the house. March is also the month when people seem happier and smile more, perhaps in the hope that the Summer months are not too far away.

Please remember: Saturday 25 March 2017 is the date the clocks spring forward by one hour. We can then expect longer, lighter evenings, and perhaps even a financial saving because our central heating is no longer on for most of the day. One downside however is that in exchange for less darkness we get one hour less in bed on Saturday 25 March. A small price to pay some may say for the lighter nights!



Box of Trix - items to help you around the home

At all the MASE Groups in March there will be a table with items to help you in your everyday lives. Please take the time to have a look to see if there are any items which could help you in the home.

- If your loved one is having trouble drinking from a normal cup, there is a special swivel cup designed for people with Dementia/Alzheimer's.
- If you need to monitor what your cared for is drinking each day, there is a special item that will enable the person to drink as and when they want to, whilst at the same time measuring the amount of fluid they are taking. This is particularly handy if your cared for is repeatedly having urine infections. Fluid is so important for them to flush out the toxins.
- There are two sizes of 'Grabbers' available - if someone is sitting in a chair and drops something on the floor, keeping the grabber close to hand can save all the heartache of someone falling out of a chair because they are leaning over to try and pick something up.
- If Carers are trying to reach something high they can use the longer grabber to pick things out of cupboards, or to replace an item that has come from a high shelf.
- There are 'ring pull' gadgets to make opening a tin with a ring pull easier. Also a multi opener which will help open jars etc.
- Plug pulls which can stick onto the outside of an electric plug therefore making it easier to un-plug items at the end of the day.
- Bath and sink plugs, which can help to avoid accidental floods if a tap is left running for any length of time.
- There are items to enable people who live on their own to put lotion on difficult areas without any problems.
- Long shoe horns can help when putting on shoes. Also hosiery aids - which can help stockings to be put on with the minimum of effort.

Everything on the table is priced, however the MASE will be subsidising the cost shown by 50% - so if a grabber is shown as £5.00 you will only pay £2.50. We will be trialling the Box of Trix for a couple of months and hope you will take a look at the items available and the discounted rates we are offering.

You can also order additional items from the Medequip-UK booklet through the MASE.

Please note that it will only be the smaller items in the booklet that the MASE is able to subsidise.

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

How can signs help someone with dementia?

The benefits of dementia signage: It may seem strange to put signs up at home, especially if your loved one has lived there for years. But for someone with dementia, simple signs can be life changing. So you want the person you're caring for to be able to navigate their own home with confidence and dignity? Well, one of the best ways to ensure this remains possible is by using signs to help guide them around the house and remain independent.

Whether it's signs for rooms, or labels for cupboards and drawers, keep your mind open and consider the following:

1. Use pictures
2. Create a colour contrast
3. Find the right height
4. Link colours to rooms
5. Give direction



1. Use pictures

A sign explaining that a particular door leads to the kitchen or toilet is useful, but only if the person reading it is still able to recognise words and letters. Sadly, dementia can lead to a condition called primary progressive aphasia (PPA), which occurs when problems in the brain mean you lose the ability to read, write and understand language. It happens most often in people with frontal temporal dementia. However please don't worry, there are ways of getting round this.

Use signage which includes an image of the room or item associated with it as well as the word. For example, signs for the bathroom could have a picture of a bath or shower, while a label for the sock drawer includes a picture of socks.

2. Create a colour contrast

Think about where you will be putting the signs. If you're sticking them on to a dark coloured background such as a wooden door, make sure the sign stands out and is easy to see by making it a contrasting colour, or by sticking it onto a piece of white paper before putting it on the door.

3. Find the right height

Regardless of their height, people with memory loss are more likely to look slightly down, rather than up or straight forward, so it's best to place signs in their natural eyeline.

The best height for a sign is about four to five foot from the floor.

4. Link colours to rooms

Making the signs for particular rooms all the same colour can be a useful way to guide someone around where they need to go if they're having trouble reading the words.

Use common sense when it comes to colour schemes – bathrooms involve water, so use blue as a colour scheme, gardens have grass, so use green as a colour scheme.

If the room has a particular colour scheme (a green-tiled bathroom or a peach-coloured bedroom), you could put the sign on the same coloured background so they make the connection.

5. Give direction

If the toilet or bathroom is on the other side of the house from where they spend most of their time, they might need help finding their way to it.

Set up signs that have a finger or arrow showing them the direction they need to go in.

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

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