



# MASE Monthly Newsletter



## Proud Recipients of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

### June 2023



It seems impossible that we are now into the month of June. Where have the first five months of this year gone to? Many of you may be thinking of taking a Summer break, and with luck we are all hoping there will be many warm and sunny days ahead to enable us to recharge our batteries over the next few months. Of course with the sunshine comes some additional worries for our Carers and in this Newsletter I have tried to cover some of the things that you may have to deal with.

However, whatever you are doing over the Summer—remember to make the most of it. Try to keep a diary of events and also a note of any changes you notice in your loved one during these hot days. Carers remember it is essential to ensure your loved ones drink plenty of fluids - the Sunshine, although lovely, can cause endless problems if a person becomes dehydrated. So always keep your cared-for (and of course your yourselves) well hydrated during the Summer and the warm days.



### Coronation Gala 8 May 2023

The Trustees of MASE would like to thank everyone who attended the Gala at Lea Hall on Sunday 8 May. You were all simply incredible and what a fantastic afternoon we shared together. Carers you are all wonderful and we applaud you. The laughter and the camaraderie in the hall was just overwhelming, and to see everyone having such a good time made all the hard work and effort worthwhile. I need to say **Thank You** to our entertainers, Gemma & Ben and Paul Birch. What a great afternoon of fun and laughter. Also to all MASE volunteers who were run off their feet during the afternoon - a huge thank you to each and every one of you. Finally, to Sue and Roger and their wonderful team at Lea Hall - sincere thanks and gratitude to each one of you for coming in at the 11th Hour and saving us from a near disaster with the food. MASE Carers and their cared-for, you definitely pulled out all the stops to make the afternoon one that we will remember for many years to come.



A huge thank you also to the **National Lottery Community Fund** who supported MASE and enabled us to provide a wonderful afternoon for our Carers and their cared for.

### How you can help the People of Ukraine?

There is a group of people now who take out much needed medication to Ukraine. This group is led by the Paramedic who started to help wounded soldiers and people who had become homeless and who did not have relief from pain and other health issues. Any medication you no longer use can be donated. There is a desperate need for Painkillers, Antibiotics, Food Supplements - even if they are out-of-date - as we are told 'something is better than nothing'.

Maybe when shopping, you could also consider purchasing two packs of low cost painkillers, and donate them to give these poor and desperate people some relief from their discomfort.



Your help would be very much appreciated and we hope our donations will help people who are in urgent need of any medication we can send. If you do feel able to help, please bring any medicines to the groups and deposit them in the box on the signing in table which Pat and Pam will be looking after.

**Please Note: The current crisis has meant that UK regulations have been relaxed to allow all donations.**

**TRUSTEES:** Daphne or Richard: ☎07939 505455 Mike Creek: ☎01785 663596 Dave Degg: ☎07974 983459 Dave Godden: ☎07968 848120

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

## Some additional pressures for Carers when the sun begins to shine!

Being a carer can be tiring and isolating, and there's greater pressure on carers than ever before. As our population grows older, more and more people are taking on caring roles – many of whom are in later life themselves. According to recent research, there are now over 2 million Carers aged 65 and over, 417,000 of whom are aged 80 and over. To add to the challenges of caring, the gap in availability of social care services means that people are caring for older people with increasingly complex needs.

The warm weather can cause so much confusion in a person with dementia and they can sometimes misinterpret an image or picture for the real thing. For example they might try to pick the leafy pattern off the carpet, thinking that someone has trampled leaves all over the floor.

Another misinterpretation is when someone sees their own face in a mirror, and thinks it is a stranger looking back at them through a window. They sometimes may not recognise their own face, because they would expect their face to be years younger. They may even have forgotten their 60's and 70's and think they are still 50.

It is so important to understand hallucinations and also always remember to inform your Doctor when they start happening. Your loved one may not only see things that are not there, but can also smell them, or even feel them. Any of the five senses can become very confused. Remember too to keep your loved-one drinking water, or any soft drinks—dehydration can cause so many problems.

1. Never argue about whether the voices or sights are there. There is absolutely nothing you can say that will make things go away. Distraction techniques are best—ie go for a walk in the garden, or put on some music that you both enjoy.
2. Try not to make your loved one feel more disturbed than they already are. Try to remain calm and be gentle with them.
- 3, To take any confusion away; put on a bright light, open the curtains. Remember to always keep a diary of events that happen, to see if there is a particular pattern of things appearing. Maybe it happens at a certain time of day. The more information you have to give to your doctor, the easier it will be to find things that may help.
4. Hallucinations are also more likely if the person is stressed, or confused, for example when coping with any changes to their regular routine.

**Sundowning** - Sometimes you might see changes in the person's behaviour late afternoon or towards the end of the day. During this time the person may become intensely distressed, agitated, and may experience **hallucinations**. This can continue into the night, making it hard for them to get enough sleep.

This is known as 'sundowning' but is not necessarily linked to the sun setting or limited to the end of the day. Sundowning can happen at any stage of dementia but is more common during the **middle stage** and **later stages** of dementia.

### Tips for reducing sundowning

- Sometimes what seems like 'sundowning' could be the person trying to communicate a need. This could be needing the toilet, feeling hungry or being in pain.
- Think whether something that's happened during the day has affected them. If they seem agitated, try to calm them by distracting them, perhaps talking about a favourite memory or event they enjoy thinking about.

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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