



**Improving Lives
Plymouth**

Supporting people since 1907



Carers Week Report

June 2018

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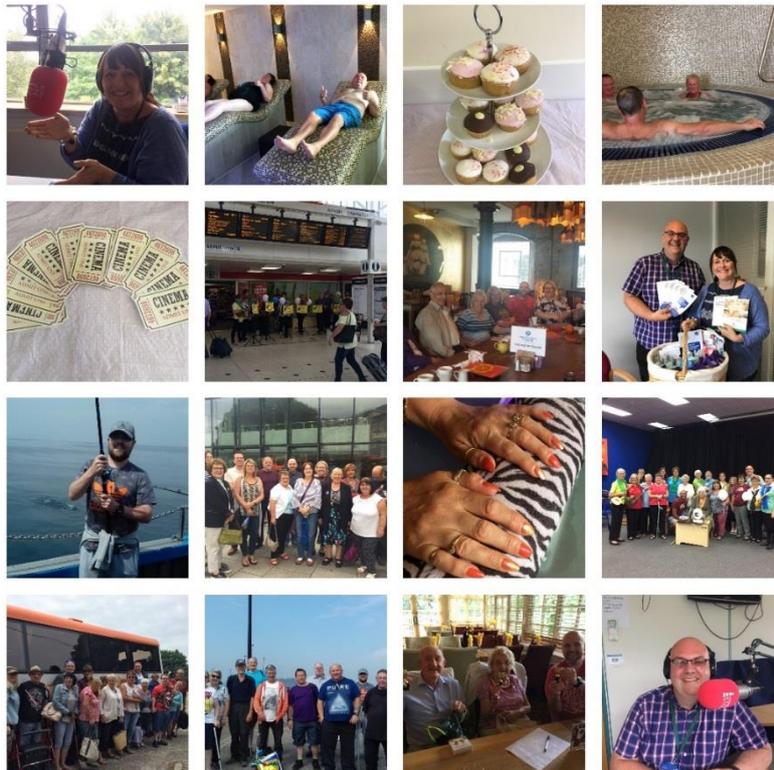
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Report Summary:

Over Carers week 2018 we:

- Worked with 24 organisations and businesses to provide 17 social events and 4 information events to carers, their families and the general public.
- Caring for Carers supported 226 carers and 51 people that they care for and their family members and friends to access these activities.
- Held carers week activities for 38 carers in 4 drop-in support groups
- Overall, we supported 264 carers and 51 people they care for and their family members and friends to access carers week activities.
- Raised £59.46 from fundraising and donations. Thompson and Jackson Solicitors donated £300 to sponsor a pamper session for carers at Bombshells Salon. Wolferstans Solicitors paid for afternoon tea at the Dome and provided 'goodie bags' for veteran carers. We also received 17 referrals for carers support where carers had found out about our services because of the events/activities we were running.

Photo collage from carers week events and activities 2018



Carers Week

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK.

The campaign focuses on individuals and organisations who come together to organise activities and events throughout the UK, drawing attention to just how important caring is. The agencies in Plymouth that we engaged with for Carers Week this year were:

Scope

Scope (soon to be called Ambito) customers and staff offered to perform a short piece of forum theatre which explored some of the challenges that carers face. This is an interactive performance which invites the audience to engage by suggesting possible solutions to the challenges that are presented by the actors. The ideas the audience suggest are then played out by the actors. The aim of the performance is to help the audience to understand the challenges that carers face as well as empower people to make positive changes and have more control over their lives. Unfortunately this event was cancelled due to low numbers of people booking spaces. We will endeavour to run this at another time outside of carers week and try to engage health professionals who support carers as it was felt that this may be beneficial for them to use as carers awareness.

Plymouth Boat Fishing

A half day sea fishing trip on the Plymouth Sound was organised. All equipment was provided and there was a bar on board with hot and cold drinks. The skipper gave assistance to all who attended to land their fish and everyone reported having a great time.

Barbican Pizza and Pasta Bar

Carers and their families enjoyed a 2 course meal and a soft drink at this fabulous eatery. As a result of us booking this venue and talking to the owner about carers week and the services we provide to carers they signed up to offer a 10% discount to carers who show their carers card.

Pan Asia

Carers and their families enjoyed an All-you-can-eat buffet of Chinese, Thai, Japanese, Malaysian, sushi & Indian dishes and a soft drink at this city centre restaurant. The owners of the restaurant donated 2 vouchers for free lunch time meals for us to use in a raffle to raise money for our carers activities.

Theatre Royal

A fabulous production of Thriller Live was offered taking those that attended on a visual, audio and electrifying journey through the magic of Michael Jackson's 45 year musical history. This was an evening event and was enjoyed by all.

Seco Lounge

An amazing brunch was had at the Seco Lounge in the Royal William Yard. This was a real treat for lots of people who attended and being close to the water and the boat yard in beautiful sunshine made the morning very special. The assistant manager at this venue identified herself as a carer whilst we were using their function room. We explained about carers week and the support we provide to Plymouth carers and she has now offered us the function room for free for any carers events we may wish to hold.

Dartmoor Zoo and Tamar Coaches

We organised an exciting day trip to see the animals at Dartmoor Zoo. We met the coach at Mile House Park and Ride at 9.30am and returned at 3.00pm. All that attended reported having a fabulous day of fun and laughter.

Wolferstans Solicitors and the Dome

Wolferstans Solicitors sponsored an afternoon tea at the Dome for 14 veteran carers and ran free legal clinics at both their North Hill and Plymstock offices where 7 carers attended. Free tea and cake and 10% discount vouchers for Wills and LPAs was provided for attendees.

As an act of kindness for Carers Week the Dome gave us £40 of vouchers to use to fundraise for the support we provide to carers.

Thompson and Jackson Solicitors and Bombshells

Thompson and Jackson sponsored £300 towards a pamper day for 8 carers at Bombshells Beauty Salon. The salon team made sure that the carers who attended were well looked after and offered treatments, snacks and prosecco!

China Fleet Club

The China Fleet Club gave carers free access to relax and unwind in the Aqua Spa. This was followed by a fabulous afternoon tea. Carers were transported to and from the venue in taxis to ensure they could completely relax. They fed back that this was an amazing day and that they loved being able to take time for themselves and recharge their batteries, even if it was for a short while.

Brook Inn

Lunch and desert and a quiz were laid on for carers and their loved ones to attend. Great food, company and a bit of competitive quizzing with a small prize were very much appreciated.

Ten Pin Plymouth and Pizza Hut

3 teams of 6 competed to get the highest scores to win a prize. This was followed by an unlimited buffet style lunch at Pizza Hut. Great fun for a short break away from your caring responsibilities.

Opportunity Knocks Timebank, Great Western Railway and Plymouth Music Zone

A group of carers went 'On Tour' after attending three different weekly music sessions at Plymouth Music Zone. Over 50 carers have joined the sessions that were designed to provide respite to carers in Plymouth and are part of the charity's 'Voices for the Unsung' programme. The project has been supported by a partnership of 3 charities – Plymouth Music Zone (PMZ), Colebrook (SW) Ltd and Improving Lives Plymouth (Caring for Carers) and has been running for the last 2 years. The music sessions for carers started in 2016 at PMZ in response to carers telling the charities they needed opportunities for respite from their caring role. They reported often facing a variety of challenges including loneliness, especially during difficult transitions times in their lives.

The three music groups wanted to raise money so more carers can take advantage of the weekly sessions. So they decided to come together to perform as one in celebration of National Carers' Week.

Quote from carer: "I've got so much out of these music sessions over the past few years I can't even begin to describe it! I would never have imagined I'd be going out On Tour! The music has been a lifeline, just being able to switch off from my caring responsibilities and to be able to hang out with other carers every week playing music and laughing and sharing stories. I just think more people deserve to have that in their lives so hopefully we can raise a few pennies!"

'Carers on Tour' started at Plymouth Music Zone on Monday 11th June where family and friends were invited to watch and join in. The second gig was a busk at Plymouth Railway Station on Wednesday 13th June where they played a selection of well-loved songs as well as debuting a brand new specially-written composition of their own to entertain audiences. This was followed by a final gig at William Sutton Memorial Hall on Friday 15th June where a light buffet and sing along took place.

Plymouth Music Zone's Executive Director, Debbie Geraghty, says: "As a charity, we try to listen to what local communities need and then work with other organisations to use music to address any issues that arise. We offer opportunities for people to be a part of a strong musical community at Plymouth Music Zone where music is like the glue that holds us all together. It's been an immense joy to see how the carers we work with have grown in confidence and skill over the last couple of years and how they've felt part of the place and the wider work we do across the city. They've already raised money for us to deliver music sessions to children in a local Special School and we're humbled they have now been 'On Tour' to do the same for other carers."

Help For Hero's

Help for Hero's Veterans Fridays are a drop in day where any Veteran and their family can attend to use the facilities and gain support that may be needed. During Carers Week we held an information stand in the coffee shop within the Endeavour Centre to engage with Veterans and their families across Multi-generational ages.

We had three referrals, with a further two referrals taken for other services within improving lives Plymouth, we also assisted one Veteran to engage with their local carers service as they lived within the Devon Carers area.

As a result of us engaging with Help for Heroes during carers week, we have been invited back to have an information stand once a month to further engage with the Veterans community. We are also now able to book rooms with the centre to hold meetings with Veterans, or conduct carers assessments.

Plymouth Energy Community and South West Water

These organisations offered a Stay warm and well event for carers to claim their free home energy monitor and free advice to help them tackle cold, damp homes, high energy bills, fuel debt, switching energy supplier, pre-payment meters and Government grants and supplier schemes whilst having a cup of tea and some cake at the Copthorne Hotel. Unfortunately this event was cancelled due low amounts of people booking places. However, these organisations will run another event in November for Carers Rights Day.

Age UK Plymouth

High Tea and a General Knowledge Quiz and Raffle was held at the William & Patricia Venton Centre, Astor Drive, Mount Gould, Plymouth PL4 9RD for people to take time away from caring and join in with delicious food and lots of entertainment.

Caring for Carers supported 226 carers and 51 people that they care for and their family members and friends to access activities and events.

From the 11th June – 17th June we supported 38 carers in 4 drop-in support groups to have carers week activities and do something a little bit different. This included fish and chips, buffet lunches and cream tea and cinema afternoon.

Overall, we supported 264 carers and 51 people they care for and their family members and friends to access carers week activities.

During the week, we raised £59.46 from fundraising and donations. Thompson and Jackson Solicitors donated £300 to sponsor a pamper session for carers at Bombshells Salon. Wolferstans Solicitors paid for afternoon tea at the Dome and provided 'goodie bags' for veteran carers. We also received 17 referrals for carers support where carers had found out about our services because of the events/activities we were running.

Publicity, promotion and media coverage

- Information about carer's week was advertised in the May edition of the Carers Newsletter and this ensured that all carers registered with Caring for Carers received information about what was available. This generated lots of calls for enquiries and bookings.
- All activities/events available to carers in Plymouth were uploaded onto the Carers Week national website.
- Advertised on Plymouth City Councils Plymouth Newsroom
- All GP practices were emailed information about how they can get involved and we undertook a survey with them to ascertain how many carers they have on their records and to ask them how we could support them to be more carer aware. The return deadline for these is 31st July 2018 and we will collate a separate report for this.
- All organisations that we work with received email communication to publicise carer's week and the ways that they could get involved.
- We used Facebook and Twitter throughout the week to show pictures of events and share comments etc.
- An article was published in the Plymouth Chronicle and over 90,000 copies are distributed across the city.
- We had a 2 hour live slot on hospital radio to promote carers week and the support available through Caring for Carers and then attended the wards to obtain song requests from carers to be played on the evening show. We also recorded a 'jingle' to be played twice an hour during breaks on hospital radio shows.

Conclusion

This year's Carers week has been well received by all that attended. It has given Caring for Carers the opportunity to engage with others and bring agencies in Plymouth together to support local carers to access activities and events that enabled them to take a break away from their caring responsibilities.

Caring for Carers will continue to engage with everyone that has made this year's carer's week so special and promote partnership working to enable us to provide lots of respite opportunities to carers in Carers Week 2019.

Both the drama event led by Scope and the Energy event led by Plymouth Energy Community were cancelled due to carers not booking onto this. When we asked carers within our support groups why they thought people did not book onto these information events they stated that as carers have very little time to spare for themselves they choose activities that are 'easy going' and do not require thinking about their caring responsibilities and the day to day routines that their caring roles consist of.

Although the Carers Week activities and events offered many carers a small amount of respite and access to information and advice. Carers UK research revealed that almost three quarters (72%) of carers in the UK said they had suffered mental ill health as a result of caring, while well over half (61%) said their physical health had worsened.

Carers reported worrying about coping in the future and the research shows over half of carers in the UK said they expect their physical (58%) and mental (57%) health and well-being to get worse in the next two years. Two in five (43%) carers said that they expect to be able to provide less care or no care in the future because of poor physical health. One third of carers (35%) felt that poor mental health would mean they will be able to provide less or no care in the future. Older people, especially those over 75 years old, were most likely to say they expected to be able to provide less or no care in the future because of poor physical health (54% of over 65's and 59% of over 75's).

Carers were most likely to say that the impact of stress and anxiety on their own health was their main worry about the impact of caring on their own health and wellbeing. Carers named the main stressors contributing most to their stress and anxiety as not getting enough sleep, providing hands on care for the person they care for, and managing financially.

Carers UK state that unless more support is provided, national charities are warning that the UK's carers won't be healthy enough to care for loved ones in the future.