



Footprints

FOOTPRINTS IS A REGISTERED CHARITY OFFERING SUPPORT TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THOSE SUFFERING FROM DEPENDENCY ON DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

This is our very first newsletter! Our intention is that it will become a monthly publication. Why a newsletter? Mostly because there seems to be so much to talk about and I always seem to forget who I have told what!! The newsletter can be emailed to those with Internet access or posted. We will also be sending copies to interested organisations, such as:

All the teams within CSSMS (Countrywide Specialist Substance misuse Service):-

GDAS

Kathy Holmes – Our Carer Participation Worker

Carers Gloucestershire

Sezincote Ward

And, of course, to all members of our Board of Trustees

Copies will be brought to our meetings. Please do let me know if you think another organisation should be included in our circulation. I really hope to find someone who will be able to photocopy the newsletter for us as circulation grows.

There will be nothing personal divulged in our newsletter so anonymity and confidentiality can be protected. First names only will be used if any one contributes a piece.

Please tell us what you would like to see in the newsletter. It will certainly contain news about Footprints and anything relating to Footprints and maybe the thoughts and views that come to me which I feel may help. But I would like to hear from you, your comments, opinions thoughts and ideas. What else can we include?

Support for Carers in Sezincote Ward

Very recently I met up with Leslie Macleod-Downes, the Ward Manager of Sezincote. Leslie is very keen to establish a support group for carers on the ward and we have agreed to start this. The meetings will take place monthly on the first Thursday of every month between 7.00 and 8.00pm. Visiting hours on the ward are 7.00 to 8.30 so this leaves visiting time for those attending the meeting.

The meeting will be open so that carers can attend even if they have no patient to visit. They may have had a patient they have been visiting and is now discharged or someone who has not been admitted yet.

Patients are admitted to the ward to be detoxed from drug or alcohol use. The ward is in the Charlton Lane Centre in Cheltenham.

The first meeting will be on June 7TH. It would be great to have a few people there from Footprints for the first meeting. If you would like to come please let me know as soon as possible. It is not necessary for anyone from Footprints to attend these meetings every month but it would be nice to have the company if you can manage to join me. If you would like to support the meetings in the ward, please let me know which ones you would like to attend. I can certainly offer lifts.

Whatever support you can offer will be appreciated, particularly to get started. We are hoping that in time, the meetings will include alternative therapies as well, just like ours do.

Carers Festival

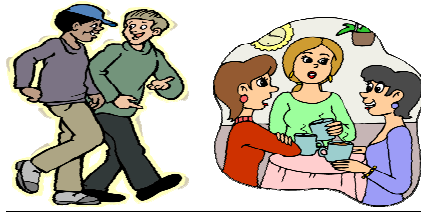
'Carers Gloucestershire' is again putting on a Carers Festival. This was done last year and was a huge success. Some of us from Footprints were there and it was really enjoyable. The festival is on Saturday the 16th June from 10am to 4pm. There are many events planned, cookery demonstrations, Arts and Crafts Workshops, Children's entertainments, alternative therapy treatments, live music and Morris dancing. There is also an Information Market Place.

'Carers Gloucester' would like to know how many to cater for, so either telephone them on 01452-386283 or email to (mail@gloscarers.org.uk). The festival is at:

Highnam Community Centre
Newent Road
Gloucester
GL2 8DG

Take the A40 towards Ross-on-Wye. Go over the roundabout. At the traffic lights turn right onto the B4215 signed Newent. The Community Centre is 250metres, just over half mile, on the left.

A Day Just for Us



Footprints Friends United

As most of you know I would like to have a half-day event for Footprint carers. This would start with lunch, followed by a workshop perhaps, or I am hoping that Louise might come and help us with our image and advice on colours. Her workshop was very popular at our event in February. This would be followed by a nice long alternative therapy session. It is hoped to hold this event in June but it may be a bit short notice now to find a venue. Also several of us have a lot going on in June.

Therefore we may have to hold it later in the year. September may be a good idea. It would avoid the summer season. However if we can find a date suitable to all in the summer we shall need to check venues and dates.

Perhaps you could let me know if and when you are away between now and October and whether you would prefer a whole day or half day event on a Saturday or Sunday. We also need to check when Paul, Stella and Mel (our alternative therapists) are available. Paul and Stella are getting married in October so it might be better earlier than later. I will check dates with them.

Please let me know if you are aware of any venues that may be suitable. We need some pleasant surroundings, easy to find and plenty of parking space. Glenfall House has been suggested as one choice so that may be pursued.

Carers Training and Information

A working party has been put together and the first meeting took place on May 23rd. There are various people in this party, including someone from CSSMS, GDAS, Footprints, The Partnership Trust and others.

The first purpose is to develop an information pack just for families and carers who have someone in the family with a substance misuse problem. It would be packed with information, which is so badly needed by us and would be so useful. Included would be advice and many contact numbers. The pack would be published in booklet form and also posted on the Internet: The Partnership Trust Site, Footprints website, GDAS and possibly others.

Secondly the working party will be developing training sessions for carers. These sessions would be held once a week, in the evening, perhaps over a 6-week period. The sessions would be for families and carers whether or not the dependent person is in treatment. These would possibly cover subjects such as addiction, treatment, medication, dual diagnosis, resolving conflicts, setting boundaries, confidentiality, role of Social Services and looking after yourself. Experts in the subjects will attend the appropriate session. These are not necessarily the subjects which will be offered, they are just some examples.

These are both exciting developments, something very much needed for us. I will keep you informed as to the progress.

Footprints to work with ADFAM

Footprints have agreed to work with ADFAM on a three-year project. ADFAM is the leading organisation working with and for families affected by drugs and alcohol. They have been granted funds from the lottery to look into substance misuse services for various types of families. In our case we will be working with Shameen from ADFAM on ways to include carers from the black and ethnic minorities. Adfam will also be working with other organisations from other areas and possibly another within Gloucestershire. It will be quite a commitment for 3 years but most of the intensive work will be over a 1 year period. It is an exciting opportunity for Footprints to be part of this.

Footprints Database

Someone has volunteered to develop a database for us. This will be a very large database filled with every piece of information possibly needed by anyone contacting us. Information will be included not just within Gloucestershire area but also outside the area. Other parts of the country will be included as some of our group have people in other areas needing help. We will include information about treatment centres, Primary Care Trusts, Rehab Centres and other help and information agencies.

The database is being installed on my computer for Footprints. It will take some time to input all information and thereafter just a matter of adding information or editing. This will eliminate the need for us to keep loads of leaflets and printed material.

The information on the database will include the name of the organisation, what type of organisation it is, a description of what the organisation does or offers, address, phone number, contact name if applicable, website name and email details. It will then be easy to do a search for anyone, eg. searching for treatment centres in Cornwall.

It has been suggested that we look into licensing the database as it will be a valuable source of information. If you come across any information or organisation you think should be included, please tell me. I will bring my laptop computer with the database along to one of the next meetings.

My Nomination for County Award

I am really thrilled to have been nominated for 'The Pride of Gloucestershire Award' in the category 'Community Project of the Year'. Sue and David from Footprints nominated me and I am really delighted.

The awards ceremony is on 10th July and I have recently been contacted to be told that I am now one of the five finalists in the category!

I am thrilled to have been nominated and very proud to have reached the finals. Anything related to drink or drug addiction usually receives a very low profile, so this is especially significant. I was also told that there were very strong entries and many of them, so this is even more significant to all of us.

Higher priority for Alcohol Treatment

On your behalf I wrote to the following telling them of the desperate need for more alcohol treatment and our deep concern for lack of facilities available:

Jan Stubbings- Chief executive of the Primary Care Trust
The Right Honourable Patricia Hewitt MP - Secretary of State for Health
The Right Honourable David Drew - MP for Stroud (Requesting a meeting)
Colin Hassell MBE. (Drugs and Alcohol Team)

Also in expressing our concern, I highlighted the effectiveness of CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training). The Countywide Specialist Substance Misuse Service has several trained staff in CRA (Community Reinforcement Approach) the only CRA trained organisation in the UK.

We want funding extended for CRAFT which has proved so highly effective. Its approach is very similar to the core belief of Footprints, changing our approach to the situation to give us quality of life. This sometimes produces amazing changes. Threatening, nagging, shouting and abandoning do not work.

A Word about our Bude Branch

Our Bude branch has been running for about a year. It started in July 2006. The Director is Julie Baggott, a very dear friend of mine. Julie has put a lot of enthusiastic effort into publicising the branch and has had several contacts, some by email, some by telephone and some face to face. The branch also has a weekly meeting on a Monday evening. Julie has two terrific volunteers working with her, Lynne and Jolene. I have met them and they have such a lot to offer, both in enthusiasm and caring skills. I know Julie is thankful for their support. It takes time for a group to develop, but Julie has done a great job so far and I know the people she has helped have been very grateful for the support she and the team have given them.



Lynne and Jolene would like to attend one of our group meetings in Gloucester and will let us know in good time when they can manage to come. We can then let everyone know. I do hope we hear from Julie and her team in our newsletter.

Footprints Group Meetings

Date: Every Tuesday Evening
Time: 7.30 to 9.30
Venue: Countywide Specialist Substance Misuse Service
44 London Road
Gloucester

44 London Road is opposite the Radio Gloucestershire building. It is a large green building surrounded by a brick wall. A map is available on the Footprints website or telephone Footprints for detailed directions

Contact details

Tel: 01452 539595
Email: carolsfootprints@hotmail.com
Website : www.footprints-support.org.uk

Conclusion

I do hope you have enjoyed our very first newsletter. We are anxious to have your feedback and please let us know what else could be included. Do you have a piece you would like to write for us?

Remember this is **YOUR** newsletter.

Carol Dass
Director and Founder of Footprints
28 May 2007



Margaret's Contribution

***Is it possible the peace we seek
Be ever ours again
The smiles we use so falsely
To hide our constant pain***

***Frustration as we try to help
Our loved one through affliction
Of this illness that has driven them
To life threatening addiction***

***We battle for the answers
That will not come our way
The nights are filled with nightmares
And we struggle through each day***

***Eventually a light shines through
And offers us a buffer
A Group formed by a victim
Who knows what it's like to suffer***

***Facing her own tragedy
She felt she could convince
Authorities to help our cause
And so she formed Footprints***

***T'was Carol our Director
Who formed this Group to help
Others who are suffering
She knew just how they felt***

***She has not all the answers
But will listen and be there
To give advice and comfort
When we are in despair***

***Getting us together
To help us how to care
Supporting one another
Our problems we can share***

***The future is uncertain
But Carol's there for us
So we say a great big Thank you
To our friend Carol Dass***

Margaret

Our sincere congratulations Carol

We are all very proud of you

Good Luck