

Age Alliance Wales

*working together to support older people in Wales.
cydweithio i gefnogi pobl hŷn yng Nghymru.*



Welcome to the 16th Age Alliance Wales e-newsletter - September 2015

Where possible, briefings will be bi-monthly, so if you have an item you would like included in the next newsletter, please e-mail Mal Andrews before November 4th.

Age Alliance Wales Activity

Dates for diary:

- CEO Summit - 25th September, Action on Hearing Loss
- Meeting Older Peoples Commissioner for Wales (OPCW) - September 30th
- Pierhead Event - 20th October

Digital Communities Wales

Digital Communities Wales is the new project from Welsh Government designed to promote the use of technology and get older people in our communities digitally included. It is the follow-on to the Communities 2.0 programme.

The project focuses on empowering organisations and community groups to become digitally aware to the degree that they can pass knowledge on to their service-users via trained staff or 'Digital Champion' volunteers. Digital Communities Wales provides free training with a huge range of courses available and advice on digital engagement from experienced officers in the field.

Welsh Government estimate that around 500,000 people in Wales remain digitally excluded in that they either have no access to or knowledge of how to use computers and the internet.

*69% of the digitally excluded are aged 65 and over so it is clear that older people in Wales are being left behind when it comes to getting online. Older people living in isolated rural areas can use technology and the internet to get connected and this can help them to remain independent in their own homes.

*91% of digitally excluded people cite 'a lack of interest or need' as being a barrier to learning but in many cases it has been found that it is actually a lack of awareness or the 'fear of getting it wrong.'

Digital by Default though sees Local Authorities and Health Boards providing more and more services online, so it is important that people can access these services. Digital Communities Wales aims to tackle these issues over the next two years and to assist in bringing down these barriers and connecting older people to the internet.

Digital Exclusion also affects many older people with disabilities including people who have a hearing impairment, but it is possible to learn new skills and to engage with others using technology such as Skype.

The links here show wonderful examples of how older people can use this modern technology to communicate in different ways. Both clips are examples of work done by Communities 2.0

[Bargoed Deaf Club](#)

[Alison Bromley](#)

The internet is a path to many benefits including;-

- Shopping online - saving money on a myriad of things from energy suppliers to white-goods.
- Online banking – as banks ask us to use the internet as a first port of call more people are now using the internet to manage their financial affairs.
- Finding information – from YouTube (the above clip is a typical example) that

offers video information to Google Search there is very little that cannot be accessed on the internet in 2015.

- Just having fun!

CONTACT US

Get in touch to find out more about our support:

Tel: 0300 111 5050

Email: digitalcommunities@walescooperative.org

Contact - [Digital Communities Wales](#)

Twitter: [@DC Wales](#)

Care and Repair

Health through Warmth

Care & Repair have been awarded additional funds by NPower to support older people through their 'Health Through Warmth' scheme. This funding provides up to £750 or 50% of total funding costs to enable Care & Repair agencies to support older people with the cost of heating measures. Care & Repair were originally awarded £57,000 to support clients for 2015/16 however the demand has already almost outweighed the means, prior to the winter months. In recognition of the importance of supporting vulnerable, older people by helping them to live in warmer, more comfortable and healthier homes Npower responded by increasing this funding by £20,000.

Care & Repair Cymru Annual Conference - Older People Deserve Better

The Copthorne Hotel, Culverhouse Cross, Cardiff - 17th September 2015

"Older People Deserve Better" is the proposition that will be debated and referred to at our annual conference this year.

We've a great line up of speakers including;

- Lesley Griffiths AM Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty
 - Ilona Haslewood, Policy & Research Programme Manager for JRF
 - Sarah Rochira, The Older People's Commissioner
 - Andrea Nicholas- Jones, Welsh Government
 - Scott Sanders, CEO Derwan Cymru
 - Lorraine Morgan, Health/Aging Policy Adviser
- Mark Gardner, CEO Melin Homes

Workshops will be informative & interactive covering topics including;

- Understanding compulsive hoarding
- Why become a dementia Friend?
- Protecting vulnerable adults
- Resilience in times of change
- Unlocking the potential of fundraising

And more.....

For more information and to book your place visit <http://bit.ly/1W1mpdm> and book your space today – there is still time!.

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Volunteering Matters Cymru

Volunteers plan to improve 21,000 Welsh children's basic skills

On September 1st 2015, in time for the new school year, Volunteering Matters will launch Learn Together Cymru. This ambitious Big Lottery funded project aims to recruit and train a national network of volunteers to support the basic skills of children and young people across Wales, with the help of strategic partner organisations such as Save the Children, Book Trust Cymru and Communities First.

The project builds on Volunteering Matters' 50+ years of experience of supporting learning and the 500 Volunteering Matters' reading volunteers already in place in Welsh primary schools. It responds to demand from schools for support in other subject areas, as well as from secondary schools, after school clubs and professionals in community and family learning, especially in areas where basic skills levels are poor. And it aims to recruit, train and support an additional 450 volunteers, who will provide one-to-one support to 21,000 young people over three years.

Learn Together Cymru will target older volunteers – aged 50+ years – through the organisation's RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer) Programme, although it is expected that some proportion of the volunteers will be younger people seeking work-related experience from their placements. All prospective volunteers will undergo reference and criminal records checks before they are placed or signposted on to other projects.

Volunteering Matters (cont'd)

The volunteers will be trained in how literacy develops and have an introduction to child protection, but they will not be trained how to *teach*. “The way the support is delivered”, explains project manager Teresa Walters, “will utilize mainly the volunteers’ social skills and their life experience: they will listen to the pupils and help them practice what they are learning through doing. As well as listening to the children read, volunteers may be with a class which is measuring or drawing, or keeping a pollen count log in the garden; they may be watching pupils weighing ingredients, or use the recipe to explore a foreign culture or healthy eating ideas. Like our existing volunteers, they will take their lead from the teaching staff, who oversee all activities, and support the teachers’ efforts to embed literacy and numeracy into all subjects.”

Volunteers in learning settings may, to some extent, do what extended family members do: they listen, discuss and praise. As well as the most obvious benefits – improved literacy and numeracy levels – aims for the project include the community benefits of intergenerational contact and improvements in the volunteers’ well-being, for example through increased community involvement or sense of purpose. As Volunteering Matters is at pains to point out: volunteers’ lives are enriched too; it’s a two way street.

Ann H, a retired civil servant supporting literacy in her local primary school near Llanelli, says: “I had a great working life doing what I enjoyed doing and was also rewarded with a good pension, which is enabling me to have a full and happy retirement. So it seems only right to give back some of my time to volunteer in my local communitywhich is loads of fun and gives me great fulfilment.”

Partners in the project will help to target areas and groups needing support, and provide resources and spaces for learning activities, as well as expertise and training in areas such as literacy learning, numeracy and child safeguarding. To these ends, Volunteering Matters will work with Save the Children Wales, Book Trust Cymru, Communities First, the Regional School Effectiveness & Improvement Service for North Wales, Swansea Libraries, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services and WEA Cymru.

More information about Volunteering Matters and their work in Wales is at www.volunteeringmatters.org.uk

RNIB

Every year for National Eye Health Week, charities, organisations and health professionals across Wales join together to promote the importance of eye health and the need for everyone to have regular sight tests. National Eye Health Week is now in its sixth year and runs from 21- 27 September 2015.

Sight is the sense that people fear losing most yet many of us don't know the best way to look after our eyes. Given that 50% of sight loss is avoidable, a regular eye check up can detect eye and broader health conditions early on.

Research shows that more than 1 in 10 of us have never had our eyes tested. A regular sight test can help detect eye conditions before you notice the effect on your vision, including health conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Most people should have their eyes examined by an optometrist every two years – although it might need to be more often depending on your age, family or medical history.

You might be entitled to a free eye test - NHS eye tests are free for people aged 60+ years, for children, for those on income-related benefits and if you have a family history of eye disease. You can look after your eyes by healthy eating, not smoking and wearing sunglasses in strong sunlight.

“People with sight loss are 90% more likely to have a fall and are more likely to live in poverty, suffer from depression, be unemployed and have problems with everyday life such as going out, cooking and reading.

Make sure you book your eye test – and support the campaign by using the hashtags #EyeWeekWales and #WythnosLlygaid.

Register for your FREE supporter resource pack by sending your name, address and email details to info@visionmatters.org.uk.

To find out how you can help promote the importance of eye health visit the campaign website: www.visionmatters.org.uk

If you'd like to request any further information, do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,
Elin

Elin Edwards

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NHS - Public Health Wales—Health Protection

Dear colleagues,

To support the annual flu campaign, the Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme in Public Health Wales produce a number of resources to help people across Wales make the right choice and get their flu vaccine, this includes carers and people working in social care, care homes and the third sector. In preparation for the forthcoming flu season, we have recently produced FluOne (social), an e-learning module to share information about flu aimed at this group.

FluOne (social) is interactive and easy to use. It explains a little about flu and also why flu vaccination is so important for all those working with clients/patients in care homes, social care, and the third/voluntary sector. It contains information relevant to everyone who works in any of these organisations.

The module is free of charge, interactive, and just 10 minutes long. You can print your **certificate of achievement** once you complete the module.

You can self register at www.wales.nhs.uk/immslearning if you have an NHS Wales email address, or you can [self register](#) if you have an email address ending .gov.uk or .ac.uk. Log in using the following details: **Username:** ESR/ Employee Number (you can find this on your payslip) **Password:** changeme

Anyone else can also access the course content easily. You just:

Contact phw.immslearning@wales.nhs.uk.

Tell us your name, job title and place of work. A username and password will then be created and emailed directly to you.

Flu kills people every year in Wales, and health and social care workers working directly with clients/patients are at increased risk of catching and spreading flu, so it's important to share the information. Please forward this email to others within your organisation who may benefit.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks

Lisa Verallo

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