



JUNE/JULY NEWSLETTER 2015

Carers' Society Otago
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Susan Says:

I have been very unwell and am now back at work but I am still mid-treatment. My wonderful children rallied round, created a roster, and made sure I was not left alone post operation. They cleaned, they cooked, they kept me company, they watched TV with me, they organized what needed organizing, and took me to appointments.

The one thing I noticed during all of their activity is that it's much worse for the carer. I could see such worry in their eyes and hear it in their voices. They were probably trying to hide it but I could tell that they were imagining a host of worst case scenarios. Whereas I was just sticking to what the doctors told me and getting on with the job of getting better.

Now my 34 year old daughter has been diagnosed with the same illness, breast cancer. My daughter's circumstance means she has to have a sterile environment and have a whole different set of tests, appointments, and treatments. Now I am both the carer and the caree of the same illness.

I am now the one who is imagining the worst. I am now part of the roster. I am the shepherd of the family carers. The one important thing I have learned is that it's much worse for the carer.

The big difference is that my daughter is accessing private health care and I am being processed through the public system. I can honestly say there is nothing better or worse about either. Both systems are run by humans and humans are not perfect. My daughter and I have discussed this at length. There are lots of little things that we could complain about but ultimately it's all about communication and bedside manner.

It's about reading a booklet and expecting that process to happen and, when it doesn't, feeling like you've been cut adrift and abandoned. It's about bearing a health professional's flippant attitude and feeble attempts at humour and fearing another health professional's funereal approach. And it's about trying to read between the lines to find some hope for a positive outcome.

The carer not only has to take on board the psychological and emotional effect on the caree of the illness but also must struggle, privately, with their own psychological and emotional reactions.

On another note we are including an important survey of CARERS and health professionals to find out if our service is fulfilling their needs.

Carers' Society Otago wants to know if there are gaps in our service and to find out if there is anything we could be doing better.

I say that this is an important survey because now our funders also want to know if granting us funds is justified.

Carers, please take a few minutes to complete the survey included with this newsletter and send it back in the envelope provided. Many thanks and take care.

Susan

TAKE A BREAK TAKE A BREAK TAKE A BREAK TAKE A BREAK TAKE A BREAK

CARERS' MEETINGS 2015

SOUTH OTAGO CARERS' MEETINGS

Meetings are **NOW** held on the **1st Tuesday of every ALTERNATE MONTH at 6:30 pm** in the Brian Dodds Room of Clutha Health First.

7 JULY – 2 pm Afternoon Tea at Milton. Transport can be arranged from Balclutha.

We will phone you closer to the time.

1 SEPTEMBER - To be announced in the next Newsletter.

MILTON CARERS' GROUP

7 JULY - We are having a Milton afternoon tea and will let you know closer to the time.

NORTH OTAGO CARERS' GROUP

Meetings are held on the **2nd Tuesday of the month** in the Weston Community Church.

The meeting dates are as follows:

11 AUGUST - To be announced in the next Newsletter.

10 NOVEMBER - To be announced in the next Newsletter.

CENTRAL OTAGO CARERS' GROUP

Meetings are held at 2pm on the **1st Thursday of the month** in the Alexandra Community House.

The meeting dates are as follows:

3 SEPTEMBER – To be announced in the next Newsletter.

5 NOVEMBER - To be announced in the next Newsletter.

DUNEDIN CARERS' MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the **2nd Thursday of the month** beginning with **MARCH** at 1:30 pm in the Alexander McMillan Room, Community House, 301 Moray Place.

11 JUNE – Paul Reet from Mosgiel Family Mental Health will be the speaker

9 JULY – We will do a Fun Art Project.

13 AUGUST – **Annual General Meeting.**

DUNEDIN AND MOSGIEL WALKING GROUPS

In 2015 these two Walking Groups will be combined and have five walks in the year on the **4th Tuesday of the month**. The walk usually starts with a coffee at 10am. Latecomers can get a coffee to go. All carers welcome. We would like to suggest that walkers meet informally in the intervening months when the group does not meet. Please check with the latest Newsletter for the meeting place.

The dates for the next two Walking Groups are as follows:

23 JUNE – Port Chalmers. You will be notified re: transport and meeting place.

25 AUGUST – Aramoana

YOUNG CARERS GROUP

Meetings are held on the **3rd Thursday of the month, 5:30 – 7pm**. Contact Susan or Anneloes for more information 471 6204. Young Carers will be sent a monthly Newsletter as usual advising of the dates and activities.

NEWS FROM THE JENNIE CLEGG LIBRARY

Our Library now has over 300 books, videos, DVDs, CDs and Tapes. It is a self service Library located in the Carers' Lounge, Community House, 301 Moray Pl, Dunedin. The Carers' Lounge is open whenever the building is open so please feel free to drop in, browse, and take out a book. We will call you when you have had the book out for three months.

If you want a copy of our complete library list please call us on 03 471 6204.

MAILING SERVICE: If you have chosen the book you want from our list we can mail it to you and enclose a return mail bag. We know it is often difficult for you to get books out or return them, even in Dunedin. Please take advantage of this service.

NOTICES

The Otematata Cottage is now closed for the winter for carers' bookings.

WHEELCHAIRS

We often have wheelchairs available for long or short term loan. These are lightweight and fold up to fit in the boot of a car. They are ideal for carers and are not the self propelling kind. If you need one, book a time to come in and pick one up. All you need is a \$30 deposit and the time to have a brief lesson on how to use the wheelchair safely.

SINGING FOR HEALTH AND FUN

A 5 week Singing Group will start on June 5, 10:30 – 11:30 am, in the MS Rooms, 8 Baker St, Caversham Dunedin. The cost is \$30 per person
Contact Paula to register 455 7260

A FREE Forum on Pain in ALEXANDRA

Tuesday 9th June at the Alexandra Community House,
Centennial Avenue Alexandra.

PROGRAMME

- 10.30—11.30 Dr Louise Parr-Brownlie, University of Otago, Brain Health Research Centre, 'Origin of Pain'
- 11.30—12.15 Glenda Wallace, ISIS Centre, 'Psychological Impact of Chronic Pain'
- 12.15— 1.00 Lunch Break
- 1.00 — 1.45 Glenda Wallace, 'Living with Pain'
- 1.45 — 2.15 Dave Cox, Arthritis Educator, 'Pain, What are the Options?'
- 2.15 — 2.45 Community Therapy Options
- 2.45 — 3.15 Panel—Questions

Everyone Welcome

Hosted by Otago Neuro Interest Group -Limited seating—Booking required
Contact : text /phone 027 303 7727 or

•Email: liaison.dunedin@brain-injury.org.nz

JOKES

A man from Poland goes to the optometrist.

The doc shows him a chart: **C Z W X N Q S T A C Z**

"Can you read this?" the optometrist asks.

The Pole replies, "Read it? I know the guy!"

One lovely morning, Ben and Thomas were out golfing.

Ben sliced his ball deep into a wooded ravine.

He grabbed his 8-iron and proceeded down the embankment into the ravine in search of his ball.

Ben searched diligently through the thick underbrush and suddenly he spotted something shiny. As he got closer, he realized that the shiny object was in fact an 8-iron in the hands of a skeleton lying near an old golf ball.

Ben screamed out to his golfing partner: "Hey Thomas, come here, I've got big trouble down here."

Thomas came running over to the edge of the ravine and called out: "What's the matter Ben?"

Ben shouted back in a nervous voice: "Throw me my 7-iron! Looks like you can't get out of here with an 8-iron."

Subject: Complete And Finished

No English dictionary has been able to adequately explain the difference between these two words. In a recent linguistic competition held in London and attended by, supposedly, the best in the world, Samdar Balgobin, a Guyanese man, was the clear winner with a standing ovation which lasted over 5 minutes.

The final question was: How do you explain the difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED in a way that is easy to understand? Some people say there is NO difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED.

Here is his astute answer:

"When you marry the right woman, you are COMPLETE. When you marry the wrong woman, you are FINISHED, and when the right one catches you with the wrong one, you are COMPLETELY FINISHED!!!

He won a trip around the world and a case of 25 year old Scotch!

The snow has well and truly gone in Canada but this is funny.



SORRY, SON...THERE'S NO APP FOR THAT

IMPORTANT RESEARCH

Carers' Society Otago is hoping to get its members involved in some very important research. We want to find out just how much carers do save the government and the economy by fulfilling their role as carers. By putting a dollar value on the caring role, the government will have to take note of this very important group of carers. The follow on will hopefully be that carers will get more support in all sorts of ways.

We also want to know how much carers know about the risks of performing the caring role. When research of this type has been done overseas it has resulted in much more recognition of carers and many more supports for them.

Nicola Swain is a member of the Carers' Society Otago Governance Committee and she also works for the University of Otago Medical School. Nicola has a researcher available to complete this task and a proposal will be submitted soon for funding for the research project.

At this stage the research will be about carers of people over the age of 65. We want you to consider being part of this project. When the funding is secured, you will be asked if you want to participate or maybe you can indicate your willingness to participate by phoning us ahead of time.

If you agree to participate in the project, you will be surveyed by telephone.

Carers, we will be contacting you soon to determine who is interested and able to be part of this very important research project.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR EYES

Keep your eyes healthy by following these tips:

- Get your eyes checked at least every two years.** Most eye conditions that can lead to blindness develop slowly. Early diagnosis means earlier treatment and more vision can be saved.
- Protect your eyes from damaging UV light.** Overexposure to UV light increases the risk of developing a number of eye conditions. Wear a hat and wraparound style sunglasses that are 100% UV protective.
- Exercise regularly and monitor your blood pressure.** Blood vessels in the retina are affected when a person has high blood pressure. This can lead to loss of vision.
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables.** They contain lots of antioxidants that help protect the retina.
- If you have diabetes, monitor your blood glucose level.** Diabetic retinopathy is a complication of diabetes and is a leading cause of blindness.
- Do not smoke. If you do smoke – quit.** The chemicals in tobacco can build up in your body and damage your retina.

RECIPES

POTATO AND CREAM CHEESE SOUP

Ingredients

1. 5 large potatoes cut into bite sized pieces
2. 1 onion diced
3. 2 Tblespoons oil
4. 1 red pepper chopped
5. 2 cups silver beet torn in pieces
6. Salt, pepper and paprika to taste
7. 2 cups water or broth
8. 250 ml cream cheese

Method

1. Gently fry the potatoes and onion in oil a large pan until the onion is clear
2. Add salt, pepper and paprika to taste
3. Add red pepper and stir
4. Add half the water or broth and cover for five minutes on a low heat
5. Mash the potatoes roughly so that some stay in chunks
6. Add the rest of the water or broth and the silver beet
7. Cook for ½ hour on low heat.
8. Stir in the cream cheese and serve when hot

MAKE YOUR OWN DELICIOUS WINTER DRINKS

Squeeze the juice of any citrus fruit - lemon, lime, grapefruit, orange. You do not need a sophisticated juicer, just do it by hand.

Boil some water and mix in honey at the rate of one Tablespoon to one cup of water. You can have a litre of this honey water mixture made up to use at any time.

When the water has slightly cooled add as much citrus juice as you want. I prefer using the juice of two lemons per cup of water.

For a little something else, add one Tablespoon of grated ginger. Another idea is to add some crushed mint leaves.

Or you can mix the honey water with ginger and leave out the citrus.

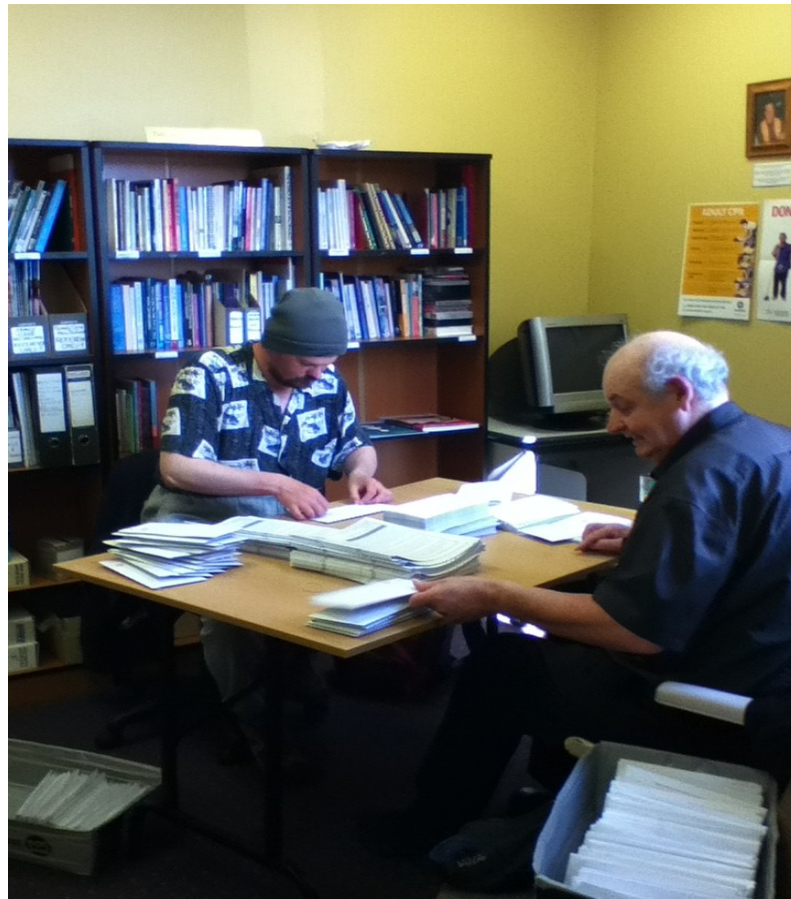
For a cold winter beverage I like to mix the citrus juice straight with Schweppes Soda with a Twist of lemon. This makes a nice cold refreshing fizzy drink without much sugar.

There is also an unsweetened blackcurrant concentrate available that you can mix with hot or cold water or make it fizzy with the Soda product.

I usually don't endorse commercial products but I have to admit I'm hooked on these products that don't have much sugar in them.



The Mission of Carers' Society Otago is to ensure that every family carer is recognized and supported.



Some of our fabulous Volunteers help with the Newsletter mailout

Do join us in the Carers' Lounge for a cuppa or a chat, a bit of quiet time, or to explore
our Information Zone and Jennie Clegg Lending Library
Up the stairs or take the elevator
Community House
301 Moray Pl
Dunedin

Some of the wonderful support we receive throughout the year is from:

Presbyterian Support Otago, New Zealand Lottery Grant Board, COGS, Dunedin Casino,
University of Otago, Otago Polytechnic, Lion Foundation, Dunedin Community House,
William Downie Stewart Charitable Trust, Dunedin City Council, Otago Community Trust,
Healthcare Otago Charitable Trust, ACE Shacklock Charitable Trust, Carers' Donations
The Southern Victorian Trust, Bendigo Valley Sports & Charity Foundation,
The Otago Masonic Trust.

