

## Em.bold.en Newsletter – July 2018 – Number 5

Welcome to the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Em.bold.en newsletter. Our apologies for the delay in getting it to you. We have had a busy few months. This is an update to let you know what we have been doing and what we have planned. The Embolden project was started to give a stronger voice to older families who have relatives with learning disabilities to influence decision makers, hold them to account and improve services. We have just completed the second year of the three-year funded project and have had a busy start to 2018.

### **Didcot Health Event and Financial Planning Event, Abingdon**

As a result of feedback from our coffee mornings around the county we held two larger events in March. The first focused on health and learning disabilities and covered such issues as Transforming Care, Emergency Care, Planned Care, Learning Disabilities and Dementia as well as the benefits of supported living and health. McIntyre attended and gave an insightful presentation on how to raise awareness of dementia amongst people with a learning disability, their families and professionals to better understand the condition and future care. One of the presentators with staff support told her story of how it was she who had been able to pick up on changes in her friends behaviour and alert staff enabling her friend to get a quicker diagnosis of dementia. If you would like to know more about dementia and the impact on someone with a learning disability you can either contact [Guideposts](#) or [McIntyre Charity](#).



We also showed a short film '[Peace of Mind](#)' that we produced with Tom Skinner from Age UK Oxfordshire. This film shows some of our older family carers talking about the benefits of supported living and the difference it has made to all their lives.

The Abingdon Financial Planning Event covered topics that many family carers had been contacting us about due to current changes been brought about by Oxfordshire County Council. We were able to bring in speakers from the council to talk about Direct Payments and the changes to Disability Related Expenditure as well as get an update on Day Time Support. With some families also beginning to make the change to Personal Independence Payment from Disability Living Allowance the presentation on how to fill in a PIP form from the speaker from the Department of Work and Pension was extremely helpful. For anyone about to embark on that journey [Mencap](#) have produced a helpful guide on the key points to include when completing the form.

We would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Veronica Cowdrey the Senior Associate from Freeths LLP for all the help and support she has given to OxFSN over the years. She gave her final presentation on Deputyship and Wills and Trusts and is now enjoying some well-deserved retirement.

## Behind the scenes.

We may be a small team but we are doing lots of work behind the scenes to ensure that our older family carers are at the fore front of our many conversations with staff from OCC Adult Social Care and Health. Gail Hanrahan is the co-chair of the Transforming Care Partnership as well as a member of the Safeguarding Adults Board. We are part of the Adult Social Care co-production board as well as attending current discussions on personal budgets and improvements to housing provision for the Learning Disabled in Oxfordshire. At these meetings we are constantly highlighting the needs of our older family carers.



Jan Sunman, who you all know, has 'retired' but still volunteers for OxFSN. She spoke at a conference for Dying Matters Awareness Week in May. Her [powerful and moving presentation](#) talking about the death of her daughter Katy has been shared widely and is a must watch.

**If you have any burning issues you want us to raise at these meetings please get in touch with Gail: Tel 07891 734987 or E-mail: [Gail.Hanrahan@oxfsn.org.uk](mailto:Gail.Hanrahan@oxfsn.org.uk)**

## Whats Next?

We have two events planned for the coming year.

First Up is a **'Better Together'** Event which will bring round the same table family carers, Professionals from Adult Social Care and Health, Support Providers, local charities and any others involved across children and adult services. This will be an opportunity to discuss key topics and talk about 'What's working, What's not working'? If you have any particular issues you would like covering please let us know.

This will be a free event with lunch provided but booking will be essential. More details to follow.



Date: Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Location: The Kassam Stadium

Time: 10.00 am – 3.00 pm

The next event we are still in the early stages of planning, but it will focus on the incredibly difficult issue of **Bereavement and End of Life Care**. No one knows how best to prepare for this but when supporting someone with a learning disability we need to consider how we can best help prepare them for the loss of a loved one. Equally as parents we need to think about what we need to do to ensure that everything is in place so that our family member continues to get the right support when we are no longer around. We will be in touch again when we have more plans in place.

If you are a social media user please visit the [OxFSN](#) website or our [Facebook](#) page as we are continually producing resources that you may find helpful including information on [The Care Act](#), Disability Related Expenditure and Discretionary Trusts.

From the Embolden Team – Gail, Angeli and Kathy.