

Factsheet 57 – 26 October 2010 (2 pages)

Getting more out of life - Community Mentoring

Get more out of life... explore new experiences, get out and about, make new friends, learn new skills...

Community mentoring is a free service for people aged 50 or over who feel they have had some kind of a down turn in their lives, perhaps because of bereavement, disability or illness either themselves or sometimes because of caring responsibilities for someone in their family. It is for people who have a loss of confidence, are feeling lonely or isolated.

Our aim is to help you choose, find and enjoy activities and social opportunities to re- build confidence and enjoyment of life.

We tackle isolation and downturns in life with a “healthy living” approach, tailoring solutions and opportunities to your own needs and wishes. We have helped people in a wide range of situations, whether they are working, wishing to work, or retired.

The service is for you:

- If you are experiencing difficulties because of isolation or you are at risk of isolation. It may be that you live in a rural area with little or no public transport or in an area with no sense of community belonging. You could be lacking supporting networks around you or have recently moved to a new area which you do not know very well.
- If you have had a recent life change, perhaps you have lost a loved one or perhaps you or a member of your family has an illness, a physical or sensory impairment or a disability.
- If you are experiencing stress through every day life, maybe you are having problems managing your money or maybe where you are living is causing you distress.

Community mentoring is most likely to be of benefit to you if you have been affected by loss or isolation, if your habits have changed and you are ill or at risk of suffering ill health as a result – in particular mild depression or anxiety. We can also help some people with dementia.

Increased social contact and activity can help many people with depression, anxiety or a long term medical condition. The service is not able to help you if you have a history of violence, moderate or severe dementia or serious mental health problems including drug or alcohol dependency

We will arrange for the local co-ordinator to get in touch and arrange to visit you so that you find out how a community mentor can help. It may be that we only need to point you in the direction of other organisations that will be able to help you, If you need more help we will work together to plan what you would like to achieve with the help of the service. This may include having a mentor working alongside you for a period of time. Everyone is different so each plan will be individual to match the person's needs.

If you just want to know what is available in your area, or would like to establish a social or activity group in your area we can help too. Many people who have come to our service wanting help are now helping others.

The service is funded through Devon County Council's Adult & Community Services, to improve the way we provide care for older people in Devon.

Who is providing the service?

The providers within the consortium are Westbank, AgeUK, Age Concern Exeter and Upstream who can be contacted by telephone: 0845 304 7267 or email: timeforlife@westbankfriends.org.

If you have any further questions please contact **Care Direct 0845 1551 007**

Further factsheets can be found online at www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets

A large print version of this factsheet is available on www.devon.gov.uk/largeprint-factsheets but if you would like it in a different format such as Braille or audio, or in a different language, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1015 or email customer@devon.gov.uk.

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