

CARERS RIGHTS DAY 2009

MP URGES CARERS TO 'CARE FOR THEIR INCOMES AND PENSIONS'

George Howarth MP added his support to Carers UK's national carers' rights campaign on Friday 4th December 2009.

There are over six million unpaid carers in the UK who provide care and support to family, friends and neighbours, providing unpaid care worth an estimated £87 billion each year. The Carers Rights Day campaign, run by Carers UK, seeks to increase the take-up of benefits and raise awareness of carers' rights and the support that they may be able to get in order to protect their pensions. It might be the Carer's Allowance, council tax discount, Pension Credit or Housing Benefit that makes a difference.

George Howarth MP said: "It's a real concern that carers in Knowsley North and Sefton East may not be getting all the help they are entitled to. Carers are fulfilling a vital role in society and without them the NHS and social care system would not be able to cope. It is essential that they are given information about their rights so that they get the support they need in order to plan for their futures."

Carers UK urged carers to get in touch with its Adviceline (0808 808 7777 or www.carersuk.org) to receive a free booklet. Carers can also pick up booklets in their local Lloydspharmacy store.

Imelda Redmond, Chief Executive said, "Many people assume that we will all automatically get a state pension, but you don't. Pensions are built up from National Insurance contributions over the years. Many carers haven't been able to make those contributions because of gaps in paid work and, despite their huge contribution to our society, there is a real risk that they will end up with less pension in their retirement. That is why it is so important they get advice and take steps to protect their pensions."

During the day George Howarth MP will be supporting an event at Knowsley Carers Centre, 143 - 143a Bewley Drive, Kirkby at 11.30 am.

To coincide with Carers Rights Day, Carers UK is publishing two new resources to help carers with advice, *Caring about your pension* and *Looking after someone: A carer's guide to rights and entitlements*.

Carers can order them in a number of ways:

- Visit www.carersuk.org
- Call Carers UK's freephone hotline on 0808 808 7777
- Email adviceline@carersuk.org.
- Visit any Lloydspharmacy store. To find local stores visit www.loydsparmacy.com