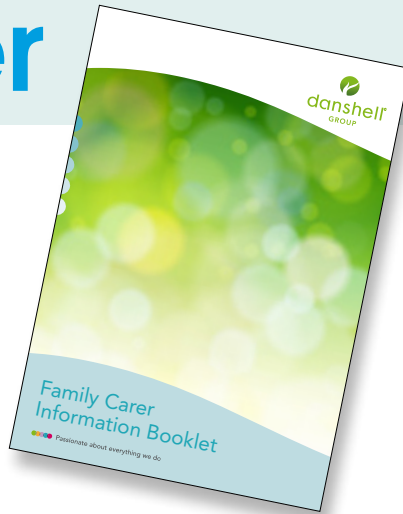


# Family Carer Forum Newsletter



## Family Carer Information Booklet



Would you have liked a Family Carer information booklet, which answered all your questions, and perhaps some you had not thought to ask, when your family member joined their Danshell service?

We are working in partnership with Danshell to produce just such a publication for distribution to all existing and new family members and carers. At the moment the document is in draft form and we would like to encourage all our readers to have a look at a copy by e-mailing [Rebecca.hill@danshell.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca.hill@danshell.co.uk) or by telephoning her on **07971 538981** and asking for a copy to be sent to you in the post.

### At the moment the booklet covers the following topics:

1. Danshell Family/Carer guide – Introduction
2. What happens when a person comes to a Danshell Service?
3. How we will keep in touch with you?
4. How are people involved in their care?
5. How people are kept safe?
6. Personal PATHS – Model of Care – overview of the 5 key principles.
7. Family and Carers Forum – Introduction
8. How to use the Family and Carer Forum.
9. How does Family & Carer Forum communicate?
10. Family Carer Procedure for making a complaint, comment or compliment.
11. Danshell – An overview of the types of services provided.
12. Danshell – Quality Strategy – An overview

We would really appreciate feedback on this document so that the final publication reflects what people want and need. All feedback to Rebecca at the e-mail address above or at her office:

**Danshell Central Support Office,  
Gateway 1, Holgate Park Drive,  
York, YO26 4GA.**

Bill Nicol

## Anne's Blog

On Thursday 26th November I was lucky enough to attend the Learning Disabilities Conference at Olympia as a representative of Danshell's Family Carer Forum. It was very encouraging to see so many wide-ranging organisations working hard to improve the lives of people with disabilities. I was particularly impressed by the 'Stay out Late' stand as so often it appears to be forgotten that people with disabilities have the same wishes and desires as 'normal' people, in other words they too, like to stay out late and party the night away!!

The highlight for me though was a more personal one. As the parent of a son who has been in care for many years, I often wonder if it would really make any difference to him if we no longer saw each other. Don't get me wrong I would walk to the ends of the earth for him but it can be hard to judge his feelings. He didn't know that I was going to be at the conference and the look of total delight on his face as he walked out of the lift and saw me, told me more than words ever could. When I left to go home I was walking on air.



**A place of support, a place to talk share ideas and stories. Join us, we want to hear from you.**

for family carers of people supported by Danshell services



## First Danshell National User Forum 2015

The Park Inn Hotel, York on the 11th June 2015

The forum was set up in order to gain insight into the experiences of Danshell through the eyes of those who use Danshell services and their families. Led by Karen Flood, Co-chair of the National Forum of People with Learning Disabilities, the forum included group exercises, poster presentations, and question time with the Danshell Senior Management Team.

The themes that came out of the day were that family, friends and happiness were the most important three things to everyone. Additionally people wanted to become more independent, have better communication with family members, to have jobs and meaningful work placements.

Each of the regional service user forum representatives fed back to their own forums and here Jane Radbourne, The Midlands Family Carer Forum representative tells us what it was like from her point of view.

"Earlier this year I was approached by staff at West Hills to see if I would

consider being a family representative. This came as a great surprise but a welcome one, it is nice to see how welcome and respected the views of family members are in the care of our loved ones.

My first experience was when I was contacted by Rebecca Hill and invited to Danshell's first National User Forum in York. I was nervous about going at first but when I got there everyone made me feel very welcome and at ease and the conference was very informal. It was made clear that all in the room were equal and we should listen to everyone's input.

The day was started with an interesting talk about ASDAN qualifications and we were told that this opportunity was open to all. Next we were set our first group exercise which was to discuss what was important to us. Bill and I decided that keeping in touch with our family was a high priority to us. We were then invited to be a bit creative and make posters showing what we

wanted most which in our case was better communication with our loved ones who are looked after by Danshell. We presented our ideas to the rest of the forum. This was a bit nerve racking at first for me as I have never done anything like this before but everyone's presentation was well received.

After some lunch there was an open question session with the senior management team.

It was a pleasure to be involved in the forum, everyone seemed to come away feeling very positive and pleased with how the day went, it's a relief to know that the voices of service users, family and carers are actively encouraged and heard."

**A full report about the day is available for you and can be emailed or posted to you contact:**

**Rebecca.hill@danshell.co.uk  
07971 538981.**

## Family Carers embraced as full members of the professional team

For most people with learning disabilities there will be some family member(s) present in their lives and in these cases those family members, with their close personal knowledge of, and empathy with, the person, can become an important valuable asset in supporting the advocacy and care of the person. Embracing and supporting the involvement of family members as 'expert partners in care' can result in greatly improved outcomes for all concerned. Danshell have asked us to take a look at the Family Carer Involvement Policy so they can embed a partnership approach to working with family carers where the family carer's role, expertise and understanding of their family member's aspirations and needs, and their unique potential for advocating on behalf of their family member, are recognised and taken into account at all levels of support. They, like us, want to ensure that family carers are included in all aspects of service delivery and design through family involvement forums, service audits and satisfaction surveys.

Within the Family Carer Involvement Policy Danshell have outlined their standards for meaningful partnerships with family carers, unless there is a very good reason not to, all family carers should:

- Be involved in all your relatives care and assessment meetings and keep you informed of how they are reacting to their new life.

- Be contacted in a manner of your choice at least weekly, provided with photos or video clips that demonstrate your family members progress and activities and their named nurse and responsible clinician will be available to speak with you.

- Be involved in your family members discharge plan and have access to general information such as unit and Danshell newsletters.

- We will support you and let you know how to make a complaint (or a compliment), will ask you what you think of Danshell services through questionnaires, seek advice from you about how we at Danshell can improve services and when relevant, make sure you understand the relevant parts of The Mental Health Act and The Mental Capacity Act.

- We will enable you, when you wish, to have contact with other family/carers who are part of The Family Carer Forum which operates independently of Danshell and who can offer a wider support network of like-minded individuals who have experienced the process you are going through

The Family Carer forum is currently being consulted on this policy to ensure that all their needs are taken in to consideration within it.

**If you would like to have a look at the policy then please email Rebecca.hill@danshell.co.uk or call her on 07971 538981.**



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## Introducing your independent Family Carer Forum representative for Scotland and Hexham:

**name:**

Bill Nicol

**Area Covered:**

Scotland and Hexham

**Phone:**

01738 812267

**Email:**

bill@nicol.org.uk



## Introducing your independent Family Carer Forum representative for The North East:

**name:**

Geraldine Myers

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The North East

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**Email:**

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## Introducing your independent Family Carer Forum representative for The Midlands:

**name:**

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The Midlands

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## Introducing your independent Family Carer Forum representative for The South East:

**name:**

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# Family Carer Forum

for family carers of people supported by Danshell services