



D'YA HEAR THERE!

NEWSLETTER FOR RNA WELFARE OFFICERS

September 2019

In this edition: Addressing loneliness:

Loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health. Research shows that lacking social connections is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (Holt-Lunstad, 2015). Social networks and friendships not only have an impact on reducing the risk of mortality or developing certain diseases, but they also help individuals to recover when they do fall ill (Marmot, 2010). There are numerous military Charities and organisations who can help.

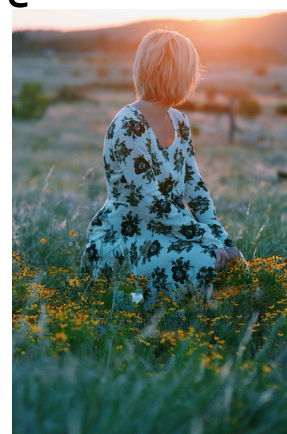
FREE GROUP PHONE CALLS FOR SEAFARERS'

Regular, group friendship telephone calls which enable up to six like-minded people to talk at the same time. They offer an easy way to connect with people who have a maritime background, to make new friends and share stories and experiences of life at sea.

Phone (it's Free) 0800 4 70 80 90

Further information at

www.thesilverline.org.uk/seafarers-link-group-calls



LEARN SOMETHING NEW!

U3A (The University of the Third Age) is a UK-wide movement which brings together people in their 'third age' to develop their interests and continue their learning in a friendly and informal environment. What is meant by Third Age? It is the time after finishing working full-time or raising a family and thus time for you, to pursue interests or just try something new.

Phone for more info 020 8466 6139

See the U3A Website for more details www.u3a.org.uk

MEN'S SHEDS

Men's Sheds are a place to pursue practical interests at leisure, to practice skills and enjoy making and mending. The difference is that garden sheds and their activities are often solitary in nature while Men's Sheds are the opposite; they're about social connections and friendship building, sharing skills and knowledge, and of course a lot of banter! Not specifically for Veterans, (although you will find that many have served) and not just for those with practical skills, go along for a cuppa and a catch up with like minded folk!

**Phone 0300 772 9626 for more info
or Find a Shed at this Link or
go to www.menssheds.org.uk**



What is Social Prescribing?

GPs are moving away from just prescribing medication and moving to social prescribing; designed to support people with a wide range of social, emotional or practical needs, many schemes aim to improve mental health and physical well-being. Those who could benefit from social prescribing schemes include people with mild or long-term mental health problems, those dealing with bereavement, people who are socially isolated and those who frequently attend either primary or secondary health care.

Social prescribing recommends exploring a range of activities, often provided by voluntary and community organisations. Examples include volunteering, arts activities, group learning, gardening, befriending, cookery, healthy eating advice and a range of sports.

In short, social prescribing is about encouraging Shipmates to make the time to do something that brings joy...try new things, get some fresh air and interact with people.

Where can I find out more?

Dr Sarah Jarvis shares more information at www.patient.info

What can you do to help?

Our Shipmates are individuals, some have complex needs and may feel too proud to ask for help in time of need, some just need someone to talk to or the opportunity to get out and about.

The value of a phone call, letter or email should therefore not be underestimated and hence why looking out for your Oppo is fundamental to the role of an RNA Welfare Officer, but...you don't have to do it all! Here are a few ideas:

At your RNA meetings, see who would be interested in visiting Men's Sheds; its much less daunting to go as a group.

Approach a few Shipmates who you think maybe interested in a group call with Silver Line and ask them to let you know what they thought of it or indeed invite them to share their experience at the next meeting. For those unable to attend meetings, perhaps they could write an article for your Newsletter about the call? All Shipmates love the opportunity to spin dits from the comfort of their home!

Why not see if you can recruit a few Befrienders; great for both those who are lonely and those looking to help but unable to attend RNA meetings and support events. Offer a number of options to get in touch, sending letters and cards are a great idea, or::

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1. Call in Time Telephone Befriending where a volunteer Befriender will phone an RNA Shipmate at an agreed time for a chat.
2. Face to Face Befriending where the Befriender will visit a fellow Shipmate at home or in a coffee shop; may progress to social prescribing in action!
3. A Project Semaphore can help here, making contact online: using an iPad or mobile phone to make calls, send texts and use WhatsApp (or form a WhatsApp group), Facetime or Skype to make contact at no cost.

If you would like further guidance regarding Befriending, please get in touch. I can provide guidance notes that I produced for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Widows' Association....I am happy to share!

Thanks you for all you do; our natural willingness to help others stems from the tradition and camaraderie that only naval service life can instil. Once Navy, Always Navy.

Sarah Clewes

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