

# Wakefield District Carers Strategy

## 2011-2014

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[www.wakefield.gov.uk](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk)



# Foreword

This Strategy is the first refresh of the Wakefield and District Carers Strategy which was published for 2007-2010. It is supported by a revised Action Plan that will continue to be regularly monitored. An updated version of the Action Plan will be made available. The overall strategy will be revised every three years.

All the partner agencies involved in this Strategy put carers and service users at the centre of their work.

This multi-agency Carers Strategy shows the changes that have happened since the first Strategy and summarises progress so far. Areas for further action are also included.

## Carers Strategy for Wakefield District

Statistics from the 2001 Census showed that there are over 35,000 people in the Wakefield District who provide some level of unpaid care to a relative or friend. This amounts to 11.1% of the population compared to a national average of 12%. Within this figure almost 8,600 people provide in excess of 50 hours care - again in percentage terms this is noticeably higher than the national figure.

## Definition of a Carer

Carers are people of any age who look after a friend or relative who needs support because of an illness or disability. This includes mental illness, physical illness, physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or substance misuse. Carers do this in an unpaid capacity. Some carers live with the person they care for and some do not.

## Policy and Legislation

**The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004** was introduced in England on 1st April 2005 and in Wales on 18th April. This gives carers new rights to information and places a duty on Local Authorities to inform carers of their right to a Carers Assessment. The Act gives Local Authorities powers to work with housing, health, education and other Local Authorities in supporting carers to work, learn and enjoy leisure opportunities. The previous Government's National Carers Strategy – *Carers at the heart of 21<sup>st</sup> century families and communities*<sup>1</sup> – was published in June 2008. It set out a vision that by 2018:

‘carers will be universally recognised and valued as being fundamental to strong families and stable communities. Support will be tailored to meet individuals’ needs, enabling carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring, while enabling the person they support to be a full and equal citizen.’

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The Coalition Government have stated they believe the vision in the National Carers Strategy holds good, but has 'refreshed' the Strategy and published '*Recognised, Valued and Supported: Next Steps for the Carers Strategy*'. This document sets out four key priorities upon which the Government – working in partnership with Local Authorities, the NHS, employers, the voluntary sector, local communities and carers – will focus from April 2011 onwards, within the context of the 'Big Society' and capacity of the community to support and empower people.

The Government's four key priorities are:

### **Identification and recognition**

**Priority area 1:** Supporting those with caring responsibilities to identify themselves as carers at an early stage, recognising the value of their contribution and involving them in designing local care provision and planning care packages

### **Realising and releasing potential**

**Priority area 2:** Enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential

### **A life outside of caring**

**Priority area 3:** Personalised support both for carers and those they support, enabling them to have a family and community life

### **Supporting carers to stay healthy**

**Priority area 4:** Supporting carers to remain mentally and physically well

## **Implementing the Strategy**

We have set out our refreshed strategy in the themes which carers in the Wakefield District have told us are important to them and have taken into account the new national priorities identified by the Government. We will continue to consult with carers to make sure the strategy is implemented and ensure we consider any other themes that become important over time.

Under each heading we have summarised what carers told us and we have given some examples of what happens at present along with some areas for improvement. There are many things that carers want local organisations to help them with and we will not be able to do everything in the next three years.

Delivering the strategy will also be dependent on available resources. We are developing an action plan with priorities. We will keep carers informed of progress through Carers Forums and regular Newsletters and let them know what we will work on first. If there are any areas we cannot address in timescales we will let carers know and explain the reasons why.

# Our Commitment to Carers

We will recognise the value of carers. Agencies providing support services and employers have a responsibility to identify carers and take their caring responsibilities into account.

Carers Assessments will look at a wide range of needs and aspirations, including leisure, employment and education. The carer will be seen as an individual and treated with courtesy and respect. Their religious, ethnic, cultural, lifestyle and age related needs will be taken account of. Organisations providing support to carers will consider their needs alongside, but separate to, the needs of the person being cared for.

Our commitment to carers will include the following:

- Choice about taking on the caring role and continuing in that role
- Inclusion in decisions about the type and volume of care provided
- Up-to-date, easily understandable information, given at the appropriate time
- To know they are fully entitled to have quality time for themselves free from caring responsibilities
- We will ensure carers are offered appropriate support to access development and training opportunities and are supported to deliver the care that is needed.
- That their situation will be reviewed from time to time
- When planning and developing support for carers, their needs will be taken into account. Carers will be consulted and decisions properly explained
- Carers may have a variety of needs, some of which may not be obvious. Every attempt will be made to enable them to get information they need, for example on finance, accommodation, education, employment or help after bereavement
- When difficulties arise, information will be provided on where to get independent advice
- Many carers combine paid work with caring and it is important that employers adopt flexible employment policies. All agencies must work closely together to enable those carers who wish to work (or wish to return to work) to do so
- Focused and effective support to young carers will be offered on a time limited basis to meet the needs identified
- Organisations will work together to recognise carers, to build and develop work practices and services that support carers
- Carers may themselves be Vulnerable Adults and will be entitled to support and protection under the Vulnerable Adults policy
- Direct Payments to be used to support carers to have a break

# Recognition of Carers and Carers Assessments

## What is Important?

- Being valued as a carer
- Acknowledgment that carers save the Government money
- Understanding from general public as well as organisations
- Having the term 'carer' recognised
- Recognising carers have needs in their own right and they may sometimes conflict with the views of the person being cared for
- Support if a carer decides they no longer wish to continue caring
- Continued time limited support when a carer is no longer a carer due to bereavement

## What has happened over last 3 years?

- Building on work on carers identification and assessment, 1324 new carers have been identified between 01/02/2007 and 31/03/2010
- Carers Assessment documentation refreshed in consultation with carers
- Voluntary organisations work with Family Services and NHS to identify carers through Carers Support Workers in 13 Integrated Networks
- Development of carer friendly GP practices with 75% of GP practices developing staff awareness, carers registers and referral arrangements
- Changed how carers assessments in mental health are undertaken to increase the number of care plans
- Established a group for carers of people with mental health problems
- Increased peer support of carers of people with mental health problems
- Increased number of carers of people with learning disability involved in service planning and development
- Local carer organisations working together for better co-ordinated support

## What carers would like to happen

- Build upon the increase in the take up of Carers Assessments
- Look at more ways of supporting carers through the assessment process
- Continue to work with GPs to identify and register more carers
- Support young carers through transition period of assessments between 16 and 18 and supporting carers in transition from adults to older people
- Appropriate information kept up to date and available in a range of formats

# Meeting Diverse Needs

## What is Important?

- Services to support a broad range of needs and diverse groups
- Recognising carers in some communities may not see themselves as carers
- Equal access and choice of services and support
- Awareness the word 'carer' does not exist in some communities; languages and additional alternative terms may need to be used

### **What has happened over last 3 years?**

- Carers Support and Development officer with specific responsibility for developing carers support to BME communities
- Regular group of BME carers of learning disability people established; now involved in LD Partnership Board to advise on carer issues/development
- Interpretation and Translation Service available
- Carers included in Family Services Equality and Diversity Strategy

### **What carers would like to happen**

- Interpreters and bi-lingual mainstream staff are available
- Ensure organisations consider a broad range of needs
- Ensure organisation workforces try to reflect the different communities
- More diversity training for staff
- Build links with members of the community to ensure that they are aware of their rights to assessment and support
- Build on existing links with Black and Minority Ethnic Groups to increase take up of support services

## **‘Time for Themselves’ - Getting a Break from Caring**

### **What is Important?**

- Short breaks for carers...not just for the cared for
- Opportunities to have leisure and recreation time
- Carers need breaks from caring in order to sustain their role as a carer
- Support to enabling Carers to have a family and community life

### **What has happened over last 3 years?**

- Investment in ‘My Time’ grants for Carer breaks – increased funding resulted in grants increasing from 171 in 2007/08 to 350 in 2009/10
- Modernisation of short breaks for people with learning disability, including new build service and increased family based care for people with complex needs and people with mental health problems.
- More individual and group activities for young carers
- Together Carers able to offer more complementary therapy services

### **What carers would like to happen**

- Extend options available to provide leisure, recreational and educational opportunities for carers
- Develop adult placement service to provide day time and longer term breaks
- Increased home based breaks available
- More carers receiving a break
- Flexible breaks for carers for all service user groups

# Emergency Support

## What is Important?

- An immediate response in a time of crisis
- Well trained staff to respond
- Having a service that continues to be funded
- Clear point of contact
- Practical support and help
- Emotional as well as practical support in an emergency
- Recognising carers may have several caring responsibilities

## What has happened over last 3 years?

- Development of Emergency Alert Card Scheme with over 1000 carers signed up with emergency support plans in place
- Short break services developed
- Rapid response/crisis intervention

## What carers would like to happen

- Make sure the service can be maintained
- Rapid response/crisis intervention extended to all carer groups
- Increased use of Telecare to provide support

# Primary Health Care Services

## What is Important?

- Information about services for carers at their primary health care surgeries
- Staff at surgeries knowing carers have health needs as a result of caring
- Primary Care staff valuing expertise carers have in care of person cared for

## What has happened over last 3 years?

- Training and information pack provided to support GPs and professionals to identify carers
- Development of Integrated Networks including Carer Support Workers
- Awareness raising sessions for GP practice staff, information and leaflets
- 38 of 40 GP practices offer extended hours
- 37 of 40 GP practices has a Carers Register

## What carers would like to happen

- All GP practices to be carer friendly, including training for staff on needs of carers, information, publicity, carers registers, referral protocols
- Increased awareness amongst GPs of young carers issues
- Primary Care 'lead'/champion for carers issues

# Hospitals and Carers

## What is Important?

- Flexible outpatient appointments
- Appropriate and timely transport
- Staff valuing carers knowledge, experience and choice when the person being cared for is in hospital and value young carers thoughts and opinions
- Involving carers in discharge planning including referrals to CW&D

## What has happened over last 3 years?

- Discharge advisor nurses in wards - helps discharge planning with carers
- The Patient Advice & Liaison Service
- Modern Matrons in each clinical area
- Discharge advisors for patients with complex care needs
- Dialogue Groups established, valued and effective in empowering carers of people with mental health problems
- Recent group established for carers of people in medium secure and forensic services

## What carers would like to happen

- Engage Hospital Trust to contribute to Carers Forums and to become actively involved in carers issues
- Engage Hospital Trust in training to raise awareness on carers issues
- Ensure carers are involved as partners in discharge arrangements

# Carer Support and Carer Wellbeing

## What is Important?

- Emotional support, advocacy and information – someone to talk to
- Having the resources and knowledge to deliver care
- Reducing social isolation
- Preventing relationships breaking down
- Emotional and physical wellbeing of carers to continue caring
- Recognition of the impact of caring on a carers own health
- Social activities which include peer support from other carers
- Not having to spend lots of time looking for help and support

## What has happened over last 3 years?

- Carer support groups facilitated in areas across the district
- Carers Wakefield and District have a resource room / loan library and IT facilities open to carers and professionals
- Grants provided: complementary therapy; gym membership; carer groups
- Advocacy and information available
- Carers Wakefield and District offer practical and emotional support to carers
- Moving & handling and first aid sessions provided and now available on individual basis through CW&D

## **What carers would like to happen**

- Database/directory of available services
- Carer friendly pharmacies and referral protocols
- More advice on moving and handling in the home
- Practical support for carers - help with shopping, gardening, cleaning
- More home based support
- Help with planning for the future
- Ensure support available out of hours

# **Young Carers**

## **What is Important?**

- Recognition of young carers and the important role they play
- Reduce or remove impacts they face due to caring responsibilities
- Ensuring young carers meet the outcomes in 'Every Child Matters'
- Working with the whole family through multi-agency support
- The role professionals have in supporting young carers
- Early intervention to prevent young people take on inappropriate caring roles
- Access to universal services

## **What has happened over last 3 years?**

- Increased number of schools on board – signing up to support young carers; reflected in increasing number of referrals from educational sources
- Young carers entitled to an annual health needs assessment as classed as children in special circumstances
- 'Think Family' guidelines developed to ensure professionals work together to ensure young carers are identified, supported and kept safe
- DVD created by Young Carers which is used in schools across the district to raise awareness. Resource pack created for schools
- Wakefield Councils 'Making Every Contact Count' increases support and referrals for young carers
- More focused group support to cover themes such as wellbeing, transitions, revision sessions and disability/illness information groups

## **What young carers would like to happen**

- To be able to access appropriate and age related young adult carer support when leaving young carers service.
- Be more involved in the creation of discharge and care plans
- More support for the person they care for
- Hospitals to be more understanding of their role and acknowledge them

# **Parent Carers**

## **What is Important?**

- Combining appointments to various specialists for parent carers with trained staff who understand the condition of the child

- Having access to someone who is contactable, who knows and understands the needs of the family and can offer immediate support
- Appropriate short break opportunities
- Provision of good information about services and support in the community, right from the start including pre-birth

### **What has happened over last 3 years?**

- Good Practice Guidance developed for supporting Disabled Parents including caring responsibilities of both parents and children
- Carers Wakefield & District involved with parent carer forums to raise awareness of specific needs
- Parent Carer Groups visited to raise awareness of suitable available support
- 258 new parent carers identified between 01/04/07 and 31/03/10
- Wakefield's Early Support, Advice, Information and Liaison Service (WeSail) commissioned to provide information, signposting and short term interventions, including key worker service
- WeSail provide regular newsletters, service directory and worked to develop hub of information for families caring for disabled children
- Range of short breaks to more families as part of 'Aiming High'; offered so parent carers can spend time with siblings, pursue interests or have a break
- Parents Reference Group supported to roll out Parent Participation programme with family events and Parents Conference for more parents to be aware of services and support available
- Parent carers represented on key groups e.g. SEN/Disabled Children's Programme Board
- Disabled Children's access to Childcare Programme (DCATCH) improving support available to working parents
- BME Development worker funded to ensure parent carers from ethnic minority communities supported to access information and services

### **What carers would like to happen**

- Provide support for parents to access training to enable them to develop skills to help their child
- More support for parents to have a short break.
- Include more parents in the decision making processes
- More access to speech therapy and physiotherapy
- Specifically identify family carers from ethnic minority communities
- Continued work with GPs to develop carers registers
- More communication in mainstream settings e.g. school
- Accessible and affordable childcare

## **Carers of Adults with Disability or Illness**

This can include mental health needs, learning disability, physical disability or a sensory impairment (or a combination of these).

### **What is Important?**

- Better information and fair access to good quality and flexible short breaks

- Recognition carers are supporting people who may have complex needs that may span several service areas; staff need to be able to help with this
- Think Family – different service areas to talk to each other
- More choice of services to support carers
- To have support before things reach crisis point
- Special consideration of the needs of older carers

### **What has happened over last 3 years?**

- Mental health carers have been directly involved with research and the report 'Mental Health Professionals Perception of and attitudes to, Carers needs in mental health services'
- Awareness raising events held across the district
- Carer and CW&D representation on planning groups such as the Learning Disability Partnership Board, NHS Trust reference groups and Learning disability Carers Delivery Group representing carers needs
- Carers Mental Health Dialogue groups involving carers meeting with mental health professionals to improve services
- Carers Wakefield and District – specialist worker supporting carers of adults with Learning Disability
- 'Together' Wakefield Carer Development Service provides support services for carers of adults with mental health needs including one to one and peer support through volunteers
- Development of extra care housing specifically for people living with older carers, reducing the potential for emergency responses at time of crisis
- Carers Directory completed and launched

### **What carers would like to happen**

- Implementation of the short breaks strategy
- New build, flexible residential short breaks service
- Increased adult placement options, particularly for people with complex needs
- Identification of carers of people with the most complex needs and engagement in planning
- Increase opportunities for carers to participate in self management programmes such as the Expert Patient Programme.
- Increased number of direct payments

## **Training and Information for Professionals**

### **What is Important?**

- Professionals understanding the value and expertise of carers
- Carers taking up support they are entitled to Professionals awareness of carers rights and services available to them
- Working with carers as expert partners

## **What has happened over last 3 years?**

- Information on services and support available throughout the District
- BME carers delivery group established
- Work done with schools to get them signed up to policies, providing them with resource packs and the Think Family guidelines

## **What carers would like to happen**

- Expand training
- Ensure that Carer Awareness training is mandatory for all staff
- To recruit black and minority ethnic carers onto representative bodies e.g. learning disability Carers Delivery Group and carers forum
- NHS Trusts should develop information on their services for carers
- More specific training for professional staff on carers assessment, producing care plans and working with carers, including carers from minority groups
- Ensuring information on services are accessible and inclusive

# **Involving Carers (including Advocacy)**

## **What is Important?**

- Different ways of involving carers that meet their needs - email, letters, meetings
- Ensuring any meetings are held at times and in ways that recognise caring responsibilities
- Transport and accessible means of involvement
- Covering all geographical areas and moving around the District with events
- Using high profile people to raise awareness
- Continually raising the profile and recognition of carers contributions, not just for Carers Week

## **What has happened over last 3 years?**

- Carers Forum continue to take place with themed information
- Carers reference groups linked to planning groups; representation on Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership Boards and Dialogue Groups
- Consultation held with carers on assessment documentation and safeguarding
- Young carers involved in developing the Think Family guidelines, resource packs for schools and created a DVD to use across schools
- Advocacy as part of the role of Integrated Networks Carer Support workers
- BME Carers subgroup established for Learning Disability Partnership Board

## **What carers would like to happen**

- Carers routinely consulted and involved in developments of new services, training of professional staff and formulation\implementation of new policies
- Training for carers to promote skills to enable them to act as representatives for social care and health boards
- Buddying systems to support carers to be involved
- Re-launch current carer forum to promote carer representation
- Specific links be made with BME groups to ensure carer consultation

- More awareness raising to identify hidden carers through Integrated Networks and increased number of events across the district
- Different timings for meeting
- Consultation with isolated carers; older carers and people with learning disability

# Finance, Benefits and Employment

## What is Important?

- To continue to work if carers want to
- Having financial support to help with caring
- Recognition of difficulties carers have with benefits and finances
- Challenging government on carers allowance and how it affects other benefits
- Knowing about Direct Payments and Individual Budgets
- Having up to date information readily available

## What has happened over last 3 years?

- Advocacy projects
- Connexions - An advice and information service for teenagers that includes work, finance, education
- Support for carers to do further education
- 'My Time' scheme - can use funding to do courses and leisure
- Information and support provided through CW&D and other organisations
- Surveyed local employers; redeveloped leaflet Juggling Carers Work and Care
- Supported by Disabled Children's access to Childcare Programme (DCATCH) to improve support available to working parents
- Work with young carers to ensure they go on to access training, further education and employment.
- Group working with young carers to help them think about the future – budgeting, cooking, CV writing etc

## What carers would like to happen

- Build links with local employers and develop good practice guidelines in relation to supporting carers in employment (work and families act 2006)
- Develop vocational training and employment opportunities for carers
- Ensure effective break services for carers whilst in education
- Access to telecare, telehealth/telemedicine to enable carers to return to work or stay in work

# Useful Contacts

## **Social Care Direct**

Your first point of contact for Social Care Services

Tel: 0845 8 503 503

Fax: 01924 303 455

Email: [social\\_care\\_direct@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:social_care_direct@wakefield.gov.uk)

Type talk calls welcome.

Online Referral forms are available for self-referral, please find these on our website at:

[www.wakefield.gov.uk/HealthandSocialCare/SocialCareDirect](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/HealthandSocialCare/SocialCareDirect)

## **Carers Wakefield and District**

Offers a confidential information and support service to Carers

Tel: 01924 305 544

Email: [info@carerswakefield.org.uk](mailto:info@carerswakefield.org.uk)

## **Wakefield District Young Carers**

Wakefield District Young Carers provides a variety of support including advocacy, information, advice and individual and group work for young carers and their families in the Wakefield district area

Tel: 01924 304110

Email: [youngcarers@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:youngcarers@barnardos.org.uk)

## **Together – Wakefield Carer Development Service**

Offers community-based one to one, group and volunteer support for families and carers of people with long term mental health difficulties

Tel: 01924 375 754

E-mail: [wakefield@together-uk.org](mailto:wakefield@together-uk.org)

## **Job Centre Plus**