

Stevenage Listening to Carers Day – 23rd February 2010

Carers in Hertfordshire recommends that this Action Plan is shared with the Hertfordshire Multi-Agency Carers Strategy Group so that the sub-groups focussing on *Learning and Work; Health and Well Being; Information (including benefits take-up); Breaks and Leisure; and Respect, Voice and Choice* can provide support and information to the relevant agencies tasked with delivering the actions.

Priorities for Action	Proposed action to be taken	Relevant agencies
1 Access to Services and Support		
<p>(a) Many carers are not aware of their right to a Carers' Assessment and to the support that can be provided following assessment, e.g. Contingency planning, Carers' grant, etc.</p> <p>Parent carers in particular seemed unaware of the support in terms of Carers' Grant or the PCT funded 'Making a Difference' scheme.</p>	<p>Service providers to monitor proportion of Carers receiving an annual assessment and the outcomes of the Carer Assessment process in terms of access to services or signposting as appropriate.</p> <p>Health and Social care commissioners and providers to be provided with feedback on carers' concerns/experiences of the Carers' Assessment process.</p>	<p>ACS: OPPD teams, CLDTs CSF: Children with Disabilities Teams HPfT: CMHTs, CDATs, SMTOP</p> <p>Carers in Hertfordshire.</p>
<p>(b) Counselling and Advocacy are not easily accessible for carers. Six weeks counselling is available from GPs – but this is not enough for some situations.</p>	<p>Provide 'walk in' service for carers suffering with stress.</p> <p>Develop register of organisations who free or nominal fee (eg. MIND, HAD, Women's Resource Centre). This is not carer specific but is available to anyone who may need this type of help.</p> <p>Advocacy for carers is available from some organisations – accessible list required with details of who would be supported, eg. Age Concern: carers over 55 years.</p>	<p>NHS Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Stevenage Borough Council</p> <p>ACS User and Carer Team Carers in Hertfordshire.</p>

2	Respite Care		
(a)	Booking respite care can be difficult and has to be done a long time in advance.	Booking respite sometimes has to be done through a social worker (some can still be booked directly through the provider). The Procedure should be much clearer to understand, eg. how dates are allocated to different clients.	Community Social Care Teams.
(b)	Billing is erratic, late and unclear.	<p>Bills should be sent monthly, or at least within a month of the respite taking place.</p> <p>Bills need to be set out in a clearer and more understandable way.</p> <p>Financial assessments are currently carried out annually – is this always necessary where clients are on benefits and the only change is the national increase. Could this be changed to three yearly?</p>	<p>ACS Finance Department</p> <p>ACS Finance Department</p> <p>ACS Finance Department</p>
3	Information/Rights/Options		
(a)	Carers are often unaware that they are carers and need easy access to information about the support and advice available for them.	<p>Core health and social care information to be provided in different formats, eg. leaflets, websites, posters.</p> <p>Core information to be available in different outlets: libraries, pharmacies, CAB offices, the County-wide magazine.</p> <p>GPs surgeries and Pharmacies to signpost Carers to the statutory agencies and to Carers in Hertfordshire.</p>	<p>HCC, NHS Hertfordshire, HPfT and the E & N Herts NHS Trust Communications section.</p> <p>HCC, NHS Hertfordshire, HPfT and the E & N Herts NHS Trust Communications section.</p> <p>NHS Hertfordshire/Practice Based Commissioners.</p>

(b) Carers need sufficient pre
them to participate fully in the C
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	east and north.	
(b) Carers report that hospital staff often show little insight into the needs of children and adults with learning or physical disabilities.	<p>GP hospital referrals should flag that the patient has special needs.</p> <p>The Health Action Plan [learning disabilities] or the Care Plan [elderly/physical disability] should be used as the patient reference book by nursing staff during in-patient stays.</p> <p>Liaison nurses for learning disability and dementia to support hospital staff in caring appropriately for patients with communication or cognitive difficulties.</p>	<p>NHS Hertfordshire/Practice Based Commissioners.</p> <p>E&N Herts NHS Trust</p> <p>E&N Herts NHS Trust, CLDTs and SMHTOP.</p>
6	General Practice	
(a) Carers feel that primary care staff often have little understanding of their issues. They report that it is often difficult to get a timely appointment and very difficult to get a home visit. It is also unhelpful to be given an appointment with a GP who is not familiar with the caring situation. A number of carers were unaware that they could register as 'a carer' with their GP surgery and some of those who had registered reported little benefit from doing so.	<p>Distribute <i>Carers as Partners</i> leaflet to all GP Surgeries.</p> <p>Distribute <i>Carers in Practice</i> West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust leaflet to Carers. (Leaflets produced by the PRTC and the RCGP to improve knowledge and understanding of carers and carers issues among Primary Care professionals.)</p> <p>Establish Carers Champion in each surgery (already provided in the West of the County)</p> <p>Membership of Patient Partnership Boards or Patient Forums to include Carer representatives.</p>	<p>NHS Hertfordshire [PCT].</p> <p>NHS Hertfordshire [PCT] with Carers in Hertfordshire.</p> <p>NHS Hertfordshire [PCT].</p> <p>Hertfordshire LINKs</p>
(b) Carers do not always feel comfortable complaining about GP services direct to the	Contact the Hertfordshire LINKs to discuss their potential role in raising complaints on	Carers in Hertfordshire

	practice.	behalf of patients/carers.	
7	Employment		
	Carers report difficulties in securing and then maintaining p/t work within the earnings limit (currently £100.00 per week) that allows carers to remain eligible for Carer's Allowance.	Produce Carers' Employment Factsheet which includes details of Carers' employment rights: flexible working, dependents' leave and parental leave (disabled child or young person up to the age of 18 years) and the restrictions in relation to claiming Carers' Allowance. Factsheet to be provided to Carers and Employers.	HCC Carers into learning and Work sub group
8	Transport		
	Public transport, particularly in rural areas, is sporadic and not available in the evenings, making attendance at appointments or leisure activities difficult or expensive.	Identify where health appointment transport costs can be claimed from the Acute Hospital Trust or NHS Hertfordshire and publicise in Carewaves Publicise the availability of free bus travel for disabled people. Provide accessible information about local volunteer driving resources Provide mobile clinics for more conditions, eg. Mental Health, to serve rural areas	Carers in Hertfordshire Carers in Hertfordshire Stevenage Borough Council NHS Hertfordshire and HPfT.
9	Local Activities		
	Carers and the person cared for need access to local activities – including leisure activities, day evening and weekend activities and learning sessions.	It to discuss the possibility of a county-wide concessionary card to provide carer concessionary rates when accompanying the person cared for. Develop central database/Directory of Services in Stevenage online (hard copy to be provided on request).	ACS Users and Carers Team District and Borough Councils Leisure providers. Stevenage Borough Council. Stevenage Borough Council

	<p>Directory to include information about what support is available for different disabilities to enable participation.</p> <p>Ensure support available for person cared for, both when attending local activities and alternative care when carers attends – list of care providers should be more easily available.</p>	<p>Cross Roads more visible. ACS.</p>
7	Younger Carers	
	<p>Parent Carer expressed concern that there does not appear to be any support or services provided for young carers under the age of 8 years, where for example there is a sibling or parent with a disability.</p>	<p>Acknowledge the needs of younger carers and ensure that there are opportunities, eg. support groups or clubs for the whole family where parents and all the children can engage in ‘fun’ activities together and with other families in similar situations.</p>
		<p>Hertfordshire Children’s Trust Partnership Board.</p> <p>District Children’s Trust Partnership Board.</p>
8	Transition	
	<p>Parent Carer concerned that transition planning for young people with learning disabilities should start at an earlier stage.</p>	<p>CSF/ Transition Team/Connexions to consider whether Pupils in Special Schools for children with severe and moderate learning disabilities should have access to a Connexions worker in Year 9.</p>
		<p>CSF, County Transition Team and Connexions.</p>

Glossary:

ACS	Adult Care Services	SBC	Stevenage Borough Council
CDAT	Community Drug and Alcohol Team	HPfT	Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust
CLDT	Community Learning Disabilities Team	LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
CMHT	Community Mental Health Team	OPPD	Older People and Physical Disability
CSF	Children, Schools and Families	PALS	Patient Advice and Liaison Service
		PRTC	Princess Royal Trust for Carers
		RCGP	Royal College of General Practitioners

