

**MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW - SUPPORT TO CARERS
TUESDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2009**

Councillor Adamou (Chair)
s

Observer Councillor Guest Inattendance Short List

Apologies Councillor Alexander, Dodds and Wilson

LC8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Alexander, Councillor Dodds

LC9. URGENT BUSINESS

None

LC10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Adamou declared an interest as her daughter is a social worker.

LC11. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Deferred

LC12. CARERS PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Councillor Catherine Harris – Chair of the Carers Partnership Board

The National Carers Strategy was published in June 2008. Haringey's Adult Carers Strategy fed down from this.

The Carers Partnership Board has 19 members who helped to develop the Haringey Carers Strategy.

A Providers Forum is due to be set up which will involve the four carers provider organisations in Haringey.

According to the last census there are approximately 16,000 unpaid carers in Haringey who provide approximately £240 million of care per year.

Carers want planned short breaks. Not just respite for the cared for person.

When configuring services providers need to ensure that they are authentically reflecting what the carers want.

Emergency breaks/planning is a concern in Haringey for carers. This is the care provided when a carer breaks down and can no longer care for the cared for person.

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Cost implications where carers are not properly supported as emergency breaks have to then be put in place.

This point/concern was reiterated by carers organisations.

Feeling that if care plans are done properly then this would limit the number of emergency situations due to carers breaking down.

Emergency planning is a particular concern for older carers who worry what will happen to the person they are caring for if they are to fall ill or die.

There is a need to ensure that there are transition arrangements in place for when a person that is caring dies.

Personalisation

There is a need to ensure that carers are fully trained in the implications of the personalisation agenda for example being prepared to make their own choices and support the cared for person in making their choices.

Carers support organisations need to be supported in the changed to enable them to fully support the carers that come through their doors.

Gaps

- There are gaps in Mental Health service provision for carers, for example around risk assessments.
 - Feels that it would be useful to have a consistent/named representative from the MHT to attend the Carers Partnership Board.
- Coordination and availability of Emergency breaks.
- Information – not just leaflets but also having someone that they can call for information and advice. Some boroughs have a carers helpline which is a focal point of knowledge for carers, this also prevents carers having to call around for hours trying to speak to the right person.
- Data – there are gaps in data on lesbian and gay carers. There are also gaps on the religion of carers, for example how many Jewish carers do we have?
 - Ethnic monitoring information – need to know exactly who we are providing services to. The monitoring forms across the organisations should be consistent.

There is a need to focus on the gaps identified and work at filling them.

It is important to remember the huge impact that caring 24hrs a day has on a person's life. This often continues even when a cared for person is in hospital, for example:

- When a person with learning disabilities is in hospitals the carer often has to stay with them to translate what they are saying to the medical staff.
- What happens in a crisis situation? In a crisis situation there is an impact on the carer's routine and life, for example when a carer is in employment and they have to take time off at the last minute in order to deal with the crisis.

Health and well-being is carers highest priority above other aspects e.g. opportunities for employment.

Carers feels that there is a lack of availability of physiotherapy and rehabilitation services. General feeling that you have to fight to get access to physiotherapy and that there are issues around maintenance e.g. if someone relapses.

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Melanie Ponomarenko to add this to the information which will be presented by NHS Haringey.

Carers should be treated as experts and should have an input into the services which are provided to them.

Discussion around what other boroughs are providing e.g. size of centres, hotlines, service provision. Barbara Nicholls will look into this and feed back into the review.

Discussion around the need for organisations (carers and otherwise) to share information on what is available in the borough. If the organisations don't know then what hope is there for the carers to be able to find out?

Need to look at whether there is duplication on what is being provided across the organisations.

Discussion around the potential benefits of there being a centralised number for carers to call when needing support.

BME Carers organisation:

- Feels that the response to the Carers Partnership Board by NHS Haringey has been disappointing thus far.
- Feels that there is a continuity issue with attendance by the Mental Health Trust e.g. the same person should be attending each meeting.
- Concerned about the availability of aids and adaptations e.g. examples of carers having to carry people upstairs which is a serious concern and has health and safety implications.

Discussion around an example of the Duty Team being called by a Mental Health carer in crisis who was told to either call the police or to take the person straight to St Ann's. This may prevent the carer from getting help as would not necessarily want to take either of these options for their loved one.

LC13. ECONOMIC REGENERATION

Paul Clarke – Employment and Skills Officer

Aims to support people back into work.

The **Haringey Guarantee** project engages with residents through public and front line services. The project then identifies what barriers they are facing in returning/finding work. The officers then undertake job brokerage by identifying jobs throughout the borough, guaranteeing an interview and offering support for 26 weeks to ensure that people maintain employment.

Engagement takes place through:

- Libraries
- Children Centres
- Youth Offending Service
- Drug and Alcohol Action Team
- Customer Services
- Job Centre Plus

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- GP surgeries
- Probation services, etc

People are also offered benefits advice e.g. by using the Department for Welfare and Pensions software "Better off Calculator". This includes considering the carers allowance.

Access to unpaid work placements is also provided where lunch and travel expenses up to £35 per week are paid. This allowance does not affect people's benefit claims.

Measurements:

- Currently 1073 residents on the programme
- 227 job starts

There are no specific targets or measurements around carers.

Economic Regeneration has also not specifically been engaged with carers or carers organisations to date.

The Carers Partnership Board is due to set up an Employment work stream. Economic regeneration will be contacted to attend these meetings.

LC14. HARINGEY ADULT LEARNING SERVICE

Pat Duffy - Head of Haringey Adult Learning Service

The Adult Learning Service is currently looking at what they can do to support carers in Haringey. For example the options around distance learning opportunities and breaking up courses into smaller more accessible modules.

The service offers a 50% discount to people who are on benefits and a further 10% for registered carers.

There are some free services available e.g. ESOL. Currently looking at whether there are options for providing more free services, for example with the personalisation agenda.

Learn Direct courses are available which focus on skills for life. These provide opportunities for distance learning where the person comes into the centre for the exam.

Identified issues around data capture as there is the feeling that they currently aren't capturing them.

Discussion around whether there is a different question which could be asked on forms in order to identify carers for example, a questions which allows people that don't identify themselves as carers to take advantage of opportunities. This would also need to be clear that they are talking about unpaid carers.

Examples of successful events for carers e.g. pamper days.

Discussion around the possibility of giving carers free access to the internet with the option of limiting the sites they are able to access e.g. just to carers support sites.

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Discussion around whether there is scope for any further training to be rolled out e.g. manual handling. Noted that there would first need to be a scoping exercise to find out what training is already available to carers across the borough.

Discussion around the need to commit to classes and courses which can be very difficult for carers as they do not necessarily know whether or not they will be able to attend. Noted that the London Skills Council papers notes the need for flexibility.

Noted that there are not many platforms available for working with partners as it is a competitive market.

Noted that there is an Education and Learning sub-group of the Carers Partnership Board planned which Pat Duffy will attend.

LC15. HARINGEY LEISURE SERVICE

Simon Farrow Business - Development & Engagement Manager

When a registered carer attends leisure centres with the cared for person they can use the facilities for free.

When a registered carer attends on their own they can receive approximately a 25% discount depending on the activity.

There are currently 47 registered carer card holders.

Noted that respite is an issue in enabling the carer to attend leisure centres.

Noted that those over the age of 65 years receive an Active Leisure card anyway – this would include carers which are not identified as such.

Query as to what publicity has been done to inform carers of the benefits. Noted that more could be done in this area.

Questions as to whether a person is a carer are not explicit on the membership forms. To enable more people to take advantage of the benefits this should be looked at.

There is a need to look at a variety of ways to capture carers and allow them to take up discounts available.

What is the start point for people identifying themselves as carers? Is it at hospitals? GP surgeries? Job Centres?

Until a person identifies them-self as a carer they won't 'see' adverts, information etc aimed at carers. There is a need to get people to identify themselves as carers as a starting point.

Information for carers should be in places that the carer goes e.g. in waiting areas at centre where they could be waiting for the cared for person.

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LC16. HARINGEY COUNCIL - HUMAN RESOURCES

Steve Davies – Head of Human Resources

Haringey Council does not specifically target carers as part of the workforce.

42% of the workforce works less than full-time hours.

Carers are mentioned in the flexible working policy.

Discussion around the need for better signposting for employees who are carers for example information on carers centres should be available on HARINET so that they can get advice and support.

Steve Davies to look into the implications of the Equalities Act 2009 for carers in relation to employment and identification.

Noted that there was a survey conducted on pay slips approximately 2 years ago which aimed to identify carers in Haringey. Barbara Nicholls will look into finding the data from this survey.

It is left to the Managers discretion as to whether to allow someone to work flexibly e.g. to work from home. Managers have to take into account the needs of the service when receiving these requests. Query as to how this is managed centrally in order to ensure that there is consistency and fairness in the application of the policies. Query as to how managers are made aware of the needs of carers and how awareness is kept up. Are there spot checks?

Noted that the BME carers centre has received a referral from a Manager within the Council for a member of staff.

Carers are entitled to specific leave in relation to their caring duties e.g.

LC17. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

Clr George Meehan

Chair