

Health and Wellbeing Board

25 September 2017

Carers Update Report



Report of Denise Elliott, Interim Head of Commissioning, Adult and Health Services, Durham County Council

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on carer developments over the last year and work scheduled for the coming months.

Background

- 2 Durham County Carers Support (DCCS) have the contract to provide adult and parent carer services across County Durham and have over 15,000 carers registered with the service.
- 3 Family Action have the contract to provide core services to young carers and have almost 500 carers registered with their service, known as The Bridge.

Carer Developments April 2016 – March 2017

Welfare Benefits

- 4 During April 2016 – March 2017 DCCS have been successful with benefit claims for carers which amount to £3,505,200.

Increasing Number of Registered Carers

- 5 2412 carers registered with DCCS between April 2016 and March 2017 which was a 13% increase from the previous year.
- 6 267 carers registered with Family Action between April 2016 and March 2017 which was a 40% increase from 2015/16.
- 7 One of the biggest barriers to carers getting support is that they often do not see themselves as carers but as a husband, wife, partner, parent, child or friend.
- 8 DCCS have a Development Team who work effectively across Health, Social Care and the Voluntary and Community Sector to develop partnerships and to support these agencies to identify carers and refer them to DCCS.
- 9 Other events held to increase awareness included a Professional Breakfast, hosted by DCCS in March 2017, which was attended by 97 people as well as

a range of events and information stands in Carers Week and on Carers Rights Day.

- 10 Family Action work with organisations such as schools and colleges to support these organisations to identify and refer Young Carers.
- 11 Family Action also encourage organisations to sign up to the Young Carers Charter, where they sign up to a number of pledges and are evaluated before gaining Charter status.
- 12 Being awarded Charter Status shows that the organisation has a commitment to identifying and supporting any young carers within their community, including signposting for other services.

Carers supporting people with mental health problems

- 13 It has previously been acknowledged that carers of people with mental ill health are often unrecognised or 'hard to reach'.
- 14 DCCS have taken pro-active steps to address this by working with Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) in the facilitation of a Dementia Awareness and a Mental Health Awareness course for carers with 128 carers attending these courses over the year.
- 15 DCCS have produced a 12 page booklet for carers of people with Mental Ill Health which TEWV Foundation Trust (FT) are now providing to carers on wards and through Community Teams.
- 16 DCCS have been working in partnership with TEWV FT to develop good practice using nationally agreed standards 'Triangle of Care', with a DCCS Development Worker involved in audits of Mental Health wards and attending regular meetings to develop action plans and training for staff.
- 17 The number of carers supporting people with mental ill health registered with DCCS has increased during the period April 2016 – March 2017 from 3124 to 3403 (9%)

Carers supporting people with a Learning Disability

- 18 DCCS have been looking for some time to increase referrals from carers who are supporting people with a Learning Disability (LD).
- 19 During 2016/17 the Learning Disability Development Worker within DCCS has started to deal with all LD referrals as they come in.
- 20 The LD Development Worker liaises closely with professionals across all LD teams and also within TEWV to feedback the support that has been offered to carers and to show the difference made.
- 21 Additionally the LD Development Worker has attended LD team meetings and met with other LD service providers, including colleges, to increase awareness of DCCS.

- 22 Of the 15,000 registered carers in March 2017, 914 of them are caring for people with a Learning Disability which is an increase of 19% on the figure at April 2016

Age of Registered Carers

- 23 The numbers of registered carers have increased in all age ranges with the largest increases being in the 18-24 and 65+ age groups.
- 24 The number of carers in the 18-24 age range increased from 255 to 366 during 2016/17, which was the largest percentage increase (43%), although total numbers in this range remain the lowest overall. This demonstrates that the service are being increasingly successful in terms of reaching younger carers, who have traditionally been difficult to engage with adult carer services.
- 25 The number of carers who are aged 65 and above increased from 3961 to 4673 during 2016/17 which is an increase of 17%. This appears to support the view that, as individuals with complex needs live longer due to improved medical interventions / quality of life, the carer age profile also increases in conjunction with that of the cared-for person.

Carers who are unable to work

- 26 The number of carers who report as being unable to work due to their caring role has increased during April 2016 – March 2017 from 3475 to 4264 (23%).
- 27 Carers who report as unable to work due to their caring role are usually those with the heaviest caring role and the increase in figures can be viewed as a positive that those carers are registering.
- 28 DCCS have been working with some of the large employers in County Durham encouraging them to work through an online course focussing on Carers in Employment. Employers involved include The Passport Office, Durham Police, Northumbrian Water, Age UK and Caterpillar.

Young Carers who look after someone living with cancer

- 29 The Bridge identified that there was a lack of information available around young carers in County Durham who look after someone living with cancer. During 2016/17, with the support of a grant from Macmillan, they have continued to pilot a project to identify the number of cancer young carers in the area.
- 30 During this time they have raised awareness, undertaken family case work, facilitated focus groups and shadowed professionals from the Health and Social Care sectors.

National Survey of Adult Carers in England

- 31 The 2016-17 National Survey of Adult Carers in England took place in October and November 2016. A total of 1,104 carers in Durham were randomly chosen to receive a questionnaire and 490 completed questionnaires were returned – a response rate of 44.4%.
- 32 The headline finding was that, where comparative data is available, Durham's performance has declined since the last survey (2014-15) in the 12 outcomes based questions.
- 33 However, Durham does score higher than the provisional national average in all 10 outcomes based questions where comparative data is available. This includes:
- (i) Overall satisfaction levels of carers with the support or services they and the person they care for received from social services in the last 12 months

Durham, 43.3%, down from 54.4% in 2014/15
England 38.6%, down from 41.2% in 2014/15
 - (ii) The percentage of carers who have as much control over their daily lives as they want

Durham, 35.2%, down from 39.6% in 2014/15
England 24.4%, down from 26.6% in 2014/15
 - (iii) The percentage of carers who have as much social contact as they want with people they like

Durham, 51.0%, down from 52.4% in 2014/15
England 34.6%, down from 38.5% in 2014/15
- 34 Officers are investigating the reasons for the drop in performance, however early findings suggest that one contributing factor to the fall in carer satisfaction is the general reduction in care packages due to austerity measures for long-term carers, particularly the reduction in day centre provision. Any reduction in day care provision for the cared-for person can lead to them spending more time in their own home and consequently reducing the time carers have away from their caring role.
- 35 Discussion with DCCS suggested that long-term carers were more dissatisfied than those newer to their caring role as they had experienced the reduction in services for the cared-for person. Analysis of carer satisfaction levels versus length of time as a carer does show a pattern of satisfaction reducing over time. The observed pattern does not stand up to statistical significance testing, but a link between the variables can be inferred.
- 36 It has also been identified that there is a lack of clarity around when social work staff would refer to DCCS and when they would carry out a statutory carers assessment.

NHS Personalised Carer Support Fund

- 37 NHS Personalised Carer Support Fund (previously known as NHS Carers Breaks Fund), is an element of the Better Care Fund, funded by local Clinical Commissioning Groups. This fund is designed to provide carers in County Durham with the opportunity to take 'time out' from the caring role; improve their health and wellbeing and enable them to continue in their caring role. This was previously in the form of a therapy voucher, gym membership, attendance on an approved course, purchase of a bus pass or a short break etc.
- 38 In March 2016 it was agreed to broaden the offer of funding to enable the carer to benefit from services such as ironing, cleaning or gardening services, which would help them to continue in their caring role. The fund would continue to also offer the previous break options.
- 39 36 payments totalling £4,890 were made in 2016/17 for these additional opportunities of which 21 were for cleaning and ironing services and 15 were for gardening services.
- 40 Feedback from carers who have utilised the fund in this way is positive including:
- (i) The grass cutting service took so much weight off our shoulders. It's a large problem we didn't have to worry about.
 - (ii) I love to be in the garden but cannot do the heavier jobs that my husband used to do
 - (iii) Having a deep clean of the house has really helped me gain more valuable time with my children
- 41 As there were 2430 payments in total from the Personalised Carer Support Fund during 2016/17, approximately 1.5% of these were for services.
- 42 The £4,890 spent on cleaning, ironing and gardening services represents just over 2% of the £231,162 spent from the fund in total.

Other Developments in 2016/17

- 43 DCCS have been working with Public Health delivering Carer Awareness Training to the Healthy Living Pharmacies and promoting them as referral points.
- 44 The Bridge has adopted the High 5 to Health Principles to underpin the work they do with Young Carers to keep them safe and healthy.
- 45 The High 5 to Health Principles are be you, be healthy, be strong, be safe and be a voice.

Carer Developments over the coming months

- 46 Social work staff will be provided with more clarity around services available for carers and when referrals to DCCS should be made.
- 47 The contract with DCCS and Family Action expire in March 2018 and a review process is underway, to determine the future strategic direction for carers services.
- 48 The review will consider the effectiveness of the current services in meeting stakeholder needs, the funding available, and any changes to the existing service specifications which could be made to further improve core carer services.
- 49 Following the review, a procurement exercise scheduled to identify organisations to commence (or continue) providing a service for carers with effect from April 2018.

Recommendations and reasons

- 50 The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:
 - a) receive the report for information.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None identified

Staffing – None identified for DCC staff

Risk – There is a risk that as awareness increases and more carers are identified there is a lack of resources to work effectively with them

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None identified

Accommodation – None identified

Crime and Disorder – None identified

Human Rights – None identified

Consultation – Stakeholder feedback to be considered as part of the review and sample of carers have been consulted as part of the National Survey detailed in the report

Procurement – A tender exercise is required to identify providers from April 2018

Disability Issues – None identified

Legal Implications – Procurement advice on legal matters will be taken during the procurement exercise