

'Carers at the heart of Worcestershire's families and communities'

Draft Carers' Strategy 2009-2014 (easy read version)

The strategy documents can also be made available in other languages and alternative formats (large print and computer disk for full document & audio tape and Braille for easy read version) on request from Helen Garfield at hgarfield@worcestershire.gov.uk or 01905 822638

Draft Carers' Strategy 2009-2014 (easy read version)

There are an estimated six million carers in the UK, and of these, over one fifth provide more than 50 hours care per week. In Worcestershire, it is estimated there are nearly 60,000 carers, representing over 10 per cent of the county's population.

The delivery of high quality support for these carers is vital to ensure the provision of good quality care and support for those that they care for. Care provided ranges from limited care to regular and substantial levels of care but all carers have a need for support of some kind to provide the best quality care possible while also ensuring their own needs and aspirations are met.

The new national carers' strategy, 'Carers at the heart of 21st Century families and communities (2008)' sets out the development of support for carers over the next ten years, with a strong focus on tailoring support for carers to their personal needs and ensuring all carers are able to access information and advice.

Locally, in response to the national strategy, a review of carers support services in Worcestershire was completed in 2009. This strategy, 'Carers at the heart of Worcestershire's families and communities', is Worcestershire's way of ensuring the aims specified in the new national strategy and the findings of the recent local review of carers support services are met.

This strategy, for the period 2009-14, which has a focus on the needs of adult carers, will ensure a higher profile for carers' issues amongst key decision-making bodies. It will also deliver services that are more equitable, will support more carers to provide good quality care while enjoying a life of their own, and will ensure carers are more engaged in the delivery of care and support services provided for themselves or those they care for.

Three strategic priorities for action have been set to enable us to meet these local and national outcomes. These are:

- **Develop stronger governance structures for decision making concerning issues facing carers** – to raise the profile of carers' issues, ensure the active engagement of key partners in decision making, and encourage the allocation of adequate resources to deliver required support services
- **Improve carer confidence in the quality of support available to them and the person they care** – in particular, the flexibility and responsiveness of services to meet personal needs and aspirations, and the extent to which carers are engaged in decision making regarding the support provided
- **Deliver more equitable access to and improved support services for adult carers** – in particular, between those eligible for statutory support and those with lower needs, for carers in different districts of the county, and between carers of different ages.

A major aim of the strategy is to increase the number of adult carers in the county who access information advice and low level support that enables them to manage their caring responsibilities in a sustainable way for the continued health and wellbeing of themselves and the person they care for.

In order to address the strategic priorities we will undertake the following actions:

Developing New Governance Structures

- Establish a pooled health and social care budget for carers
- Establish a Carers Consultative Group with carers and voluntary sector partners to shape future strategy development
- Establish a Carers Commissioning and Finance Sub Group of key health and social care officers to lead on implementation of the strategy
- Require the provider of a new countywide carers information advice and support service to support carers to engage meaningfully in decision making groups
- Ensure that the key governance bodies of the NHS and the County Council receive progress reports on implementation of the strategy and are challenged to maintain a clear commitment to delivering the strategy's aims
- Explore development of a Carers Charter that enshrines how key health and social care organisations are to support carers
- Argue for National Indicator 135 to be included during the life of the strategy as a local indicator of quality of life in Worcestershire's Local Area Agreement.

Improving Carer Confidence in Support Services

- Ensure carers are engaged in decision making regarding adult social care's Choice and Control programme so that their needs and aspirations are considered when developing care packages for the people they care for
- Complete a person centred care check of how carers support services are delivered to ensure they offer carers choice and control
- Re-procure the existing Sitter Service that provides short term breaks for carers as the Flexible Breaks for Carers service that will offer greater flexibility
- Consider the option of direct cash payments for eligible carers who wish to purchase their own support to provide them with breaks
- Require the new countywide information advice and support service to develop a carers wellcheck assessment that enables them to tailor services to personal needs
- Maintain a focus on providing professional support for social care and mental health teams to ensure that carers assessments are completed and support provided
- Commission a dedicated service to engage with health professionals based at GP practices to ensure that carers needs are recognised and addressed
- Embed carers' issues into the development of care pathways for health service areas such as stroke and end of life support.

Delivering More Equitable Access To and Improved Support Services for Carers

- Ensure more equitable access to delivery of support while also responding to new priorities identified in the local strategic review and the national strategy
- Improve the level of support for carers with low and high levels of need
- Commission a new countywide information advice and support service that focuses on addressing lower level support needs
- Develop further the carers training programme
- Commission a new support service for carers aged 16-25 years to provide targeted information advice and support for this group
- Re-procure services that help carers of people with mental health issues, in particular dementia, to understand the illness and have a break from caring
- Utilise extra funding of £120,000 per annum allocated by NHS Worcestershire from 2010/11 on a wide range of services

PATHWAY FOR CARER SUPPORT



