



Derby City Council Carers Event – Feedback report January 2024

1. Councillor Alison Martin (Derby City Council Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Care and Health) hosted a workshop event for informal, non-professional carers on Thursday 25th January 2024. The aim of the event was to provide carers with an opportunity to share their experiences of being a carer and to have their voice heard by the City Council and local NHS.
2. The event was developed and organised by a working group of carers, adult social care commissioning and social work colleagues and the commissioned carers support service (Universal Services for Carers) in Derby.
3. Carers were invited to share their experiences and insights through some short questions:
 - What is your experience as a carer?
 - What about your experience so far could have been better?
 - What is the experience of the support you receive as a carer?
 - What do you think would help you most in your caring role?
 - How do you think the Council, NHS, support organisations and carers can better work together?
4. Over 35 carers attended the workshop and the feedback has been collated and reviewed. Feedback was also received from carers who had registered an interest but were unable to attend the event which has been considered.
5. The feedback has been collated into 6 'themes' (see below) with key consensus messages identified and options for actions. Some actions are already in progress, whilst others are longer term and would need prioritising, with additional resources, agreement and support from the Council's partners. It is anticipated that carers will have opportunity to actively support and contribute to a range of actions and projects outlined in this report.

a. Recognition/ feeling valued

KEY MESSAGES:

- Carers do not feel valued, they do not feel that the system (Council/NHS/support organisations) recognises and understands them and their experiences and challenges that carers face, including the impact on their relationships, health (mental, emotional and physical), finances and wellbeing and how this impact changes over time.
- Many carers feel they do not have a choice in providing care support – they feel an expectation that they will take on the role. People often do not recognise they are a “carer” until well down the line (possibly until too late?).





- Carers feel that they often need to take the lead on accessing the support for them and their cared-for, information or access to support options are not readily available or actively encouraged by professionals, who lack empathy.
- Carers are not recognised or valued within wider society, there is a lack of empathy within their communities in relation their caring role.
- Carers want to feel that support is available to them as and when they need it and need to know how to access it.

OPTIONS:

- A system wide communications campaign to celebrate carers, raise awareness of the caring role including helping people to self-identify as carers and encourage earlier seeking of support.
- Educate wider Council and health services on how to recognise carers and how to signpost to relevant support.
- Introduce a Civic Awards system to recognise, champion and celebrate carers (as well as others contributing to their local communities).

b. Planning for the future

KEY MESSAGES:

- People do not feel that the transition of cared-for from children's services into adult services is well supported.
- Carers would like to see earlier, more proactive, preventative measures to support them.
- Carers regularly worry about the future, particularly what this means for their cared-for, in particular if there is a lack of family/informal support networks. This is both for anticipated changes to circumstance and also in an emergency situation.
- Better recognition of and support for young carers.

OPTIONS:

- Review pathways from children's to adult services including carers in this review with a view to improving the transition experience for cared-for and carers.
- Review emergency planning arrangements to define purpose and scope of current offer and to see if and how this could be improved.
- Review 'planning for the future' arrangements to assess efficacy of planning for anticipated changes in carer/cared-fors' circumstances.





c. Feedback on current support service/ offer

KEY MESSAGES:

- Carers want a better carers support and assessment process with less bureaucracy.
- People want an in-person option for accessing support from a carers support service.
- Carers want a range of activities that cater for a range of different ages (including young carers and younger adult carers) and types of carer.
- Carers value the opportunity to meet and access peer support.
- Carers want education, information and training relevant to caring for their cared-for.
- Carers want to be properly represented and heard.
- Established carers groups want support to ensure they remain valuable and viable.

OPTIONS:

- Feedback and review current service offer (with carers) with a view to agreeing service developments. Review to include:
 - o Number of in-person opportunities for carers to engage with service.
 - o Education offer within service.
 - o Wellbeing opportunities and activities to identify gaps particularly for younger, more active carers.
 - o Carers Support Group network of independent carers support groups in the City – working with Council locality teams to co-ordinate approach.
- Review and improve carers assessment/support journey.

d. Communication/information/engagement

KEY MESSAGES:

- Information should be shared better between organisations (Voluntary and Community/Council/ NHS) and organisations should coordinate better between them to support – Carers feel that they need to tell their story many times.
- Professionals often do not know well enough what support is available and what other agencies do.
- Carers want information about the support that is available to them, where and how to access it.
- Carers want information to be clear, simple to follow, easily accessible and provided to them – not them having to ask for it. Carers want an in-person and range of other options to access this information.





- Carers want to understand system processes better, including social care assessment (both for carer and cared-for), hospital discharge and decision-making processes.
- Carers want to be involved in decision making processes, they want to be engaged with regularly, including on funding/ budget decisions.
- Caring needs to be “everyone’s business”, there should be a ‘no wrong door’ approach for carers accessing support.

OPTIONS:

- Develop information “pack”, co-designed with carers and across the system, which can be provided to carers from a range of sources (inc. Council, hospital, GP, Voluntary and Community, social care providers).
- Review existing website offering across system and support organisations with a view to ensuring that information is co-ordinated and consistent.
- Explore coordination and information sharing opportunities with a view to developing a more collaborative, joined-up approach to carer support across health, social care and Voluntary and Community organisation partners.
- Guidance to be produced which explains adult social care / hospital discharge processes and decision making.
- Commit to more engagement events with carers on an ongoing basis – this would include a range of options for engagement including around budget decisions, processes, services, support and guidance.

e. Financial impact

KEY MESSAGES:

- Carers feel financially penalised for being a carer.
- Carers feel the financial support provided is unfair.
- Carers feel the financial support available is complicated.

OPTIONS:

- Produce financial information guidance to ensure that carers are aware of rights and eligibilities and how to access them.
- Ensure carers are aware of support offers such as carer cards/discounts through active promotion.
- Produce report for senior Council colleagues outlining financial challenges faced by carers and perceived unfairness of system to support lobbying of national Government.
- Consider how Council can use existing resources to provide support -e.g. discounted leisure facilities etc. and how could gear off others in the City e.g. businesses, shops etc.





- Need to clearly communicate to Carers what are the limitations of what the Council can do and is within its control, so expectations are set and agreed for future discussions.

f. Feedback on Council/Adult Social Care/Health/local offer

KEY MESSAGES:

- Carers value voluntary and community organisations and their support – recognise that voluntary and community organisations are often better set-up to provide the type of support they need than the Council.
- There is inconsistency across adult social care operational teams – in personnel, information and support – quality, empathy.
- There needs to be a more joined-up approach across the system including both the City and County Councils and with health which demonstrates an agreed understanding and approach to carers support.
- Organisations need to share information, particularly in regard to emergency planning.
- There needs to be more options available for respite (both planned and emergency) and day opportunities, these need to be flexible in times including evenings and weekends.
- The wider Council (not just adult social care) could provide more practical support to carers e.g. through Local Area Coordinators, parking/transport solutions, use of Council assets.
- Carers find that transport options for disabled users is limited and adds on to the financial impact of their role.
- There is inconsistency in access to NHS services and in information from services including signposting.
- Need more (consistent and timely) support for adaptations to support cared for.

OPTIONS:

- Utilise carers expertise to educate adult social care / hospital/ GP teams re: carers.
- Communications campaign across health, social care and other services to build a “think carer” approach including when supporting cared for – helping them to suitably recognise and signpost carers appropriately.
- Explore opportunities to share emergency planning information between organisations with a view to supporting a more co-ordinated, informed approach in the event of an emergency.
- Review current day opportunities and respite options to identify gaps and identify actions required to remedy.





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- Review current licensing arrangements with taxi providers in the City with a view to ensuring there is a sufficient supply of disability friendly taxis with suitable equipment and driver training.

