

Hertfordshire Multi-Agency Carers Strategy, as at 31 January 2003

1. Background

The Strategy was designed to incorporate all the main headlines raised in consultations with carers, the Carers' Topic Group, the Hertfordshire Carers' Strategy Group (carers and professionals from a range of agencies) the *Black and Minority Ethnic Carers' Forum* and by *Listening to Carers Days* etc

2. Endorsement and Action Plans

To date the Strategy has been endorsed by:

- Carers' Topic Group, ACS Scrutiny Committee and HCC Cabinet
- Herts and Beds Strategic Health Authority
- Some Primary Care Trusts
- Department for Work and Pensions (locally now a member of the Strategy Group) are consulting nationally on how to sign up

County Action Plans are being prepared by:

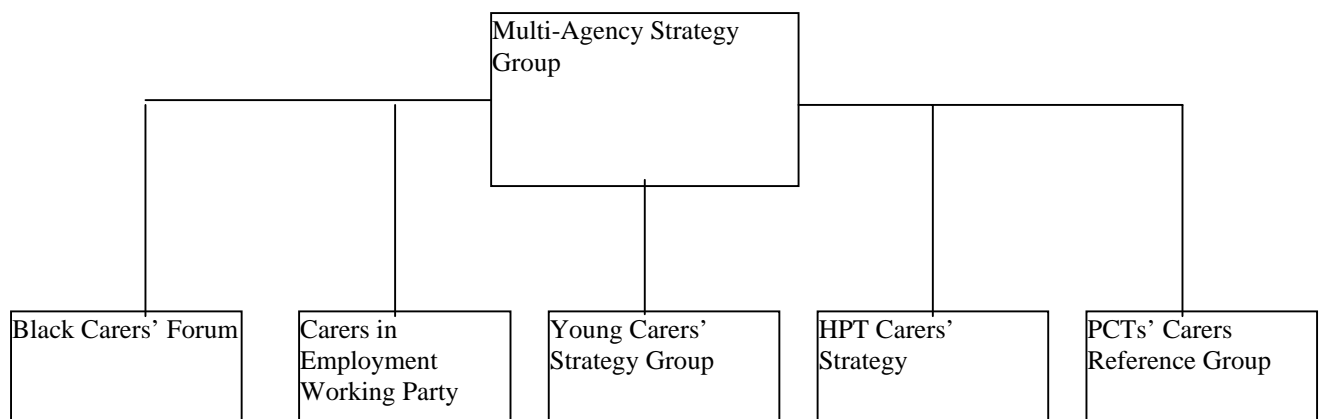
- CSF (young carers) – second Action Plan for 03-04 in draft
- Hertfordshire NHS Partnership Trust – in draft
- ACS for March 2003

Local Action Plans are being prepared by:

- Hertsmere PCT, ACS, HPT
- Watford and Three Rivers PCT and EPD Team
- Stevenage and North Herts PCT and EPD Team
- Royston and Bishops Stortford PCT and Carers in Herts

Discussions with other PCTs are under way and the county conference money is being made available to them to support carer involvement in local strategy development.

3. Working Groups/Reference Group under the Strategy



4. Other Standing Groups relating to above:

EPD

Carers Co-ordinators Meeting (From Jan 2002)
Team Managers (Carers Lead) Meeting (From September 2001)

LD

Carers Leads in Community Learning Disability Teams (from March 2003)
Valuing People County-wide Carers Group commissioned through Carers in Herts

MH

Mental Health Carers' Assessors (HPT)

5. National Involvement

Caroline Tapster is now carers lead for the Association of Directors of Social Services and chairs the Carers Reference Group, with representation from all key national carers' voluntary organisations.

DH have included HCC's Carers' Assessment Checklist and HPT's Carer's Plan as part of the toolkit in their publication: *Discharge from Hospital: Pathway, Process and Practice, January 2003.*

ACS received a visit from Audit Commission in January to discuss good practice and limiting factors in current legislation and policy as part of a research programme into supporting carers of older people. Publication this autumn.

6. Areas to be addressed in ACS Action Plan 2003/04

- In the light of Fair Access to Care, the Practice Development Programme and the need to clarify strategies around the prevention of hospital admission and promoting independence, it is time for work to be done on the levels of carer support we should be aiming for in Hertfordshire over the next 3 years. New flexibilities in Carers Grant and those flowing from Excellent Authority Status mean that, so long as we can guarantee the breaks market is developing as we would wish with adequate outcomes, we could put some of this money into other types of carers' support infrastructure
- Proposals are being developed for devolving control of flexible breaks pots and carers services pilot monies to teams to help them devise their own flexible solutions to support carers. Cabinet will be asked in the Service Plan to endorse this approach

7. Progress on the Key Themes, as at 31 January 2003

7.1 Information

- Carers' information is routinely sent out by the CSC Fulfilment Team. *Support to Carers* and *Benefits for Carers* Leaflets have been updated
- Training for Capita staff and Client Services staff around carers' issues is planned
- Herts Direct now has 24 pages of carers' information directly accessible by the public (474 entries)
- Connect (HCC Intranet) now has 29 pages of carers' information (561 entries) and the new Guidance can be accessed there by staff
- Welwyn Hatfield PCT's web-site describes what each practice offers in the way of support to carers (eg fast-tracking appointments)
- Carers in Herts information services are linking into Older People's Best Value Review Hypothesis on Information
- Carers in Herts provide their quarterly newsletter to 9,000 people. They provide information and support to 3,000 carers and 500 professionals per year
- Of carers surveyed on their experience of assessment in two EPD areas last year, the number saying they gained useful information as one of the key benefits of their assessment rose from 52%, before the introduction of the carers' co-ordinator posts in EPD, to 67% following their introduction.

7.2 Recognition

All aspects of the Strategy relate to this theme. Some key developments in hand are:

- A complete revision of all guidance on carers, from referral to case closure and recording was issued in November 2002. Well received by practitioners it is available to them electronically
- Work to develop better access for carers to adult education through promotional work including a carers' concession policy is being discussed with CSF with a view to piloting in one area in September 2003
- Joint training for EPD and PCT staff has been provided in all 7 ACS areas with central training events provided in ACS core programme to ensure all staff have access – very positive feedback received
- Work with Carers in Herts under way to develop Carers as Trainers Panel to support training on carers' assessments
- MH teams' training is being addressed under new carers strategy in HPT
- All Community Learning Disabilities Teams have been visited to pick up their issues around carers' assessments in preparation for training in the summer. Carers leads are now identified in CLDTs and will meet together as in EPD to develop the carers' agenda
- PCTs vary considerably in their engagement with county strategy. Negotiations around devolving the county carer conference budget to them where they are working in partnership with ACS has had some impact
- Sarah Pickup has written to the Strategic Health Authority seeking their greater involvement in the strategy, especially in regard to providing overview of consistency of PCT approach to carers

7.3 Time Off

- Carers Grant spend on breaks for carers is on target at £1.6m, creating more and more flexible breaks, allowing direct access and culturally appropriate services to be developed. Minor changes to the plan for 2002/03 presented to Topic Group and Cabinet are detailed in a separate report
- Carers Grant has been extended to 2006 and will be more than doubling. More flexible conditions are expected, but anyway as an excellent authority HCC will be able to be more flexible in the way it spends the grant in the future
- Discussions with teams around devolving responsibility for flexible pots for breaks and carers services are in hand with a view to local flexible solutions for carers being facilitated from April 2003, with an overview from the centre
- Work with Crossroads to enhance the capacity of their scheme county-wide continues. In 2002-03 Crossroads is expected to deliver 95% of its increased target service, providing 16,159 hours of breaks, an increase of 36% on last year
- A new live intra-net-based booking system for older people's block contract respite should be implemented from June 2003. This is an important first step in making respite directly book-able by carers and users and providing the basis for a voucher scheme for breaks. In the meantime it will make it easier for care managers to make better use of existing resources with much reduced bureaucracy and effort
- The Turning Point service in Watford is now supporting 16 mental health carers with flexible breaks
- EOD project in Dacorum provides support to 10 carers of people with early onset dementia. A County Conference was held in January to promote development of work with this very marginalised group for whom mainstream services are currently inappropriate
- 58% of EPD carers surveyed recently had felt able to talk about their need for a break (compared to 19% in the sample of carers assessed before the introduction of the new structures)

7.4 Emotional support

- A range of support exists in the voluntary sector, most notably through Carers in Herts and Age Concern. About 40 isolated carers receive calls from Carers in Herts Link-Line
- Examples of emotional support individuals sometimes receive through the carers' services pilot include: reiki, massage, aromatherapy, college and other courses. Where particular issues have been causing carers acute stress we have helped with practical tasks to alleviate this, including decorating, plumbing and gardening
- Early Onset Dementia project provides group support to carers as well as one to one work with the service user

- Assessment, when properly done, can provide real benefits in this area. Of carers assessed since the new structures were introduced in EPD in St Albans and Dacorum, 67% felt they had been able to discuss what worried them most (as compared to 38% in the sample before the new structures were in place)
- Emotional support to carers in mental health needs to be linked to NHS Plan targets around 14 carers support workers

7.5 Training and support to care

- Events and courses for carers of those with strokes and dementia have been organised in the past but need to be offered more pro-actively
- Age Concern have continued to provide learning experiences for carers in relaxation techniques along with a break through the Carers Grant
- Action research on what carers want to learn has been carried out by the University of Herts and Carers in Herts has been evaluated with involvement of carers who participated. Predominantly the course focuses on emotional support needs. Adult Education and Adult and Community Learning are exploring accreditation as a possible way forward
- The Health and Safety Officer (Moving and Handling) based within the Policy and Performance Unit has since June provided professional advice to some 12 carers to support their caring role. This service is accessed through care managers in complex cases, in simpler cases carers should be instructed by the OT

7.6 Financial security

- Research shows that 18.4% of HCC staff are carers. A *carers in employment* working group now meets with PCTs and HPT following the event held in June 2002 to improve awareness and take-up of flexible employment practices to support carers. Corporate Personnel have launched the Carewise Leaflet and will publish the Flexible Working Directory in April 2003 and a second event is planned in June 2003
- The Money Advice Unit continues to provide support to carers through its specialist project. A separate report is attached.

7.7 A voice

- Consultation with carers on the role of CLDTs is taking place in each quadrant in March/April
- Watford and Three Rivers PCT hosts a regular carers' health forum attended by EPD
- North Herts and Stevenage PCT in association with ACS and Carers in Hertfordshire held an event attended by 60+ carers in North Herts
- Speakeasy day for young carers to speak to health and other professionals April 2003 (PCTs and Carers in Hertfordshire with Carers Grant funding)
- During February, Quality Monitoring Officers are interviewing carers who have benefited from the carers services pilot, and staff who have accessed

this money on their behalf, prior to recommendations being made for roll-out of this flexibility

- Carers are making use of the new *Having Your Say* forms to provide us with feedback both on the work of assessment teams and on services provided
- Carers in Herts are organising a Carers Participation Event in April 2003
- Work with Carers in Herts on involving carers in monitoring the LD Joint Investment Plan has produced a pro forma based on the carers' compass
- All MH Local Implementation Teams now have carers involved. The HPT carers' strategy is looking to involve these in a county process around the overall strategy

7.8 Quality Services

- In EPD 5 out of 7 areas currently have carers' co-ordinators in post, working to team managers with a carers' lead to ensure improvements in practice and recording and increase numbers of carers' assessments and most CMHTs have carers' assessors
- Only 29% of carers surveyed prior to the introduction of the new carers' structures in EPD felt their situation had changed as a result of our assessment. This figure increased to 83% in the sample since the new structures were introduced
- Audit of files also has shown an improvement in recording of work with carers
- SSI recommendations that more separate assessments were carried out for carers of older people are already being addressed through the appointment of carers' co-ordinators
- Survey of the carers' services pilot being carried out in February 2003 should provide useful understanding of a more outcome focused approach to service provision

7.9 Equity of access and appropriate support

- The Black Carers Forum is meeting with the National Black Carers' Workers network in February to identify next steps
- Work is planned in association with Team Managers (Carers) and Team Managers (Equalities) to look at further Black Carers Events for Carers Week 2003
- An ethnic minority sub-group of the Customer Service Centre Service Improvement Group fed in black carers' concerns around silence on the line. Because it was confusing people with language difficulties this has now been replaced by music
- A revised young carers' strategy is being led by CSF to ensure these children get the support they need and a new guide for working with young carers has been available in draft since October 2002
- An agency care worker has been attached to Asian Lunch-clubs in Watford funded out of the grant to provide care within context of linguistic and cultural appropriateness

- Asian respite beds in Watford have not been developed as envisaged. Further work building on local and regional skills and good practice is planned

7. 10 Quality management information about carers

- Under-recording of carers' assessments is a concern. Recent detailed work with Management Information Unit is addressing this and should ensure that the Performance Indicator (D42) is in an appropriate shape by reporting time to DH (May 2003). A sample of 952 carers (all client groups) who are deemed to be substantial and regular carers but who are not recorded as having had assessments, is being investigated
- A new carers' screen has been set up on SSIS along with a new report to download so that managers can identify which staff are carrying out/recording carers' assessments
- Carers' data requirements are being built into the new electronic recording system
- New Census data published 13 February identifies the carer population of Hertfordshire by Districts. The overall total is 96,190 of whom 23,956 care for more than 20 hours per week (of whom 15,507 care for 50 hours plus). There are also 72,234 people caring for up to 20 hours, some of whom would be eligible for support depending on the impact of their role upon them. Further analysis is possible.

Tim Anfilogoff, Policy Manager Users and Carers, 14 February 2003