

Hertfordshire Multi-Agency Carers Strategy, as at 1 September 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 (SHA)
- Primary Care Trusts
- Department for Work and Pensions were consulting nationally on how to sign up, but are not currently represented

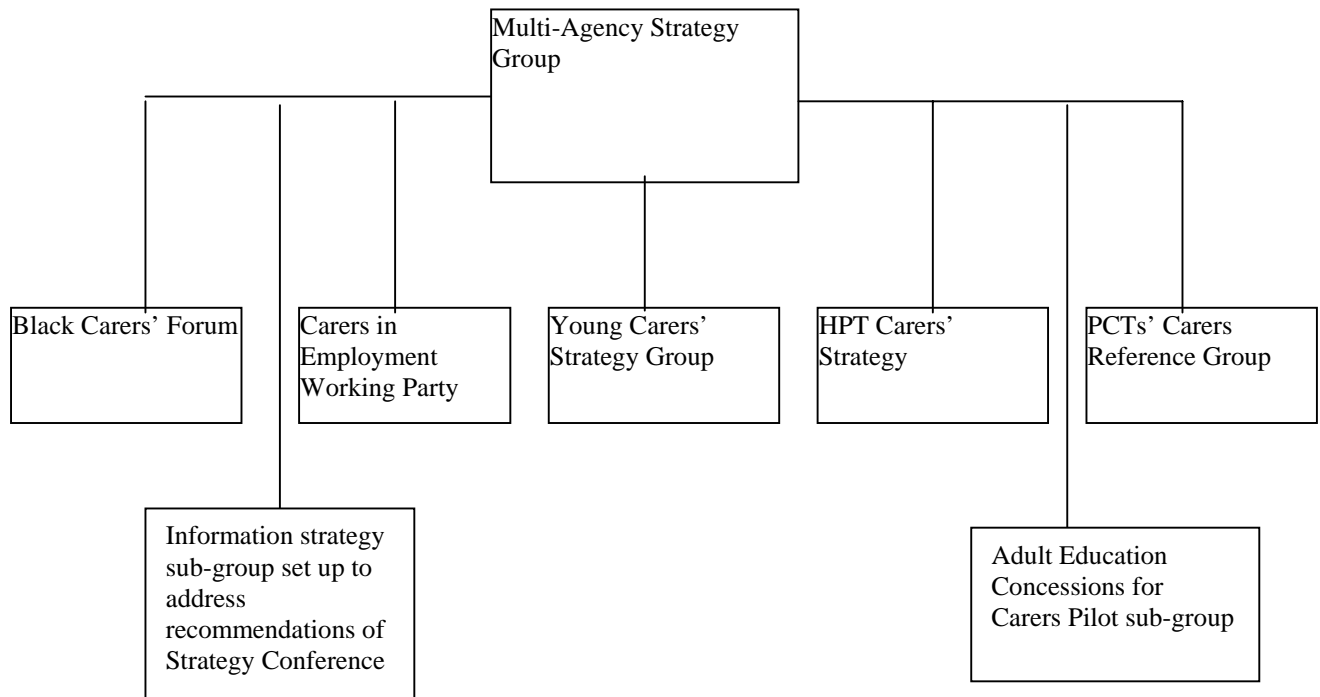
County Action Plans are being prepared by:

- CSF (young carers) – second Action Plan for 03-04 finalised
- Hertfordshire NHS Partnership Trust – launched June 2003

ACS continues to co-ordinate the strategy overall. Recent **partnership developments** include:

- SHA has now undertaken to convene and chair the PCTs' Carers Reference Group as part of monitoring and performance managing PCT work around carers to ensure profile, equity and consistency
- Work around standard tools to help local carers action planning groups to involve carers, monitor performance, measure progress, link key organisations and plan ahead
- At the Carers' Strategy Conference in June 2003 only two PCTs had managed to complete the audit process relating to the strategy. The SHA has now taken a lead in getting all PCTs to do so
- A Carers in Employment Conference (also June 2003) aimed particularly at HCC and NHS staff has raised the profile of this issue and come up with a new agenda for further development
- Local Action Plans are being developed in all PCT areas and Carers Grant consultation monies are being made available to ensure involvement of carers locally
- Publication of available Carers Grant resources (04-05) in HCC Prospectus with new priorities to ensure increase in carers' support as well as breaks. Designed to make full use of new flexibilities available to HCC as an Excellent Authority
- Commencement on work of developing a Joint (with Health) Carers' Commissioning Strategy for 05-06

3. Working Groups/Reference Groups under the Strategy



4. Other Standing Groups relating to above:

EPD

Carers Co-ordinators Meeting (Since Jan 2002)
Team Managers (Carers Lead) Meeting (Since 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

Sarah Pickup succeeds Caroline Tapster as 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.

Following publication of a report evaluating the Carers Services Pilot, the National Local Government Network has interviewed Tim Anfilogoff and

Angela Cannon about HCC's Carers' Services under the Carers and Disabled Children Act as a model of providing greater user choice.

The Audit Commission were very positive about the contribution ACS had made to their research programme into supporting carers of older people. Publication this autumn (see Briefing 10 Summer 03)

6. Progress on the Key Themes, as at September 2003

6.1 Information

- *Frequently asked questions* (FAQs) are being drafted with input from front-line staff and *Carers in Herts* information officers to improve quality of information and referral process for carers through the CSC
- Client Services staff have had training sessions around carers' issues and CSC Call-Handlers will be trained on the new FAQs
- The Carers' Strategy Information sub-group will audit the quality and comprehensiveness of Herts Direct carers' information so it can underpin a multi-agency carers information strategy, using a simple county sign-posting tool which can be tailored for local use
- A *Carers who work for HCC* web-page is planned, incorporating feedback from the conference, encouraging take-up of Lifewise flexibilities and encouraging comments from staff

6.2 Recognition

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

- The word 'carer' needs to be reserved for the meaning in the Carers Strategy. Following comments from carers, the Single Assessment Process glossary will now define care-worker, home-carers etc in a way which clarifies the distinction between them and 'carers'. Carers UK is currently conducting a 'Reclaim the Name' Campaign, addressing this issue with a range of organisations including with Registration Bodies. There are implications for Herts Direct Carers Pages
- Practice Development Programme measures include a focus on carers' practice and their experience of services, using *Having Your Say* forms as one indicator and 'carers' practice' sessions are being held in each area as part of roll-out
- Stevenage has been selected as the location for piloting a carers' concession policy for Adult Learning, linked to relevant breaks services. First meeting of sub-group September 2003
- Training is now planned for CLDTs on carers' issues for October, tailored to the requirements expressed by the new carers' leads meetings
- EPD Reviewing Officers are receiving training in September on carers' assessments and recording (see also below Management Information). There are some 9,000 reviews per year (non-residential) and to date it has not been feasible to record carers' assessments on SSIS at this point
- Carers' Support through primary care is now an advertised priority in the HCC Prospectus for funding and this is likely to give primary care an

incentive to carry out National Strategy initiatives such as identifying tagging of carers' notes. This should help with the whole agenda of finding 'hidden carers'

6.3 Time Off

- Carers Grant spend in 02-03 was £1.58m on breaks for carers (including the permitted roll-over of £79k). This equates to £1.1m on providing 2,512 carers with 19,152 breaks of varying types. £318k provided breaks for parents of disabled children, or activities for young carers.
- Last year Crossroads schemes delivered an average increase in hours of 20% against a 19% target. An additional £12k has been allocated to developing rural breaks.
- A new live intra-net-based booking system for older people's block contract respite will be implemented from 15 September 2003 to help maximise use of this valuable resource and minimise bureaucracy. This is an important first step in making respite directly book-able by carers, following an assessment of their annual requirements
- Officers of ACS and CSF, lawyers and Carers in Herts met in August to evaluate final guidance from DH on Vouchers for breaks under the Carers and Disabled Children Act. The possibility of piloting a scheme with carers of older people with mental illness is being investigated.
- Early Onset Dementia schemes giving carers break are now operational in Dacorum, St Albans, SW Herts. Development work is happening in Welwyn Hatfield and North Herts and Stevenage
- Harpenden Mencap's two shopping projects are proving a success with users (helping in the shop and giving carers a break) and with older people whose shopping is done by adults with learning disabilities
- Club Italia is helping Italian and other ethnic groups of carers to get a break through informal day care and access other key services
- Connect now provides practitioners with a hot link from the guidance on carers section to examples of uses of Carers Grant (for flexible breaks and carers' services)

6.4 Emotional support

- Carers' Services under the Act continue to provide carers with practical and emotional support to reduce their stress. Examples can be found as above bullet
- 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
- As highlighted to Carers' Topic Group in February, new flexibilities under the Carers' Grant mean it is now possible to give this area of work greater priority from 04-05 and it has been included as a priority in the HCC prospectus

6.5 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
- As highlighted to Carers' Topic Group in February, new flexibilities under the Carers Grant mean it is now possible to give this area of work greater priority from 04-05 and it has been included as a priority in the HCC prospectus

6.6 Financial security

- Corporate Personnel have launched the Carewise Leaflet published the Flexible Working Directory in April 2003 which should help carers to balance work and employment
- A second Carers in Employment event June 2003 was very well attended by carers from HCC and the NHS and a lot of messages about getting the practice more in line with the theory were voiced
- ACS will continue to co-ordinate a multi-agency strategic group to look at the personnel issues around supporting carers at work
- A carers only group will be set up following the conference, with access to admin support to allow carers who work for HCC to set their own agenda and feed into the above group and other groups
- The Money Advice Unit continues to provide support to carers through its specialist project. [A separate report is attached.]

6.7 A voice

- Consultation with carers on the role of CLDTs took place in each quadrant in March/April and leaflets responding to their requests for better information about how teams work are being prepared
- During February, Quality Monitoring Officers interviewed 10 carers who have benefited from the carers' services pilot, and 22 staff who have accessed this money on their behalf. The service was welcomed by all and it was particularly good to note that staff and carers had worked together to design the support that gave the best outcome
- 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
- Over the first quarter of 03-04, 18 out of the 20 respondents (90%) who identified themselves as carers were satisfied that ACS had understood their needs and concerns at assessment, as compared to 76 out the 83 respondents (92%) who had identified themselves as users of services
- Discussions are in hand with other agencies about consistency in expenses for supporting carers and users to take part in consultation etc. Currently ACS follows the HCC Corporate Consultation standards, but carers have been confused by different agencies adopting different

policies around expenses, with differing rates. On agenda of Multi-agency strategy group November 2003

- All MH Local Implementation Teams now have carers involved. The HPT carers' strategy is looking to involve these in a county process around their overall strategy

6.8 Quality Services

- In EPD 7 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
- Control of flexible breaks pots and carers' services pilot monies has now been devolved to EPD teams to help them devise their own flexible local solutions to support carers. MH and LD monies should be transferred to teams from April 2004
- 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 - targets for additional carers' assessments per team are being set as part of improving the DH Performance Indicator
- A new role of Hospital Carers' co-ordinator has been devised to help ensure effective carers' assessments at discharge, and follow up in the community where appropriate. Building Capacity Monies have been secured for three 20 hours posts, (advertised in Community Care, week ending 12 September)

6.9 Equity of access and appropriate support

- Funding has been identified from Practice Development Programme funding and Physical Disability and Sensory Services Best Value Review follow up monies, to employ a Black and Minority Ethnic Users and Carers Worker to ensure that users and carers views and experience actively inform ACS' practice. [Members are being asked to commit 20k of next year's grant from grant not advertised in Prospectus]
- This role will facilitate the development of the Black Carers Forum and its local networks, as well as developing a similar users' group
- A very successful Asian Carers' Day, conducted in several languages (English/Gujerati/Hindi/Urdu) was organised by Watford Asian Community Care and ACS for Carers Week
- An ethnic minority sub-group of the Customer Service Centre Service Improvement Group is attempting to address some of the difficulties people whose first language is not English may have accessing services
- The addition of block contract care-workers to the lunch clubs continues to allow more disabled elders to attend

6. 10 Quality management information about carers

- ACS recorded just under 3,500 carers' assessments in 02-03, despite evidence that actually considerably more carers are having their needs discussed and worked with by teams and services
- Census figures indicate that our target group (substantial and regular carers) is probably of the order of about 30,000 – though many of them will not want input from social care
- Under-recording of carers' assessments has been a concern, and an action plan is in place including targets for EPD teams for carers' assessments
- a new paper recording system for recording carers assessments undertaken at review has been designed (this is not possible on SSIS for technical reasons) and all EPD reviewing officers are being offered training on carers' assessments during September

Tim Anfilogoff, Policy Manager Users and Carers, 4 September 2003