

CARERS IN DEVON DEVELOPMENT GROUP

ACTION NOTES - MONDAY 15TH JANUARY 2007

Present

Rowena Lane, Lynsey Self,
Denise MacDonald
Carole Stoye, Nicki Ruane
June Wilkins, Sue Hurley
Trish Whitfield, Rosemary Whitehurst

Apologies

Justin Hayden, Geoff King
Lesley Willmott, Sue White
Debbie Shamroth, Sonia Barton

1. Previous minutes
 - a. Rosemary is now involved with carers training around contact assessments at Care Direct following request from Nina.
 - b. Referrals from Care Direct are still very low and uncertainty expressed about whether training had taken place.
Action Nina to report to March meeting as previously agreed.
 - c. **Action Geoff** – Has contact been made with WCAS?
2. Eoghan Kelly came to talk about the Devon Training Consortium, which is made up of public, private and voluntary orgs and acts a sign posting and facilitation service for care training. He was keen to involve carer workers and carers. Anyone using the service must be a member. Would individual carers/workers have to become members or could the Carers Link(s) organisation be the member on their behalf?

Eoghan wanted someone from the group to join their steering group to look at the issues including membership costs. As it linked with other work Lesley was nominated to take the initial lead supported by Nicki.

Action Lesley to make contact with Eoghan.

3. Sadie Clark came and introduced herself and her current role of getting Take a Break off of the ground. She confirmed that carers in East and Okehampton would begin using the service from 29/1/07.

The third set of interviews for the development manager post for TaB is this Friday. A delay in this appointment and other circumstances has meant there has been some slippage but plans remain for the entire county to go live from 1/4/07. Local SSD managers remain responsible for any transfer of current services.

4. Issues around ex-carers were discussed and the following was agreed;
 - Ex carers should be respected and retained and their knowledge and experience used wherever possible.
 - Carers would be removed from the Carers Link members section when they stop caring and consequently would not be eligible for services such as the flexible breaks grant.
 - Changes need to be made to the database so that carers information can be kept, and produced as a list of Ex Carers including triggers for review.
Action Phil to check progress with Paul
 - Ex carers would continue to receive newsletters and invitations to events, training etc, but current carers would take priority as resources are scarce.
 - There would be **no artificial time limit** when ex carers would be forced to stop receiving news letters, invitations etc. It was felt that carers will naturally withdraw over time as their life moves on.
 - Positive support and training opportunities should be developed for ex carers.
 - Need to confirm eligibility for Carer chairs in light of above.
5. The Carers Transport Workshop was discussed. Whilst this was positively received, concerns were strongly expressed that it was taking place in the school holidays which would preclude parent carers, who have many concerns about this issue.
Action Phil to alert Geoff to these concerns. All reported that to catch newsletters etc. confirmation of date and venue would be needed by end of January.
6. The Flexible Breaks Grants was discussed with a view to agreeing the common data to be captured before the review meeting on Feb 5th. The group felt disinclined to do this task!! However they felt it should be kept obvious and simple such as;
 - Do you have a panel protocol in place and if so what is it?
 - Who makes up your panel?
 - What have been the strengths of the process?
 - What have been the weaknesses and suggestions to improve this?
 - What has carer feedback been?

- Any other comments

Action agreed – Carers Link workers would invite forum chairs and any other carers involved in the process as appropriate to the meeting.

7. AOB

- Next CiDDG meeting on 19th March.
Action all - Can everyone diary this as a full day. It is hoped that new Central Carers Link manager will be in post by this time and therefore a review of this meeting can take place.
- Phil requested that he be sent any statistical information the Links have captured in relation to the take up of the free benefits and Devon Link subscription.
Action all Link workers
- Phil requested that Link workers identify a carer(s) who has benefited from the Flexible Breaks Grant and who would undertake a Devon Link article.
Action Link Workers to contact Lesley directly
- Rural Carers Project. The group had concerns about the questionnaire and would like to know how many went out to carers and how many have been returned
Action Phil to request from Jo
- With Sonia off sick there were concerns that no one was leading on this bit of work and so; had the cathedral been booked; who was on the working group; what was the budget etc.
Action Phil to discuss with Geoff
- Concern was raised about the position of the County Carers Steering Group in relation to meetings with David Johnstone (DJ) and chairs, and the possibility of a Carers Partnership Board.

Phil stated that the meetings with DJ had been a fortuitous event which had been built on and led to thinking about a Board as a way forward. (The County Steering Group has agreed a Board in principal with a broad outline of how this might work.) Any way forward would however need to come as an outcome of the review of the generic involvement framework and subsequently be ratified by the County Steering Group. (Geoff has subsequently agreed this position)

The group stated that they had not been prepared to forward names to Jo from carers not involved with the involvement framework because of concerns with the questionnaire and what might be asked of them.

- The group had significant concerns that all of their contracts end in a couple of months and that no one has met with them to explain what is happening in relation to their jobs and the contract. Information such as the final specification has not been circulated or discussed.
Action Phil to raise urgently