

COUNTY CARERS FORUM 13TH MARCH 2006

Questions from Chairs of Locality Forums.

	QUESTION	SERVICE AREA	LOCALITY
1	Carers have great problems with the various social service agencies e.g. mental health, childrens services, learning disabilities etc., which apparently work in isolation – getting them to communicate and work together, particularly, when one or more members of a family have specific needs. How can it be ensured that all of their family issues are addressed by effective collaboration between all agencies?	All Carers/Services	Exeter
	<p><i>RESPONSE</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are parents involved in protocol? - Check parent and children with Trust Board - Need to ensure children's transition protocols - need to work across service areas. - Use PACR Service - Use new meetings with generic Carers Forum 		
2	There are great concerns over the possible closures of Residential Homes and re-arrangement of Day Care Services. Many Carers rely on the availability of this form of respite care. Carers understand that the homes concerned need a great deal of modernisation to bring them to the correct standard but are finding it difficult to envisage the type of services that will be available to them in the event of closure. Many do not see how community based services would be able to give the same type of constant care. Carers are concerned that any home-based service will rely upon many trained, quality staff. At present there seems to be a shortage generally in good care staff and agencies. Can you reassure carers that at least the same amount of availability and quality of service will be provided and how you intend to address the possible problem of a shortfall in the service provision?	Adult Services	Teignbridge
	<p><i>RESPONSE</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCC has reviewed Older Peoples services – not enough for EMI and nursing care. • Developed Plan and Strategy – working on for last three years. Develop Community Resource Centres with rehabilitation and reablement. • DCC should not be providing 'ordinary' residential care – sites to be passed to 		

	<p><i>independent sector or developed into CRCs or developed into extra care sheltered housing with regard to current development with four residential homes, not about reducing spend, but using resource more flexibility. Proposals coming forward on 21st March and hope to agree imaginative proposals in conjunction with community.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sonia Barton asked if Locality Forum could be involved more consistently – David confirmed.</i> • <i>Mr John Crowter-Jones felt needed more positive PR to have more accurate representation. David accepted.</i> • <i>Mr Goad – concerned about information and communication re Barnhaven, Mid Devon. Mr Goad offered himself and Mid Devon Forum as communication route.</i> 		
3	<p>At some stage during a carers role, some carers will find that they are unable to continue to care due to ill health, old age or other circumstances. This can cause great distress as to what the future may hold regarding ongoing care for their cared for. What choices are available to carers who may find themselves in this situation and how do the needs/choice of the carer get addressed whilst taking into account the needs/choice of the cared for?</p>	Adult Services	East Devon
4	<p>Press reports in late summer last year indicated that with new referrals, only personal care tasks will now be authorised and shopping, cleaning etc should instead be carried out by relatives/friends/voluntary organisations.</p> <p>Most carers want to and are able to provide personal care for their cared-for, other domestic tasks such as cleaning, can often become a big problem due to lack of time and energy because of this. This can develop into a carer feeling that they can no longer continue to care purely because they did not get this type of support when needed. How flexible will social services be about providing this form of support in the light of the proposed change over to community-based services, and can you advise if there has been a change of policy?</p>	Adult Services	Mid Devon
	<p><i>RESPONSE TO 3 & 4</i> <i>Contingency planning will be specific element of new Carer Assessment to cover this type of eventuality.</i></p>		

	<p><i>Assessments are completed on an individual basis and guided by Fair Access to Care and the eligibility criteria – this will then determine what support services need to be commissioned in order to support both the carer and cared for person living at home.</i></p> <p><i>Sam Newman talked about LD – some families able to think more definitely re the future.</i></p> <p><i>Suggestion to link NHS PALS Service with SSD – to discuss at meeting with Director and Carer Chairs. (now arranged for 25th May 2006)</i></p> <p><i>Wendy Protheroe from Mid Devon PCT said that PALS are supporting carers in taking up issues.</i></p>		
5	<p>In Devon, we have a unique situation where a lot of carers are living in rural locations and may therefore become very isolated, with very poor support available to them. The extent of services can be dependant on where you live rather than your needs. How will Social Services address this problem of providing high-level care and support so that carers in rural areas can enjoy the same services as those in more densely populated parts of the Region?</p>	All Carers/Services	South Hams & West Devon
	<p>RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Geoff King put emphasis on ensuring equity of access in rural areas because of historical differences – More consistent Countywide approaches being developed. Need to gain full benefit of Rural Carer Project into mainstream health and social care services.</i> 		

Individual Carer Questions

	QUESTION	SERVICE AREA	LOCALITY
1	<p>What is the NHS doing to encourage GPs /GP practices to “think carer” and to signpost carers to appropriate services?</p> <p>Why can’t all carers actually get the ‘flu jab they are all supposed to be offered?</p>	Health Service	Teignbridge
	<p>RESPONSE - WENDY PROTHEROE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>White Paper mentions carers fifteen times in chapter 5.</i> <i>Project work in Mid Devon for people with learning disabilities offering health screening.</i> <i>Flu jabs should be offered by all GP’s – not happening comprehensively ye but working</i> 		

	<i>on it.</i>		
2	We understand that the way FACS has been carried out in Devon is illegal. Will assessment now all be re-done using the correct format for those who have already been assessed and changes made to Devon's FACS to make it legal?	Adult Services	North Devon
	<p>RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>FACS – “illegality” is based around wordings of criteria, but in substance means very little.</i> • <i>New clients will have new wordings and reviews of existing clients will use new wording.</i> • <i>Recent legal judgement meant that exact words of guidance must be used by all Local Authorities.</i> • <i>Dinny Cope concerned that annual reviews are not happening comprehensively. Sam Newman acknowledged this situation partly due to greater time commitment based around “My Life, My Plan”.</i> • <i>Concern re individual issue re Risk Assessment – to follow up with personal response</i> 		
3	Do Carers have an automatic right to a minimum of four weeks respite and if the cared for is too ill to leave can respite be given at home, overnight by Devon County Council? No grey areas please!	Adult Services	Teignbridge
	<p>RESPONSE</p> <p><i>An individual assessment through Fair Access to Care and Eligibility Criteria will always need to be completed and this will highlight how frequent respite needs to be. Considerations of how respite is to be given / received will be taken into account through the assessment process.</i></p>		
4	How is Social Services going to plan for emergencies e.g. carer hospitalisation, to enable the carer and cared for to feel confident about the possibility of such an emergency?	Adult Services	South Hams/West Devon
	<p>RESPONSE</p> <p><i>This will be picked up within the new carers assessment form under the heading of “Contingency Planning”. This will enable issues to be highlighted in an emergency situation and what needs to happen.</i></p>		
5	What extra costs will carers incur as a result of the Modernisation Programme, in particular the possible closure of residential homes which are currently providing residential respite?	Adult Services	Mid Devon

	<i>RESPONSE</i> <i>There will be no change to the existing way of determining how much someone pays for residential respite, which is determined through an individual financial assessment of the cared for person.</i>		
6	Can more money be found for the Citizens Advice Bureau? If you just turn up there is a long wait and arranging appointments is difficult. This would also relieve pressure on MP's constituency offices.	All Carers/.Services	Exeter
	<i>RESPONSE</i> <i>Citizens Advice Bureau are funded through a joint arrangement between the Devon District Councils and the County Council Chief Executive's Department. The issue of ensuring an adequate response to carers queries is being raised with the Joint Monitoring Group</i>		
7	What support is there available for carers who suddenly find they no longer have a caring role, due to bereavement or when their cared for goes into residential care? What help is there particularly for those of working age to support them in the few weeks or months after their role is finished, to help them find work or support? Or is it a case of no longer required, so no longer able to access help!	All Carers/Services	Teignbridge
	<i>RESPONSE</i> <i>The transition from being a carer to being an ex-carer can be a difficult one. The local Carers Links continue to offer membership to ex-carers, who can often offer time to take on representative and other work which they couldn't as a carer. However, a more structured approach to supporting carers through this time is needed and will be considered in the development of the new arrangements for a more County wide focus for the Carers Links</i>		
8	Some learning disabled people need a competent carer in a nearby room every night – for example if they are epileptic. Dispersal into scattered independent living situations is clearly uneconomical for this group, the number of whom, I believe, is not known. When and if data that will enable district councils and providers to plan for future need is assembled, what forms of accommodation will the county council approve for development?	Learning Disability	North Devon
	<i>RESPONSE</i> <i>With effective use of risk-management and development of 'assistive technology', alternative</i>		

	<i>methods of monitoring people has been achieved without compromising safety. Where the need for either waking night staff or 'sleep-in' services remains, this may continue to be a barrier to providing affordable single tenancies, however, shared properties with 2 or more are still proving to be practical. We have a group of managers from across Devon addressing the whole issue of 'accommodation and support' , and we've been encouraged by some national 'good practice' in providing individualised supported living for people with high-support needs. We anticipate that future housing needs will continue to be through a 'range of options' e.g. single and multi-tenancies, and from ordinary housing stock to adapted properties .</i>		
9	How can Devon County Council demonstrate to carers how it is responding to the outcomes of consultation?	Learning Disability	North Devon
	<i>RESPONSE At present we attempt to use forums such as the Partnership Board and carers groups to engage in dialogue, provide reports and information. Our main activity here is probably individual strategies and initiatives where we would seek to state 'this is what we plan to do' and then report if we've done it or not. We would not always be in a position to demonstrate how we've carried out the wishes of any one group following a consultation, but would strive to give a 'justifiable position' where we've gone against peoples views. Would be pleased to hear from carers if they have ideas on this.</i>		
10	What qualifications do managers have to enable an understanding of the complexities of learning disability?	Learning Disability	North Devon
	<i>RESPONSE A major benefit of having established our 'Learning Disability Partnership' is that we have multi-disciplinary teams that draw on qualification requirements of nursing, social work, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, psychology, speech and language therapy. In addition there are staff with NVQ qualifications relating to health and social care, as well as management qualifications. We also have a number of managers with masters degrees. Additionally in the case of independent service providers, there are very clear requirements of qualifications of managers (and staff) monitored via CSCI</i>		
11	How can Devon County Council respond to the needs of people with learning disabilities with complex needs who are not offered a building based service?	Learning Disability	North Devon

	<p>How is the modernisation programme going to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Benefit adults with profound learning disabilities? ii. Provide stimulus for all people with learning disabilities? 		
	<p><i>RESPONSE</i></p> <p><i>I Some buildings based service will continue but will seek to provide integrated opportunities where possible to give more options and variety.</i></p> <p><i>li Individualised approaches and PCP will help focus specific activity for individuals – the challenge remains to make best use of limited resources.</i></p>		
12	<p>Following the closure of traditional day service, how will Devon County Council prevent all responsibility for day activities falling on carers?</p>	Learning Disability	North Devon
	<p><i>RESPONSE</i></p> <p><i>The changes in day services is essentially a programme of modernisation- doing things differently- rather than closure. We recognise the value of daytime support as a means of helping carers to continue to look after their son / daughter. Any reduction in services have been as an unintended consequence (mainly due to changes implementing 'Fair Access to Care Services' and the impact of staff vacancy freeze late (05- early 06) rather than a general experience.</i></p>		
13	<p>Does the Director of Social Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Believe the Government is genuinely offering choice and improving the lot of disabled people? ii. Believe DCC procedures are adequate to identify needs and provide and monitor services? 	Learning Disability	Mid Devon
	<p><i>RESPONSE</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i) Where we can see more people gaining independence through their own tenancies and employment (as is the case in Devon) this would suggest a clear link to national policy and direction. Of course if we were adequately funded, more could be achieved for more people.</i> <i>ii) Over the years assessment of need has developed considerably, and by increasing Person centred Planning we expect to see more improvement in linking choice and</i> 		

	<i>service outcomes. Monitoring services happens in a number of ways – individual reviews , contract monitoring, CSCI inspections. Developing systems of identifying and monitoring ‘quality’ is something we are looking to improve- including how we engage users and carers in the process.</i>		
14	How will the Direct Payments scheme work for people with a learning disability without placing unacceptable burdens on the carer?	Learning Disability	Mid Devon
	RESPONSE <i>The key term used in the legislation is that such payments should be offered where the individual is both ‘Willing and able’, we cannot force them on to anyone and its part of our job to make sure adequate support is offered . The balance between our continuing requirement to monitor what is still public money and ‘letting go’ is not always straight forward . It has been acknowledged that the administration involved can be too complex, so its important we get that right- especially as we move towards ‘In control’ and individualised funding to create more freedom, autonomy and flexibility on how money is used.</i>		