

SOUTH DEVON CARERS CONSORTIUM
South Hams & West Devon Locality Carers Forum
Summary of meeting – Tuesday 27.02.07

Attendance

5 Carers JB Carer Chair, SueWhite, Carers in Devon Development Worker, Sue Hurley SDCC Carers Link Worker SHWD, Clare Woodend Totnes Caring, Sue Kenyon Dartmouth Caring Assistant Co-Ordinator, Morwenna Mullen Kingsbridge Methodist Church, Jo Wallace Occupational Therapist, Jane Rolfe Living Options Devon, Julia Kelland South Devon Branch Alzheimer's Society, Michael Wright Carers Assessor South Hams, Jo Pickering Rural Carers Project Worker, Clare Webber Community Care Worker West Devon, Jim Mc Cabe Kingsbridge R B L Welfare Secretary/Case Worker, Jenny Store Parent Carers Voice, Jenny Rayner Temporary Administrator SDCC,

Apologies:

4 Carers, Justin Haden Co-Ordinator SDCC, Jackie Milan Learning Disability Carers Worker, Dianne Walton Dartmouth Caring, Phil Dyson, Claudia Benzies Carers One to One Link, Karen Cleave Locality Manager Teignbridge PCT, Giles Gardiner Operations Manager Adult and Community Services – representative sent instead, Wendy Price Locality Manager Adult and Community Services.

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

County Carers Forum Update – Sue White

There was a good mix of carers and organisations who attended this meeting. Sue is to take forward to a meeting with Jennie Stevens the Commissioning Manager issues raised about contingency planning and respite beds.

There is to be a meeting regarding Rural Carers Strategy Transport Co-Ordination on 20th April 07 with rural carers in mind Sue White will attend.

Breaking News about Respite: Recently news items had reported that the government had announced £73,000.00 for Devon to enable respite care in Devon £300,000.00 all client groups. When this was broken down to the actual number of carers needing respite it actually works out at £4 per carer.

Lively debate then ensued from Carers about how year after year they had asked for more respite beds this was still not happening despite repeated requests and representation at many meetings. South Hams they feel is particularly short of beds and the process difficult and does not allow for emergencies.

Update on Carers Assessments: During May and June 2007 there will be a survey of completed Carers' Assessments. The simpler Carers' Assessment Form is now in use as a result of 18 months consultation and workshop will be part of a survey in May and June 2007. Carers feedback was that the original assessment was complex and intrusive.

This new simpler form includes sections on contingency planning. Carers are entitled to a joint assessment or separate. The major change is that Devon County Council now have a duty to inform Carers of their entitlement to an assessment. Previously it was their duty to offer an assessment. They will also have to report annually the number of Carers Assessments undertaken.

Update on Take a Break South Hams Area – Clare Webber

From April 1st in line with the rest of Devon the new Take a Break Scheme will be rolled out across the South Hams. Carers in the designated groups will be entitled to 3 hours per week respite care, which can be accumulated to a maximum of one 12 hour block, at a cost of £2.50 per hour. Carers who are members of the Carers Link will be issued with three months worth of vouchers at a time for their use. Giles Gardiner has sent a letter to all Carers currently using the old system with the contact details of himself, Mike Wright and Clare for any queries or concerns Carers may have.

Carers can access respite care by contacting Sadie at Westbank League of Friends from 1st April 2007. Michael kindly agreed to offer any information if Carers would like to contact him about this new system. Personal Care is included.

Large concerns were raised about how, for Rural Carers, 3 hours was not the same break as for a town or city Carer. By the time they have travelled to their destination or used transport time is up. For a city/town based carer these 3 hours is more time available to the Carer. Carers also raised the issue that in Teignbridge there had been transition arrangements which were not available in South Hams and West Devon.

Carers wondered how they accessed one off respite care – they were informed that in view of budget allocations and to enable a truer picture it is better to apply for the three months worth of vouchers. It will be a direct access and different model of receiving respite. Carers can after these hours are used up for respite and holidays still use Fair Access to Care Systems. It is hoped by Carers that there will be designated worker posts in South Hams and West Devon similar to Torquay to enable understanding and increase take up by carers not only of respite but to increase knowledge of what is available. Sue White will reflect this back as will Clare.

This then led to the discussion of how internet shopping is an identified training need by Carers themselves in rural areas to aid their well being and give them more time. This would also be an asset for Working Carers. There are many charities that can supply reconditioned computers for home use.

Carers Weeks Celebrations 11-17th June 2007 – Theme this year is My Life as a Carer

The Cathedral celebration takes place on Monday 11th June and invitations are to Carers, the cared for and families. Westbank are again running the poetry competition and there is a £20.00 prize. Carers and organisations were also given copies of the Annual Carers Survey. Organisations can apply for 100 copies at a time. The results of this survey will be used during Carers Week to highlight issues and concerns of Carers.

Other News for Carers:

Warm front offer assessments for those in receipt of attendance allowance, pension credits and disability living allowance. This may highlight savings for fuel and in some cases installation of other devices or equipment to reduce heating costs.

Fire Services: Anyone can have a fire risk assessment. Some Carers have reported using this scheme and having free smoke alarms installed as an additional safety measure

Health and Wellbeing Conference 27th April 2007: There are 100 free places available to Carers and organisations in Devon, flyers were given to all in attendance.

The Involvement Framework: - Focus Group Jo Pickering

What impact has the Involvement Framework had?

- Some effect – re issues over respite
- Slow progress
- Increase in number of meetings – discussion of value – is communication reaching the target audience?
- Collective voice – make greater impact
- Limited information/signposting.

What impact would you like the Involvement Framework to have?

- More direct – reaching carers
- Triggers – via GP reg of carer – info/contacts and updates (or one number)
- Communicate any successes

What are the strengths of the Involvement Framework, and how can we build on these strengths?

- Way of getting information with reference to problems to the top
- Does anything happen to this information?
- Strengths are only for those who come to meetings.

What are the weaknesses of the Involvement Framework and how can we overcome these weaknesses?

- Ignorance of help available e.g. how to access the information and contacts to help
- Cannot get carers together – in denial (as a carer) too tired
- Won't reply to umbrella invites – suspicious of being judged, or having their lives organised for them
- Personal invite can work.

DATES OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 5th June, Follaton House, Totnes, Devon 10.30 -12.30 followed by a buffet lunch