

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE - EQUALITIES

5 DECEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, WELLBEING

SUPPORT TO CARERS

1. Purpose

1.1 To update the Committee on support to carers in Bridgend County Borough.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority.

2.1 This links directly to the Community Strategy themes:

- Healthy Living
- Strong Communities

2.2 The adult social care remodelling programme includes a specific activity which will improve support and services for carers.

3. Background

3.1 Bridgend County Borough Council is committed to supporting carers and to ensuring that they are valued as equal partners in the provision of care so that they can continue to undertake their caring role. The Bridgend Carer's Strategy sets out how we can continue to develop the appropriate support and services to do this. The Bridgend Strategy uses the Carers UK definition of a carer as:

A Carer is someone of any age who looks after a relative, partner, friend or neighbour who has an illness, disability, frailty or addiction. The help they provide is not paid for as part of their employment. The care may be personal, emotional or supervisory. They may or may not live with the person for whom they care.

3.2 The Strategy builds upon the priorities identified by the Welsh Assembly Government Carers' Strategy for Wales (2007) and aims to recognise the needs of local carers in Bridgend. The 2001 census showed that there are 16,189 carers in Bridgend County Borough, with 9571 people providing 1 to 19 hours of care per week, 2201 providing 20 to 49 hours of care and 4417 people providing 50 or more hours of care every week. In 2007, Carers UK estimated that the financial value of care provided in Bridgend amounted to £279million.

3.3 The Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010 and its regulations sets out how local authorities and local health boards, which the Measure calls 'relevant authorities' should work together to develop a joint strategy that sets out how the authorities should:

- provide appropriate information and advice to carers,
- ensure that carers are consulted before any care and treatment decisions are made in relation to the carer or the cared for person,
- ensure that carers are consulted before any decisions of a general nature regarding the provision of services to or for carers and the persons they care for.

3.3.1 The Measure places a very clear duty on the local health board to take the lead responsibility for developing a strategy for ensuring that carers are identified at every primary and secondary health contact so that all carers are provided with sufficient relevant information and are involved in all care and treatment decisions.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 The Bridgend Carers Strategy 2010–2013 was developed by Bridgend County Carers Forum in partnership with Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC), Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University (ABMU) Health Board, Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) and a range of third sector organisations.

4.2 The strategy sets out an ambitious framework in which the partnership should work toward helping carers in Bridgend maintain their health and wellbeing while continuing in their caring role.

4.3 The strategy is clear that the 'relevant authorities' need to value Carers as equal partners in the delivery and planning of care, treatment and support of carers and the cared for. To this end, Carer's Champions have been identified for each assessment care management team to raise the profile of carers' issues throughout the care management process to ensure all carers are consulted and engaged with the assessment and care planning process of people requiring adult social care.

4.4 The Bridgend Carers Forum goes from strength to strength, with over 70 carer members and representatives from the local authority, local health board and third sector organisations. The forum is reviewing the strategy action plan through Autumn 2011 and there will be a focus on ensuring that the partner organisations are continuing to support carers.

- 4.4.1 The forum has been active in campaigning for the effective and secure storage of incontinence pads as part of the BCBC recent recycling process, launching the Bridgend Carers Emergency Card and is currently in consultation with the directorate's safeguarding team about sharing information relating to residential care settings.
- 4.5 The responsibility for carrying out carers' assessments remains with the local authority. Care managers are identifying more carers as part of the unified assessment process and work is being carried out to increase the numbers of completed carer's assessments.
- 4.6 During spring 2011 ninety carers who had declined the offer of a carer's assessment were contacted. It was found that carers did not understand the purpose of carer's assessments and therefore felt there was no value in completing them. At the same time, discussions with social work team managers told us that the 6 page Carer's Assessment form was too long.
- 4.7 The Carer's Assessment form has now been reduced to two pages and care managers have been given additional training and guidance in undertaking Carers Assessments. The number of completed Carer's Assessments continues to be monitored by the Wellbeing Directorate's Senior Management Team.
- 4.8 The development of an Older Persons Stakeholder Group with representation from SHOUT, the Carers Forum and other service user and carer groups will be enable more meaningful consultation on future service development s for older people and carers.

Next Steps

- 4.9 The Bridgend Carers' Forum intends on presenting a Bridgend Carers Conference in the Spring 2012 with a focus on Young Carers, Carers of people with mental health problems and the emotional wellbeing of carers.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 There is no effect on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact assessment.

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the Bridgend Carers Strategy 2010-2013 and it was assessed as relevant to the Authority's general and specific duties to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. However, there is no negative impact to the protected equality groups
- 6.2 A system has since been put in place to ensure that equality information is recorded at the point of assessment.

7. Financial Implications.

- 7.1 There are no financial implications. Where the work and actions identified in this report are the Council's responsibility, the costs are being met from within existing resources.

8. Recommendation.

- 8.1 The Committee is recommended to note progress made in providing support to carers.

9. Background papers

None

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Background documents

Bridgend Carers Strategy 2010-2013.

Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010