

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

7. Meeting:	Health Select Commission
8. Date:	23 January 2014
9. Title:	Scrutiny Review of Support for Carers
10. Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary

This report sets out the main findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review of support for carers in Rotherham. The draft review report is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration by Members.

6. Recommendations

That the Health Select Commission:

- 6.1 Endorse the findings and recommendations of the report and make any amendments as necessary**
- 6.2 Agree for the report to be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and then Cabinet.**

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1 Following a Member seminar on dementia and ensuing discussion about the important role and contribution of carers in Rotherham, the Health Select Commission and the Improving Lives Select Commission agreed to undertake a joint spotlight scrutiny review of support for carers.
- 7.2 The key focus of Elected Members' attention was to ensure carers have access to the right information to enable them to access the support and services they require to assist them in the caring role and to maintain their own quality of life and health and wellbeing. As such it was very important to consider this from the perspective of carers, especially adult carers of adults with long term conditions.
- 7.3 The following definition of a carer was used for the review:
"A carer is an adult or young person who provides unpaid care for a partner, relative, friend, an older person or someone who has a disability or long term illness, including people with alcohol/substance misuse and mental illness."
- 7.4 There were six main aims of the review, which were to establish:
- if carers generally identify themselves as carers in line with the definition above
 - the degree to which carers access support or consider they need support to assist them in their caring role
 - who carers go to for initial support when they first become a carer
 - where carers usually go for ongoing support
 - key factors necessary for ensuring carers receive good and timely information
 - any areas for improvement in current information provision
- 7.5 Members also wished to complement and add value to the review carried out by Neighbourhoods and Adult Services of current support services for carers, which focused on how support is currently provided to carers and how this may be improved.
- 7.6 A spotlight review was carried out, chaired by Cllr Brian Steele, and evidence gathering commenced in October 2013, concluding in December 2013. This comprised an on-line survey for carers supplemented by direct engagement with carers at two events, followed by two small discussion groups. Further evidence was provided by Council officers and witnesses from partner agencies in health and the voluntary and community sector.
- 7.7 Members recognised the large number of "hidden" carers in Rotherham, who are key to the effective provision of social care. There is a very strong case, both morally and financially, to ensure that carers are provided with the most effective support possible as it is estimated that nationally, carers save the country an estimated £119billion in care costs. The review group consider that any resources invested within the carers community in Rotherham, therefore represents an invest to save opportunity, particularly with the demographic pressures created by an ageing population.
- 7.8 There are ten recommendations and in summary these focus on:
- increasing the number of people recognising themselves as carers and willing to seek support for this vital role they carry out;

- ensuring that support for carers adequately includes emotional support and counselling;
- providing a multi agency “carers pathway” that recognises the journey that carers are on and provides them with the correct support and information at the right time and in the right place on that journey;
- increasing the number of carers receiving a fit for purpose carers assessment, which is reviewed on an annual basis.

Recommendations:

1 – That Rotherham CCG and Rotherham Council consider how this first line of support for carers to help them identify themselves, is commissioned, in partnership with GPs.

2 – In looking at recommendation 1 above, the partners consider whether the positive assumption that a relative or friend is a carer unless told otherwise can be built into this process, and what information resources are required to back this up.

3 – That Rotherham Council investigates further with the Advice in Rotherham partnership (AiR) and the Department of Work and Pensions, what specific information carers need to access benefits that are available to them. This may also help to identify more carers.

4 – That Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group and Rotherham Council, work with its VCS and other partners to create the carers pathway of support. This should include the effective multi agency use of carers assessments and crucially allocation of a “buddy” or “lead worker” to ensure that support is accessed consistently and according to the identified needs of the carer. This lead worker could come from the most appropriate agency identified for individual needs.

5 – That Rotherham Council considers via its review of services to carers; the use of a new single contact number, a combination of Carers Corner and outreach facilities; and the replication of the carers card in schools for adult carers.

6 – That the “triangle of care” presented by RDaSH be considered as part of this process as something that could be adapted and rolled out to all partners providing support to carers.

7 – That Rotherham Council reviews its carers assessment tool in the light of the Care Bill to ensure it is fit for purpose. This should involve considering whether it could be less onerous and more appropriately named to reflect that it is an enabling process rather than an “assessment”, whilst complying with statutory frameworks.

8 – That Rotherham Council looks to set more stretching targets for former NI 135.

9 – That a full review is undertaken of the Joint Action Plan for Carers to ensure that it meets the recommendations of this review and is more accountable in terms of its delivery.

10 – The review group recognises that these recommendations have resource implications but consider that the “invest to save” case for the Council and NHS is strong enough to warrant this. It therefore recommends that the £500,000 provisionally allocated to carers support in the Better Care Fund is allocated to implementing the recommendations of this review.

8. Finance

The recommendations from the Select Commissions will require further exploration by Cabinet, the Strategic Leadership Team and Partner agencies on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation, taking into account the invest to save potential over the longer term.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Rotherham has a significant number of carers, many of whom are older people who may themselves have underlying health conditions, and with an ageing population it is vital that support is in place to ensure that carers maintain their own health and wellbeing and are supported in their caring role.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Children and Young People's Plan 2010-2013
Corporate Plan

Ensuring care and protection are available for those people who need it most.

- Carers get the help and support they need
- People in need get help earlier before reaching crisis
- People in need of support and care have more choice and control to help them live at home

The Care Bill 2013-2014, which will reform the law relating to care and support for adults and the law relating to support for carers, is currently progressing through parliament and will impose new duties once enacted.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

See Section 8 of the review report and Appendices 1 and 2.

12. Contacts

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