

Development of the Carers Strategy

2013- 2015

Engagement Report

March to December 2013

Contents

Introduction	3
Consultation	3
Engagement	5
Summary of feedback	6
Online consultation.....	7
Appendix 1 – Carers Strategy Workshop agenda	8
Appendix 2 – Carers Strategy Workshop Attendees.....	9

Introduction

The Carers Strategy 2010-2013 and its Action Plans were the catalysts for developments during these years which led to improvements and achievements in the support provided to carers in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

In order to take the Carers Strategy forward for the next two years and to develop the priorities for improving support to carers there has been consultation and engagement activities with carers, partners, statutory bodies and the voluntary sector.

Consultation

A draft of the new Carers Strategy was distributed to the following people/organisations requesting them to highlight any gaps or areas missing, give additional input or comment on the draft document:

- Carers Strategy Reference Group with carers and representatives from the following organisations: London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames, Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group, Carers Hub Service, Richmond Crossroads, Richmond Borough MIND, Richmond Council for Voluntary Services, Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- London Borough of Richmond (LBRuT) – Children’s Services; Adult and Community Services
- Richmond Joint Commissioning Collaborative

Carers Conferences

A Carers Conference was held on 12 June 2013 hosted by Richmond Carers Centre. Over 65 carers attended and there were representatives from many other organisations. The main area of concern emerging from the group work was around communication in all its aspects:

- Between service providers, the cared for person and the carer
- GPs were seen as a vital link to identifying and maintaining a register of carers and providing sign posting to carers advice, information and support
- Health care professionals to recognise the carer’s role and ensure carers are consulted as expert partners in care planning – in the community, in hospital and when making discharge plans
- Communication by service providers with parent carers around transition of services when children reached the age of 18

A 'Finding Solutions' Conference was held for carers of people with mental health difficulties on 14th June 2013. 70 carers attended and the main focus of discussion was around the importance of including carers as expert partners in care, with specific reference to GPs and primary care, and discharge into the community from secondary care.

Engagement with carers in developing the Better Care Closer to Home Richmond Out of Hospital Care Strategy

Carers were engaged in the development of this strategy and their responses are summarised below. The views expressed in this engagement were also used to inform the development of the Carer's Strategy.

The overarching theme for carers is that they should tell their story only once and support having one point of contact that will take responsibility for supporting them to find out information and provide advice and support, rather than being passed around different departments and teams. There needs to be a greater recognition of the "carer's burden" by both commissioners and providers.

Carers value and are generally supportive of services being delivered locally such as outpatient clinics and having GPs with special interests e.g. dermatology being available within the borough.

Carers view their GP as a key support in the community but it is often difficult to speak to or see them quickly. GPs should be more proactive in identifying patients who are also carers and checking if they need support and information.

Services should offer a confidential carer's assessment which can be carried out separately from the assessment for the person being looked after.

The role of pharmacists as a support and link for carers in the community should be encouraged and developed.

Equality - carers of self funders should have access to the same support and information as funded individuals.

Carers raised issues around timely transport, both for themselves and to transport the cared for person to appointments.

Carers would like recognition of their role as an expert care partner who should be involved in the care for the person they look after while they are in hospital, during discharge planning and afterwards in the community.

Carer's Survey 2012

All local authorities were required by the Department of Health (DoH) to conduct a Carers Survey during 2012-13. Richmond Council identified 853 carers who had completed a carer's assessment over the previous year and these carers were sent the survey

questionnaire to complete. Of these, 447 carers completed and returned it which gave Richmond a response rate of 52% compared with a national average of 46% and a London average of 37%.

Information provided through this survey has been used to inform and direct the revised Carers Strategy for 2013-15 ensuring that focus is given to areas and outcomes which carers have indicated could be improved. These are:

- Ease of access to information
- Usefulness of information provided
- Carers being involved or consulted in care plans for the person they look after
- Improving quality of life – feeling supported, looking after and having some time for oneself
- Improved recognition of the impact of caring for carers of people with mental health difficulties by providers of commissioned mental health services

Please see the [Carers Survey Report](#).

Carers Strategy Engagement Event

A workshop was held on 7 October 2013 to gather input and views to inform the Carers Strategy from a range of organisations and people who support carers, are carers, or work with carers. An agenda can be found in Appendix 1 and a list of organisations which had representatives attending is in Appendix 2.

The workshop began with a series of short presentations about the range of local services for carers from the following organisations:

- Public Health, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
- Community Services, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
- Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- Richmond Wellbeing Service
- South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
- Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group, GP with carers' lead responsibility

The people attending the workshop were then involved in group discussions led by a facilitator to look at the following three themes:

1. Information and Advice
2. Improving Carers Health and Wellbeing
3. Carers as Expert Partners in Care

The facilitators asked their groups to consider what aspects of each of these themes were the most important to carers or to support carers, how these could best be implemented, and which of the suggestions were the top priorities.

Summary of feedback

Common themes emerging overall:

Awareness of language/terminology – a carer may not identify with this term and therefore the voluntary sector/GPs/professionals need to be pro-active to recognise carers and explain the meaning and use of the label 'carer'.

Information and Advice

- GP, as the initial point of contact, should be able to recognise carers at the point of diagnosis of the cared for person and provide a systemised hand-out to carers with organisations to contact and phone numbers or, even better, make referrals on their behalf.
- Needs to be easily accessible/up to date
- One stop shop for advice and information
- Easy, quick and multiple means of accessing info and advice are needed – internet / professionals / hard copy
- Should be clear / jargon free
- Need information about 'Who does What'
- Information and advice to be kept up to date through all distribution points/'gateway' professionals eg Citizens Advice/Job Centres/Hospital discharge etc can provide or signpost to appropriate organisations.
- Need advocates/organisations to do 'form filling' for carers eg for benefits etc
- Regular meetings/carers forums to dispense information on different topics of interest to carers
- Find 'hard to reach' carers, particularly young carers. Outreach important.
- Need for comprehensive guide/Carers Directory

Carers Health and Wellbeing

- GPs to be pro-active to identify carers and then have a set of relevant questions to address issues such as stress/anxiety/depression/ problems
- GPs to have a referral process for identified carers to Carers Hub/generic organisations
- GPs to be more involved/follow up and ensure carer is coping: How Are You?
- Respite
- Breaks for Carers – Sitting Service
- Peer Support – Carer Groups – regular and different localities
- Counselling and support for Stress/Anxiety/Depression needs to be available
- Employer Support for Caring Role
- 24/7 telephone support across health and social care to cover carer issues (available during normal hours and out of hours) and emergencies affecting the cared-for person
- Professionals need to recognise the importance of holistic care: carer / cared for may have different physical conditions/disabilities and mental health issues
- Appropriate services provided for the cared for person: consistent, reliable and flexible
- Separate issues re carers looking after people with mental health difficulties: proactive rehabilitation services/voluntary sector to ref to IAPT services/specialist housing

- Future planning to prevent emergencies; know what to do in a crisis

Carers as Expert Partners in Care

- Out of hours and weekend telephone support for emergency (but not 111 or 999) situations affecting the cared for person/crisis support
- Involve carers in plans/decisions for cared for
- Recognise carer's understanding of the person cared for – i.e. how the person was before needing care
- Report back on carer feedback/involvement; how do carers' views get back to decision makers and influence service delivery
- Respect carer's views of cared for needs and decisions affecting them.

Carers Strategy Online Consultation

The feedback from the Carers Strategy Workshop event was looked at in detail by the CCG and Richmond Council's Joint Commissioning Collaborative and used to make revisions to the Carers Strategy. The draft strategy was available on Richmond Council's website for a three week consultation period, which ended on 6 December 2013.

Over 30 people completed the online consultation questionnaire and/or submitted additional comments. Please see the [summary consultation report](#).

Comments submitted were analysed and while many confirmed the aims, priorities and objectives already within the draft Carers Strategy, adjustments were made to include some additional areas of work where omissions or gaps had been identified by the consultation responses.

Appendix 1 – Carers Strategy Workshop

Programme

Carers Strategy Workshop

7 October 2013

10am to 12:30pm

Cole Court, London Road, Twickenham TW1 1HD

1000 Networking and refreshments

1020 Welcome and Introduction

Short Presentations

- Katherine Thompson, Public Health Principal
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
- Lynn Wild, Service Manager Community Care
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
- Ann Stratton, Assistant Director Adult Services
Hounslow & Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- Dr Sim Roy-Chowdhury, Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Richmond Wellbeing Service

Iain Richmond, Operational Manager, Kingston & Richmond Adult Services, South West London St George's Mental Health Trust

- Dr Kate Moore, GP

Topics for Discussion

Table Discussions

Short Plenary Session

1230 Close

Appendix 2 - Attendees at Carers Strategy Workshop

20 Carers attended the Carers Strategy Workshop and they were joined by representatives from the following statutory, partner and voluntary organisations:

- Addiction Support and Care Agency
- Alzheimer's Society
- Crossroads Care Kingston and Richmond
- Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group
- Grace Debt Advice
- Healthwatch Richmond
- Homelink Day Care
- Hounslow and Richmond Healthcare NHS Trust
- Integrated Neurological Services
- Live Well Richmond
- Mencap
- Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Mulberry Centre
- Richmond Carers Centre
- Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group
- Richmond Homes and Lifestyle Trust
- Richmond Joint Commissioning Collaborative
- Richmond Wellbeing Service
- Public Health
- London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
- Richmond Council for Voluntary Services
- Richmond Borough MIND
- South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust