

Redcar & Cleveland Carers Partnership Meeting
Between 12 noon and 2.30pm on Monday, 15th September 2008
Coatham Memorial Hall, Redcar

Attendees

Carers: Gordon Mogg (co-chair), Alf Robinson, Shirley Robinson, Geoff Probert, Marjorie Hardy, Joan Robinson, Mary Sheehy, Linda Dickinson, Stuart Saunders, M Robinson, Ann Milne, K Barnbrook, Marjorie Elliott, S R Lewis, G Shippey, L Shippey, Jimmy Shepherd, Sylvia Shepherd, J Earl.

Others: Toni McHale, Glenda Middleton, Angela Bartley, Sue Reeves, Nicola Smith, Jeanette Clisby, Sharon Tulloch, Lisa Atkinson, David Morris, Jo Cole, Sarah Welsh, Nicola Sylvester, K King, A Dale, J Everidge, L Desmond, L Wyres, M Wyres, Jody Sayer, Jane Reast, Maggie Balmer, Kath Oyston, Lynn Johnson (co-chair), Janine Cusworth, Margaret Yull, J Page, M Buckton, Ian Hutchinson, Jay Jackson, Terry Fahey, Sue Renvoize, Jim Wingham, Maureen McKay, Jo Crook, Linda Batty, Michelle Fearin, Sandra Duggan, Linda Benson, Sue Longmate, S Smith, L Reay, M P Rutherford, C Bill, A Hayward, C Smith, P Robson, Reg McCarthy.

Apologies

Carers: Lucy Smith, Claire Heath, Edna Whitewood, Tricia Abell, Eileen Purvis.

Others: Sue Stevens, Carole Dodd, Liz Allison, Linda Bell, Bill Gamble, Debbie Sheldon, Ashok Kumar MP, Val Halton, Chris Pope, Chris Green, Tracie Jacobs.

1. Welcome/Apologies – Gordon Mogg

- Gordon thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and commented how great it was to see such a mix of people, including some new faces.
- Apologies not read but included in the minutes. No further apologies offered.
- Everyone was encouraged to complete an evaluation questionnaire to obtain views about the partnership and future planning.
- Gordon thanked Glynis Calvert, Ann Milne and Geoff Probert who recently met Inspectors at Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council on behalf of the Partnership.
- Gordon highlighted the information boards containing details of events/courses.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising – Lynn Johnson

- (a) The minutes of the last meeting were viewed for accuracy. No errors were raised.
- (b) The Legal and Financial planning event organised by Carers Together was very successful - over 50 carers attended. The event will be repeated in early 2009.
- (c) Jane Reast spoke briefly about 'Healthy Eating Needn't Be A Chew', a project for disabled people and carers funded through the Real Opportunities Fund and the Department of Health and organised in partnership with Redcar & Cleveland Real Opportunities Centre, Carers Together and Redcar & Cleveland Mind. Four groups have participated and will meet on 10th October 2008 to work on a report which will inform the Obesity Strategy. It is anticipated that a 2009 calendar will be published.

'Healthy Eating Needn't Be A Chew' has proved to be great success involving and bringing together people from a range of diverse backgrounds.

- (d) The Direct Payments Forum will be held bi-monthly. Chris Pope, Direct Payments Coordinator for Adult & Children's Services, and Sandra Conway, NECIL, to attend. The next meeting will take place 11.30am - 12.30pm on Wednesday, 12th November 2008 at Coatham Memorial Hall.
- (e) Sue Renvoize gave an update on the Older Persons Strategy – she said responses on behalf of carers had been received through the Partnership, Carers Together and individual carers. Teesside University are collating the information; their findings will be available on the Council's website. Individuals who took part in the consultation will be notified personally. Findings will help to develop future services.
- (f) Sue Reeves, vice-chair of the interim LINKs advised the partnership that Shaw Trust has been appointed as the host agency. LINKs members had a meeting with representatives from Shaw Trust, who are also the host agency in Stockton, Shaw Trust have advertised for a development officer and are working with the interim LINKs to look at future developments of the LINKs.

3. Update on Emergency Respite Care – *Maggie Balmer*

- (a) Maggie gave a brief outline of the Carers Emergency Respite Service and Breaks for Carers, she stressed that a break is anything that gives the carer time out from their caring responsibility, eg taking part in a social activity.

The timetable distributed at a previous meeting was on target.

Two carers were on the recruitment panel. Maggie introduced Geoff Probert to speak about his involvement.

- (b) Geoff took early retirement recently to help his Dad care for his Mum. He registered with Carers Together, attended Carers Partnership meetings and recently volunteered as a carer representative to assist with the tendering and recruitment process. The first meeting lasted about ½ hour and was an informal introduction. The second meeting gave representatives an opportunity to discuss the kinds of questions that they would like to ask. Unfortunately, mainly due to caring responsibilities, this meeting was not so well attended by carer representatives and so only Gordon Mogg, Victor Gauchi and Geoff went on to the next stage. Geoff felt the process was fully inclusive. He did not have to consider costings, so never felt any pressure to choose the cheapest option. It was a relaxed atmosphere and, despite some trepidation, he felt he was wholly part of the process and certainly not just making up the numbers.

Geoff considered the experience very valuable in bringing forward carers ideas. He would not get involved again as he does not feel that his involvement would be relevant again; but he encouraged others to voice their opinions and take future opportunities to be involved.

Gordon Mogg agreed, stressing that the more people who get involved the greater the benefits will be.

4. Update on Personalisation – Lynn Johnson

Lynn spent a lot of time at the last meeting in an attempt to demystify Personalisation. She therefore gave a brief overview emphasising the intention to put people at the heart of things preventing ill health and promoting health and well-being.

She said there are a number of challenges ahead, so it is very important that we work together to achieve the best outcomes. Part of this has involved the Council engaging with other organisations, the NHS and also with the Carers Partnership. She acknowledged that some mistakes may be made along the way but if we work in partnership we can put plans in place to work through them. The Council have a committed staff to take Personalisation forward, so service users have the choice, control and flexibility they have not previously experienced. Fundamental changes will take place: people will know at the beginning how much they have to spend on support before they decide what and where to spend it; Social Workers will work in a very different way; Providers will need to change to meet market demand; Commissioners will have a responsibility to support, educate and develop.

Sue Reeves said Debbie Sheldon has been appointed as the Personalisation Manager. She attended the last Carers Partnership and facilitated a discussion group. She was unable to attend this meeting, but will present updates at future meetings.

Q How much of Personalisation is cost cutting?

A There has been a lot of negative press as government can't afford to continue with the current systems. People will know how much their current care services cost and will be aware of how much they can spend under Personalisation. They will be able to retain their care package if they wish.

Q What if they are offered less money than they currently manage upon?

A It is extremely unlikely. The self assessment questionnaire applies abilities for daily living on a points system which is converted into money. This system is accredited and used nationally.

Q Is it an attempt to cut the care that is provided?

A No. It is more flexible and not prescriptive.

Linda Dickinson spoke about training she has attended with Barbara Rankin. She believes Personalisation puts individuals in control offering flexibility and choice; there are examples of very good practice. She commented that it is not just about money but a whole package to lead to better health.

Q How will quality be maintained/governed?

A The Council's role is to develop the market place and offer quality assurance. Providers will need to demonstrate quality which meets requirements.

Q What has the reaction been from service users?

A Administration is more difficult when smaller services are involved as people will become employers. Ultimately this is a better scheme and if changes are daunting, support can be sought from organisations like Carers Together.

Q Peoples circumstances are not always black and white, what then?

A Current systems offer a very limited menu of choice for people - Personalisation opens up this range. The Direct Payments Forum offers the opportunity to voice concerns: peoples experiences help to identify and develop processes.

It was suggested that a list of roles and responsibilities would ease the anxiety of liability as an employer. NECIL have information.

5. Dignity and Patient Safety – Sharon Tulloch

Sharon has worked for the NHS for over 30 years and is now a Modern Matron and works for the Primary Care Trust (PCT). Her presentation focused on Dignity in Care; looking at changes in future care provision, balancing meeting targets and treating patients with compassion, dignity and respect.

She gave examples of some simple changes that have taken place locally to improve dignity and respect. A Modern Matron must work with staff to effect changes: education and training are vital in achieving change. Patient feedback is equally important.

She explained details of a nurse's shift in a productive ward. Complaints often relate to care provision so she demonstrated how improvements have been identified and implemented. She said although dignity has no standard definition we all know how it feels to be treated well. The Dignity Challenge has been simplified into 10 patient key rights; and cards giving details, produced by the Department of Health, were provided. Michael Parkinson is an ambassador for Dignity in Care, and will be visiting the area in the future.

More details about the Dignity Challenge or becoming a Dignity Champion can be obtained online at www.dignityincare.org.uk which provides a good source of information.

Q Will it fit into the new NHS Constitution?

A Further information is available on the website.

6. Carers Strategy

(a) National Strategy – Sue Reeves

The second National Strategy 'Carers at the heart of 21st-century families and communities' was published in June 2008. The document is lengthy but Sue attempted to condense the main issues. She gave national and local statistics including the projected figures for the next 20 years. She detailed promises the strategy identified as priorities for implementation by 2018.

Carers Allowance was raised as a priority during consultation. However, no changes relating to carers benefits have been included in the strategy: it remains the lowest rate Welfare Benefit with difficult criteria. The government have said they will look at carers benefits in the future overview of all welfare benefits

The government has already announced extra funding for emergency planning. The strategy promises further financial commitments including £150m to local PCTs to provide more breaks for carers, but this has not been implemented to date.

A Standing Commission on Carers was established by Gordon Brown in September 2007 which has a scrutiny role and will oversee development and implementation. The strategy can be found at www.dh.gov.uk.

(b) Redcar & Cleveland's Carers Strategy (2008-2013) – *Maggie Balmer*

A draft document of the update to the local carers strategy is being produced: seven priorities have been identified. Maggie said she was very pleased that parents of children with disabilities have been included as a priority for the first time. A consultation timetable is being drawn up and consultation events will be organised. Dates to be circulated.

7. Any Other Business

(a) Sandra Duggan, Project Coordinator for User and Carer Involvement at Teesside University, gave a talk about her role. Part of the training at the university is for under/post-graduate nurses, occupational therapists, radiographers etc.

Sandra asked carers to become involved with the training by talking to students about their experiences as carers, both good and bad. This will also help with future recruitment, assessments, new courses, research and focus groups. No formal qualifications are required, there are no time commitments and there is a payment policy to reimburse for time, travel and also to employ a personal assistant if necessary

She distributed leaflets giving more details about her role.

(b) Jo Cole said the next Neurological Alliance meeting will be held on 7th November 2008. The booking fee is £10.00, 30 places remain and free transport can be provided. Please contact Jo to book (telephone number 01642 641825 or email jo.cole123@ntlworld.com)

(c) Sue Reeves said the Ofsted report on Children's Services is available on their website.

(d) A number of issues highlighted the need for carers as volunteers to be involved in various aspects of decision making. The Carers Partnership is establishing a list of interested carers who can be contacted in the future. If anyone would like to become more involved or would like to talk about it should contact Angela on (01642) 488977.

- (e) The Redcar & Cleveland Credit Union Development Agency are holding an event between 11.00am and 1.00pm on Monday, 22nd September 2008 at Coatham Memorial Hall.

Gordon closed the meeting, thanking everybody for attending. The next meeting is:

Monday, 1st December 2008
12 noon for 12.30pm start
Free buffet lunch and mince pies
Coatham Memorial Hall