



SUPPORTING CARERS IN DENBIGHSHIRE

A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVEMENT (Draft)

2008 - 2011

Denbighshire County Council

Draft Carers Strategy

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why do we need a Carers Strategy for Denbighshire?

The purpose of the Denbighshire Carers Strategy is to improve and develop sustainable and appropriate services and support to known Carers, and to reach out and identify those Carers who are 'hidden' from services.

It reflects a commitment by social care, health and voluntary sector partners to improve the support services offered to Carers over the next three years.

The Strategy builds on the two previous Carers Strategies in Denbighshire (2001 and 2005-08), and sets out key priorities for supporting Carers over the next three years.

1.2 Who are Carers?

The Strategy is for Carers who are caring for someone with an illness, a disability or someone who is elderly and cannot manage on their own without support, including Young Carers. The care they provide is unpaid. Carers may be caring for someone who:

- has a Learning disability
- has a Physical and/or sensory impairment, including a child with disabilities
- has a long term medical condition
- has a Mental Health condition
- has a drug or alcohol dependency
- is an older person

This includes Carers who may or may not be living with the person they care for. It must also be recognised that some people care for more than one person.

The term 'Carer' does not include anyone who receives payment for providing care, such as an agency care worker, or voluntary workers providing support as an agent of a funded organisation.

1.3 Identifying the needs of Carers in Denbighshire

For the purpose of developing this Strategy, information has been pulled together about the needs of Carers, the services that currently exist to support Carers, and the resources available to fund these services.

Carers, and those working to support Carers, have been involved in developing the Strategy in various ways including:

- A Carers Strategy Stakeholder Day
- Consultations with Young Carers
- A Carers Questionnaire
- A Stakeholder Questionnaire (for people who work with Carers, including health and social care professionals and voluntary sector organisations).
- The Denbighshire Carers Strategy Group
- A Carers Strategy Reference Group

The Carers Compass



In Denbighshire, we would like to plan and improve services that will help Carers to achieve the same outcomes as those set within the Carers Compass. The Carers Compass was developed by The Kings Fund in 1998, and has been used by several local authorities across England and Wales to help them plan services for Carers.

The Compass sets out eight key outcomes which Carers identified on a national level, as important to them. They are:

- **Full Information:** To ensure that Carers are aware of how to access services and support, and that they receive timely information, and are fully informed on the nature of the illness or impairment of the person they care for
- **Recognition, Health and Well Being:** To ensure that Carers are recognised, and have their own needs, including health needs, taken into account by practitioners and staff in health and social services.
- **A life of their own, with quality services for the Carer and the person they care for:** To ensure that Carers are supported to achieve a more fulfilled life, including access to leisure, employment and life long learning opportunities, by providing flexible, quality alternative care for the cared for person.

- **Time off:** To ensure that Carers have access to a range of breaks and opportunities to take time off from their caring role.
- **Emotional Support:** To ensure that Carers have access to a range of services where they are listened to.
- **Training and Support to Care:** To ensure that Carers have access to a range of training opportunities that enable them to develop the practical skills required to carry out their caring responsibilities.
- **Financial security:** To ensure that Carers are aware of benefits that are available to assist them, and that they can be signposted to agencies that can offer advice.
- **A voice:** To ensure that Carers contribute to the shaping and development of local services through forums, events and groups

The Strategy has arrived at a number of priorities against each outcome. The experiences and views of Carers has significantly influenced the priorities contained in this Strategy.

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT (Local and National Guidance)

As a Local Authority we must work within certain guidelines and have a range of duties that we are required to meet. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) usually defines these.

In addition there are priorities and targets that are set at a local level, which are based on the needs of the local population.

These all help to shape the development of services for Carers in Denbighshire, and as such a summary of some of the most significant policy documents is provided in this section.

2.1 Local

2.1.1 Denbighshire Carers Strategy 2001

The document 'Caring about Carers a National Strategy for Carers' provided the initial impetus for developing a local joint strategy for Carers. This was produced in 2001 by the Denbighshire Carers Strategy Group in consultation with Carers, and highlighted seven areas for action:

- Provision of relevant, good quality information.
- Consulting and involving Carers and those working with Carers in planning of services.
- Recognising and valuing Carers as part of the care team and keeping them fully involved and informed.
- Ensuring Carers' individual needs are recognised in policies, procedures and practices of agencies
- Joint working between all agencies supporting Carers.
- Promoting the health and well being of Carers by identification of Carers and recognising the value of sustaining Carer well-being.
- Breaks for Carers

Each agency was required to identify specific actions required to make the Strategy real, whilst the Denbighshire Carers Strategy Group would identify areas for joint working and monitor the progress of the strategy overall.

Evaluating the use of the Carers Special Grant in Denbighshire - In 2003 the Social Policy Research Unit at Bangor University carried out an evaluation of the Denbighshire Carers Strategy, and in particular the use of the Carers Special Grant. The report reflected positively the joint approach being taken by Denbighshire and the appropriate use of the Grant. Service provision included most service user groups apart from Carers of young people in transition from child to adult services. The main focus of provision was on Carers of people with mental health conditions and young Carers.

Carers surveyed at the time suggested that the type of service provided was what they wanted but they needed more of it and for longer. It was undoubted that the services provided were valued by Carers, although some Carers had difficulty accessing them. The findings highlighted a number of particular areas of need:

- Support immediately available in response to a crisis.
- Relaxation therapies.

- Help to manage change
- 'Sitting services' in the evenings to enable Carers to engage in social activities.

The report also highlighted a perceived lack of information by Carers, although considerable effort had gone into the provision of information about Carers services, and highlighted the importance of collaborative working to reach people who do not consider themselves to be Carers.

2.1.2 Denbighshire Carers Strategy 2005 – 2008

This Strategy built on the aims and principles of the 2001 Strategy and incorporated subsequent developments in national legislation and local policies and strategies relating to Carers in Denbighshire. The findings of the Bangor University research were also incorporated into the Strategy Action Plan. The aims of the Strategy were to:

- Provide a framework for action for all relevant agencies.
- Promote greater awareness and understanding of the role and needs of Carers in Denbighshire.
- Ensure that agencies continued to work closely to influence policy so that health, social care and well being needs of Carers were adequately addressed.
- Keep stakeholders informed of relevant legislation and guidance.

The following is a brief summary of the progress made following the second Carers Strategy:

- A new Carers Information Pack developed in conjunction with Carers and the Carers Strategy Group.
- The development of new guidance for local authority staff on carers assessments and eligibility for services.
- Set up of Carers Consultation network
- Development of Denbighshire County Council's Carers Policy
- Involvement in the development of the unified assessment process in relation to Carers.
- An awareness raising event for elected members to raise awareness of Carers
- A series of awareness raising sessions for social workers on services available to Carers.
- Support for the development of the Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy (see 2.1.5 below) in relation to Carers.

2.1.3 Denbighshire Joint Review Report – 2003

Denbighshire Social Services was reviewed in 2003 by a team working on behalf of the Audit Commission and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales. Some of the key areas for improvement highlighted by the Joint Review Report were as follows:

- Give a significantly higher priority to the strategic commissioning of services
- Invest in more preventative and rehabilitative services in adult services
- Ensure that everyone is committed to improving services, based on a better use of information
- Progress partnership initiatives with other agencies and authorities

2.1.4 Social Services Inspector for Wales (SSIW) – Review of Adult Services 2005

The SSIW carries out the social service inspection functions on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales, under the Health & Social Care (Community Health & Standards) Act 2003 and other legislation. The purpose of such reviews is to provide an assessment of how well local people are served and to contribute to the further improvement of services. The report highlighted areas of good practice, and areas where there was need for improvement. Overall, the level of support to Carers was reported in a positive light although equity of services to all Carers was highlighted as an area for improvement.

2.1.5 Denbighshire Health Social Care and Well Being (HSCWB) Strategy 2008-2011

The National Health Service Act 2006 placed a duty on each local authority and local health board to formulate and implement a Health and Well-being Strategy for the public in the local authority area.

The HSCWB Strategy 2008 – 2011 is for Denbighshire citizens of all ages, and highlights what has been done and what is being done to improve people's lives and reduce inequalities to health. The HSCWB Strategy sets out eight priority 'themes' that affect people's health and well being, and recognises Carers as a specific key group of the population in need of support.

The eight themes of the strategy are:

- Reducing Poverty and Improving Social Inclusion
- Our Environment
- Positive Lifestyles
- Early Intervention and Crisis Support
- Changing Needs – Responsive Services
- Longer Term Needs
- Protecting and Safeguarding
- Right Services in the Right Place

The HSCWB Strategy is a very significant Strategy for Denbighshire, and it will be important to link all key actions for Carers services identified within the new Carers Strategy, with the above themes.

2.1.6 Denbighshire Community Services Framework

This Framework for 2008-2011, outlines how Denbighshire Local Health Board and Denbighshire Local Authority will work together to commission and deliver enhanced community based services to meet the health and social care needs of the local population.

The Framework is central to the delivery of the HSCWB Strategy, and is intended to be an overarching strategic document which describes how Denbighshire's health and social care community will commission and develop improved, integrated community services.

The Framework has adopted the 'Five Levels Model of Care' which places greater emphasis on services that support people in the community, ranging

from supported self care and preventative services to specialist services for people with more complex needs.

It will be necessary to use this model to demonstrate how the services needed to support Carers meet the core aims of the Framework.

2.1.7 CSSIW Performance Evaluation of Local Authority Services (PEF) – Evaluation of Denbighshire for year ended 31 March 2007

The Evaluation is designed to assist the authority in its own programme for improvement and to assist CSSIW, other inspectorates and auditors in planning their work. It sets out strengths, achievements, priorities for improvement and areas for further examination.

The report concluded that Denbighshire Social Services have improved substantially in recent years, from a position of relatively higher risk to much lower risk overall. There have been undoubted improvements in overall service delivery.

Priorities for improvement included improving the range of services for young Carers. The report also highlighted that the authority offered assessments to over 84% of identified Carers, which is just below the Welsh median, of those Carers offered an assessment, over 52% had received an assessment – again just below the Welsh median. However, proportionally fewer were provided with a service following assessment – almost 15% compared to the Welsh median of almost 24%.

2.2 National

2.2.1 Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995

This Act was a step forward in acknowledging both the role that Carers have in supporting people with disabilities and the needs which Carers themselves have, and gave Carers the right to have their own needs assessed. It gave social services departments a statutory duty to take a Carer's needs into consideration when deciding what support to provide to the cared for person.

2.2.2. 'Caring about Carers, A Strategy for Carers in Wales Implementation Plan'

This strategy was published in January 2000 with the objective of improving in the longer term the health and well being of Carers and those for whom they care. It identified five main areas for action:

- Health and social care
- Information
- Support
- Young Carers
- Carers and Employment

This Strategy was underpinned by the Carers Grant which was made available by the Welsh Assembly Government to all local authorities. This was a pump-priming grant to stimulate the local development of services for Carers. It remained a ring-fenced grant until 2005-06 after which time the resources were transferred into local authorities' Revenue Support Grants.

2.2.3 Carers & Disabled Children's Act 2000

This Act came into force in Wales in July 2001. It further extended Local Authorities' power to supply services directly to Carers following assessment, and to make direct payments to Carers for services that meet their own assessed care needs.

2.2.4 Carers Equal Opportunities Act 2004

This Act came into force in Wales in April 2005. It places a duty on local authorities to inform Carers of their right to an assessment. The carers assessments should take into consideration whether the Carer works or is undertaking education, training or any leisure activity, or wishes to do these things. The Act also provides for better co-operation between statutory agencies in the provision of services for Carers.

2.2.5 The Work and Families Act 2006

This Act came into force in Wales in April 2007. It widens the scope of the existing law on flexible working to enable more people with caring responsibilities to request to work flexibly.

2.2.6 Re-focused Carers Strategy for Wales 2007

This Strategy is intended to help deliver the timely and effective implementation of the new strategic directions for health and social services. The Welsh Assembly Government performance management arrangements with local authorities will monitor progress in achieving the aims and objectives of these wider strategies. The re-focused Strategy will seek to ensure

- Better assessment and care management arrangements to make sure people receive timely and appropriate services to meet their needs.
- Better constructive engagement with Carers as key partners in the planning and delivery of both health and social services.

2.2.7 Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities

This 10 Year Strategy recognises that at least 75% of care for vulnerable people is provided by family, friends and neighbours. It recognises that Carers are partners in care and need support in their caring role, and envisages that over the next 10 years, Carers and their families will expect a step change in the range, type and accessibility of service they need. Carers and service users will be much more active in managing their own situations, and will have a greater say in how services are developed and provided. It also recognises that social services agencies will need to take full account of peoples' religious, cultural and ethnic needs as well as age, gender and sexual orientation considerations.

2.2.8 Designed for Life

This is the corresponding strategy for the health service. It focuses on the vision for health services and health improvement but with local government also having a crucial role to play in developing its own service contribution and working with the NHS to bring about service changes and improvements. It seeks to maintain the independence of patients and service users by providing services to enable people to remain in or return to their own homes, and providing support for Carers in achieving this. It also seeks to develop services that allow people to become engaged with their own health and well being.

The Strategy refers to strengthened Carer support as being a key element for better integrated services for older people, and to the transition to new patterns of services generally.

The targets for 'Designed for Life' include every hospital making arrangements to actively involve Carers in discharge planning and provide information about Carer support services.

2.2.9 National Service Frameworks

National service frameworks (NSFs) are long term strategies for improving specific areas of care. They set national standards, identify key interventions and put in place agreed time scales for implementation.

Some frameworks have more specific implications for social services such as the National Service Framework for Older People 2006, the revised framework for Mental Health 2005, and the framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services.

These frameworks contain specific standards for Carers. It is important that we work with the agencies who have the lead responsibility for the frameworks to help ensure that the standards for Carers are met.

3. A PROFILE OF CARERS IN DENBIGHSHIRE

3.1 Census Information 2001

There are an estimated 10,659 Carers in Denbighshire, including an estimated 2,000 young Carers who may be caring for people of any age.

At the time of the 2001 Census, the population of Denbighshire was around 93,000 people. The population rose by over 6% between 1993 and 2003, compared with 2% in Wales. By mid 2005 the population had risen to around 96,000.

20.2% of the population of Denbighshire are aged over 65 (18,814) and this is set to increase by 40% by 2020.

An estimated 12,543 people aged 18 – 64 in Denbighshire have a limiting long term illness, and 30.2% of households in Denbighshire are occupied by a person with a disability.

The 2001 Census, for the first time, asked a question about whether people provided unpaid care for a family member or friend and for how many hours.

The resulting picture for Denbighshire is as follows:

Provision of unpaid care in Denbighshire

	Denbighshire	Wales	Denbighshire %	Wales %
Total no. of unpaid Carers	10,677	340,745	10	10
Carers providing 1-19 hrs of care / week	6,584	208,292	61.67	61.13
Carers providing 20-49 hrs of care / week	1,331	42,850	12.47	12.58
Carers providing 50 hrs or more of care / week	2,762	89,604	25.87	26.30

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2001 Census of Population

The Carer population in Denbighshire can be split into the four locality areas as follows:

Locality	Population	Providing 1 – 19 hrs of care	Providing 20 – 49 hrs of care	Providing 50 hrs or more of care	Total no providing care
North West (Rhyl)	28623	1863 (6.5%)	482 (1.7%)	1025 (3.6%)	3370 (11.8%)
North East (Prestatyn)	20743	1484 (7.2%)	343 (1.7%)	709 (3.4%)	2536 (12%)
Central	18061	1445 (8%)	212 (1.2%)	456 (2.5%)	2112 (11.7%)
South	23740	1767 (7.4%)	263 (1.1%)	536 (2.3%)	2566 (10.8)

These figures demonstrate a relatively even spread of the Carer population across all localities. However, the geographic spread of the population across the central and south localities in particular will inevitably result in Carers being **more isolated**, and **access to services more difficult**.

3.2 Number of Carers accessing support and services

It is difficult to be certain of the number of Carers who currently access support and services in Denbighshire, but the estimated numbers shown in the table below demonstrate that these numbers fall massively short of the estimated total number of Carers in the County, thus indicating that the large majority of Carers in Denbighshire are not receiving any form of support.

As shown in the table below, an estimated 1800 Carers in Denbighshire are receiving support services. It is likely that there will be duplication amongst the numbers shown as once a Carer is identified they often benefit from being signposted to other services available and ultimately receive support from more than one service provider.

Provider	Type of support / service	Est no of Carers	Source of Information
Adult Social Care – Carers of adults (generic)	Sitting service/practical support / ‘one off’ grants / planned respite beds / LD respite beds	295	Local Authority data
Adult Social Care	Respite provision (delivered as service to cared for person)*	95	“ *
Children’s Services - Parent Carers	Short term respite breaks/project workers/spot purchased services/holiday breaks	60	“
Adult Social Care – Direct Payments	Packages managed by Individual Carers to meet own needs	9	“
Diana Nursing Services (parent carers)	Specialist home based respite provision	40	Diana Nursing Service
NEWCIS (generic)	Regular information One to one/ Support Groups/ holistic therapies/ counselling. training/social activities	570	Organisation database
Hafal (mental health)	Regular information One to one/ Support Groups/ holistic therapies/ training/ social activities	140	“
Crossroads (generic)	Sitting service	116	“
NCH Young Carers	One to one / support groups/activities/training/social activities	50	“
Alzheimers Society	Regular information/Support Groups /	80	“

Stroke Association	One to one support / Training	170	“
Multiple Sclerosis Centre	Respite/regular information/counselling/holistic therapies/social activities	20	“
MIND (mental health)	Carers breaks (via service user project workers)	8	“
Learning Disabilities Forum	Regular information/ Social Activities	150	“

*Many statutory services that provide Carers with a break from their caring role are delivered to the cared for person following a Community Care Services assessment, and to which the charging policy applies. Thus, they are not recordable as Carers services. However, manual examination of adult social care records in 2007/08 reveal that a **minimum of 182 weeks of respite** were approved to provide Carer breaks, benefiting an estimated **95 Carers**.

3.3 Identifying Carers

'In the Know – the importance of information for Carers' (Carers UK Dec 2006) found that 65% of Carers did not identify themselves as a Carer in the first year of caring. For a third of Carers interviewed, it took over 5 years before they recognised they were a Carers. During that time they remained 'hidden' Carers. 58% of these had missed out on benefits for over 3 years, as well as missing out on practical support.

The report emphasised how critical it is for Carers to receive information in the first year of caring which will have a significant impact for advice and information services. It specifically highlights GPs and hospital staff as first ports of call for medical advice, and considers it vital that other key professionals, such as social workers, help by signposting Carers to sources of advice.

Turnover of Carers based on 2001 Census:

	No of Carers	New Carers every year
Denbighshire	10,677	3,950
Wales	340,745	126,076

The report also states that a similar proportion of Carers cease caring every year either due to bereavement or the cared for entering permanent residential care. It highlights the need to support Carers in these circumstances.

3.4 Carers of Adults Under 65 Years

Adults with Physical and Sensory Impairments

In Denbighshire, adults over the age of 18 years with a physical or sensory impairment are supported by the Specialist Adult Team. The needs of this group of adults are addressed in the new Physical and Sensory Impairment Commissioning Strategy. A recent study shows that staff from the Specialist Adults team are currently supporting 69 Carers in their caring role. The Strategy recognises that the future development of services for this group of

adults also serve to support Carers of those adults, to enable them to continue in their caring role.

Adults with Learning Disabilities

Adults over the age of 18 years with a learning disability in Denbighshire are supported by the Learning Disability Team. According to the recently developed Denbighshire Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disabilities, 94 service users are supported to live at home with their parents. More than half are living with parent Carers over the age of 65 who are providing the bulk of care. It is also possible that there are a number of adults with Learning Disabilities who are living with elderly parents or relatives but who are not currently known to services. The Strategy pays considerable attention to the expectations of parents and to the delivery of services that not only meet the needs of individual clients but also support parents and families.

Adults with Drug and Alcohol Dependency

Support for this group of service users is provided by the Drugs and Alcohol service which is part of the Specialist Adult Team, although the service links very closely with the Community Mental Health Service. As is the case with mental health service users, support for Carers can be particularly difficult often due to confidentiality issues or the service user's reluctance to engage in the service. Carers require a great deal of emotional support often due to a lack of understanding of the condition and lack of specific information provision.

3.5 Older Carers

Compared to the population of Wales, the age profile of Denbighshire is older: 23% are of retirement age compared to 20% nationally. A significant feature of the population is the proportion of older people aged over 65, representing 20.2% of the population (18,814). This compares to 17.4% for Wales. Projections predict that the proportion of the population aged 85+ in Denbighshire will rise from an estimated 2,700 in 2003 to 3,942 in 2016.

The 2001 Census shows that in Denbighshire, just over 10% of the population are aged 75 and over and provide care. In addition, the number of older people with dementia is predicted to increase from 683 in 2003 to 995 by 2016.

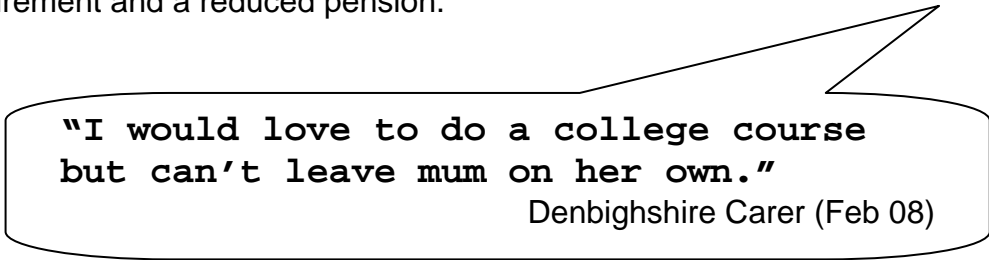
These statistics suggest that there will be a significant increase in the number of older Carers in Denbighshire over the next 8 years. Many older Carers are themselves in poor health and the strains of caring can lead to a deterioration in their health, often resulting in a Carer becoming the person in more need of care.

"I have always cared for my daughter who has learning disabilities. I am now 75 but no-one as ever asked me how I am"

Denbighshire Carer (Feb 08)

3.6 Carers of Older People (over 65 years)

This group refers to Carers who care for people over the age of 65, and who are themselves under the age of 65. According to the Census 2001, approximately 70% of Carers provide care for older people, although it is recognised that one in six Carers are older people themselves. For many Carers in this group, caring roles emerge over time, for example when an older person gradually becomes frail, or when someone with a progressive condition begins to need support. For others caring may come on suddenly and unexpectedly when an older person who was previously active and mobile suddenly has a stroke or a fall. As Carers in this group are of working age, managing work with caring responsibilities becomes difficult and Carers often give up work to continue caring. 'Out of Pocket', a survey on the financial effects of caring (Carers UK 2006), revealed that Carers in their late fifties and early sixties faced the biggest loss in earnings, and faced forced early retirement and a reduced pension.



**"I would love to do a college course
but can't leave mum on her own."**

Denbighshire Carer (Feb 08)

3.7 Young Carers

Carers who are under the age of 18 years are generally regarded as 'Young Carers'. Social Services Inspectorate guidance (1995) defines a Young Carer as 'a child or young person who is carrying out significant caring tasks and assuming a level of responsibility for another person, which would usually be taken by an adult'.

Whilst the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 and the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 applies to Carers of all ages, young Carers should be routinely assessed under 1989 Children Act. Whichever of these Acts they are assessed under, the new obligation to consider a Young Carer's wish to work, undertake education, training or leisure opportunities, still applies.

For a child to benefit from help under the Children Act 1989, it is necessary for the child to come within the definition of a 'child in need'. The 1995 Act states that 'Many young Carers with significant caring responsibility should therefore be seen as children in need'.

The most recent policy guidance concerning the assessment of young Carers is the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families. The guidance states that young Carers should not be expected to carry out inappropriate levels of caring which have an adverse impact on their development and life chances, and it should not be assumed that children should take on similar levels of caring responsibilities as adults. Services should be provided to parents to enhance their ability to fulfil their parenting responsibilities. The guidance highlights the need for good quality joint working between adult and children's social services, and co-operation from

schools and health care workers, including direct work with the young Carer to understand his or her perspective and opinions.

Where a child is providing regular and substantial care for a parent, the child will be entitled to an assessment under the 1995 Act and the local authority must take that assessment into account in deciding what community care services to provide for the parent.

In Denbighshire 60 young Carers receive support from the NCH Young Carers Project who offer emotional support on a one to one basis as well as group based activities and holiday breaks. A total of six groups are run across the county which accommodate two age ranges – 5 – 11 years and 12 – 18 yrs. One group in each age range meets in Rhyl, Denbigh and Corwen on a monthly basis.

Access to the service is by open referral, although the large majority of referrals are via Social Services. However, there is currently a waiting list of 50, over half are from the Prestatyn area.



"People just don't understand"

Denbighshire Young Adult Carer (Feb 08)

The priorities identified by this Strategy in terms of Young Carers cannot be taken forward in isolation, and must be developed in partnership with Children's Services, Education and the voluntary sector.

3.8 Carers of People with Mental Health Conditions

Carers play a vital role in helping to look after service users of mental health services, particularly those with severe mental illness. Providing help, advice and services to Carers can be one of the best ways of helping people with mental health conditions.

The Conwy and Denbighshire Integrated Partnership was established in July 2005 and oversees the provision of adult mental health services. The partners include Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust, Conwy and Denbighshire Local Authorities, the voluntary sector and service user and Carer board members.

From a needs assessment prepared for the Joint Strategic Commissioning Partnership (Mental Health and Social Care, Conwy & Denbighshire February 2007) it is clear that both Conwy & Denbighshire have significantly higher rates of mental ill health than other areas of Wales. Although there is a high incidence of mental illness amongst the 45-64 age group, which would suggest a potential impact on older people's services in the future, Denbighshire, in particular, has a significantly high rate of mental illness amongst people under the age of 25. The needs assessment goes on to state that admissions to acute mental health facilities are higher in Denbighshire than anywhere else in Wales. The number of adults in Denbighshire who are supported to live at

home is higher than the Wales average, which may suggest the potential for an impact on Carers.

In 2006 the Conwy & Denbighshire Adult Mental Health and Social Care Partnership Board set up a system of payments for service user and Carer board members and recruited permanent service user and Carer board members who have a strong commitment to the work of the partnership board.

"Carers needs to have a better understanding of mental health conditions to help them to care better for the people they care for."

Denbighshire Carer (Feb 08)

Elderly Mental Health (EMH):

According to the Audit Commission (2000 Report), dementia affects nearly 1 in 25 people over the age of 65 and 1 in 4 people aged 85+. Applying these percentages to the population and projected population of Denbighshire would give the following figures:

Year	Total no. of cases
2003	683
2006	771
2011	893
2016	995

Support for older people with mental health conditions is provided jointly by health and Social Services Elderly Mental Health Team. Carers for this group of service users gain benefits from periods of respite in specialist residential settings, with services such as Cornerstones and the Ace Club providing services for those with early onset dementia.

"Please ensure Denbighshire remains a forerunner in raising awareness and helping people with Alzheimers and dementia, and their Carers."

Denbighshire Carer (Feb 08)

3.9 Parent Carers

A parent Carer is a parent or guardian who has additional responsibilities and duties towards a son or daughter, whether a child, young person or adult because of a long term illness or a disability. Parent Carers will often see themselves as parents rather than Carers, but they may require additional services in order to meet or continue to meet the needs of their son or daughter.

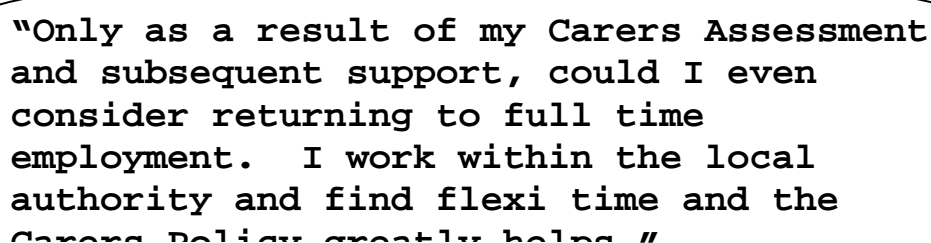
The needs of 'older' parent Carers are highlighted under 2.4 , and are specifically addressed in the recently published Denbighshire Strategy for Learning Disabilities, and the Strategy for Physical and Sensory Impairment.

The section below refers to parent Carers of those under the age of 18 years.

Parent Carers have a right to a separate assessment under the 1995 Carers Act in addition to their needs being fully addressed in their child's Children Act assessment. However, since the 2004 Act, the assessment should take into consideration the parent's ability to continue to provide care for the child and consideration of whether they work, undertake, or wish to undertake any education, training or leisure activity. This means that local authorities have a duty to ask Carers about these activities and take their wishes into account when planning the care package.

In reference to parent Carers, the English practice guidance to the 2000 Carers and Disabled Children's Act identifies the importance of providing such assistance, states "Such Carers often face difficulties re-entering the workforce because of lack of suitable child care services. Many parents of disabled children would like to return to work and, if they were able to do so, would benefit socially and emotionally as well as financially."

In Denbighshire, whilst parent Carers are entitled to a Carers assessment, they are generally assessed and will receive services for their family under the provisions of the Children Act 1989. Currently Denbighshire are involved in a North Wales initiative, led by Flintshire, to agree a common eligibility criteria for parent Carers across the six counties.



"Only as a result of my Carers Assessment and subsequent support, could I even consider returning to full time employment. I work within the local authority and find flexi time and the Carers Policy greatly helps "

3.10 Carers from Minority Groups

Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) Groups

The proportion of people from ethnic minorities in Denbighshire is low compared with the national average and is also below the average for Wales. The 2001 Census shows that 2.8% of the total population is non White British whilst only 1.2% is non white. Whilst the ethnic minority communities are scattered throughout Denbighshire, the proportions are highest in Bodelwyddan, St Asaph East and Rhyl West.

Denbighshire has the highest percentage of BME population aged 60-64 (21.7%) living in North Wales, 15.8% of the North Wales BME population aged 65-74 and 19% of the North Wales BME population aged 75+ (Source: North Wales BME Communities Research).

BME Carers have many of the same needs as white Carers but face particular barriers in gaining equal access to support services from health and local

authorities. They may be unaware of what services are available and how to access them, but in addition those services may not meet their religious or cultural needs. Establishing links with groups such as the North Wales Phillipino Community Group could provide valuable in considering how the needs of Carers from minority groups could be met.

Carers of Same Sex Partners

At present no information is available on the number of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people in the UK, therefore without a base-line it is not possible to obtain figures on this specific group of Carers in Denbighshire. However, the Alzheimer's Society campaign to raise awareness of issues for LGB Carers states that in the UK there are between 35,000 and 70,000 LGB people caring for a person with dementia. This is based on the fact that between 5% and 10% of the population is thought to be lesbian, gay or bisexual, and 750,000 have dementia.

The lack of information available places greater emphasis on achieving outcomes for Carers which are sensitive to their individual needs.

3.11 Working Carers

Based on the 2001 Census it estimates that there are 7,555 working age Carers in Denbighshire, and 4,636 working Carers ('Out of Pocket' Carers UK 2007).

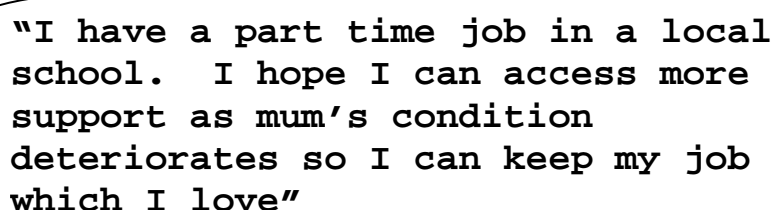
Carers are often in the lower threshold of income and earnings due to the difficulties they experience in remaining in employment whilst carrying out their caring duties. Carers who are able to work often find that their choice of employment is limited by their caring responsibilities. For Carers who are able to combine work with caring, the additional stress they may experience can be considerable.

Many young Carers under achieve due to difficulties in maintaining their education and being able to take up further education and employment opportunities.

The requirements of the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act in taking account of Carers' desire to work and access life long learning, remain a challenge both in terms of the assessment process, and the provision of suitable and responsive services to meet these needs.

Denbighshire County Council have already developed and implemented a Carers Policy for employees, and must use this as an example of good practice with other agencies.

3.12



"I have a part time job in a local school. I hope I can access more support as mum's condition deteriorates so I can keep my job which I love"

When caring comes to an end, either due to bereavement or the cared for person entering long term care, Carers often need specific support to enable them to cope with the different emotions and situations that they experience as a result. For many Carers this can mean new learning, employment and leisure opportunities. Although, many voluntary organisations in Denbighshire do support Carers and help them to 'move on', this provision has never been addressed formally.

4. THE IMPACT OF CARING

4.1 Impact on Health

'In Poor Health – The impact of caring on health' (Carers UK 2004) revealed that Carers who provide high levels of care are more than twice as likely to suffer from poor health compared to people without caring responsibilities.

Carers in younger age groups – ie 16 and up are significantly more likely to suffer ill health than non-carers of the same age. As Carers become older, the evidence suggests that they are far more likely to be caring with ill-health – at a similar rate to their own age group. In other words, if they already have ill-health and take on caring responsibilities, this could have a significant impact on their health. The report also states the Carers' poor physical and mental ill-health are due to a lack of information, support, concerns over finance, and the general stresses and strains of caring.

In Wales, nearly 15% of all Carers suffer from ill-health compared to 10% in England, 12% in Scotland and 13% in Ireland The picture for Denbighshire is as follows:

Denbighshire					
Total of Carers not in good health	% of Carers not in good health	Carers providing 50+ hrs of care/week in poor health	% of Carers providing 50+ hrs of care/week in poor health	% non-Carer population in poor health	Difference in likelihood
1,947	12.09	791	21.01	11.77	1.78

In the light of these findings, it is vital that we consider the health implications for Carers, and give due regard to services that promote and improve the health and well being of Carers.

4.2 Work, Educational and Financial Impact

Carers often experience difficulties in maintaining long term employment, and employment opportunities are considerably limited. This often places Carers in the lower threshold of income and earnings.

The financial impact of caring is more specifically highlighted in 'Out of Pocket' (Carers UK 2007) which reports that in 2006 Carers lost out on an average of £11,050 in earnings due to giving up work, reducing hours or taking on more junior positions.

4.3 The Positive Impact of Caring

It must be acknowledged, however, that caring can also have a very positive effect on Carers, the person they care for and their relationship. Caring responsibilities can bring with them their own rewards and satisfaction for the person who is caring. Where the roles are mutually agreed, it can bring an additional sense of closeness within the relationship,

Carers often take pride in the skills and knowledge they have acquired through their experience of caring, and must be recognised and valued for this.

5. CURRENT SERVICES FOR CARERS IN DENBIGHSHIRE

Denbighshire County Council funds a range of services for Carers. Details of the services that are funded are given in Section 6 on Resources. Defining services for Carers can be difficult as services provided for the cared for person such as personal care, day care and respite services (indirect services), should also benefit the Carer. More specific services that are provided to Carers can include sitting services(with no personal care), practical support, support groups, holistic therapies and training (direct services).

The majority of indirect services are provided by social services who also provide direct services such as practical support in the home, and a 'one off' grant scheme.

The majority of direct Carer support is provided by the voluntary sector by organisations offering 'specialist' support. The North Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS), however, has a generic remit in supporting Carers. Many of these services receive funding from Denbighshire Adult Social Care although it must also be acknowledged that voluntary sector organisations receive funding from other sources to support these services.

A comprehensive list of direct and indirect services and support currently available in Denbighshire has recently been compiled both for the purpose of developing the new Carers Strategy and the Denbighshire Community Services Framework. In addition the list also highlights gaps in services which have been identified by the service providers.

The services that are currently available to Carers in Denbighshire have been grouped under the following headings:

- 5.1 Information, advice and signposting services
- 5.2 Carer Support Groups
- 5.3 Listening Services / Emotional Support
- 5.4 Carer Assessments
- 5.5 Support in the Home
- 5.6 Day and Evening breaks (less than 24 hours)
- 5.7 Breaks (respite) from caring (more than 24 hours)
- 5.8 Promotion of health and well being (including access to life long learning and leisure)
- 5.9 Practical skills for Carers
- 5.10 Innovative solutions

5.1 Information, advice and signposting services

A wide range of information and advice to Carers about the range of services in Denbighshire is available, and includes a comprehensive generic information pack, and more specialist information. These are generally available in written format, although some website information is also available.

Main providers:

- a. First Contact Team within Social Services (Adults & Children)
- b. NEWCIS

- c. Hafal
- d. NCH Young Carers
- e. Alzheimers
- f. Stroke Association
- g. Multiple Sclerosis Centre
- h. Learning Disability Forum (for parent Carers)
- i. Home Treatment/Crisis Resolution Service (mental health)

5.2 Carer Support Groups

Carer support groups provide an excellent opportunity for Carers to provide mutual support, and to gain information from speakers and from each other. Groups are also used as a means of consulting with Carers forums as and when required. NCH Young Carers facilitate groups for two different age ranges (5-11 and 12-18 yrs).

Main providers:

- NEWCIS
- Hafal
- NCH Young Carers
- Alzheimers

5.3 Listening services / Emotional support

Carers can access a range of services that provide the opportunity to talk about their caring situation on a one to one basis. The level of support ranges from low level preventative support to specialist counselling services, with many organisations offering stress and anxiety management training.

Main providers:

- NEWCIS
- Hafal
- NCH Young Carers
- Alzheimers Society
- Stroke Association
- Multiple Sclerosis Centre
- C.A.L.L. Helpline

5.4 Carer Assessments

A Carer's Assessment is an assessment of a Carer's needs and not an assessment of a Carer's ability to care.

Assessments are currently carried out by social services staff and some health staff, and provide carers with an opportunity to talk about their caring role and identify how they can be supported.

The Unified Assessment Process is now used to assess the cared for person. It ensures that only one assessment is required to identify their care needs. The needs of Carers are also taken into account as part of the Unified Assessment Process. This part is called the Carers Perspective. The Carers Perspective is a very effective way of identifying Carers, and can determine whether a separate, more detailed Carers Assessment is required.

Main provider:

- Adult Social Care

5.5 Support in the Home

Support in the home is an essential component of a care package for both the cared for person and the Carer. This may include personal care for the cared for person (to support the Carer) or practical help for the Carer such as gardening or domestic chores. This could also include the provision of aids, equipment and telecare equipment.

The recent development of a new intermediate care service in Denbighshire is a key strand in delivering health and social care services. It is aimed at improving the provision of community care services, and reducing the use of both acute hospitals and long term care. The priority given to this area of development is clear both in local and national strategies. As this service develops it will be necessary to consider the impact of this service on Carers.

Main provider:

- Adult Social Care Home Care service
- Crossroads
- Independent Care agencies (either contracted out by adult social care or via private arrangement with family).
- Intermediate Care services
- Crisis Resolution / Home Treatment Service (Mental Health)
- Diana Nursing Services

5.6 Day and Evening breaks (less than 24 hours)

These can be provided in the home of the cared for person or in another setting such as a day centre or via work opportunities placements.

Main providers:

- Denbighshire County Council Day Care – Local Authority care homes – Prestatyn, Denbigh, Ruthin, Corwen
- Denbighshire County Council – Cornerstones, REMIT
- Crossroads
- Alzheimers – Ace Club
- MS Centre, Saltney
- Diana Nursing Service
- Family Placement Schemes (Children's services)
- MIND – project support workers
- MIND work opportunities projects for mental health clients
- Local Authority work options such as Meifod, Aberwheeler Nurseries and Popty'r Garn for learning disability clients.
- External work options providers such as Crest and Co-options for learning disability clients.
- Family Support Service for adults with learning disabilities

5.7 Short Term Breaks (respite) from caring (more than 24 hours)

This is provided as short term care for the cared for person. Currently eligible Carers can also access grant funding that can be used for a holiday break.

Main providers:

- Denbighshire County Council Homes
- Independent Sector (contracted out or by private arrangement)
- Learning Disability respite beds
- Family Placement Scheme
- Mental Health Carers Grant Contingency Fund
- Mental Health Carers Grant Planned Respite Beds
- NEWCIS - Noddfa breaks (retreat for Carers in Penmaenmawr) (Mental Health Carers Grant)

5.8 Promotion of health and well being

It is important that Carers are encouraged to consider their own health and well being, including access to leisure and life long learning. Whilst many of the services already listed support this, Carers can also access holistic therapies, and training in stress and anxiety management, and relaxation techniques. Partnership working with GP practices is also ongoing to improve recognition of Carers and to highlight the impact of caring on health.

Main Providers:

- NEWCIS (including primary care facilitator post)
- Hafal
- NCH Young Carers
- Alzheimers
- Stroke Association
- Multiple Sclerosis Centre
- Local Health Board – ‘Looking After Me’ course (Expert Patient Programme)

5.9 Developing practical skills for Carers

Carers can access opportunities to develop skills to enable them to carry out their caring role. This includes practical skills such as how to move the cared for person safely, and emergency first aid.

Main providers:

- NEWCIS
- Hafal
- NCH Young Carers
- Alzheimers Society
- Stroke Association
- Local Health Board
- MIND
- Multiple Sclerosis Centre

5.10 Innovative solutions

It is important that Carers are supported to identify their own needs and solutions. ‘One off’ grants are available to eligible Carers eg driving lessons, holiday breaks, DIY and decorating jobs.

Direct Payments are cash payments from Social Services, which enable Carers to 'buy in' their own services, although the payments cannot be used to buy services that provide personal care for the cared for person. Direct payments for Carers have been used to purchase services such as art classes, someone to sit with the cared for person, and practical assistance around the home.

6. RESOURCES FOR CARERS SERVICES

6.1 Current financial position

This section provides details of the current spend on services that provide support for Carers. As support services to Carers are often provided as part of a package of care to the cared for person, it is difficult to extrapolate information regarding the amount spent on these services, not least because we are not allowed to record such services as 'Carers' services.

Although some services such as mental health project workers continue to be funded from the former Carers Grant allocation, it would be fair to state that if it was possible to calculate the spend on care packages, and in particular respite provision, then Denbighshire's investment in Carer support would be considerably higher than demonstrated in this section.

The following table shows the total amount spent in 2007/08:

Funding Stream	Total
Adult Social Care Carers budget	£264,191
Local Authority Voluntary Sector Budget	£123,961
Former Carers Grant	£216,936
Mental Health Carers Grant	£153,303
TOTAL	£758,391

The breakdown of this spend is as follows:

6.1.1 Adult Social Care Carers budget:

Service	Budget
Provision of direct services including sitting service and practical support. (NB £33,962 was awarded from the former Carers Grant budget)	£264,191

6.1.2 Local Authority Voluntary Sector Budget:

Organisation	Brief outline of service funded	Funding
Alzheimer's Society – Rhyl & District Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core costs including staff costs • Monthly Carers meetings 	£2,059
NEWCIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core cost, including staff costs • Information provision • Support groups • One to one support • Consultation with Carers • Facilitate training course 	£37,682
Crossroads – South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respite service 	£25,095
Crossroads – North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respite service 	£48,874
Denbighshire Learning Disabilities Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core costs • Production of quarterly newsletter 	£10,251
	TOTAL	£123,961

6.1.3 Former Carers Grant allocation

This was a Welsh Assembly grant introduced in 2001 to stimulate the local development of services for Carers. It remained a 'ring-fenced' grant until 2005-06 after which time the resource was transferred into the local authority's revenue support grant. Since that time the services established with the grant monies have continued to be funded.

Organisation	Brief outline of service funded	Funding
Alzheimer's Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly 'Ace Club' for younger people with dementia, providing weekly break for Carers. 	£13,753
Crossroads – South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respite service 	£28,017
Crossroads – North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respite service 	£39,287
Hafal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family support worker (part funding) • Monthly support group • Social breaks/activities 	£2,742
NCH Young Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project work co-ordinator (part funding), • Young Carer groups • Social & educational activities/ training • One to one support 	£17,377
MIND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Opportunities Project for Mental Health service users providing breaks for Carers 	£21,354
MS Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach service support for Carers including counselling, information • Weekly 'relief time' for Carers • Relaxation therapies 	£10,300
NEWCIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers circle activities • Training sessions (stress management, First Aid, Moving & Positioning) • Holistic therapies 	£5,613
Oakleigh Community Mental Health Team (Llangollen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sessional support workers for mental health service users to provide Carers with a break (part funding) 	£3,181
Children with Disabilities Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project work • Respite services – nursery, after school clubs • Holiday breaks • Spot purchase domestic services • Spot purchase services from voluntary and private agencies to meet identified need. 	£28,017
Adult Social Care – Learning Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional respite beds for adults with learning disabilities. 	£13,333

Adult Social Care – Carer support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services tailored to meet individual needs identified via Carers Assessment. Services can include sitting services and practical support (part funding) 	£33,962
	TOTAL	£216,936

6.1.4 Mental Health Carers Grant

This is a 3 year grant scheme (2006 – 2009) to support Carers of people with mental health conditions, including dementia. In 2007/08 Denbighshire was allocated £153,303 which has been used to provide a range of services and support for Carers of people with mental health problems including dementia. This included an additional amount of £34,121 to support emergency planning for all Carers. At present, there is no indication as to whether this funding will be available beyond 2008-09, either as a ring-fenced grant or subsumed into the Revenue Support Grant.

In 2007-08 the grant was used to fund the following:

Service	Funding
Adult Mental Health - Home Treatment/Crisis Resolution Service – part funding for 3 Carer Support workers based at Ablett Unit	£41,200
'One Off' Grant Scheme for carers	£10,500
Planned respite beds to provide Carer breaks	£24,300
Commissioning Officer post for Carers services (part funding)	£21,428
Emergency Planning (rolled forward to 2008-09)	£34,121
'One off' services provided via the voluntary sector, including information packs, training courses, alternative therapies and social events	£14,089
5% admin	£7,665
TOTAL	£153,303

6.1.5 Other funding sources

The Denbighshire Older People's strategy has also provided financial support to develop Carers services, including funding for the Carers Information Pack, stress management courses and a counselling service for 'hidden' Carers. The use of the Denbighshire Night Rider service has also been extended to Carers.

Local Health Board funding

Some voluntary sector organisations also receive funding from the Local Health Board to support Carers. In particular this includes funding for NEWCIS to facilitate support for Carers within primary care.

The NCH Young Carers project also receives funding via the Denbighshire Children's Partnership from the Cymorth Fund which Welsh Assembly Government funding to support Children and Young People's Plan.

6.1.6 Contractual Arrangements:

At present, the local authority have Service Level Agreements with all Voluntary organisations in receipt of Voluntary Sector Grant funding, which incorporate agreed performance indicators and monitoring requirements.

The former Carers Grant funding has continued to be allocated as an 'in house' grant scheme, and organisations are required to meet reporting and monitoring requirements as originally specified under the grant conditions. However, no formal agreements exist in respect of this funding stream.

The Mental Health Grant Scheme allocation requires authorities to monitor services funded and provide reports to the Welsh Assembly Government.

As the authority is required to move towards more formal contractual arrangements with the voluntary sector, it will be necessary to combine the above funds to commission a range of services for Carers that meet the priority objectives of the Strategy. In addition, funding arrangements will need to be for a minimum three years to ensure greater stability for the voluntary sector, and clearer performance indicators will need to be agreed.

6.2 Financial Implications

This document has already highlighted the number of Carers who receive support and the large number who remain 'hidden' in our communities therefore it is likely that reaching out to more Carers will be one of the Strategy's fundamental objectives. This in turn, is likely to place a greater demand on services and on financial resources.

There are unlikely to be any additional resources available for new developments and as such, any new projects or developments commissioned will need to be either cost neutral, self financing, or offset against a de-commissioning action. In addition, the Mental Health Carers Grant comes to an end in March 2009 and as yet the Welsh Assembly Government has not indicated whether this funding is likely to continue.

Over the past two years it has been possible to retain the same level of funding for services originally funded by Welsh Assembly grant monies. However, Local Authorities are expected to make savings on budgets year on year, and, the continued pressures on budgets may well effect the level of funding for Carers services.

7. INVOLVING CARERS IN WHAT WE DO

Denbighshire has a Consultation Policy which sets out our process for all groups of people who use social services.

The Denbighshire Carers Strategy Group comprises representatives from the voluntary organisations that support Carers, and provides an effective means of consultation with the Carers that they support. The North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) has a more specific role to consult with Carers, and recently set up a Carers Consultation Network to increase Carers' opportunities to become involved in service planning and development.

The Carers Strategy Group also links in with other strategic groups such as the Older People's Partnership Board, in regard to Carers issues.

There is also a regular Adult Services Consultation Group chaired by the Head of Adult Social Care Services. This group is used as a conduit between groups representing users and/or carers, to receive and share information and to enable representatives to take back specific documents to their constituent groups for consideration.

The Conwy and Denbighshire Adult Mental Health Partnership Board has a more formal arrangement for involving and supporting service user and Carer representation. Two service users and one Carer representative sit on the Partnership Board, but in addition a network of service users and Carers has been established to enable wider consultation.

The Local Health Board comprises a Carer member who is able to provide a Carers perspective to the work of the Board as opposed to representing issues in relation to specific groups of Carers.

7.1 Involving Carers and those who work with Carers, in the development of the Strategy

The Denbighshire Carers Strategy Group has played an important role in the development of the Strategy both in involving Carers, and as providers of services to Carers. A reference group was established to ensure that other health and social care agencies and individuals who support Carers could also be involved. This group included social workers and health workers who were also able to provide good links with individual Carers.

Questionnaires

Two questionnaires, one for Carers and one for people who work with Carers, were developed to find out about the needs and priorities of Carers in Denbighshire. The responses received represented the different 'groups' of Carers highlighted in this Strategy. The findings from the questionnaires have been collated in a separate report, but the main priorities coming out of the questionnaires have been summarised in Section 8.

The findings of a Carers Questionnaire carried out in Spring 2007 for the purpose of the Denbighshire Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People have also been taken into consideration.

Carers Strategy Stakeholder event – February 2008

A consultation event for Carers, those working with Carers, and representatives from other relevant organisations and agencies was held at the Oriel House Hotel, St Asaph at the end of February. A total of 80 delegates attended, 40 of whom were Carers.

The event was chaired by Merfyn Roberts, Chair of Crossroads Wales. During the morning two Carers gave a very open and honest account of their caring experiences. All the delegates took part in a series of workshops to discuss different aspects of caring and services.

A separate report on the event together with a summary of the key findings from the workshops has been compiled.

Talking with Young Carers

The views of young Carers and those working with young Carers have been gathered less formally by interacting with them during two social events in the Easter holidays. 15 young Carers between the ages of 11 and 18 enjoyed an indoor bowling session, and 11 young Carers aged 6 – 11 years had great fun at the Loggerheads Country Park. Their views and comments have been drawn together in a separate report.

Visits to Voluntary Organisations

Visits were also made to voluntary organisations that provide services to Carers to gather information on the services they provide and their views on gaps in services. A summary of the findings have been compiled in a Community Services Mapping document.

Social Worker Training Sessions

Consideration has also been given to views and comments gathered from Denbighshire social workers during training sessions on Carers Services, held in July and August 2007.

8. A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVEMENT

In order to arrive at the priorities for Carers in Denbighshire, and the main actions for the Carers Strategy, we have looked at the findings from all the consultations carried out with Carers and with those who work to support Carers. We have also looked at the services that we already have for Carers.

It is important to note at this point that many of the comments that we have received from Carers were complementary of the services that they receive, particularly those provided by the voluntary sector.

This section highlights points that have been made repeatedly by Carers, and those working with Carers. We have set these out using the eight outcomes of the Carers Compass. In order to improve these outcomes for Carers we have listed a number of Key Actions.

8.1 Outcome 1: Full Information

To ensure that Carers are aware of how to access services and support, and that they receive timely information, and are fully informed on the nature of the illness or impairment of the person they care for

Carers in Denbighshire, and those working with Carers have said:

- Information for Carers and those who work with Carers within health and social care agencies, needs to be more widely available and in different formats. In particular more information needs to be available at Glan Clwyd Hospital.
- There should be better promotion of what is available for Carers with the general public, including in the media, on the internet, at community centres and supermarkets.
- Information needs to be timely and appropriate, including information that is specific to different conditions and illnesses, and what to do in an emergency.
- Information for mental health Carers needs to be available on the Ablett Unit and Llwyn y Groes, Wrexham.
- Information about young Carers needs to be available in schools and colleges for both teachers and students.
- Almost all voluntary organisations that provide information are located in North West Denbighshire. These services are less well known in the South of the county.
- Awareness, recognition and identification go hand in hand with information provision and signposting. Awareness raising is particularly fundamental, and needs to be addressed within all sectors including with the public.

Strategy for Improvement:

We will:

Key Action 1 Improve the provision of information on Carers rights, services and support, including the provision within secondary care.

Key Action 2	Improve the provision of condition specific information to Carers.
Key Action 3	Increase the promotion of Carers issues via a range of methods, including regular media coverage.
Key Action 4	Consider the development of a Denbighshire Carers website as an option for providing information for Carers and those working with Carers.

8.2 Outcome 2: Recognition and Health and Well Being

To ensure that Carers are recognised and have their own needs, including health needs, taken into account by practitioners and staff in health and social services.

Carers in Denbighshire and those working with Carers have said:

- Health professionals, in particular GPs, should be more proactive in identifying Carers and referring them onto appropriate services.
- Schools and colleges should be more proactive in identifying and supporting young Carers.
- Carer Support Groups run by voluntary organisations are a good way of providing emotional support, and providing opportunities for problem solving.
- Holistic therapies and stress/anxiety management courses are valued by Carers and benefit their health and well being. These services are usually provided by voluntary organisations but only when funding allows.
- The level of support for Carers within GP practices is not consistent, and there is no formal process for monitoring and auditing the support given to Carers within primary care.
- Alternative, flexible care is also important to promoting good health and well being for Carers.

Carers Assessments

- There needs to be better promotion of Carers Assessments with Carers and staff.
- The assessment form needs to be re-designed to focus more on the Carer. Carers should be included in the re-design.
- Consideration should be given to a dedicated post to carry out assessments, possibly within the voluntary sector.
- The assessment process is considered to be too bureaucratic and time consuming by many Carers and practitioners.
- Practitioners need to be clearer about the eligibility for assessments.
- There need to be clear outcomes as a result of an assessment.
- Regular reviews are important to meet changing needs.
- Young Carers and Carers of children under 18 are not currently assessed in their own right.

- Mental Health Carers and practitioners in particular, consider that there is often a conflict of interest for a practitioner in completing assessments for both the service user and the Carer.
- Recording of Carers Assessments on the local authority's management information system, needs to be clearer and more consistent to enable Denbighshire to record more accurately the level of support to Carers.

Emergency Planning for Carers

- Emergency Planning provides peace of mind for Carers but there should be options for Carers who do not want social services involvement.
- Emergency Plans should be developed as part of the Carers Assessment.
- A Carers Emergency Card should be introduced for Carers linked to a 24 hour response service.
- Emergency planning should start early, particularly if agency support is required.
- Emergency planning should be well promoted, ie via GPs, voluntary sector, hospitals.

Strategy for Improvement:

We will:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Key action 1 | Encourage health professionals, including GPs, to be more proactive in identifying Carers and referring them on to appropriate services. |
| Key action 2 | In conjunction with all relevant partners, increase the awareness and identification of young Carers within schools and colleges. |
| Key action 3 | Review the process for carrying out Carers Assessments for adult Carers including re-designing the assessment form with greater focus on the Carer as a service user, and consider the introduction of a 'self assessment' process as a 'first step' approach for Carers. Increase promotion of Carers Assessments with Carers and staff and improve internal processes for recording assessments. |
| Key action 4 | Consider the options for creating a dedicated post to carry out Carers Assessments. |
| Key action 5 | Work in partnership with Children's Services, in particular the implementation of the Children and Young People's Single Plan, to develop support for Young Carers. |
| Key action 6 | Work in partnership with Children's Services to develop support for parent Carers, and in particular to consider the findings of the Children's Services (North Wales) review of eligibility criteria for assessments for parent Carers. |
| Key action 7 | Develop a Carers Emergency Scheme for Carers to include a Carers Emergency Card and Emergency Plan. |

8.3 Outcome 3: A Life of their Own with quality services for the Carer and the person cared for

To ensure that Carers are supported to achieve a more fulfilled life, including access to leisure, employment and life long learning opportunities, by providing flexible, quality alternative care for the cared for person.

Carers in Denbighshire, and those working with Carers have said:

- Alternative, flexible care is key to enabling Carers to achieve a fulfilled life.
- Support for the Carer and cared for should be timely, and meet specific needs, particularly around transition (post 16 and post 65)
- Many Carers have difficulty accessing transport.
- Financial assistance or concessionary rates would help Carers to access leisure facilities.
- Improved information about what is available using different methods and a consistent approach, particularly to try and target male Carers.
- Organised events, activities and social outings for Carers.
- Courses that are specifically for Carers.
- Flexible employment policies.
- Promote the City & Guilds “Learning for Living” on line course designed specifically for Carers,
- There is a gap in services for young adult Carers who tend to disappear from services once they reach the age of 16.

Strategy for Improvement:

We will:

Key Action 1	Consider the options for improving the availability of more flexible short term breaks.
Key Action 2	Consider the options for improving the provision of alternative care in emergency situations.
Key Action 3	Encourage a more consistent level of support for Carers within primary care.
Key action 4	Link in with the new Denbighshire Children and Young People’s single plan to consider ways of improving the level of support to young Carers.
Key action 5	Promote the use of Telecare technology, where appropriate, to assist Carers in their role.
Key action 6	Submit proposal to European Convergence Fund to fund a project to support Carers into employment.
Kay action 7	Work with partners in education to assist Carers in accessing life long learning opportunities.

8.4 Outcome 4: Time Off

To ensure that Carers have access to a range of breaks and opportunities to take time off from their caring role.

Carers in Denbighshire, and those working with Carers have said:

- There needs to be improved and increased provision of flexible short term breaks – a ‘flexible menu of pick ‘n mix services’.
- Lack of services in the South of the County, in particular day care services, and respite care / sitting service. There is concern that the lack of provision results in services not being requested, which in turn can be perceived as a lack of need.
- Evaluation of the recent Carers telecare pilot in Denbighshire reveals that the service was particularly beneficial to Carers. Consideration should be given as to how telecare technology could be more widely used to support Carers, and promoted in positive manner.
- The Adult Social Care Carers budget which funds direct support services to Carers such as sitting services and practical support is currently overspent. Whilst some Carers receive continued services, there is no funding available to allow ‘new’ Carers to receive services.

Strategy for Improvement:

We will:

- Key action 1: Promoting the use of Telecare technology, where appropriate, to assist Carers in their role.
- Key action 2: Develop a more consistent approach for providing Carers with direct services following a Carers Assessment.

NB The key actions outlined in Outcome 3 are also relevant to this section, and will support Carers needs in taking ‘time off’ from their caring role.

8.5 Outcome 5: Emotional Support

To ensure that Carers have access to a range of services where they are listened to.

Carers in Denbighshire and those working with Carers have said:

- The majority of emotional support is provided via the voluntary sector.
- Having someone to talk to is very important – to discuss the caring role, and for problem solving.
- Consideration should be given to having a 24 hr dedicated telephone line for Carers with access to professional advice and support.
- Voluntary sector providers are located in North West Denbighshire despite having a service coverage across the whole of the County, and are less visible in the South.
- Currently the support provided by the Carer Support Workers based in the Ablett Unit with the Home Treatment Team is limited as the service has not yet expanded to the whole County.

- There is no formal provision of emotional support within local hospitals other than from the Family Support 'service (Cancer Centre), Children's (Paediatric) Service and the Stroke Association.
- Attendance at support groups tends to be improved if a specific activity or a speaker is planned and where the cared-for also attend, supported by professional staff.
- Consideration needs to be given to ways of supporting male Carers, who often find it more difficult to seek support.
- There is no formal advocacy service available for Carers.
- There is a lack of awareness of the services of NCH Young Carers in the South of the County, and lower attendance at group meetings compared to the groups in Denbigh and Rhyl. There is currently a waiting list of 26 in the Prestatyn area.

Strategy for Improvement

We will:

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|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Key Action 1 | Consider the options for developing a dedicated telephone line for Carers to provide support and access to professional advice. |
| Key Action 2 | Link in with the new Denbighshire Children and Young People's Single Plan to consider how support for Young Carers can be developed. |
| Key Action 3 | Work with partners agencies to develop more formal advocacy services. |

8.6 Outcome 6: Training and Support to Care

To ensure that Carers have access to a range of training opportunities that enable them to develop the practical skills required to carry out their caring responsibilities.

Carers in Denbighshire, and those working with Carers have said:

- The priority topics for Carers training were Carers Rights, Stress Management, Benefits and Challenging Behaviour.
- Moving and Positioning training needs to be timely. Consideration needs to be given as to how this could be provided more on a one to one basis.
- Transport and alternative care are key to Carers accessing training opportunities.
- The 'drop-off' at training sessions can be quite significant due to emergencies, or lack of alternative care.
- Sessions that include provision for the cared for person have a more consistent attendance rate.
- Training tends to be provided on an ad hoc basis, as and when funds permit.

Strategy for Improvement:

We will:

- Key action 1 Ensure that Carers have access to a range of regular and timely training opportunities that help them to develop practical skills for their caring roles.
- Key action 2 Continue to promote the 'Looking After Me' course for Carers (Expert Patient Programme Wales)

8.7 Outcome 7: Financial Security

To ensure that Carers are aware of benefits that are available to assist them, and that they can be signposted to agencies that can offer advice.

Carers in Denbighshire, and those working with Carers have said:

- There are no dedicated services offering support to Carers, eg Welfare Rights officer for Carers.
- Up to date information on benefits and entitlements is crucial, but information on its own is not enough. There should be help and support available to complete benefits forms etc.
- Carers Allowance should be increased and should be a stand alone benefit.
- There should be free or reduced rates for respite provision.

Strategy for Improvement

We will:

- Key action 1 Work closer with the Welfare Rights Unit and other advice agencies with a view to increasing the awareness of benefits entitlements, and supporting Carers to maintain financial security.

8.8 Outcome 8: A voice for Carers

To ensure that Carers contribute to the shaping and development of local services through forums, events and groups.

Carers in Denbighshire, and those working with Carers have said:

- Feedback to Carers following consultation is important. Carers need to know how agencies not only listen but respond. Positive feedback can motivate further involvement.

- Carers and Carer representatives should sit on planning groups / hospital committees, and should be 'employed' to do so.
- Carers have limited time to become involved in consultation, either by attending events or forums, or completing questionnaires.
- Questionnaires are an unreliable way of collecting information. The most vulnerable tend not to have time to be involved in consultation, Interviews and home visits would be a more effective means of gathering the views of Carers.

Strategy for Improvement:

We will:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Key action 1 | Continue to promote the involvement of Carers via forums, events and groups, but also consider ways of involving Carers who have greater difficulties in becoming involved. |
| Key action 2 | Ensure that Carers receive regular feedback following consultation . |
| Key action 3 | Ensure that all Social Care and Health Services planning groups have Carer representation on them, either via the direct involvement of a Carer or an appropriate Carer related organisation. |

9. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE STRATEGY

A detailed action plan will be prepared which will set out how the key actions set out in this document will be implemented. Many of the actions listed will involve our partners in health and the voluntary sector, as well as Carers themselves. Some actions will apply to all Carers whilst others will apply to different groups of Carers such as young Carers or Carers of people with mental health conditions. The action plan will also include time scales to achieve these improvements over the next three years.

The real success of the strategy will be measured by the impact it makes on the lives of Carers in Denbighshire. The Carers Commissioning Sub Group will monitor the progress of the action plan against the Carers Compass' outcomes for Carers.

We will ensure that efficient systems are put in place to measure the effectiveness of the Strategy. To manage and improve performance we will:

- Improve our recording and monitoring procedures for carers services. This will include services provided by the voluntary sector. Service providers will have agreed contracts or service level agreements, and clearer performance indicators.
- Monitor our performance against the national performance indicators for Carers, to achieve year end targets. This will include monitoring the number of Carers Assessments being undertaken, and the services that are provided following an assessment.
- Work with our partners in health to ensure that there is a consistent approach to supporting Carers within GP practices.
- Seek Carers' feedback, annually, on how well their needs are being met.

Denbighshire Carers Strategy Carers Questionnaire




We need the views of Carers to help shape a new Strategy for Carers in Denbighshire

Denbighshire Social Services are currently drafting a strategy for people who care for relatives, friends and neighbours who have a long term illness or disability. The Strategy will look at the existing range of services, and will consider how we might want services for Carers to look in the future. We also need to look at wider issues around raising the awareness and recognition of Carers and their needs, and how this could be achieved.

Please Note that the reference to Carers throughout this Questionnaire specifically relates to family Carers and **NOT** paid care workers. Please complete as many questions as you are able.

This document can be made available other formats on request.

Please contact:
Carys Williams

E:mail  carys.williams@denbighshire.gov.uk
Phone:  01824 706658 Fax:  01824 706660

If you would like to receive the consultation document or other information on the Carers Strategy please include your details below.

Name

Address

Telephone

E.mail

Please state your preferred format and language

1. Provision of Information to Carers.

This could include regular updated information on services to Carers, information at times of crisis, or information on the illness or condition of the person you care for. You may also wish to consider the way in which information is provided, eg newsletters, information packs, website information, e-mail.

Do you receive enough information to support your caring role? Yes No

1a. If Yes, what information do you receive and how could this be improved?

1b. If No, what information would you like, and how would you like to receive it?

2. Health and Well Being of Carers

Do you receive any support or services (voluntary or paid) that help you to stay healthy and well? Yes No

2a. If Yes, what support do you receive and how could this be improved.

2b. If No, what type of support would be helpful?

2c. Can you suggest how Carers could be helped to enjoy more community, leisure or social activities?

3. Recognition and Identification of Carers

There are approximately 11,000 Carers in Denbighshire, but only approximately 1,000 Carers are known to social services and the voluntary sector.

Do you have any views or comments on how we could improve the way we identify Carers, and how we recognise and respect Carers in Denbighshire?

3a. If you have any specific cultural needs, have these ever been addressed in relation to your caring role? (eg religion, language, ethnicity) If not, what would have helped?

4. Services for the Carer and Cared For

Do you OR the person you care for receive any services that give you support you as a Carer? Yes No

4a. If Yes, what support do you each receive and how could this be improved.

4b. If No, what type of support would be helpful?

5. Carers Assessments

Have you ever been offered an assessment of your needs as a Carer?

Yes No

If yes, and you then went on to receive an assessment:

5a. Did you receive new or additional services to support your needs as a Carer?

5b. Do you feel that the assessment process could be improved in any way?

5c. What services identified as a result of your Carers Assessment, were not provided?

5d. If you were offered an assessment but declined the offer of an assessment, why was this?

6. Emotional Support

Do you receive any emotional support in your caring role?

Yes No

6a. If yes, what support do you receive and how could this be improved?

6b. If No, what kind of emotional support would be helpful?

7. Training and Employment

7a. What kind of training would help you as a Carer?
(eg Moving & Positioning, Stress management, Challenging Behaviour, Carers Rights and Benefits, Personal Care)

7b. Many Carers have difficulty continuing in employment, and cannot access further education and life long learning opportunities because of their caring responsibilities. What do you feel would be helpful to enable Carers to remain in employment and/or take up training opportunities?

8. Financial Security

Carers can suffer financial constraints, often due to the cost of caring, having to give up a job to care, or not accessing the benefits that are available to them and the person they care for.

Can you suggest ways in which Carers' financial situations could be improved?

9. A Voice for Carers

Carers are often asked for their views and comments on new services and documents, usually by completing Questionnaires or an invitation to attend consultation events.

How could these methods be improved or how else could Carers be involved?

The Future Development of Carers Services

What services for Carers do you think Denbighshire should invest in for the future, and why?

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It would be helpful if you were willing to provide us with the following information: (please tick the appropriate boxes)

What is your relationship to the person you care for?

Husband/Wife/Partner Parent Son/Daughter
Grandson/Granddaughter Other relative Friend/Neighbour

What is the main condition of the person you care for?

What age group is the person you care for?

(If you are caring for more than one person, please indicate age group of all persons you care for)

0 – 16 yrs 17 – 25 yrs 26 – 49 yrs 50 – 64 yrs 65 – 74 yrs 75 + yrs

What age group are you?

0 – 16 yrs 17 – 25 yrs 26 – 49 yrs 50 – 64 yrs 65 – 74 yrs 75 + yrs

Are you in employment?

Yes No If yes, how many hours do you work?

Please include any other comments you wish to make

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Thank You for filling in this questionnaire
Please return by Monday 18 February 2008 in the FREEPOST envelope attached