



Do you care for someone
in Staffordshire?

Then you should read this

If you are a carer, you are not alone. Carers provide an enormous contribution not only to the person they care for but to wider society.

Our goal is to shape a future where all carers are recognised, valued and supported across Staffordshire. We know that individual carers' requirements are seldom identical. We think that our proposed changes to personalise each carer's assessment should lead to increased freedom of choice and bespoke solutions to help them in their own unique caring role.

Caring for someone is a demanding job, it can be very tiring, emotionally draining and require significant commitment often at the expense of the carers own needs. It can also be a very rewarding and fulfilling role.

This booklet explains important proposals that we believe will improve outcomes, independence and choices for you as a carer. It also suggests how you can take part in a consultation to let us know what you think. We have highlighted the main ways in which we'd like to change the county council's current policy on page 6.

Our proposals are set out in two documents.

The first is called the 'Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carers 2011-2016'. This strategy describes how we hope to work together with local services and other organisations to provide carers with the support services they need.

The second is a proposed policy and guidelines for the county council which focuses on the needs of carers. This is the 'Carers' Assessment and Provision of Services policy'.

This booklet summarises the main points of both these documents, please read carefully before sending us your comments; we'll tell you how to contact us at the end of this booklet. Full versions of both the proposed strategy and policy are available online at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/carersconsultation.

Joint Commissioning Strategy 2011-2016 summary

Our Strategy details how we'd like to work closely with other services across Staffordshire over the next five years to support both young and adult carers. It is about acknowledging the crucial role of carers by introducing measures which will help them in their caring role.

This Strategy sets out a vision that carers will be universally recognised and valued as being fundamental to strong families and stable communities.

Recent government proposals underpin what we have been delivering in Staffordshire. If partners across the county sign up to this plan and work together, carers of people living in Staffordshire will be supported in a more holistic way to meet individual needs.

Our goal is to influence eight areas which affect you as a carer.

1) Information and Advice

We aim to:

- ◆ Help carers to get hold of good quality information and advice. This might be in person, through traditional publications or electronically via the internet.
- ◆ Raise awareness of carers by working closely with health and care professionals.
- ◆ Start a carer 'champion' network which will promote the rights of carers within statutory services.

2) Recognise carers' expertise

We aim to:

- ◆ Promote ways of getting carers' views heard where it matters.

3) Carers' assessments and reviews

We aim to:

- ◆ Increase the number of carers' assessments and annual reviews. These will be focused on clear, agreed results.



4) Health and wellbeing

We aim to:

- ◆ Work with health professionals to identify carers early on so they can be directed to services which can help them. GPs, care support workers and community nurses in particular would be targeted for this.
- ◆ Help carers to get regular health checks, emotional support and training to help maintain their own health and mental wellbeing.
- ◆ Work with GPs to develop registers of carers in surgeries
- ◆ Develop workshops to help carers with health promotion, mental wellbeing, managing stress, handling crisis situations and relaxation.
- ◆ Offer training sessions to help carers understand and manage a variety of issues. These might include long term conditions, mental illness, dementia care, challenging behaviour, first aid, health and safety, assistive technology (mechanical and/or electronic aids to improve quality of life and independence) and moving and handling.

5) Support for carers

We aim to:

- ◆ Help carers find opportunities to take planned breaks, emergency breaks or breaks available at short notice depending on individual circumstances and/or assessment. We will do this by working closely with third party organisations.
- ◆ Promote and encourage the day to day use of assistive technology.
- ◆ Review and amend the specifications of each of our current core services for carers and ask third party organisations to tender for them where appropriate.

6) Accessible services for all carers

We aim to:

- ◆ See that services are available equally to all carers by working with Black and Minority Ethnic community contacts and community groups.

7) Development of skills, training and leisure opportunities

We aim to:

- ◆ Work with communities and volunteers to build sustainable support and leisure networks for carers.
- ◆ Work with the 'Adult and Community Learning' service, partner organisations and carers to develop a range of informal and leisure activities for carers.
- ◆ Work with 'Job Centre Plus' and 'Care Partnership' managers to make sure carers are aware of ways they can get back into employment.

8) Support for young carers

We aim to:

- ◆ Work to increase the recognition, awareness, identification and assessment of young carers' roles, needs and circumstances
- ◆ See that young carers can easily get understandable information appropriate to their age.



Carer's Assessments and provision of Services policy summary

If you are a carer this proposed policy is very important. It sets out clearly our proposals for which discretionary services and support that carers may be able to get if they care for someone in Staffordshire. It is important to understand that this is intended to replace our current policy.

If you provide substantial care on a regular basis, perhaps to a relative in Staffordshire, then this consultation may affect you. The proposed policy will not apply to professional or volunteer carers.

Conducting this consultation and reviewing our policy gives us the opportunity to make things clearer for you and fairer for all. We want to make sure that any assistance we may give is properly accounted for and makes the best possible use of public funds.

The biggest proposed changes concern the use of direct payments for carers. At the moment no agreement has to be made between a carer and ourselves to account for how these direct payments will be used.

Every time we use public money in this way we think it will be fairer to everyone, and better practice, if we agree and record how it's intended to be used. This will result in consistency across the board. We also want to gauge how successful each payment has been in supporting the carer.

Main changes in the proposed policy which might affect you

In terms of the proposed policy, and how it will work if implemented, these are the big changes we intend to make:

- ◆ The carer's support plan will detail the outcomes to be achieved to support the carer and how these will be met.
- ◆ The carer's support plan will be reviewed to see if outcomes are being met and whether payments should continue to be made.
- ◆ Weekly payments for general support will no longer be made. However there will be a strong emphasis on directing carers to carers services available in Staffordshire.
- ◆ Eligible carers may get one-off direct payments or other support, depending on their circumstances.
- ◆ If we find that a direct payment has not been spent as agreed in the carer's support plan we will require them to give the money back.





Here is a summary of the proposed policy.

- ◆ Every carer is entitled to ask for an assessment to see if they could be eligible for support.

The assessment will:

- ◆ Recognise the knowledge and expertise of the carer.
- ◆ Consider what the carer wants to happen.
- ◆ Aim to maintain the carer's own health and well-being.
- ◆ Help sustain carers who choose to continue to care.
- ◆ Consider the extent to which carers are able to look after their own needs and other daily routines.
- ◆ Consider carers' relationships and their cultural and religious needs
- ◆ Consider carers' wishes to continue or take up employment, leisure, learning and other interests and commitments.

- ◆ Identify any support which carers need to continue their caring role
- ◆ A friend, relative or advocate can be present during an assessment.
- ◆ If the person being cared for consents to respite care (or a sitting service) this can be considered if it helps toward the outcomes outlined in the carer's support plan (see later under 'Outcomes for Carers). If the service provided during respite also includes personal care, the person being cared for must consent.
- ◆ The person being cared for is responsible for paying their usual contribution for any planned respite care they receive to give their carer a break.
- ◆ No such contributions apply to direct payments to carers or to carer specific services.
- ◆ The carer's assessment should be reviewed annually.



Carer's direct payments

- ◆ Carers Direct Payments are county council payments available locally to those who have been assessed as eligible to receive help from Adult Social Care.
- ◆ If a carer chooses to have the direct payment then it:
 - ◆ can be used by a carer to buy in services to support their caring role as long as these have been agreed in their personal assessment. Payments can also be used by agreement to access leisure, training, employment or to maintain their own health and wellbeing.
 - ◆ must be clearly linked to agreed outcomes in the carer's personal assessment and support plan which cannot be met by any other means.
 - ◆ will be reviewed, and checks may be made to ensure payments have been spent on achieving outcomes identified in the carer's personal assessment. Where we find a direct payment has not been spent as agreed in the carer's support plan we will require the money back.

- ◆ will be for a limited amount each assessment year for eligible carers to spend on their identified outcomes.
- ◆ will not be counted as income if carers apply for means-tested benefits.
- ◆ can be paid in a single payment or in installments, but will be for one year only.
- ◆ does not have to be used to cover emergencies.

Support and services for carers

These fall under four broad categories:

◆ Planned breaks for carers

These breaks take the form of replacement care which is programmed into the support plan of the person being cared for. The person being cared for will be asked to pay towards their care in the usual way after a means test. Replacement care might be provided at home, in a day centre or in a residential or nursing home. It may be a regular or a 'one off' service.



◆ **Unplanned carers' breaks**

Ring and Respond means carers can purchase flexible, home based respite care at short notice. It is designed so that carers have an opportunity of time to themselves which hasn't been planned well in advance. Ring and Respond is available, at only 48 hours notice, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for up to 12 hours, subject to availability and conditions. There are currently two care providers offering Ring and Respond Services, their contact details are as follows:

Allied Healthcare **01785 811112**

Crossroads Care Staffordshire **01782 268391**

Carers who are eligible for direct payments will be able to use them to purchase this service if it helps to meet an agreed outcome in their support plan.

For details of the service and how it can be used visit:

www.staffordshire.gov.uk/health/carers/ringrespond/providers

◆ **Emergency Support for Carers**

If something unexpected happens which makes it impossible for a carer to continue caring we have an emergency service standing by ready to provide help and reassurance. This is currently available through 'Crossroads Care Staffordshire' on 01782 268391. Their details are here:

www.staffordshire.gov.uk/health/carers/ringrespond/providers

(Note: you will need to register in advance with this service before you can use it.)

◆ **Other services which provide information, advice and/or support for carers include:**

- ◆ North Staffordshire Carers Association and Carers Association Southern Staffordshire.
- ◆ NHS Short Breaks Fund.
- ◆ Helplines.
- ◆ Websites such as Carers UK, Age UK or Alzheimer's Society
- ◆ Emergency Scheme with Crossroads.
- ◆ Adult Placement Scheme.
- ◆ Stroke support groups.
- ◆ Dementia support workers.
- ◆ Alzheimer's cafes.
- ◆ Local carers' groups or other voluntary agencies or support groups.
- ◆ Department of Work and Pensions for Carer's Allowance.
- ◆ Other benefits such as concessionary rates.
- ◆ Staffordshire Cares Direct
- ◆ General sources of information about any conditions the person being cared for may have.



Outcomes for Carers

Carers have identified the following six areas which are important to them:

1. Quality of life for the person receiving care:

- ♦ personal cleanliness and comfort;
- ♦ independence;
- ♦ personal safety and security;
- ♦ maintaining important social contacts;
- ♦ maintaining dignity and morale.

2. Quality of life for the carer:

- ♦ maintaining their physical health, fitness and well-being;
- ♦ peace of mind with relief from anxiety about the person they care for;
- ♦ freedom to have a life of their own with a feeling of being in control;
- ♦ avoiding social isolation;
- ♦ maintaining a positive relationship with the person they care for;
- ♦ managing any conflicts sensitively;
- ♦ adequate financial security.

3. Recognition and support for their caring role:

- ♦ time to unload their concerns to a non-judgemental listener;
- ♦ being able to define the limits of their caring role;
- ♦ feeling informed, skilled and equipped for their caring role;
- ♦ a sense of satisfaction or achievement in caring;

- ♦ a sense of shared responsibility;
- ♦ recognition of their personal knowledge and understanding
- ♦ being able to manage the physical and practical tasks of caring.

4. Access to information to help them manage better:

- ♦ information about carer support groups and what's going on in the area;
- ♦ information about the condition of the person they care for and specialist clinical support/ groups;
- ♦ websites/information and helplines;
- ♦ information about benefits, concessions and courses.

5. How things are done by services:

- ♦ being valued and respected as an individual;
- ♦ recognition of their needs and expertise;
- ♦ having a say in how services are provided for the cared for person
- ♦ a positive relationship with practitioners and service providers;
- ♦ professional services should be easy to access with a minimum of bureaucracy whenever they are needed.

6. Support to think ahead and plan:

- ♦ carers should have a 'Contingency Plan' such as the one drawn up in the 'Crossroads Emergency Scheme' for carers. In our 2008 survey, 74% of carers who had an emergency plan said it gave them reassurance.



We need your views

Now that you've read our proposals it really is important to us that you let us know what you think. We will need to get your comments no later than 20th July 2011.

Remember, the information in this booklet is presented as a summary. If you would like to read the full length versions of the strategy and proposed policy before you comment they are both available at

www.staffordshire.gov.uk/carersconsultation.

If you would like a printed copy of the full length draft strategy and proposed policy call **0300 111 8000** or email carersconsultation@staffordshire.gov.uk.

How can I send you my comments?

There are five ways you can let us know what you think:

1. Visit www.staffordshire.gov.uk/carersconsultation and complete the online form.
2. Email comments to carersconsultation@staffordshire.gov.uk.
3. Comment in person and ask questions at our presentations on the following dates:

7th July 2011

Rising Brook Church, Burton Square, Stafford ST17 9LT
10 am Start

8th July 2011

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Moorlands House, Stockwell Street, Leek, ST13 6HQ
1pm Start

As all venues have a limited capacity and attendance at these meetings is on a first come, first served basis. It is important that you book a place in advance by calling **0300 111 800**. Be sure to let us know if you have any special requirements.

4. If you were sent this booklet with a letter, complete the form which came with it and return it in the prepaid envelope (no stamp is needed).
5. Write to us at:

Staffordshire County Council
Carer's Consultation
Long Term Conditions Team
Joint Commissioning Unit
Wedgwood Building
Tipping Street
Stafford. ST16 2DH.



Who else are you involving?

We are inviting a wide range of individuals and organisations to give their views (see www.staffordshire.gov.uk/carersconsultation for the full list)

If you think there is someone else who should have the chance to comment, please pass this booklet on to them or ask them to contact us (see back cover).

What will happen to my comments?

After the closing date for the consultation we will consider all comments carefully and may revise our plans to reflect them. We will treat your comments with respect and keep to the Data Protection Act 1988.

Will I be able to see a report of the consultation feedback?

You will be able to see a report of the consultation feedback from 24th August 2011 at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/carersconsultation. You can also ask for a copy by calling or emailing us (see back cover)





How can I contact you?

You can call us on **0300 111 8000** or send us an email to **carersconsultation@staffordshire.gov.uk**.

Your views are very important to us and we welcome your opinions. Thank you for your time.

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, audio tape/disc, British Sign Language or any other language, please ring **0300 111 8000**