

A Strategy for Carers

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Background:

- Joint Carers' Strategy, has been refreshed to address the needs of the 19,000+ Carers who live in Tower Hamlets (Census, 2011).
- 6.5m Carers in the UK, (2011)
- Strategy refreshed following the implementation of the Care Act 2014, Children and Families Act 2014 and the Nationals Carers' Strategy
- The strategy covers young, parent and adult carers.
- Strategy pulls together local data, Carers JSNA (October 2016), carer and professional feedback and provides the strategic framework for how Carers will be supported in Tower Hamlets over the next three years

Benefits:

- An opportunity to review carers' services across the system
- Investment in carers so they can continue their caring role
- Economic value of the contribution made by carers in the UK is now estimated at £132 billion per year, equivalent to £15.1m per hour (Valuing Carers 2015, Carers UK)
- Doing nothing puts reputations at stake and potentially increases health and social care costs
- Deters the cared for from depending on long term health and social care services and encourages use of their own resources

Priorities in the carers' strategy

- **Identification and recognition**

Carers do not always identify with the term 'carer' and feel that health and social care professionals do not always recognise their role in relation to the person being cared for

“Over half of carers (54%) took over a year to recognise their caring role. Almost one in four carers (24%) took over 5 years to identify as a carer, and nearly one in ten (9%) took over 10 years.”

- **Realising and releasing potential**

Empower Carers to fulfil their work potential, to protect their own and their family's current and future financial position and to enjoy the health benefits and self-esteem that studying, paid employment or self-employment can bring

“For half of carers (52%) missing out on support impacted negatively on their finances”

<https://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/missing-out-the-identification-challenge>

Priorities in the carers' strategy...

- **Supporting carers to stay healthy**

Carers have described to how the caring role can often have a detrimental impact on their own health and wellbeing.

“Half of carers (50%) said that missing out on support had an impact on their physical health”

- **A life outside of caring**

The provision of good information and advice at an early stage will help young and adult Carers to access support before they reach crisis point.

“Three quarters of carers (78%) suffered from stress and anxiety as a result of missing out on support”

- **Transition**

The transition between Children and Adults Services should be as seamless as possible and should start as early, ideally at 14 years .

<https://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/missing-out-the-identification-challenge>

Current work:

- Carers' strategy is awaiting approval from Cabinet, 7th March 2017
- Carers' Dignity Charter is being co-designed embedding key principles from the Carers' Strategy and NHS Commitment to Carers' policy
- PAN Provider Forum on 20 February 2017 at the PDC, invitation extended to all GP's and Practice Managers as the topic is Carers (so far...nobody has accepted)
- Council has appointed dedicated Carers Commissioning Manager who will support the co-design of action plan and service specifications, focusing on health and social care

Feedback:

- Carers UK report (Pressure Points) found that of the 4 in 10 carers who have taken their loved one to A&E in the past 12 months believe their admission could have been prevented, because it was impossible to see a district nurse or a GP out of hours.
- For many people, looking after an ill, older or disabled loved one doesn't have a name, it is 'just something you do'. However, not recognising carers are carrying out a caring role can be a real barrier to accessing vital support
- The council spends approximately £2.2m on Carers, through core resources and BCF, this is an opportunity to review spend across health and social care
- Annual health check is incentivised via the NIS but need a mechanism to engage with carers under 40 years old, GPs are usually the first point of contact
- Carers should be involved in all part of service delivery and the strategy realises this as a priority, to avoid carer reaching a crisis point
- It is expected all health and social partners will sign up to the Carers' Dignity Charter

Questions?

What can you do?