

Cwm Taf Carers Strategy 2016-2019

Executive Summary



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MERTHYR TUDFUL

Executive Summary of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy 2016 – 2019

Cwm Taf University Health Board (UHB), Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) County Borough Council are committed to working together to improve the ways we provide support to Carers of all ages. We have developed this Strategy in order to explain how we are going to do this. The Strategy is also in response to the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB) and the repeal of the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010.

Vision and Principles

Throughout health and social care communities, there is an increasing emphasis on supporting people in ways that help them to retain their ability to live in the community, maximise their independence and give them choice and control over the services they receive. It is also important to promote and improve health and wellbeing, providing preventative services and early intervention.

For many people, this will involve help and support from a Carer. This Strategy is about what we need to do to support Carers, understanding and meeting any needs they may have in their own lives, as well as working together with them to address the needs of the person they are caring for. Based on what Carers have told us, we have developed a Vision Statement:

Carers of all ages in Cwm Taf will be recognised and valued as being fundamental to supportive and resilient families and communities. They will not have to care alone and will be able to access information, advice and support to help meet their needs, empowering them to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, balancing their caring role and their life outside caring.

To underpin our Vision, we have identified the following principles which reflect what Carers say is important to them:

- ***Recognition and Respect***
- ***Working together***
- ***Integration of services***
- ***Accessibility***
- ***Tackling isolation***
- ***Focus on actions and outcomes***

Carers: an Overview

We recognise that there is no typical Carer. Carers of all ages, whether Young Carers, Young Adult Carers, Parent Carers of children with a disability, working age or older Carers, look after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The care they provide can be physical, emotional or social. Carers are individuals who may not see themselves as Carers, but consider themselves above all a parent, wife, husband, partner, son, daughter, friend or neighbour.

For Cwm Taf the 2011 census showed:

- 12.6% of the population in Merthyr Tydfil and 12.5% in Rhondda Cynon Taf provided care to a family member, friend or neighbour.
- In RCT there were 29,640 Carers and in Merthyr there were 7,427 Carers. The combined total of Carers in the Cwm Taf area was 37,067.
- The percentage change in the number of Carers of all ages providing care in Cwm Taf from the 2001 census to the 2011 census was 3%. This included an equal increase of 3% in both males and females providing a caring role.

It is probable that the number of Carers is even higher, as the census indicated there are over double the number of people reporting a long term limiting illness compared with the number of people reporting themselves as a Carer.

Engagement with Carers and other Stakeholders

Cwm Taf recognises the importance of Carers getting their voices heard and that both Carers and service users are engaged and consulted to ensure that their needs are being met. It is essential that Carers are recognised as key partners in care and that their invaluable perspective is taken into account when developing future services.

As part of this engagement, Carers were involved in a variety of focus groups, workshops and meetings. Information and questionnaires were also provided online on partner websites and through the Cwm Taf Consultation Hub. The use of social media and other communication mechanisms were also used.

Examples of the most common issues raised were:

- Access to respite and short breaks to recharge batteries and more free time for young Carers to spend with friends/socialise.
- Professionals should respect, communicate and listen to Carers.
- More practical support would ease the pressure on Carers.
- More emotional support would prolong the health and wellbeing of Carers.

Improving outcomes for Carers – Our Key aims

Having reviewed our current services, the developments we have made implementing the Carers Measure from 2012-2015, the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and taking on board the views expressed during engagement and consultation with Carers and staff, we have developed the following 5 key aims:

- **Aim 1. Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions**

Raising awareness amongst the public and with our staff about who Carers are, what they do and how important it is to identify them and understand their caring role.

For example through Annual Carers Champions conference to share information and best practice across the network

- **Aim 2. Providing up to date, relevant and timely information, advice & assistance to Carers of all ages**

Making it easier for people to find out about care and support services available in their area, both for themselves as a Carer and for the person they care for.

For example through the implementation of the new Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) service required by the SSWB Act

- **Aim 3. Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of Carers of all ages**

Enabling Carers to access appropriate support to help them carry out their caring role effectively and meet a range of needs, including maintaining their physical and emotional health and wellbeing, accessing education, training and employment opportunities and participation in activities outside their caring role.

For example, through developing and commissioning a wider range of preventative services to promote health and wellbeing, early intervention and minimise the escalation of crises.

- **Aim 4. Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice & control over their lives**

We recognise the need to improve Carer involvement in decision making within Cwm Taf to ensure that Carers are valued as partners in care and that the care and support they provide is recognised.

For example, to continue to engage meaningfully with Carers of all ages through an active and participative process which captures their aspirations

and priorities by using an assets based approach which provides insight into their needs, what the best solutions may be and who is best placed to provide or contribute to these.

- **Aim 5. Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages**

Through partnership working, between Carers, statutory and voluntary organisations, to create and sustain an environment where adults, young people and families have access to information, support and opportunities relevant to their caring roles. We will need to deliver local services in a joined up manner to meet the needs of individuals and maximise the resources available to ensure Carers and their families achieve a greater degree of independence and improved quality of life.

For example through “Make every contact count”, by maximising opportunities from other programmes of work e.g. Health and Housing project in Tylorstown, UHB’s Inverse Care Law project to identify and capture views from Carers and look for new ways to meet their needs

Implementation and Delivery

To achieve the Vision set out in the Strategy will require a multi agency and partnership approach. A cross section of agencies will need to commit to the delivery of the Strategy. Each has a role to play enabling Carers and the cared for to live as independently as possible and maintain a good quality of life.

We will establish a Cwm Taf Carers Partnership Group and any specific Task and Finish groups needed to be responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Strategy and monitoring performance. The Groups will include Carers representatives.

Annual Action Plans

The Cwm Taf Carers Strategy is not a fixed and final plan but a framework which sets out what will be taken forward over the next three years. Annual Action plans will be developed which will detail key actions, lead responsibilities, timescales, resource implications and performance measures, which will focus on the outcomes we want to achieve.

Outcomes we want to achieve and monitoring progress

The success of this Strategy and the benefits it delivers will be reviewed regularly. It will be a partnership plan and a variety of staff within a wide range of sectors will be responsible for working in collaboration to implement it effectively.

Progress will be reported to the Cwm Taf Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership Board, as well as the individual organisations i.e. the two Local

Authorities and the Health Board. We will also have to report on our plans for Carers to Welsh Government.

Copies of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy, an easy read version and welsh translated documents will be available on partner websites:

- www.rctcbc.gov.uk
- www.merthyr.gov.uk
- www.vamt.net
- www.interlink.org.uk
- www.cwmtaflhb.wales.nhs.uk

If you require further information, please contact the Health and Wellbeing Improvement Manager at Cwm Taf University Health Board on 01443 744800 or e-mail: Rhian.Webber@wales.nhs.uk