

CARING TOGETHER IN BELFAST



A Plan for Supporting Carers in Belfast 2017 - 2020

‘As a carer, you often forget about yourself
and that you need care too’ (Local carer)

This is a summary of the BHSCT's second plan to support Carers, which shows our ongoing commitment to improving the range and quality of services provided for Carers. It has been written jointly by Carers and staff.

This plan covers the period 2017 – 2020 and is about and for people who care for a family member or a friend in need of assistance or support. This also includes BHSCT staff who have a caring role.

“Our vision is that through our Carers’ Strategy we will deliver the highest quality support, for our Carers living in the Belfast area, as well as Carers of people who use our Regional services. We are committed to making sure our Carers of all ages are at the heart of everything we do in the Belfast Trust.”

TRUST CHAIRMAN

In Belfast
43,000
people of all ages
are Carers
NI Census 2011

Carers who
do not get a break
are more likely to
suffer from
**poor mental
health**
Carers UK

The support that
Carers provide
each year is worth
£942m
in Belfast
Carers UK

There are
1,500
Young Carers
in Belfast
NI Census 2011

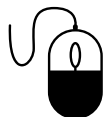
Who are Carers?

Many do not call themselves carers, but see themselves as a husband or wife, mother or father, partner, grandparent, child, friend or neighbour.

- Carers include those caring for frail older people, those living with long-term medical conditions, those with a mental illness, children or adults with a disability and those receiving palliative care
- Carers can be of all ages from young carers through to carers of working age to older carers
- A Young Carer is a child or young person up to the age of 17 and a Young Adult Carer is aged 18 to 25 years.



Carers at Consultation
Events (282)



Online Carers'
Survey (35)



Postcard Carers'
Survey (100)



Strategic Priorities
Workshop (80)



Carers Reference
Group (10)

How we developed our new plan

In writing our new plan for supporting carers we looked at what we managed to do up until now and what still needed further work. We also looked at good examples of Carer support in other areas. We asked many Carers what they thought was important to include in this plan. We want to thank all those Carers, staff and organisations who helped us write our new plan.

From this work, **four** main areas were agreed as being important in our new plan. These are known as our priorities. We have also included some Carer comments from our consultation period.

Total =
500+
voices

Introduction



Reaching Carers of all ages

What Carers told us


They want to be provided with the right information and support at the earliest time.

What we will do

- Make sure all Trust services actively identify Carers
- Work with our hospital teams to make sure they understand what Carers need and can provide them with information and support
- Work with GPs to make sure they know what Carers need and how to refer them for support
- Work with all community and hospital staff on the role of Young Carers and how to refer them for support
- Develop a network, where organisations can come together to share information about what may be useful for Carers.

How we will know we have made progress

- Increase in the numbers of Carers we reach
- More carers of all ages will be referred for support by GPs and hospital staff
- The profile of Carers and their support needs will be raised in local communities.



**'Knowing the help and support is there makes all the difference'
Carer**

Priority 1 - Reaching Carers of all Ages



Developing Carer Support Pathways

What Carers told us

Carers want a clear pathway to find their way around the health and social care system.

This will help them to

- **Get support more easily**
- **Plan ahead**
- **Know what is available for them, and their relative.**

What we will do

- Gather information on how Carers currently receive support from the Trust
- Work to develop one contact point in the Trust for help and advice for Carers
- Make sure the Carer's pathway to get help, works for all Carers including:
 - > Parent Carers
 - > Older Carers
 - > Young Carers
 - > Working Carers.

- Make sure the Carer's pathway works at key stages of change. This includes:
 - > When a person being cared for moves from Children's Services to Adult Services
 - > When a Young Carer reaches adulthood
 - > When a person being cared for moves from Adult Services to Older People's Services
 - > When a person being cared for is reaching the end of life
 - > When a caring role ends.

How we will know we have made progress

- We will have one point of contact for Carers
- Carers will tell us that they have been better informed of how to get support
- Carers will tell us they were better supported at key points in their caring journey.

'Individually tailored support is highly valued' Carer

Priority 2 - Developing Carer Support Pathways

Carer Support Plans

What Carers told us

The support needs of a Carer are determined by the Trust through using a Carer's Assessment. Carers we spoke to said the term Carer Assessment was unhelpful and that they preferred Carer Support Plan instead.

What we will do

- Carer Assessments will be called **Carer Support Plans**
- Promote the benefits of Carer Support Plans to Carers and staff
- Review staff training to make sure they know how to complete Carer Support Plans in a beneficial way with Carers.

How we will know we have made progress

- More Carer Support Plans will be offered and accepted
- More staff will have training in Carer Support Plans.



‘Having a Carer support plan needs to be a useful experience with clear benefits’
Carer

Carer Support Services

What Carers told us

Carers value specific services such as Carer grants and complementary therapies as well as social events, Carer groups and training. Carers also said there needs to be a broader range of flexible breaks from caring and support in the event of an emergency.

What we will do

- Continue to seek Carers views on breaks from caring
- Develop support to reduce isolation for Carers
- Further develop the range of Carer training
- Promote limited out-of-hours telephone advice support
- Work closely with other organisations to support Young Carers.

'This break from caring is very necessary for me to recharge my batteries so that I can continue caring' Carer

How we will know we have made progress

- Carers will be made aware of what services and breaks from caring are currently available
- Carers will be referred for listening support, training and have the opportunity to meet with other Carers
- More Young Carers will be referred for support.



Communication

What Carers told us

Carers wanted one point of contact. They also required information that is easy to find, easy to understand and up-to-date. They liked the Carer Information Pack which contained key information in a Carer friendly format.

What we will do

- Plan to develop one point of contact for Carers
- Develop different ways to communicate with Carers
- Encourage more carers to sign up to the Carers mailing list to receive information
- Regularly update all information for Carers
- Develop information for Young Carers.

How we will know we have made progress

- More Carers will be on the mailing list
- More Carers will receive timely, relevant and up-to-date information.

'Improved communication and information, more regular and more consistent' Parent Carer



Involving Carers

What Carers told us


The Carers Reference Group who were established by the Trust have said that involvement at all levels within the Trust is important particularly where Carers are concerned. All the group members have significant caring roles and are valued experts by experience. Carers also said they appreciated having their views sought during the development of this plan.

What we will do

- Continue to work in partnership with the Carers Reference Group
- Measure against the Trust Involvement standards how well we involve Carers
- Continue to develop ways of supporting Carers to have their voices heard
- Develop opportunities for Carers to be involved in the planning, development and review of services.

How we will know we have made progress

- Each service area will have a list of Carers who want to take part in Carer Involvement activities
- Young Carers will have an opportunity to work with the Trust to agree a plan for hearing their views on a regular basis
- We will be able to evidence how carer involvement has changed services
- We will seek feedback from Carers on all our key priorities on an ongoing basis.



**'I felt that the Trust had listened to me ... My caring role is demanding and will be long term'
Carer**

Trust Values



respect & dignity



openness & trust



leading edge



learning & development



accountability

Our commitment to Carers, is that our staff will demonstrate our Trust values as follows:

Respect & Dignity

We will show respect to Carers and treat them with dignity

Openness & Trust

We will communicate openly and honestly with Carers

Leading Edge

We will explore, together with Carers, new opportunities for developing services

Learning & Development

We will actively support education and training for Carers and continually take feedback from them on our services

Accountability

We will use all available Carer resources in the best way possible. We will widely share our plan with Carers and will regularly ask them how well we are putting our plan into action.

If you would like to know more

For further information or a full version of this strategy please contact the Carer Co-ordinators.

This plan is available in alternative formats on request. Please contact Orla Barron at the Health and Social Inequalities Team, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust on 028 9063 5678 or Textphone on 028 9063 7406 or email orla.barron@belfasttrust.hscni.net

There are two Carer Co-ordinators who work together to put this plan into action:

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Online Carer Support information is available at – <http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/services/CarersServices.htm>