

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

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DRAFT MEDWAY JOINT CARERS' STRATEGY

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Summary

The existing Medway Carers' Strategy 2015-2017 was developed to ensure the Council was Care Act compliant and able to demonstrate its commitment to carers. The Council's legal duty to assess and identify the eligible needs of carers and the important contribution that carers make to supporting our strategic priorities, has led to the development of the draft Medway Joint Carers' Strategy 2019-2024.

The Strategy has been coproduced with carers and in consultation with stakeholders. It describes how health and social care services, provider organisations and the voluntary sector will work together over the next five years to respond and meet the needs of carers in Medway.

The Strategy aligns with the overall objectives defined within the Council Plan, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway and "Getting Better Together", the Adult Social Care Strategy for Medway.

The success of implementing this Strategy lies firmly in a collaborative and joined up approach. A clear governance and performance framework will help to drive the Strategy forward through the development of a joint delivery plan that measures whole system benefit.

The Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 14 March 2019 and the comments of this Committee are set out in section 4 of the report.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The Care Act 2014 gives local authorities a legal duty to understand better their role in supporting carers. The new statutory principle of individual wellbeing underpins the Act, and is the driving force behind care and support.

1.2 New duties for local authorities:

- Duty to provide carers' assessments
- Duty to provide a support plan to eligible carers
- Provide, or arrange the provision of services, which will prevent or delay the need for care and support by unpaid carers as well as the person they care for
- Information and advice.

1.3 The Children and Families Act came into effect on 1 April 2014 and complemented the Care Act. The local authority is responsible for providing a young carer's assessment and providing support to carers under 18 who are providing support to an adult who is an ordinary resident within that local authority.

1.4 The NHS has also pledged its support to carers. In 2014 NHS England published its Commitment to Carers 2014. This document set out the priorities and actions the NHS had identified to address the physical and mental health impact that acting as a carer can have on individuals. The implementation of these NHS ambitions for carers is set out in the NHS Five Year Forward View 2014 and the recently published NHS Long Term Plan. The NHS Long Term Plan builds on the previous NHS policies for carers. It does however contain a number of new pledges that require the NHS to ensure that carers are full partners in the way the NHS delivers care.

1.5 Approval of the Medway Joint Carers' Strategy is a matter for Cabinet.

2. Background

2.1 The current Carers' Strategy 2015-2017 was completed in response to new duties placed on local authorities by the Care Act 2014. The new Carers' Strategy has been developed to respond to the changes in the way health and social care is being delivered across Medway and to demonstrate the Council's and CCG's continued commitment to carers. The contribution carers make to the Council and the CCG's strategic priorities of supporting people to live independently in their own home for as long as possible is recognised.

2.2 In order to develop the new Strategy a range of evidence resources have been used to inform thinking:

- Consultation process and engagement
- Review of relevant legislation and policies
- Review of national and local strategies and data sources
- The local vision and key priorities for Medway
- The council's commissioning intentions.

2.3 The evidence from the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014, clarified the Council's statutory requirements. It was determined that the Strategy must align with the overall objectives defined within the Council Plan and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway and the Adult Social Care Strategy 'Getting Better Together'. To give both local and national

context, data on carers was determined from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Census 2011 and the Carers' UK Survey.

- 2.4 Medway Council worked closely with carers, key partners from different organisations and the Medway Carers' Partnership to develop the following vision:

Medway Council, key partners and stakeholders across health and social care and the voluntary community sector will work in partnership with carers, making sure carers of all ages from all parts of the community are identified, valued and supported to have a quality life of their own.

- 2.5 The Medway Joint Carers' Strategy has been developed to articulate the future vision for supporting carers in Medway and to ensure that the key themes and priorities for action are clearly identified. A consideration has been given to ensure the Strategy is deliverable at a local level and that priorities are realistic and deliverable within allocated budgets. The development of the Strategy has established six key priorities that are important for both adult and young carers in Medway:

1. Identification and recognition of all carers in Medway
2. Provision of good quality Information, advice, guidance and support
3. Access and involvement in assessment and support planning
4. High quality carers support services
5. Support to maintain physical, emotional health and wellbeing
6. Respecting the expertise that carers have

- 2.6 The Strategy reflects the key priorities set out in the National Carers' Action Plan 2018-2020: Supporting Carers Today, that focuses on progress in five priority areas:

1. Services and systems that work for carers
2. Employment and financial wellbeing
3. Supporting young carers
4. Recognising and supporting carers in the wider community and society
5. Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for carers

- 2.7 The success of the Strategy will be measured through a delivery plan that will set out key priorities, actions and outcomes. The priorities will be delivered through a partnership approach that ensures all aspects of commissioning and health and social care policy that affect the population of Medway and impact on the role of adult and young carers are considered.

- 2.8 The Strategy sets out the how the Council and CCG aims to support both adult and young carers in Medway and the people they care for, to live full, active lives, to live independently for as long as possible and to play a full part in their local communities. The Strategy aims to recognise and value carers in a timely manner in different health, social care or community settings and to ensure they are listened to, treated with respect, valued and supported appropriately.

3. Advice and Analysis

- 3.1 A clear accountability and governance structure will be put in place to drive the Strategy forward using the Council's and CCG governance structure. This is a joint strategy and will be approved by the Cabinet. The overall responsibility for improvement in this area of work for Medway Council will rest with the Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services.
- 3.2 A performance framework will be put in place to measure whole system benefit. A comprehensive joint delivery plan will set out how the priorities will be delivered to include performance indicators, outcome measures and key milestones. Baseline data will be established and targets set to enable success to be measured. For example a percentage increase in the number of carers reporting that they feel they have been appropriately supported (carers' satisfaction survey) will be considered. Other Council targets will be considered to monitor progress and strengthen the Council's commitment to carers.
- 3.3 Comprehensive analysis has identified a range of opportunities that will contribute significantly to the delivery of the key strategic priorities within the Strategy. Collaborative working across health and social care and high quality targeted commissioning has the potential to significantly improve outcomes for carers. Any new policy guidance and emerging strategies such as the forthcoming green paper on social care for adults, will be reviewed and considered as part of the delivery plan.
- 3.4 During the development of the Strategy, the Council and Medway CCG commissioned a new carers' service for both adults and young people in Medway, funded through the Better Care Fund. The service, provided by Carers FIRST, commenced in January 2019 and forms part of the Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) 'Better together' Consortium contract. Other services forming part of the contract include infrastructure and volunteer brokerage (MVA), Healthwatch Medway (Engage Kent), Citizens Advice Medway and Local Welfare Provision, and the visually impaired service (Kent Association for the Blind). All providers are working collaboratively to identify and support carers.
- 3.5 Carers FIRST provides a joined up information, advice and support service for both adult and young carers that support the Council to meet its statutory obligation of delivering a young carer's assessment and carers' support payments. The service provides early intervention and identification of carers, supporting a reduction of the number of carers entering into the health and social care system unnecessarily. A Carer's Coordinator is placed in Medway Maritime Hospital to support carers when a cared for person is admitted or discharged from hospital.
- 3.6 Medway Council led on the joint commissioning of the Medway Wellbeing Navigator service that commenced in October 2018. The service identifies and supports carers in the primary care setting and will signpost carers to appropriate services. Link workers are placed in Medway Hospital and in GP practices and work closely across health and social care.

- 3.7 Identifying and supporting young carers and young adult carers (16-25) is a key focus area that will determine success of the Strategy. A collaborative approach will be adopted across health and children and adult social care services. Strong partnership working will be established between the young carer's service provider (Carers FIRST), Early Help, School Nursing and the Child Health Team. There is also a commitment to embedding more sustainable support into schools via programmes such as Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and the Young Carers in Schools Programme.
- 3.8 A review of respite care, day care, supportive Extra Care housing and Shared Lives will be carried out to determine the offer available for carers and the cared-for person. It will also determine how new technologies and direct payments can be used more flexibly to support carers. The Council and the CCG will ensure there is sufficient provision of care within a community setting to support individuals with complex needs, such as adults of working age with a learning or physical disability. The aim is to prevent people becoming dependent on more long term and costly care services. For example when an older parent carer looking after an adult child with a learning disability, is no longer able to carry on with their caring role, appropriate support has already been put in place.
- 3.9 A Diversity Impact Assessment, set out at Appendix 2 of the report, has been drafted and no adverse impacts have been identified as a result of delivering the Carers' Strategy.

4. Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 14 March 2019

- 4.1 The Council had a statutory responsibility under the Care Act to assess the needs of carers and to separately assess the needs of those in receipt of care. The Medway Joint Carers' Strategy would support the Council and Medway NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to work jointly with carers to support them effectively. It was considered that figures for the number of young carers locally were likely to underrepresent the true picture. The figures showed that of 64,000 under 18's in Medway, there were 660 young carers. There were also 1,600 aged 16 to 25. One driver of the Strategy was the need to identify carers that the Council was not aware of.
- 4.2 The underpinning vision had not changed since the previous Carers' Strategy but the health and social care system had. The new Strategy reflected these changes. It had been co-produced with carers and stakeholder engagement had been undertaken. A Carers Service for new older and younger carers had been established. The service, which had launched in January 2019 using Better Care Fund funding, was provided by Carers First. It formed part of the wider voluntary and community sector consortium contract.
- 4.3 The six key priorities set out in the Strategy were:
1. Identification and recognition of all carers in Medway
 2. Provision of good quality Information, advice, guidance and support

3. Access and involvement in assessment and support planning
4. High quality carers support services
5. Support to maintain physical, emotional health and wellbeing
6. Respecting the expertise that carers have

4.4 A Committee Member commended the co-production of the Strategy and emphasised that work was needed to identify hidden carers. He emphasised the social isolation that many carers faced. The Member asked what steps were being taken and how the CGG was being involved in development of the Strategy.

4.5 The Head of Health Improvement said that CCG colleagues were engaged in Strategy development. The Strategy would be presented to the Local Care Strategy Group and other CCG forums over next six months to develop an action plan. Updates on Strategy delivery would be provided during the five year period that it covered.

4.6 A Member, who had had experience of being a carer shared his experience with the Committee. He highlighted the following:

- The development of a local induction pack for people becoming a carer would be welcome.
- Taking on caring duties while working was challenging.
- Carers benefitted from receiving training about managing a crisis soon after becoming a carer but it was also difficult for many carers to leave their home to attend.
- There needed to be preparation and training to enable carers to deal with end of life considerations.
- The Member had been linked in with Medway hospice from early on. Care provided by the hospice had helped the cared for person to regain their dignity.
- Both carer and cared for person had completed a questionnaire about attitudes to death. It had been good to have an open conversation about death.
- It would be helpful to have the opportunity of an interview once a person had stopped being a carer.
- Respite care provision was crucially important to carers and its provision had been much appreciated. There had been a suggestion that the Council had stopped the provision of respite care, which was a concern.
- It was concerning that Medway Council was not subscribed to the 'Tell us Once' scheme as it had been necessary to contact several individual

Council departments [It was confirmed during the subsequent agenda item on Scrutiny of the Council's Transformation Programme that the Council was in the process of joining the scheme].

- Carers needed to know that there would be support available in the event that they themselves became ill.
- 4.7 A Committee Member said that better support was needed for older carers aged 70 and over. The Director of People, Children and Adult Services said this was an areas of concern. While it was pleasing that adults with a disability now had longer life expectancies, it meant that parents looking after them were becoming older. Some individuals with disabilities had to enter care suddenly due to the death or illness of a parent carer. It was acknowledged that there needed to be a particular focus on older carers.
- 4.8 It was asked by a Committee Member what benefit priority six of the Strategy, 'respecting the expertise that carers have' would have for carers and the cared for person. The Committee was advised that this was about identifying the added value that a carer could bring, such as skills acquired in their professional life and then enabling these skills to be utilised effectively. Development of new skills for carers was also an important consideration.
- 4.9 A Member sought assurance, particularly in relation to Medway NHS CCG that the Strategy would be supported effectively. The Member also highlighted that the Strategy referenced a need for GPs of carers to be aware of their role so that they could look out for any resulting problems. There was an expectation amongst many carers that they would have to stop working but this could result in whole families becoming dependent on the state. Employers tended not to be as flexible with regards to employees with caring duties as they would be for those with children and it was suggested that the Council could do more to engage with local employers as well as ensuring that its own staff with caring responsibilities were supported effectively. The Head of Health Improvement highlighted that the Carers Strategy would be presented to the CCG Steering Group on 28 March. Consideration would be given as to how GPs could be fully engaged in support for carers. A question about caring responsibilities would be included in the next staff survey and local employers were encouraged to engage in workplace health programmes. The Deputy Managing Director of Medway NHS CCG said that the CCG was fully supportive of and engaged in development and delivery of the Strategy.
- 4.10 The Committee commented on the Medway Joint Carers' Strategy, provided feedback to improve the content and delivery of the strategy outcomes and noted the timetable for approval, as set out in paragraph 5.5 of the report.

5. Risk Management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Priorities to be addressed through commissioned services are not met	Commissioned services fail to deliver on the objectives around carers set out in service specifications	Commissioners will hold regular performance monitoring meetings to ensure risk and issues are identified and addressed	D2
Lack of capacity within the organisation to deliver the changes required	Risk that the organisation will lack the capacity to deliver the actions required from services across the organisation (adult and children's social care)	Ensure that the Strategy aligns with improvement programmes across the council	C2
Strategy could fail to keep pace with dynamic change	The scale and rate of change within health and social care could lead to the Strategy becoming out of date	Delivery plan will be realistic and reviewed and updated annually	D3

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Consultation has been led by partnership commissioning as part of the Medway Carers' Board. This group brings together all relevant partners including adult and parent carers, commissioners, health and social care, public health and a range of voluntary community sector organisations. A range of focus groups were set up involving carers and partners with a particular focus on understanding the needs of adult and young carers. The views of young carers were obtained through community voluntary groups specifically working with young carers to ensure their voice was heard. The aim was to ensure the most effective solutions were identified and well supported.
- 6.2 The Carers Partnership will carry out further consultation with young carers through the Carers FIRST young carers' steering group. This will ensure that the actions within the delivery plan are representative of the way in which young carers want to be supported. As further progress is made on updating Medway Council's Children and Young People's Plan, consultation with young carers will augment efforts to ensure that the voice of young carers in Medway is heard.
- 6.3 Through consultation it has been determined that the Strategy must be deliverable at a local level and that priorities need to be realistic and deliverable within allocated budgets, taking into consideration the legal requirements put on Medway Council to provide high quality, flexible and effective support services for carers in Medway. The Council has used the feedback from consultation alongside findings from a wider review, to

establish six key priorities, important for both adult and young carers in Medway.

- 6.4 To establish a final draft Strategy, further engagement has taken place with Medway Adult Social Care, Public Health and Medway CCG. The Carers Partnership have also commented on the draft and were keen to stress that the Strategy must communicate how priorities will be addressed. The draft Strategy has also been presented at Children and Adults Divisional Management Team and Corporate Management Team. Further Engagement will take place to ensure the development of a robust delivery action plan that supports the Strategy.
- 6.5 The Medway Joint Carers' Strategy will need to go through the approval and governance processes within the Council. The timetable includes:
- Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee - March 2019 - complete
 - Health and Wellbeing Board - April 2019
 - Cabinet - June 2019

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 Updating the Carers Strategy has no direct resource implications.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Care Act 2014 and Children and Families Act 2014 gives local authorities in England a legal responsibility to assess the needs of carers, support their eligible needs, promote their wellbeing and personalised support.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:
- 9.1.1 note the comments of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee set out at section 4 of the report;
- 9.1.2 comment on the Medway Joint Carers' Strategy, provide feedback to improve the content and delivery of the Strategy outcomes; and
- 9.1.3 note the timetable for approval, as set out in paragraph 6.5 of the report.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Medway Joint Carers' Strategy
Appendix 2 - Diversity Impact Assessment

Background Papers

None