

TITLE	Medway Joint Carers Strategy 2019 - 2024
DATE	5th October 2018
LEAD OFFICER	Heidi Ward Programme Lead, Partnership Commissioning

1 Summary description of the proposed change

- What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed?
- How does it compare with the current situation?

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 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.

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

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.

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.

It was determined that the strategy must align with the overall objectives defined within the Council Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway and the Adult Social Care Strategy 'Getting Better Together'. The objectives are to support people to live full, meaningful and healthy lives. To live independently for as long as possible in their local communities. 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.

The strategy reflects the key priorities set out in the National Carers Action Plan 2018-2020, Supporting Carers Today and focuses on progressing five priority areas: Services and systems that work for carers, employment and financial wellbeing, supporting young carers, recognising and supporting carers in the wider community and society, building research and evidence to improve outcomes for carers

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 treated with respect, valued and supported.

2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

- Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user records etc.
- Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

A range of focus groups were set up to enable consultation to take place with carers and partners in Medway. This included The Medway Carers' Partnership and young carers groups. The focus was on identifying priorities that were deliverable at a local level to meet local needs. These priorities could realistically be provided within allocated budgets.

Additional focus groups were set up to specifically consult with young carers and to further understand their needs as part of the council's statutory requirements to support young carers. The most effective solutions were identified to ensure that these most vulnerable carers are well supported. 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.

Workshops were held with a range of stakeholders and the following key priorities were identified as an area of focus for the new carers strategy. 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

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

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to :

- Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't?

(insert ✓ in one or more boxes)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Gender reassignment			
Marriage/civil partnership			
Pregnancy/maternity			
Race		✓	
Religion/belief		✓	
Sex		✓	
Sexual orientation			
Other (eg low income groups)		✓	

4 Summary of the likely impacts

- Who will be affected?
- How will they be affected?

According to the Census in 2011 a total of 25,033(9.5%) people living in Medway were providing some form of unpaid care. One sixth of carers being recorded as such by their general practice In addition, 24,289 households (24.9%) report having at least one person in the household with a long-term health problem or disability.

Age:

The 2011 Census in England identified 166,363 young carers aged under 18 years old. In Medway carers aged under the age of 18 account for less than 2% of all carers. 3379 carers 18+ registered in Medway.

Carers' strategy recognises this and prioritises recognising young carers and supporting them in their caring role. It sets a priority to identify young carers: work with schools and universities to identify and support young carers in their place of learning to support them to fulfil their potential.

There are 1.2 million people in England aged 65 and over who are providing unpaid care to a disabled, seriously ill or older relative or friend

The number of carers aged 85 and over grew by 128% in just ten years
In Medway over three-quarters of carers are aged over 50.

The strategy sets out the how we aim to support carers of all ages in Medway to live full, active lives and for the person they care for, to live independently for as long as possible, and to play a full part in their local communities.

Race:

The Black and Minority Ethnic group stands at 10.4% of the population, which is higher than Kent (6.3%) and the South East (9.4%) but lower than across England and Wales (14.1%). This has increased significantly from 5.4% in 2001.

The strategy recommends developing services to identify and support those more likely to be hidden carers, for example Black and ethnic minorities, older carers that are frail themselves, young carers and carers of those with mental health and substance misuse

Sex-

Two thirds of carers recorded by general practice in Medway as females and one third male.

Carers' strategy it sets out a priority to identify hidden carers who may not recognise themselves as carers.

Unemployed and those in debt:

Medway is ranked 118th most deprived Local Authority of 326 (1st being the most deprived) in England in the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation.

This is a relatively worse position than the index in 2010, when Medway was ranked 132nd most deprived of 326. Caring often has a severely adverse impact on income.

The strategy specifies the carers support service should work with Job Centre Plus to ensure carers of all ages have access to job opportunities that enable them to continue caring whilst having access to employment. It also recommends supporting carers to access financial and emotional support through benefit advice, direct payments and access to respite.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, Improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

- What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?
- Are there alternative providers?
- Can demand for services be managed differently?

There are no adverse impacts identified within this DIA for the Carers' Strategy. The strategy itself does not make any direct service changes, rather provides a framework for doing so by setting the strategic direction, vision and aims for the future of care and support for carers in Medway.

6 Action plan

- Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
No adverse effects on protected characteristic groups are likely from the strategy. None of the actions highlighted under each of the strategic themes are detrimental to any protected characteristic groups.		

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be:

- to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate
- consider alternatives
- gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

Finalise the Draft Joint Carers' Strategy and develop a measurable delivery plan to ensure the Council is Care Act compliant.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that:

- the recommendation can be implemented
- sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned
- the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Fiona Mccaul

Date

5th October 2018

Contact your Performance and Intelligence hub for advice on completing this assessment

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