

Who Cares?

The unrecognised value of a hidden social service

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Terminology



Carer? Care worker? Care support assistant?



Carers are people who look after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are frail, ill or have a disability.



The care they provide is unpaid.





Carers are not always obvious.

There is a three in five chance that any of us is, or could become, a carer at some time in our life.



Why should healthcare professionals consider carers?



1. Because it makes social and economic sense
2. Because their health/wellbeing are vulnerable
3. Because you need them!
4. Because legislation says you should
(in the UK at least!)



Reason 1 – It makes social and economic sense

- There are an estimated 6 million carers in the UK* (4.3m of working age and >1m caring for more than one person)
- 1.25 million provide over 50 hours of care per week* (a full-time workforce > that of the NHS)
- Their value to the economy is estimated at **over £119 billion per year*** (av. of £19,833 per carer)
- This is equivalent to the total government spending on health in 2011
- The number of carers is rising with demographic change*
- Probably more than 250,000 young carers in the UK



*Source: Carers UK

www.carersuk.org/

In Hertfordshire



- There are an estimated 138,000 Carers, including 11,000 under 18 years old (source HCC)
- More than 18,000 provide care for more than 50 hours a week
- It would cost the State £2.1 billion annually if it were to pay for the hours of work carers do (source Carers UK/Univ of Leeds)
- An estimated 15% of any work force will be carers



Reason 2 – Their health and wellbeing are vulnerable



Physical health

Emotional health

Mental health

Poverty

Self-neglect

Reduced access to services



- Carers allowance: £58.45 per week for people providing min 35 hrs/week care (but many carers are not eligible)
- This calculates out at **£1.67** per hour
- The minimum wage is currently **£6.08** per hour and will increase to £6.19 in October 2012
- 72% of carers are worse off as a result of their caring role
- 54% of carers are in debt as a result of their caring role



A brief case-study

Norman

- 60 years old
- Married 41 years to Ros
- Two children and two grandchildren
- Worked up from wireman to Programme Manager in major technology company (av. working week 50 hrs)
- Ros diagnosed with MS 20 years ago
- Carer for 10 years from the point that Ros had to give up her work. For the last 4 years full-time Carer



Norman's typical day



Caring schedule

- 7.00 Tablets
- 7.15 Toilet (Ros)
- 7.20 Catheterisation
- 8.00 Breakfast
- 9.00 Exercises for Ros
- 9.30 Tidy house & do laundry
- 11.00 Take Ros out with wheelchair
- 12.30 Tablets
- 13.00 Lunch
- 17.00 Tablets
- 18.00 Dinner
- 20.00 Catheterisation
- 22.00 Tablets
- Ad hoc events
 - Dealing with falls – avg 4 per week
 - Toilet accidents – wash and change
 - Night-time events – cramps/toilet etc

Norman's free time

- Walk dogs twice a day
- Various
 - Volunteering
 - Reading
 - Computer



Caring Costs – Human

(in Norman's case)



- **Physical injury – Spinal Damage**
- **Loss of dignity and self esteem**
- **Lost dreams & ambitions**
- **Isolation**
- **Mental illness – Clinical depression**



Caring Costs – financial

(in Norman's case)



- Personal income
 - Annual income was c £100K
 - Annual income is now c £18K plus £2600 in benefits including £10 pw housing benefit
- Needed mortgage rescue



Reason 3 – You need them!

- Carers provide the bulk of community care
- They are experts in the care of the cared for
- They are essential to well co-ordinated discharge practice
- Treating them as partners is enlightened self interest



Consider this!



1.8m carers provide over 20 hours of care per week in the UK, easily outnumbering all those employed in health and social care.

Research suggests that a significant number of emergency admissions to residential or hospital care are as a result of breakdown in the health of the carer – not the cared for.



Preventative Support for Carers

- Early signposting
- GPs need to recognise carers
- Caring is a 24/365 responsibility – carers need respite
- Carers need recognition of their role
 - ❖ Expertise
 - ❖ Skills
 - ❖ Part of the support team for the cared-for
- Carers deliver value to society and this needs recognition



Reason 4 – Legislation and Government Guidance say you should



- Recognised, valued and supported: next steps for the Carers Strategy – NHS Guidance 2010
- Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities: a caring system on your side, a life of your own – NHS Guidance 2008
- Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc) Act 2003
- Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000
- 'Caring for carers' national strategy - 1999
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995



Carers in Hertfordshire as a partner



- The only county-wide carers' organisation
- Formed by carers in 1995 and carer-led
- Largely funded by and strategic partners to Health & Social Services in the County
- A sound track record – Beacon partners and PQASSO Level 1
- We make a difference to carers
 - Information, support & carer planning
 - Development & Training
 - Involvement: opportunities for carers to have a voice
 - Young carers' service



So, does a carers' centre deliver value for money?



Social Return on Investment study* in 2010 by Baker Tilly auditors revealed aggregate social benefits of £73 million per annum compared with the aggregate funding of less than £5 million per annum.

There was a 13% premium in terms of SROI if the carer services are co-ordinated by a single centre.

*Clifford, J., Theobald, C., Mason, S. (2011) The Princess Royal Trust for Carers: Social Impact Evaluation of five Carer Centres



www.carersinherts.org.uk

