



# **Carers Together**

A consortium of carers in Hampshire  
Charity Number 1051879 Company Number 6262146

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

- Carers Together is an independent charity run by carers for carers.
- It has been operational for fourteen years and has its main base in Romsey
- Carers consulted, designed and developed the vision and package of support for carers provided by Carers Together.
- The management committee are all carers or former carers whose experience of caring is invaluable.
- It believes that all carers are individuals with different needs and aspirations and will try to effectively support carers as they wish to be supported
- It believes that carers should be at the centre of all organisations that offer them support and that any proposed action or continuing activities should reflect the individual and changing needs of the carers involved.
- Carers Together
  - ⇒ gives information and advice to carers and ensures wherever possible that carers are offered informed choice and signposted to appropriate services.
  - ⇒ maintains a comprehensive information resource to ensure the most effective use of resources and the most effective sharing of information - this includes
    - issuing a regular Newsletter – with a growing circulation list - currently over 5000
    - maintaining a database of Hampshire carers and carers groups
    - providing an effective website
  - ⇒ supports carers to care with dignity and independence by providing an independent non judgemental listening ear to enable carers to offload and harnessing the experience of carers for the benefit of carers.
  - ⇒ advocates for carers to ensure they can benefit from advocacy services and take an active part in expressing their needs when the needs of the person they care for are being assessed
  - ⇒ co-operates with other statutory, voluntary and private organisations on any issues involving carers and in particular the planning, development and implementation of services with and by statutory organisations
  - ⇒ regularly consults and holds seminars with and for carers and carers groups on issues affecting carers and those they care for. This includes bi-annual consultation seminars that provide opportunities for carers from each locality to meet, share views, news, needs and seek mutually beneficial solutions. We also set up consultation and seminars for statutory organisations when requested to do this for them.
  - ⇒ ensures carers and carers groups have the opportunity to input into the regular newsletter
  - ⇒ Encourages carers to take part in planning, development, monitoring and review of services and to be involved with training of professionals and carers awareness, as well as with University Social Work Training Courses and influencing social work practice.
  - ⇒ believes that carers should be supported according to their individual needs, sometimes by other carers, sometimes by paid workers and sometimes by volunteers.
  - ⇒ Believes that carers have the right to represent themselves and, where appropriate other carers, and should be assisted and encouraged to do this whenever possible.
  - ⇒ has a varied programme of services, training and activities for carers that are supportive, practical and sometime fun – e.g. consultation, information, relaxation, signposting, training tips, creative activities etc.

## **OVERALL AIM**

The aim of Carers Together is to effectively support carers as they wish to be supported and to encourage, empower and enable carers (of all ages and regardless of whom they care for) to identify, co-ordinate and express their needs effectively, and to ensure that they are fully represented in any consultation on planning, development, implementation and monitoring of services provided by statutory, private and voluntary organisations

## **CARERS TOGETHER AIMS TO**



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- Be accessible to/involve carers from all areas of Hampshire regardless of whom they care for.
- Listen to carers with empathy and respond appropriately to their individual need.
- Recognise the expertise of carers and ensure this is used effectively by harnessing the experience of carers for the benefit of carers,
- Enables and empowers carers to care with dignity and independence
- Improve carers awareness by facilitating courses to increase their knowledge and skills.
- Develop the profile of carers and ensure their voice is heard.
- Empower and enable carers to discuss, co-ordinate and represent their needs in all areas and levels of decision-making.
- Ensure carers are involved in all stages of planning, development, implementation and review of services locally and countywide.
- Support carers to find out more about services available to support them including Direct Payments, CLICK, and Respite Care.
- Give support to all existing carers groups in the county as required, establish and support new groups and forums and to link them through a countywide support network.
- Continue to develop and improve links with carers, local groups and forums, individuals and other groups interested in supporting carers
- Enhances links with other voluntary organizations that support carers and/or the person they care for and work in networks, partnership and alliances to achieve best value for carers.
- Seek carers to represent the views of carers on issues that affect carers, and which need publicising or have been brought into the public domain and at present provides representatives on a number of committees/consultation groups run by Health, Social Services and Voluntary organizations including Community Action Hampshire, Hampshire Learning Disability Partnership Board, Hampshire Partnership NHS Trust PPIF, Southampton, Portsmouth and Winchester Universities - Social Worker Degree Development, Southampton University Hospital Patient User Group, Hampshire Partnership NHS Trust User and Carer Involvement Group, Children's Fund Partnership Board, Hampshire County Council Older People's Wellbeing Steering Group, Completing the Circle - user and carer consultation group, Carers Strategy Group – Hampshire and Southampton, LINKs, LAA, LSP Health and Wellbeing, Older People's Wellbeing Steering Group.
- Work with disabled people/groups on issues affecting users and carers across all care groups
- Continue to monitor
  - ⇒ the effect of care in the community on services provided for carers.
  - ⇒ the way that the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 has been implemented as well as the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 and the new Mental Capacity Act 2006. Our aim is to ensure that all health and social care staff empower carers and inform them of their right to receive an assessment of their needs. We have produced information documents to give pointers to carers to assist them with this.
  - ⇒ the implementation of continuing care and its effect on carers. We follow closely the series of changes that are taking place in the Health Service and NHS Trusts and try to ensure the views of carers are taken into account.
  - ⇒ the effectiveness of carers involvement in the planning and development of services and ensuring that the voice of carers is heard as widely as possible.
  - ⇒ The proposals and actions contained in Independence Well Being and choice, Our health, our care, our say.
  - ⇒ Inform carers about facilities for 'taking a break' and to monitor and evaluate the services available for carers to take a break, across generic client groups, to ensure choice, flexibility and value for money.
  - ⇒ Work with Health Trusts, PCTs and PALS services and monitor the changes to patient and public participation and its benefit to carers