

Carers Together

Vision and Strategy

2008 – 2012

Carers Together

Carers Together is an independent registered charity in Hampshire (including Portsmouth and Southampton) run by carers for carers.

Its principles, aims and beliefs are:

- To accept that all carers are individuals with different needs and aspirations
- To effectively support individual carers as they wish to be supported
- To encourage, empower and enable carers (of all ages, regardless of whom they care for) to identify, co-ordinate and express their needs effectively
- To encourage and support carers to be fully represented in any consultation on planning, development, implementation and monitoring of services provided by statutory, private and voluntary organisations.
- To believe that no single organisation has all the answers or can provide all the solutions to meet the range of needs of carers.

The Vision

The Carers Together vision is to continue to provide independent information, advice, advocacy and appropriate support for carers and to promote services to help carers and the cared for person, including respite care.

This will include:

- development of a clear focus and direction for Carers Together
- working in partnerships, networks or alliances, with other organisations when necessary or desirable
- putting into place whatever quality activities are necessary
- regular consultation with carers to identify what they need and want locally
- identification of the changing services needed and available for carers to help and support them

Carers Together Strategy 2008 – 2012

- identification of gaps in essential support and services needed to help carers
- development of integrated, comprehensive information for carers
- development of comprehensive training and awareness for carers about services available to support them
- development of comprehensive training and awareness for professionals in both voluntary and statutory sectors about what carers need
- working with carers to plan, promote and/or provide services to help them
- development of a range of responsive services provided by Carers Together to meet the changing needs of carers
- development of advocacy for carers to enable them to make best use of limited resources through independent non-judgemental advice and support

The outcomes of the Vision will be:

- improvement in the mental well-being of carers, through social interaction, feeling valued and being informed
- increase in numbers of carers accessing good quality appropriate information and support at the right time for them
- increase in identified carers, previously isolated, accessing social and other activities both statutory and voluntary
- more carers actively contributing to activities, living healthy and active lives
- better planning for carers - medical, social and emotional
- fewer carers isolated by situation rather than choice
- more carers with better knowledge of what is available for them
- more professionals with better knowledge of the range of services and support needed and available for carers
- more carers taking part in consultation on prospective legislation and guidance issued by central and local government

Monitoring

Carers Together will monitor the services it provides through a range of methods including:

- **Quantitative:-**
 - increase in numbers of isolated carers being contacted
 - numbers attending carers groups locally or accessing telephone support
 - increase in number of carers contacting Carers Together/CALL
 - increase in numbers of volunteers (former carers) who are actively involved.
 - increase in numbers of carers registered in GP surgeries
 - increase in number of GP surgeries aware of carers needs and the support, information and services Carers Together can provide.
- **Qualitative:-**
 - Satisfaction questionnaires
 - Carers Forums
 - Network Meetings
 - Carers Groups

Outputs and outcomes

- **Trustees**

The Management Committee members (Trustees) have a key role in coordinating the monitoring strands of Carers Together Projects and to ensure links are made with local area support networks in order to share good practice and learn from each other's experiences.
- **Outputs and outcomes are measured by:**
 - ⇒ Feedback from carers consultation days (2 per year)
 - ⇒ Feedback from carers awareness training sessions and verbal feedback on how carers feel as a result of accessing the service.
 - ⇒ The number and variety of courses delivered and numbers of participants
 - ⇒ on each course.
 - ⇒ The number of carers information packs sent out in response to carers requests.

Carers Together Strategy 2008 – 2012

- ⇒ The number of phone calls received and made during office hours and the nature of the calls
- ⇒ The number of phone calls received and made out of office hours and the nature of the calls.
- ⇒ Data collected on number of emails and written requests for information.
- ⇒ The amount of information gathered / disseminated and the range of
- ⇒ up-to-date accessible information about services available.
- ⇒ Recording the number of visits to the website.
- ⇒ Feedback from satisfaction questionnaires
- ⇒ Feedback from partner agencies
- ⇒ Regular (quarterly) meetings held with appropriate partners agency staff for contracts

The future

Current financial pressures in the public sector mean registered charities will need to:

- become more independent
- raise funding from a range of sources
- take whatever action is necessary to keep the organisation active and effective.

Carers Together will continue to

- look at what it does to support carers
- measure how this is achieved
- monitor how successful this is
- continue to respond to the changing environment and changing needs of carers.

Carers, professionals and other interested people will be asked each year, through a questionnaire, for feedback on services provided by Carers Together.

This will be followed by a review of the services provided and a revised plan for activity in the next five years.

Who is a carer?

- A carer is a relative, friend or neighbour who gives care, support, help or guidance to someone, who is a disabled person of any age, or has a long or short term medical condition or is a frail older person. It does not include paid workers or volunteers who are directed to work with a person, in need of support, by an organisation. A carer, in this context, is not employed, either paid or voluntary, to undertake their caring role.
or
- A carer is someone who, without remuneration, has the main responsibility for providing or for arranging care for someone else who, because of long term illness, disability, or old age is not able to care for him or herself
or
- A carer is a person who gives support, help and assistance to a relative, friend or neighbour who needs help because of an illness or chronic condition
or
- A carer is anyone who provides or intends to provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis
or
- A carer is not directed to do what they do by an agency or authority
or
- A carer is unpaid, a care worker is paid
or
- The word 'carer' refers to people who provide unpaid care to a relative, friend or neighbour who is in need of support because of mental or physical illness, old age or disability.
It does not include people who work as volunteers or paid carers; these people should be referred to as 'care workers'.
It is also important to remember that some people who use social services are also 'carers'. For example, many people with learning disabilities provide support to their ageing parents.
(SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence) October 2005)
- What does 'carer' mean?
The term carer refers to anyone who cares for another person and is not paid for it. Caring duties range from helping someone with the shopping to giving 24-hour care.
Commission for Social Care Inspection CSCI 2006
- The definition of carer is an employee who is or expects to be caring for an adult who is either their husband or wife, their civil partner, or a close relation. The employee will also fall into the government category of carer if they look after somebody who lives at the same address.
The Work and Families Act Employment Relations Department