

Action Plan in Response to the Scrutiny Group Review of Carers Services

March 2010

Key To Abbreviations: ABG – Area Based Grant; ASC Adult - Social Care; CAF – Common Assessment Framework; DMT – Directorate Management Team; HCS – Herefordshire Carers Support; I-C - Integrated Commissioning; LMC – Local Medical Committee; PCSG - Primary Care Steering Group; RAS - Resource Allocation System

Recommendation No. 1	The Review Group recommends that representation should be made to the Minister of State for Pensions and local MPs expressing concern concerning the financial loss suffered by carers once they have reached pensionable age, and that this anomaly should be corrected.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is noted, however is not accepted as action to be carried out by officers. Given recent policy announcements on the future of funding care and the likelihood of further changes and announcements it is proposed that the Council waits for policies to become clear and settled.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Recommendation No. 2	The Review Group strongly recommends that the Area Based Grant for Carers' Services Budget is fully protected and that Cabinet emphasises to all Area Based Grant recipients to consider and include the needs of carers when planning services provided through these Grants			
Executive's Response	Whilst recognising the need to ensure services for carers continue to be delivered effectively, available funding must be directed to meet the agreed priorities of the Partnership. However it is agreed that all Area Based Grant (ABG) recipients should be asked to take account of the needs of carers in planning and delivering services supported by ABG.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning will present to Herefordshire Partnership's Health and Wellbeing Policy & Delivery Group a paper setting out areas of concern and options to protect services for carers.	Associate Director Integrated Commissioning	End May 2010	Service provision is maintained	
Recommendation No. 3	Given that the future demographic trend is for an ageing population in the County, consideration must be given to augmenting future Carers' Services Budgets			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted in principle but it must be recognised that in the challenging financial climate ahead available resources must be directed to meet priority needs.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
In their 2010/11 business plan, Integrated Commissioning will set out the impacts of demographic changes on budgets and make proposals to ensure carers continue to receive appropriate support.	Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning	End March 2010	Appropriate services for Carers are maintained in future years.	

Recommendation No. 4	That the accommodation for HCS should be kept under review in order to consider the availability of more accessible offices with adequate parking facilities.			
Executive's Response	Accepted in principle.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
HCS will be advised of this recommendation. The Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning keeps under review the current contract with HCS, which is due to complete on 31 March 2011. In the process of recommissioning carers support for 2011/2 and thereafter, Integrated Commissioning will ensure that the agreed contract will sustain appropriate support for Carers.	Head of Planning, Integrated Commissioning	March 2011	Agreement reached with commissioned service provider of service specification for carers support.	

Recommendation No. 5	Additional campaigns should be considered by HCS in order to encourage carers' to register with them, however minor their current role in order that reasonably accurate figures for carers in Herefordshire can be obtained.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Integrated Commissioning will ensure that Hereford Carers Support Workplan for 2010/11 will include actions and events specifically designed to increase the number of registered carers. (The number of carers registered is one of the performance indicators monitored through the contracts process).	Integrated Commissioning Contracts Manager in conjunction with Director, HCS.	Apr 2010	HCS workplan completed which contains actions to increase number of registered carers. A target number of registered carers will be agreed between Commissioners and HCS.	

Recommendation No. 6	It should be ensured that any report or specific development or proposal for individualised budgets for carers is made publicly available, and that carers' groups receive copies				
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
The Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning has started the development of a Carers RAS, as the first step to offering personal budgets to Carers. Options will be shared with Carers by using forums, networks or other mechanisms established by Herefordshire Carers Support. Final proposals with go through full consultation with carers through the mechanisms described above.	Planning Manager	Final options/ proposals to DMT by Jan 2011	Person budgets for Carers agreed and available to Carers	Integrated Commissioning has included in its work plans for 2010/11 detailed work to begin mid by July 2010 to finalise the development of a Carers Resource Allocation System, as the first step towards offering personal budgets to Carers.	

Recommendation No. 7	There should be a designated Officer of the Council available to explain and clarify to the carer and the cared for both the possibilities and the pitfalls of personalised budgets.				
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
The Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning agreed in 2009 the designation of an Officer post to lead on carers issues and act as a repository of expertise on personal budgets for carers and their cared for.	Service Manager, ASC Provider Services	Feb 2010	Designated Officer in post.	Integrated Commissioning has supported the recruitment of a Carers Lead Officer, who is now in post. The Officer will play a part in developing options for personal budgets for carers and ensure that Carers Assessors and other staff are appropriately knowledgeable and skilled in the subject of personal budgets and are thus able to fully explain personal budgets to carers when they are finally agreed.	

Recommendation No. 8	A carer's policy is needed, which should be signed off at Board level in the Hospital Trust, in order to embed the needs of carers in Trust policy.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The Associate Director of Integrated Commissioning will write to the Chief Executive of Hereford Hospitals Trust relaying the approved Recommendation and inviting the Trust to respond to the Recommendation.	Associate Director, Integrated Commissioning	Following Cabinet response to Scrutiny –April 2010	Implementation of Carers policy by HHT	

Recommendation No. 9	Systems should be reviewed in order to ensure the best co-ordination between Social Services and the County Hospital so that both patients and carers are 'processed' more effectively. It is also important that carers' interests should be integrated into the patient pathway, and acted upon, from patient admission to discharge.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted in principle.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Herefordshire Delayed Discharge Agreement and Protocols sets out the coordination processes between hospital and social care staff, which ensures both patient and carer needs are properly assessed and planned for to achieve effective transition through and discharge from hospital. Integrated Commissioning will ensure with Provider Services that the Service Manager for the hospital social care team confirms that these existing processes are reviewed and are clear and being adhered to.	Service Manager, ASC Provider Services	June 2010	Existing discharge processes reviewed and services continue to be coordinated between ward and social care staff so that patients and their carers experience effective transitions through hospital.	

Recommendation No. 10	The PCT should ensure that GP Practices have consideration for carers' needs incorporated in standard procedure, and that patients who are carers have this fact flagged up prominently in their notes and appropriate attention paid to this in their own care.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Integrated Commissioning will request that the Scrutiny Review Recommendation be presented to the LMC (through the Primary Care Steering Group - PCSG) for consideration. The LMC will be asked to comment on the feasibility of adding information on carers to patient's notes.	Head of Planning	Following Cabinet response to Scrutiny –after Mar 2010	LMC recommend to GPs to note the role of patients who are carers and provide feedback of the feasibility of adding relevant information on patient carer notes.	

Recommendation No. 11	Transport should be made more available to suit the requirements of young carers, especially in regard to carers' breaks. Where the Council holds contracts for the provision of taxi services for young carers, the contract should be monitored and enforced.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
<p>Integrated Commissioning will continue to ensure that breaks for young carers take the form of support, including transport services, to access clubs and other activities.</p> <p>Many clubs and activities are based in Hereford City, and transport costs from outlying town and rural areas are high. Herefordshire Carers Support arranges and pays for these transport costs. Transport is provided on a needs basis and this ensures that no young person is disadvantaged through lack access to a local club or activity, or because a disabled parent cannot drive.</p> <p>Commissioners will continue to ensure through HCS that young carers are offered transport to allow them to have breaks at suitable venues around the County.</p>	Planning Manager	Ongoing, with feedback through contracts monitoring on HCS's ability to meet demand for transport by young carers	Young carers are able to access clubs and activities as identified in care plans.	

Recommendation No. 13	Parent carers have expressed a desire for early support at diagnosis and joined up health and social care services to avoid confusion at what is a difficult time. It is therefore recommended that families receive a 'joined up' service from PCT and Council providers, with a lead professional/key worker identified to liaise with the carers at an early stage.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Integrated Commissioning will work with the the Childrens Trust to undertake a comprehensive review of Children with a Disabilities Services (incorporating PCT/LA services).	Service Redesign Manager in conjunction with 'Be Healthy' Group (Chair)	Report by Sept 2010	1.Review completed 2.Updated Service Plan 3.Updated Childrens & Young Peoples Plan/ Commissioning Intentions	
The Director of Integrated Commissioning will ensure with Provider Services that children with disabilities have a named key worker.	Service Redesign Manager in conjunction with Acting Interim Childrens Directorate Manager	Immediate & Ongoing	All children have a named key worker/lead professional	
The Childrens Nursing Team is currently rolling out the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), which requires a named key worker/lead professional to be identified for all children/families.	Service Redesign Manager in conjunction with Acting Interim Childrens Directorate Manager	Sept 2010	All children in contact with the Childrens Community Nursing Team will be offered a 'Team around the Child' /CAF process upon entry to the service and at reviews.	

Recommendation No. 14	It was important that Care Support Plans, drawn up and agreed with the carer, are shared and carefully explained to the carer. The Support Plan should set out clearly what support has been agreed and, where possible and applicable, which Service Provider will be involved in the provision of support. On initial contact with a carer, it should be ensured that carers receive a copy of the Herefordshire Public Services leaflet on Carers Services in Herefordshire. A more flexible approach was also required of the definition of 'essential needs' in terms of what care support was provided				
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
The Associate Director, Integrated Commissioning will ensure with the Head of Provider Services that existing standard good practice is reconfirmed and understood throughout front line teams. This will include the provision of information and agreement and explanation of care plans with carers. Assessors will be reminded that when working with carers they will explore flexible means to meet carers' needs, which will be reflected in written care plans.	Provider Services Managers (MH, OP, LD & PD)	At Team meetings as and when held, to be completed by October 2010	Team members are clear about including all support being provided in care plans & routinely communicate this clearly with carers.	Existing standard practice is that Care Support Plans must clearly set out the support required to meet the Carers assessed needs and that these are drawn up and agreed in detail with the carer. Carers are sent information packs prior to an Assessors visit, or the Assessor will take information with them on the first visit. Where known at time of Support Plan writing, the Provider name will be included.	

Recommendation No. 15	Herefordshire Carers Support (HCS), which is a central, easily accessible and easily recognisable focus for enquiries from carers, was not widely recognised amongst the community of carers during the early stages of the Review. Therefore, measures should be put in place to continue the publicising of the services offered, and which allow carers to be simply and rapidly signposted to all sources of available support.				
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Integrated Commissioning will ensure that HCS will include in their work plans actions to continue production of the Carers newsletter, and further develop carers' forums and outreach sessions and events, to publicise services and support of HCS and other relevant services. Integrated Commissioning will monitor the number of registered carers which is an indicator of the public's knowledge of HCS and the services it offers.	Planning Manager	Details in work plan by April 2010. HCS monitoring reports (quarterly)	Work plan submitted by HCS with Commissioners by April 2010 Carers have increased awareness of services provided by HCS, indicated by the number of Registered carers, as a proxy measure of awareness.		

Recommendation No. 16	More use should be made of the Info Shops, and that a member of each Info Shop should receive training in the signposting of carers to HCS.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Integrated Commissioning will ensure that HCS will liaise with Info Shops to bring awareness of HCS and its role and provide awareness training and contact information for staff as well as HCS leaflets for the public.	Planning Manager	April 2010	At least one member of staff in each Info Shops received awareness training of HCS.	<u>Already completed</u> : between 9 Nov and 4 Dec 2009, HCS conducted presentations to the following Info Shops in Herefordshire: Ross, Kington, Bromyard, Leominster and Hereford. <u>Forthcoming</u> : Commissioners will explore with HCS whether this work can be repeated in 2010/11.

Recommendation No. 17	The Council has ensured that the voice of carers is heard in policy and planning and has commissioned to provide an advocacy role in conjunction with its participation model for Carers. The effectiveness of this arrangement should be reviewed after a year of its inception in order to ensure it is working in practice.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Integrated Commissioning will work closely with HCS to ensure that it receives feedback from carers on the relevance and effectiveness of services provided and where changes are required builds actions into commissioning plans which will be presented to carers through HCS for comment. A measure of the effectiveness of these arrangements will be the production and agreed of a Carers commissioning Strategy by March 2011. On production of the Strategy, Commissioners will review the effectiveness of Carer involvement.	Planning Manager	Ongoing throughout 2010. Plan agreed by carers by March 2011. April 2011	Evidence of Carers involved in the production of, and consulted with, any commissioning plans in developed during 2010/11. Review Completed by April 2011	

Recommendation No. 18	Clear communication was essential between Social Workers, carers' assessors, carers and Service Providers, and other agencies to which the carer may be referred. Feedback should always be provided to carers and the cared for where appropriate, following any contact with external Service Providers and internal Provider Services			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The Associate Director, Integrated Commissioning will ensure with the Head of Provider Services that social care staff are reminded of the need for clear and continuous communications with both carers and providers and this is understood and embedded in everyday practice. In the forthcoming revisions of the standard contract templates for provider contracts, Contracts Section will review all Quality standards including communication issues with service users and carers	Service Manager, ASC Provider Services & Carers Officer	July 2010	Evidence or confirmation by Service Manager that staff have received appropriate instruction regarding clear communication.	
	Contracts Manager	Nov 2010	Standard provider contracts will include general or specific standards covering all key aspects of service provision.	

Recommendation No. 19	There are instances where carers have refused help from Social Services because they did not understand what was involved in the assessment process. Carers Assessment should be referred to as a Carers Needs Assessment in order to prevent misunderstanding in the minds of those being assessed. The Assessment should have a primary focus on the carer, rather than the cared for. The Care Assessment Officers should ensure that they are as focused on the needs of the carers as the cared for.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The Associate Director, Integrated Commissioning will ensure with the Head of Provider Services that existing practice emphasises a focus on the needs of the carer during assessment. The opportunity will be taken to re-emphasise this with staff involved in assessment (in tandem with action 18 above).	Service Manager, ASC Provider Services & Carers Officer	July 2010	Evidence or confirmation by Service Manager that staff have received appropriate instruction regarding the focus on carers needs.	
Social Care providers will also investigate the extent of changes required to amend assessment paperwork and any requisite changes to Frameworki needed to support the move to renaming 'Carers Assessment' to 'Carers Needs Assessment'.	Service Manager, ASC Provider Services & Carers Officer	Initial review of changes required by July 2010	Paperwork and Frameworki updated by November 2011.	

Recommendation No. 20	Concern has been expressed about the apparent lack of continuity within the Children's Services Directorate, and as a result it is recommended that a named senior lead officer in Herefordshire Public Services should be in post to ensure that the needs of Young Carers are met.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The Director of the Children's and Young People's Directorate will be requested to identify a senior named lead officer to take forward the issue of continuity of support for young carers. Once identified the senior named lead officer's details will be circulated to staff, relevant bodies and partner organisations	Director of Children's Services Directorate	July 2010	Named Senior Lead Officer identified and role publicised	

Recommendation No. 21	The Group recommends that the Council work with providers to ensure that they understand the personalisation agenda and develop their services appropriately.			
Executive's Response	This recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The Head of Planning will ensure that as work is completed for the provision of Personal Budgets for Carers, providers will be informed of processes to support Budget holders and expectations of Carers in terms of provision of new and individually tailored services.	Planning Manager	February 2011	Providers informed of timescales and changes required to deliver new services for carers.	