



## **CARERS AND EMPLOYMENT – Making a Difference, Realising Potential**

22 July 2011

## Your Notes

## ABOUT THIS JOINT PAPER

### Status

Professional practice, guidance, experience, skills and research are developing all the time. This short report aims to:

- promote discussion;
- share evidence based practice; and,
- respond to the challenge of the national priority of enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential<sup>1</sup>

The paper does not seek to amend or replace existing statutory guidance that may be in place.

### Association of Directors of Adult Social Services

[Registered Charity No: 299154 – England ]

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, (ADASS) represents directors of adult social services in local authorities in England. Directors of Adult Social Services have statutory responsibilities for the social care of older people and adults with disabilities, while over 50 per cent also run social housing departments. ADASS members might also share a number of responsibilities for the provision and/or commissioning of housing, leisure, library, culture and arts services within their councils.

### Carers UK

[Registered Charity No: 246329 – England & Wales, SCO39307- Scotland]]

Carers UK is a charity set up to help the millions of people who care for family or friends. At some point in our lives every one of us will look after an older relative, a sick friend or a disabled family member. Six million people in the UK are caring now but whilst caring is part and parcel of life, without the right support the personal costs can be high. Carers UK supports carers, provides information and advice about caring, delivers training and consultancy services and campaigns to make life better for carers.

### Employers for Carers

Employers for Carers, (EfC) is an exciting, innovative and growing service for employers. Chaired by BT and supported by the specialist knowledge of Carers UK, its key purpose is to provide practical, 'hands on', help to employers to support the 1 in 7 carers in their workforce. Launched in January 2009 as an employers' membership forum, EfC now has over 50 member organisations, representing one million employees across the public and private sectors. Services include a dedicated members' website with a range of practical resources, networking facilities, case studies, employee resources and expert training and consultancy.

### Intended Audiences

The intended audiences of this position paper are: Directors of Adult Social Services, Lead Council Members, Carers Leads, Local Strategic Partnerships, Health and Well-Being Partnerships, carers organisations, local employers and employers forums.

**CARERS AND EMPLOYMENT**  
**MAKING A DIFFERENCE, REALISING POTENTIAL**

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## JOINT FOREWORD

This is the first time we have come together, as organisations, to work on the issue of carers and employment. The title says it all: it is about encouraging statutory agencies, employers and carers' organisations to make a difference locally to create opportunities for carers to have choices around employment and to realise their potential.

The imperatives of demographic change arising from an ageing population and an ageing social care workforce mean that it is increasingly likely that more of us will need an extended menu of help and services to enable us to combine work and care and for longer. The reality of this and the need for a response is being recognised increasingly by government, employers and service providers alike.

In working together on this report we had eight outcomes in mind. We wanted to:

- Respond to feedback from carers and employers and to the challenge of the refreshed national strategy for carers
- Stimulate local discussion and action to improve employment opportunities
- Encourage the creation of more opportunities for a life alongside caring
- Promote the benefits of modern and flexible employment practice
- Improve access to flexible care and support services which enable carers to remain in or return to work
- Promote equalities for carers
- Complement work being undertaken by the Standing Commission on Carers
- Complement work by government on modern workplaces<sup>ii</sup>

We want local statutory agencies, employers and carers' organisations to use the resources within this report, along with their own local intelligence, to work together to improve employment options for carers.

The practice examples show how much good work is happening around the country. We are sure there will be many other examples and want to hear about them [See Page: 6]. In sharing them we also want to inspire further local innovation and carer friendly employment practice to deliver the workplace of the future.

In summary, our message is simple: it makes business sense to care for carers and to promote modern workplaces and improved employability and skills of carers. If we do so we can secure business gains and improved health and well-being. We aim to review progress in 18 months: to see what has changed and to celebrate improvement.



**Dr. Graeme Betts**  
**Chair – ADASS**  
**Carers Policy Network**



**Caroline Waters OBE**  
**Chair**  
**Employers for Carers**



**Imelda Redmond CBE**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Carers UK**

## 1. A CALL TO ACTION

We want local statutory agencies, employers and carers' organisations to use this report to work together to improve employment options and opportunities for carers and to secure the outcomes we believe are within our grasp. Key recommendations are:

- Local strategic partnerships, including the local DWP, agree to adopt and then to work together on carer friendly and modern flexible employment opportunities.
- Local statutory agencies, as employers, accept the business case for supporting working carers, sign up to carer friendly employment practices and underpinning organisational cultures and policies.
- Local health and social care agencies seek to ensure that no carer is forced to give up work to provide support for the person they look after and that barriers to entry to the workplace are removed.
- Opportunities arising from information and communication technology are used locally to sustain employment and support return to employment by carers.
- Local Health and Well-Being Partnerships evidence how carer friendly working practices can help improve productivity and health and well being and contribute to achievement of local economic and social progress and become exemplar employers themselves.
- Directors of Adult Social Services share knowledge and experience to create a wider evidence base on positive practice on carers and employment which in turn encourages further progress.
- Local Councils in their Overview and Scrutiny role review local practice and progress.

This paper is being sent to all Directors of Adult Social Services and to a range of stakeholders. It is for Directors to decide how they want to take forward this review locally but we would encourage them to:

- Share this paper with their Lead Member, their Local Strategic Partnership and/or Health and Well-Being Board;
- Draw this review to the attention of their local Jobcentre Plus and others as they consider appropriate locally; and,
- Invite local stakeholders to consider together how far the issues and messages from this review apply, and appropriate local action to take them forward.

Directors may also wish to consider how local carers' support projects and advocacy schemes might be engaged in discussing this paper consistent with local needs and circumstances. Knowledge and information exchange remain key components to practice improvement and learning. Locally, we should make best use of the steadily increasing body of evidence that exists to help. Examples illustrating local practice around the themes we have identified are given in **Appendix A**.

### **Additional practice and policy examples**

The materials in this joint paper are likely to be of value to Directors of Adult Social Services, Directors of Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Partnerships, Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Lead Members, Commissioners, Human Resources/Workforce Leads, Carers Projects and Leads and Local Strategic Partnerships.

**If you have more practice or policy examples, please send them to:**

[employers@carersuk.org](mailto:employers@carersuk.org) [info@carersuk.org](mailto:info@carersuk.org) or [adasscarers@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:adasscarers@warwickshire.gov.uk)

## 2. THE CONTEXT

The refreshed National Carers Strategy, *Recognised, Valued and Supported* (November 2010)<sup>i</sup> recognised the importance of early identification and realising the potential of carers, including supporting a life outside of caring and ‘enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential.’ *Transparency in Outcomes: a framework for adult social care* (Department of Health, 2010) also includes an outcome that: “Carers can balance their caring roles and maintain their desired quality of life”.

The Government’s Public Health White Paper, *Healthy lives, healthy people* (November 2010) makes a clear link between public health and carers. Increased powers for local government, including the introduction of local statutory health and well-being boards, provides a key opportunity for Councils and partners to address working age carers’ needs as part of the objective of ‘reducing working-age ill-health’. More recently the Government has consulted on modern workplaces and the Law Commission has also made recommendations for a new social care law to overhaul the current complex legal provision in this area<sup>ii</sup>.

Many carers, however, remain unaware of their legal rights and the ability of carer sensitive employment and service provision to help them combine work, care and family life. By modelling good practice, health and social care, through local Health and Well-being partnerships, can help grow the momentum towards enhanced local carer friendly employment practice and improved outcomes for carers and employers.

### **Why we need to do more:**

Key facts about carers and employment are covered on page 10. There is an established body of evidence including the most comprehensive research published to date on this subject - produced by Carers UK and the University of Leeds<sup>iii</sup> - that carers experience considerable difficulty in balancing caring and employment and having a life alongside both. Often, caring responsibilities can lead to decisions about reducing hours, taking up different employment or leaving the employment market altogether.

Caring can have adverse effects on longer term employment, earning capacity and health: tiredness, worry and the stress of trying to manage incompatible roles<sup>iv</sup> are frequently cited by carers. At the same time there is evidence that employment can have a positive impact on carers: maintaining income and pension rights, sustaining social networks and relief from the caring role. Carers who are in paid work are less vulnerable to social isolation.

### **The business benefits:**

Supporting carers supports the achievement of business objectives, as the work of Employers for Carers has shown. A flexible, carer sensitive approach has been shown to have the following business benefits:

- Improves **retention** and **recruitment** of staff
- Reduces recruitment, training and retention costs
- Increases **productivity** and **performance**
- Reduces stress, sick leave and absenteeism
- Improves **people management** and **morale**
- Produces **cost savings**
- Makes the organisation relevant to an increasingly larger **market sector**

Further information about the business case for supporting carers is covered in “**The business case for supporting carers in, and into, employment**”, an evidence base prepared by Employer for Carers Leadership Group. This has been published as part of the refreshed National Carers Strategy (2010) as Annex B: [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_122077](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_122077)

In the present economic climate it makes even more business sense to care for carers<sup>v</sup>. As one manager commented: “*By supporting carers in our workforce (the organisation) can contribute more fully to society as a whole*”. This chimes well with the concept of the “*Big Society*” in which we are all players and with local and shared responsibilities for promoting independence, health, well-being and choice and control.

### **The challenge:**

Whilst progress has been made it is clear there is still some way to go if we are to support carers in and into work and help local employers to retain and recruit key staff. This short report provides a framework for local councils and their partners within emerging health and wellbeing partnerships to review progress. We hope it will encourage local adoption and use of carer friendly employment practice.

The resource material has been organised under a number of headings:

- Key policy principles to support carers in, and into, employment
- Carers and employment: the facts
- Carers and employment: what helps
- Practice examples [Appendix A]
- Sources and references [Appendix B]

We want to encourage local councils and local strategic partnerships in their community leadership role to consider what this information means for them as an employer; as a key driver of local employment opportunities; and as a service provider (and employer of paid care workers); and to reach out to local exemplar organisations, including Employers for Carers members.

### **Potential questions to ask locally:**

1. *What are we as a council or partnership going to do about this?*
2. *How much do we know about local awareness of carers’ employment rights to flexible working and what might we do to improve this?*
3. *What information do we have about local carers who would wish to remain in work or return to work but feel they cannot do this because of their caring responsibilities or workplace culture?*
4. *How far are we exploring and taking up the opportunities offered by information and communication technology to sustain carers in employment or enable a return to employment?*
5. *How far is our local Job Centre Plus involved in the work of the local strategic partnership on workforce planning and in promoting flexible employment opportunities and clarity around benefits?*
6. *What are carers and employers telling us about combining work and caring and how we do things now: are there any local quick wins that will make a difference and encourage progress by others?*
7. *Is there scope for a review by Overview and Scrutiny?*

### 3. CARERS AND EMPLOYMENT: POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 promotes the rights of carers to access to education, training, employment and leisure. The guide<sup>vi</sup> to the implementation of this legislation notes:

- Carers' employment needs are rarely considered at strategic planning level.
- Other public service bodies make the assumption it is the sole responsibility of "social services" to meet carers' needs when it is not.
- The benefits of employment to carers are well evidenced.
- Awareness of rights is limited.
- Support to remain in employment is identified as a key outcome by many carers.
- Support to return to employment may be needed; especially where "...confidence may be lost due to length of caring role".
- Parent carers may need additional support at the time of transition of support to adult social care.

The Coalition Government's Carers Strategy refresh, published in November 2010, contains a number of measures aimed at helping carers to balance caring with paid work, including commitments on:

- Extending the right to request flexible working to all employees including new recruits.
- 'Designing in' flexible working arrangements in job design and recruitment.
- Developing the first all-age careers service.
- Continuing to invest in supporting carers to return to work through Jobcentre Plus;
- Promoting the growth of assistive living technologies which can also play a key role in enabling people to balance caring and paid work.
- Ensuring carers have informed and responsive line managers.

The refreshed national carers' strategy also recognises that employers and services have a key role to play in supporting carers through offering flexibility and understanding. A key theme running through the Strategy is that employment is critical for carers: whether this is about helping them to stay in or return to work or enabling young adult carers to access employment.

#### ***This means carers should be able to:***

- Have a life of their own alongside their caring role.
- Be supported so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role.
- Remain in, or return to, work if they want (or need) to.
- Have a real choice about combining work and care.
- Exercise their rights in relation to "associative discrimination" under the Equality Act 2010.

#### ***To achieve this, carers should be able to access:***

- Accessible information about employment rights and benefits.
- Flexible employment and return to work services.
- Good employer support, including understanding and flexibility in the workplace.
- Affordable and reliable care and support services.
- Clear and transparent information about what support is available locally.
- Signposting to financial support, advice and advocacy.
- Effective legal rights to ensure that they do not face discrimination or harassment in accessing employment or services.

## 4. CARERS AND EMPLOYMENT: THE FACTS

When thinking about carers and employment issues within your locality bear in mind:

- Carers have rights and these are extended by the Equality Act 2010
- The vast majority (80%) of the UK's 6 million unpaid carers are of working age: 90% are aged 30 plus.
- 3 million people currently combine work and care – 1 in 7 in every workplace.
- With our ageing population and workforce, this number is set to increase - 3 in 5 people will become carers at some point in their lives.
- Every year, over 2 million people become carers, so there is a new population of carers in the workforce every day.
- 1 in 5 people give up work to care.
- The peak age for caring is in the age group 45-64.
- Almost half of carers are in paid work.
- Carers may take on work that is below their skill and capability.

Public sector employers, in partnership with their local DWP and other local stakeholders, can make a vital contribution to change at local level.

### ***As an employer:***

Supporting your own employees with unpaid caring responsibilities is critical if you are to retain key staff and benefit from a healthy and productive workforce.

- The peak age for caring is between 45 and 64 – when many employees will have gained valuable skills and experience. Yet employees in this age group are most likely to give up work to care, resulting in further recruitment and retraining costs.
- Stress is the main reason carers cite for leaving work; especially if combining work and caring unsupported.
- Employers who support their employees to combine work and care have reported business benefits all round: retention, resilience and results!

### ***As a key driver of local employment opportunities:***

Working with local partner organisations and the DWP to support carers in, and into, work is essential for the health and well-being of your local workforce and economy.

- By 2017 we will reach the tipping point for care when the numbers of older people needing care will outstrip the numbers of working age family members currently available to meet that demand<sup>vii</sup>.
- With an ageing population and an ageing workforce, supporting people to continue to work and care will be critical to national and local economies.
- Tighter public sector budgets for care and support services may be perceived as increasing the pressure on families and friends to care.

### ***As a service provider (and employer of paid care workers):***

Employees within care services also play a key part in supporting unpaid carers:

- The paid care workforce is absolutely critical to the success and quality of the care services that you provide, or arrange to be provided, as a local council.
- All employees need to be aware of and have the appropriate skills to work with carers.<sup>viii</sup>

## **5. CARERS AND EMPLOYMENT: WHAT HELPS**

### ***As a fair employer:***

1. Be aware of caring issues and that there will be carers in your workforce.
2. Have a clearly identifiable source of support for carers within the workplace - encourage networking and peer to peer support among carers.
3. Build consideration of carers into your staff recruitment and retention practices.
4. Be a flexible employer, both in terms of recruiting and retaining staff.
5. Communicate your support for carers throughout your organisation, including to line managers, as they will be key to its successful implementation.
6. Consider joining Employers for Carers [www.employersforcarers.org](http://www.employersforcarers.org) to engage with, and learn from the practical experience of, other employers in promoting carer and family friendly employment practice.

### ***As a key driver of local employment opportunities:***

7. Develop an overall plan for providing support and information to carers around work, training and education – and include this in your Carers' Strategy.
8. Build and maintain partnerships with local employers, JobcentrePlus and other employment, careers and training services to raise awareness and promote action.
9. Engage with all these partners to promote more accessible and flexible return to work services for current and former carers.
10. Encourage all partners to advertise flexible jobs and training in order to recruit current and former carers and take opportunities offered by technology.
11. Support local employers to become more carer friendly, including scope for flexible working practices and technology which recognise and meet the needs of carers.
12. Communicate any positive results in supporting carers to return to or remain in work, in order to build further support for this work in your local area.

### ***As a service provider (and employer of paid care workers):***

13. Raise awareness among your care workforce of the contribution that unpaid carers make to the health and wellbeing of their families and to the wider community.
14. Recognise that many care service employees will be providing unpaid care for family members and friends and may well need to be supported in the workplace.
15. Promote carers' rights to social care staff to make them aware that carers' work and training issues should be considered when Carer's Assessments are being made: no care package should force a carer to give up work to care.
16. Ensure there are sufficient local arrangements in place - including carers' support services - to offer back up to carers that helps them to return to, or remain in, work.

### ***Organisational policies and culture:***

17. Comply with the law – the Equality Act 2010 protects carers from unfair treatment from employers and service providers.
18. Carer-proof local policies – develop clear procedures and include them in written policies to prevent unfair treatment or exclusion of carers.
19. Communicate about carers – publicise your policies and activities to support carers in your workplace and local area to enable carers to come forward for support.
20. Generate and sustain organisational culture change – raise awareness and understanding throughout your local authority in order to embed caring issues within your organisation, audit and evaluate.
21. Make sure carers' issues, including employment, forms part of your local joint strategic needs assessment [JSNA] and the processes of consultation and inclusion inherent within it.

## APPENDIX A

### CARERS AND EMPLOYMENT: PRACTICE EXAMPLES

These practical experience examples aim to illustrate the points highlighted in this paper. The willingness to share experience has been invaluable and encouraged us to prepare this paper both to record the progress being made and to encourage further innovation and improvement. We have organised material around four main themes:

#### **Carer friendly employment:**

- The business case
- Encouraging carer friendly employment locally

#### **Services which support carers to stay in, or return to, work:**

- Information, advice and guidance
- Recognition of carers' employment needs in assessment processes
- Technologies to support people to work and care

#### **Return to work support:**

- Employment and training help

#### **Policy development, evaluation and audit**

- Flexible and accessible care and support services
- Evaluation and review

### **A.1 Carer Friendly Employment**

#### **[a] The business case**

**Hertfordshire County Council** has a long track record of supporting carers both within its own workforce and more widely within the county. It was a key delivery partner in the major EU (ESF) funded *Action for Carers and Employment (ACE National) partnership* programme (2002-2007) which was led by Carers UK and designed to assist the mainstreaming of effective support for working age carers and the development of services enabling carers to work.

The Council was named in 2009 by Working Families as one of the best family friendly employers of the past 3 decades for the leadership it has shown in its flexible working and family friendly initiatives.

- 31% of the Council's staff are carers. Support for work-life balance is central to its policies. A range of flexible working opportunities are offered to all employees.
- Council employees can take up to 5 days paid leave to deal with emergencies involving dependants and also an extra 20 days unpaid leave each year.
- The work-life balance strategy was linked to the Council's comprehensive change programme, which over 3 years reduced accommodation from 51 offices to 3 main bases. Flexible working is not just an HR policy, but a recognised means of achieving business objectives and personal commitment.
- The Council has seen increased **staff retention rates** as a result of these policies.  
[http://www.topemployersforworkingfamilies.org.uk/binary\\_data/52\\_top\\_employers\\_for\\_working\\_families\\_2009\\_hertfordshire\\_county\\_council.pdf](http://www.topemployersforworkingfamilies.org.uk/binary_data/52_top_employers_for_working_families_2009_hertfordshire_county_council.pdf)

**Sefton Council:** the **Sefton Equalities Partnership**, which involves the Council and a range of local public and voluntary sector organisations, has implemented a multi agency flexible working policy 'which takes into account the needs of carers and the benefits that flexible working can offer to employers in terms of recruitment and retention of skilled staff.' [www.sefton.gov.uk/PDF/ASC\\_SefCarersStratgey\\_July2010.pdf](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/PDF/ASC_SefCarersStratgey_July2010.pdf)

**Kirklees Council** has for many years supported carers both within its own workforce and more widely in the community. Support for the Council's employees includes a flexible working hours and career break scheme, home working, special leave of absence provision and an employee carers' network which has run now for 5 years.

## **[b] Encouraging carer friendly employment locally**

**Oxfordshire County Council** sponsors a free logo 'Employers supporting working carers' for employers who are supportive of carers. It is working with Age UK Oxfordshire, with support from Carers UK and Employers for Carers, to develop and implement a Carers Employment Strategy. This work will include producing and promoting a business case to local employers to evidence how supporting carers in employment can be beneficial to the economy and individual businesses. Further information and examples of good practice can be found on the advice for businesses pages of the Council's website at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/supportingworkingcarers](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/supportingworkingcarers)

**The Yorkshire and Humber Improvement Partnership/Department of Health/ Carers Innovation Fund** have funded a Carer Friendly Employer programme which provides local employers with a toolkit and guidance to achieve a Carer Friendly Employer charter mark. City of York Council has become the region's first local authority to achieve this. [www.york.gov.uk/news/latest/News/PR1937](http://www.york.gov.uk/news/latest/News/PR1937)

## **A.2 Services which support carers to stay in or return to work**

### **[a] Information, advice and guidance**

**Hampshire County Council** has provided a comprehensive Carers Information Pack, 'Assistance for caring whilst working' <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/carers-assistance.pdf>

**Hertfordshire County Council** supports **Carers in Hertfordshire** which provides assistance to carers and information for employers who wish to support carers in and into work [www.carersinherts.org.uk/help-us-help-carers/employers](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk/help-us-help-carers/employers)

**NHS County Durham and Darlington and Durham County Council** have produced 'A guide for employers and carers wishing to work'. This provides information and advice relating to employing carers, supporting working carers and guidance on flexible working options which may assist carers in gaining and maintaining employment: <http://www.durhamcarers.info/SiteCollectionDocuments/Caring-for-carers-A-guide-for-employers-and-carers-wishing-to-work.pdf>

**Warwickshire County Council** provides a separate 'employment' section on the 'carers' section of its website with information for people who are currently working and caring or who are looking to return to or start work whilst caring: <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/Web/corporate/pages.nsf/Links/C74558A23FC9D241802577D00051C547>

**West Sussex County Council** provides information for carers about local and national schemes to support carers to remain in or return to work: [www.westsussex.gov.uk/living/social\\_care\\_and\\_health/carers/work\\_and\\_learning.aspx](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/living/social_care_and_health/carers/work_and_learning.aspx) It also supports West Sussex Carers Online which provides information for carers on education, training and employment: [www.westsussexcarers.org.uk/HelpCarers/education\\_training\\_employment.htm](http://www.westsussexcarers.org.uk/HelpCarers/education_training_employment.htm)

The Council was also a key delivery partner in the ESF funded *Action for Carers and Employment (ACE National) partnership* programme (2002-2007) led by Carers UK.

## [b] Recognition of carers' employment needs in assessment processes

**Kirklees Carers Gateway** sits inside the Council's Assessment and Support team. It aims to stop carers rising up the tariff of care by early intervention and support. This has resulted in increased referrals for carer's assessments (almost a threefold increase) and a range of support being offered, including the use of direct payments.

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/care-support/carers/carers-link.shtml>

Kirklees Council was also a key delivery partner in the *ACE National partnership* programme (2002-2007). Its related *Action for Carers and Employment (ACE) Plus* service also provides employment and training advice for carers plus short courses in confidence building, assertiveness training, job search skills, IT training and work placements.

[www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/care-support/carers/ace.shtml](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/care-support/carers/ace.shtml)

**Surrey County Council** has developed its arrangements for personal budgets with the involvement of carers, including working (and working age) carers throughout. As a result, the carer's assessment has been embedded in the main Supported Self-Assessment to ensure that these are routinely undertaken. It also reinforces the right of carers to be consulted in the service user's assessment and other statutory obligations.

[www.carersnet.org.uk/sds/budget.html](http://www.carersnet.org.uk/sds/budget.html)

## [c] Technologies to support people to work and care

**Tunstall working carer case study** 'We got dad a Lifeline and pendant and in the first four weeks he'd used it twice. The first time was when he'd fallen in the evening and within minutes the Careline had called...The whole family feels so much more secure and has peace of mind that should dad need help, they'll know about it straight away. My sister was seriously considering giving up work or going part time and now she feels she doesn't have to as the burden has been shared.'

**BT case study** BT has longstanding experience of using workplace technology to enable employees to combine work and care. This includes technology not only to enable home and remote working but also to enable carers to access information and advice about workplace and external support. BT's employee Carers Network facilitates the exchange of advice and learning through a SharePoint networking site on line and by using BT's conferencing service. Using virtual tools cuts down on travel which reduces costs but more importantly allows carers to participate without adding lengthy travel to their already busy agendas.

BT also provides 'knowledge calls' where employees can ring in for a question and answer session with experts and other carers. <http://carers-efc.jamkit.com/BusinessCase/CasestudyBT>

## A.3 Return to Work Support

### [a] Employment and training help

**Ealing Council** supports Ealing Carers' Centre which, in partnership with the Council, is managed by Ealing Carers Connect, a consortium led by the Ealing Centre for Independent Living and including Ealing Mencap, Alzheimer's Concern Ealing and Crossroads Care West London. The Centre 'provides occasional free training and development sessions for carers on a variety of topics, including IT and finding work' [http://www2.ealing.gov.uk/services/social\\_services/carers/ealing\\_carers\\_centre.html](http://www2.ealing.gov.uk/services/social_services/carers/ealing_carers_centre.html)

**Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council** runs a Carers' Resource which supports carers 'by the delivery of one stop advice and information, emotional support and access to free training to equip you with additional skills if you are planning to return to the workplace'.

It is linked with Rochdale Learning Network (RLN), Rochdale Employment Development Service (REDS), Moving On and Steps.

[www.rochdale.gov.uk/advice\\_and\\_benefits/volunteering/carer\\_support\\_groups\\_and\\_organ.aspx](http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/advice_and_benefits/volunteering/carer_support_groups_and_organ.aspx) The Council also participated in the ESF funded *Action for Carers and Employment (ACE National) partnership programme (2002-2007)* led by Carers UK.

**Sefton Council** has a long track record of supporting carers in and into employment and also participated in the above mentioned ACE programme. The Council works in partnership with **Sefton Carers Centre** which provides training in IT skills, interviewing techniques and confidence building and volunteering opportunities 'to give carers who have been out of the workplace for some time the opportunity to gain new skills and work experience'. It also provides training at the STEPS Centre, including work opportunities in catering, gardening, administration and advocacy. <http://www.sefton-carers.co.uk/> The Sefton Carers' Guide includes a section on 'Juggling work and care' [www.sefton.gov.uk/pdf/HSC\\_Sefton\\_Carers\\_Guide2009.pdf](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/pdf/HSC_Sefton_Carers_Guide2009.pdf)

**Suffolk County Council** has a separate 'employment' section on the 'carers' section of its website with information for carers who are seeking to return to work, or need information about their rights in the workplace while caring:

<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/CareAndHealth/WorkAndLearning/Employment.htm>

There are also sections on 'education and training' and 'volunteering' which provide further information, advice and signposting for carers seeking to return to work.

The Council supports **Suffolk Family Carers** whose Learning, Education & Employment Team supports 'family carers who wish to be involved in some form of learning or who would like support in returning to work'.

[http://suffolk-carers.org.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=section&id=4&Itemid=141](http://suffolk-carers.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=section&id=4&Itemid=141)

**Surrey County Council** funds **Action for Carers (Surrey)** which provides specialist support, information and advocacy for carers, and former carers, in relation to employment, training and leisure activities. Action for Carers provides free and confidential impartial information on return to learning or work and support for those juggling work and caring, including awareness of their right to a carers' assessment. They are also currently piloting an advice line service for carer employees and pensioners of a national construction company:

<http://www.carersnet.org.uk/ace/ace.html>

Surrey County Council like many large organisations has contracted with an employee support service and the chosen provider Workplace Options have themselves developed a carers information pack for carers working for its customers.

**The Carers Resource** is an independent charity which has worked in partnership with Councils in Yorkshire over the years to support carers in the districts of Harrogate, Craven and Airedale. Its Changing Lives initiative helps carers to 'gain new skills and/or qualifications, regain confidence and sense of self and remain in, or get back to, paid work'. <http://www.carersresource.org/learning-leisure-employment.htm>

## **A.4 Policy Development, Evaluation and Audit**

### **[a] Flexible and accessible care and support services**

Services to support carers to stay in or return to work are not just about providing carer friendly employment, information, advice and guidance and recognising carers' employment needs within assessment processes. They are also about providing the **back up care and support services** that people need to combine work and caring. This means ensuring that services are commissioned and supplied which are flexible and accessible in order to enable carers to stay in or return to work.

**Employers for Carers' Leadership Group** recognises that: 'Care needs vary enormously, and carers also have very varying work patterns. Care and support – and other services – must therefore be flexible and able to accommodate such patterns if people are to be supported to work and care.' (*Conditions for employment for carers, EfC discussion paper, 2011*). Flexible employers need to be supported by flexible services.

More **personalised services** can also help carers combine work and care. The Department of Health's paper 'Carers and personalisation: improving outcomes' provides signposts for better practice and outcomes including a range of practice examples: [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_122076](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_122076)

## **[b] Evaluation and review**

**Kirklees Council's** Carers' Strategy includes the following specific actions:

- *Work with partners to ensure that carers, especially working carers' needs are considered during consultation and the design of new services.*
- *Work with Jobcentre Plus Partners to develop new ways and continue existing ways to support carers into education, training and employment.*
- *Work with Kirklees Council Working Carers Network to develop a Working Carers Good Practice Guide to share with other Kirklees Employers.*

**Lambeth Council's** Carers Strategy includes the following outcome measures are:

- *Increased number of working age carers able to remain economically active.*
- *Increased numbers of carers supported back into education or employment*
- *Increase in educational attainment of young carers.*

<http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/HealthSocialCare/Carers/LambethCarersStrategy20082013.html> It also includes a proposal to 'Provide Assistive Technology to manage risk that will support 40 installations for working carers a year.'

The **Surrey Carers Charter**, supported by **Surrey County Council**, Action for Carers (Surrey), Surrey PCT and Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, includes a section on 'a life beyond caring', including employment and training issues. <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/berkshire/charterstrat.pdf> Surrey's Carers Strategy also includes:

### *7. A Life Beyond Caring*

- *To improve support to carers in relation to training and work through the Action for Carers and Employment Partnership, carers' assessments and promotion of carer friendly employment practice. This will include work with employers, Job Centres and training organisations and use of materials produced by Employers for Carers.'*

## **Employers for Carers [EfC]**

Employers for Carers [www.employersforcarers.org](http://www.employersforcarers.org), through its Leadership Group of employers, has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU, signed March 2010) with the six signatory government departments to the National Carers Strategy (DH, BIS, DWP, DfE, CLG, GEO). This sets out how EfC and Government can work together to support implementation of the Strategy, including desired outcomes for carers.

Work is currently under way to define practical outcomes which are actionable and measurable over the short, medium and long term. The MoU should therefore become a useful mechanism for promoting good practice in measuring outcomes for carers. One way in which EfC will be seeking to measure outcomes is via an annual 'light touch' employer and parallel employee survey. The first of these surveys will be undertaken in spring 2012, with results published during Carers Week in June. It is intended that this survey will form a baseline for future years and that this process will be the start of a more formal benchmarking process in the future.

**Carers UK** [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) occupies a unique position as both an influencer of policy and an early interpreter of the practical implications of legislative change. It has an established track record in working with local authorities, voluntary organisations and businesses to develop practical and workable solutions to support carers in, and into, employment.

Carers UK was the lead partner in the major EU (ESF) funded **Action for Carers and Employment (ACE National) partnership** programme (2002-2007) which worked across six local authority areas along with Jobcentre Plus and other employment services, advice and guidance services, service providers, central government and employers, to:

- Explore the provision of services that 'work around work'.
- Raise awareness of carers and mainstream their support.
- Provide benefits advice to carers.
- Develop carer-friendly working policies and practices, leading to the establishment of **Employers for Carers**.

The second phase of the project focused on improving the infrastructure of care services that enable carers to work, and involved public, private and not-for-profit care service providers in ten local authority areas in England, Scotland and Wales.

[www.carersuk.org/professionals/resources/research-library/item/504-action-for-carers-and-employment-impact-of-the-ace-partnership](http://www.carersuk.org/professionals/resources/research-library/item/504-action-for-carers-and-employment-impact-of-the-ace-partnership)

Carers UK provides support to forward-thinking local authorities in their consultation process, strategy revision and implementation. Work to date includes:

- Exploring the provision of services that 'work around work'.
- Interpretation of national strategy and impact on local implementation.
- Reaching and supporting hidden carers through innovative use of technology.
- Identification, support and retention of carers in employment.

## APPENDIX B

### SOURCES AND REFERENCES

#### 1. References to the text:

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<sup>i</sup> **HM Government**, *Recognised, Valued and Supported: next steps for the Carers Strategy*, Department of Health, 25 November 2010 Gateway ref:15179

<sup>ii</sup> **HM Government**, *Consultation on Modern Workplaces*, BIS, May 2011 and **Law Commission**, *Adult Social Care*, Law Com No 326, The Stationery Office

<sup>iii</sup> **Carers UK and University of Leeds**, *Carers, Employment and Services Report Series*, (2007). This is the most comprehensive research to date on carers and employment.

<sup>iv</sup> **Arksey Hilary**, *Combining informal care and work: supporting carers in the workplace*, *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 10, 151-161 quoted in *Audit Commission 2004* p 7

**Arksey, Hilary et al** *Carers' aspirations and decisions around work and retirement*, *Research Summary of Report 290*, November 2005

<sup>v</sup> **Yeandle, Sue et al**, *Who Cares Wins: The social and Business Benefits of supporting Carers*, ACE national, Carers UK Sheffield Hallam University 2006

<sup>vi</sup> **Cass, Elaine** *Implementing the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act, 2004*, SCIE Guide 9, Social care Institute for Excellence, 2005 [revised 2007]

<sup>vii</sup> **Pickard, Linda**, *Informal care for older people provided by their adult children: projections of supply and demand to 2041 in England*. Report to the Strategy Unit and Department of Health, 2008

<sup>viii</sup> **Skills for Care**, *Carers Matter – Everybody's Business: A guide to supporting carers through staff learning and development*, Skills for health/skills for Carer [Parts 1-3] 2011.

**The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services** [Registered Charity No: 299154 – England] aims to promote the education of the public in matters of social policy, social organisation and social problems; to promote the relief of poverty; to promote the relief of aged, sick and disabled and the prevention and protection of physical and mental health for the benefit of the public and to promote the preservation of family life for the benefit of the public.

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**Your Notes:**

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Association of Directors of Adult Social Services  
Employers for Carers

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