The new national Carers’ Strategy

Realising the spirit of the Care Act and the Children and Families Act for carers and their families
Chair
• Glen Garrod, ADASS

Panel
• Mark Browne, Carers Policy Lead, Department of Health
• Gail Scott-Spicer, Chief Executive, Carers Trust
• Heléna Herklots, Chief Executive, Carers UK
Mark Browne

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Gail Scott-Spicer

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Care Act and Children and Families Act – the impact for carers so far
Care Act 2014 and Children and Families Act 2014

Before: Carers did have legal rights and entitlements, but laws were complex and confusing; Carers had to prove they provided “regular and substantial amounts of care”. Young carers: no specific rights

Came into force on 1 April 2015
Care Act for carers: One year on

3 key recommendations

Reason to be optimistic about potential of the Act, if national and local government and the NHS work together to invest in the support needed to ensure the legal rights fully introduced.

This includes making sure that all social workers and assessors are appropriately trained, and able to reflect the wellbeing principle in assessments.

Local authorities, with the LGA and ADASS, should review their systems for monitoring progress in implementing the Act. The Short-and Long-Term (SALT) return should be reviewed, so that it captures all assessment and support activity for carers, including prevention.

Full recommendations page 22
Findings

Mixed

Evidence of good practice and implementation bedding in

"I have just had an assessment done. I have been my son’s carer for the last 27 years unpaid and at this assessment I was asked about my needs. This has never happened before."  

Carer

"Knowing I have the right to be asked if I am ‘willing and able to continue caring,’ has stopped the crucifying assumption I have a duty to care until I drop."  

Carer
Findings

Carers not experiencing enough of the benefits

“I have no idea, I know for me nothing has changed. I am doing the same exhausting job of caring for my son as I always have.”

Carer

“I continue to have zero personal support after a mental breakdown.”

Carer

65% of carers had not had assessments.

4% did not know if they’d had one or not.

23% of the carers who had had an assessment felt that their assessor was “Not knowledgeable”.

26% felt that they were “Partly knowledgeable”.

37% had not received a letter or a support plan after assessment.

34% felt the assessment was “Not helpful”.

31% felt it “Partly helpful”.

69% of parent carers had not been offered an assessment.

The shortest time a carer reported waiting for an assessment was one day; the average wait reported was eight weeks.

NCAS Conference, Friday 4 November 2016, 09:00-10:00, Charter 4
Summary findings

- Implementation of the Act far from complete.
- Too many carers unaware of their rights.
- Practitioners not always clear that carers’ eligibility for support is independent of the person they care for.
- Not all local authorities complying with the law when assessing carers’ needs and putting support packages in place.
- Engagement with health services problematic for many carers. NHS England Carers Toolkit is welcome - many opportunities for NHS to support carers, particularly with identification.
- Little evidence market-shaping duty has benefited carers and promoted innovation. Local authorities could do more to develop their offer to carers.
- Transition planning duty for young carers and parent carers. Some local authorities adopted narrow interpretation of this duty, to the exclusion of carers with support needs.
Heléna Herklots

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Topic 1

Information, prevention and early intervention

- Identification and assessment – and how the Strategy can support Local Authorities in delivering this for carers and families

- Potential of digital platforms and technology to help Local Authorities communicate with carers, link them into services, and carry out assessments
Topic 2

**Joined up working between health and social care**

- How we can build on work such as the NHS England Memorandum of Understanding to develop joint approaches and commitment between local health and care services

- How we support frontline professionals to work effectively across service boundaries, and wrap support around the carer and their family
Thank you