

Support and Services for Carers

A survey of Welsh Local Authorities

2005/06

Introduction

Part of Carers Wales' role is to ensure that the Welsh Assembly Government is aware of the issues in relation to service planning and provision for carers across Wales. With the transfer of the Carers Grant into the Revenue Support Grant to provide carers services in Wales, we felt it was opportune to gather information from each local authority with regard to what support and services are available for carers based on the 5 priority areas set out in the Assembly's strategy for carers in Wales "Caring about Carers." (2000).

- Health and social care
- Information
- Support
- Young Carers
- Carers and Employment

A letter was sent from Roz Williamson, Director of Carers Wales in October 2005 to all elected members with responsibility for Social Services in Wales, drawing their attention to the possible risk to carers' support when the Carers Grant was transferred into the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) - from April 2006. We wished to ensure that members knew if satisfactory arrangements were in place to protect carers' services in each authority. Following on from the letter, the survey questionnaire was sent to each Director of Social Services in November 2005.

We feel the 100% response from the Local Authorities in Wales is a reflection of the excellent co-operative relationship that exists in working towards providing better support for carers in Wales.

We hope this report will provide a valuable snapshot of what services and support are available to carers across Wales at this time and will also identify any major gaps or risks that exist.

Maggie Titterton
April 2006

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KEY FINDINGS

Local government Support & Services for carers in Wales

Out of 22 Local Authorities:

- 18 have a local carers strategy
- 20 consulted with carers before allocating money from the Carers Grant
- Only 1 has ring-fenced money from the Carers Grant for 2 years (at the time of writing)
- 5 will fund current services
- 17 have a dedicated lead officer for carers
- 3 have a "Carers Champion" at cabinet level
- 20 produce carers information
- 5 have dedicated staff for carers assessments
- 14 record unmet need through carers assessments
- 18 do not charge for carers services
- 17 have a young carers officer
- Only 8 have a carer support policy for their own staff

SUMMARY

There was a 100% response from the Local Authorities in Wales. This excellent co-operation demonstrates an enormous goodwill and commitment to improve support for the 350,000+ carers across Wales.

Carers Strategy:

1. 18 authorities have developed a carers strategy and most have been published, whilst the remainder are in progress.
2. 18 authorities have a Carers Strategy Group and most are linked to the Health, Social Care & Well Being Partnerships either directly or via internal planning structures.
3. A majority of authorities have a wide range of membership within the Carers Strategy Groups which include carers and the voluntary sector as well as the statutory agencies.

Carers Grant:

1. There was wide consultation prior to allocation of the carers grant, but many decisions were made without a measure of carer satisfaction being known.
2. Only 1 authority, Cardiff, at time of response, has committed publicly that the Carers Grant will be ringfenced internally for 2 years. 5 others have committed to funding current services, but not for how long. All remaining authorities described a commitment, but no certainty for the future funding of carers services
3. A majority of authorities have a dedicated lead for carers and have a range of different posts with responsibility for carers issues.

Information and Support

1. Only 3 authorities have a Carers Champion at cabinet level
2. 20 out of the 22 authorities provide a wide range of information for carers.
3. Only 5 out of the 22 authorities have a dedicated member of staff to carry out carers assessments. It is mostly care managers and social workers who undertake this task. A majority record the number of carers assessments carried out and also record unmet need. Training has been provided for assessors via a range of internal and external sessions.
4. 14 authorities use eligibility criteria to access carers services and 3 authorities currently charge for carers services. Only 8 authorities stated they would not charge carers for services in the future.
5. All 22 authorities provide a range of services from alternative funding streams to the Carers Special Grant which support carers in continuing to care.

Young Carers

1. 17 of the 22 authorities have a Young Carers officer, but only 1 authority carries out Young Carers assessments in conjunction with a children's team.
2. 21 authorities stated that their Young Carers services were either hosted or supported via the voluntary sector.

Carers and Employment

1. Only 8 authorities have a specific carers policy. 10 others stated other employment policies included carers, and 4 other authorities were looking at developing an appropriate policy.
2. Only 9 authorities stated they would be prepared to carry out a staff audit to ascertain how many members of the workforce are carers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Carers Strategy

1. All remaining authorities, should develop a carers strategy as soon as possible.
2. All existing carers strategies should be reviewed and up-dated on a 3 year basis.
3. Membership from the statutory agencies participating in carers strategy groups should be of sufficient seniority to make decisions about levels of resources/support for carers.

Carers Grant

1. All authorities need to adopt a wide range of methods for consulting with carers and to establish a method of measuring carer satisfaction.
2. Uncertainty over future funding for carers promotes even more stresses and strains for carers, and has serious implications for their health and well-being. Despite authorities describing a commitment, there is no certainty expressed for the future funding of carers services. Three year service level agreements should be considered for voluntary organizations providing services to carers which would help with the continuity of service and care.
3. A majority of authorities have a dedicated lead for carers but there is inequity for carers as these posts vary greatly in responsibility. An appropriate level of seniority needs to be established across all authorities.

Information and Support

1. All authorities should have a Carers Champion at cabinet level.
2. There is a wide range of information available for carers, and this is commended. However, it is essential that this information is evaluated and updated regularly, and that a dissemination/distribution plan be adopted.
3. There was a wide range of responses with regard to carers assessments, good practice and training to improve support for carers. Equity for carers is crucial and training on carers issues, legislation and practice is essential for managers and operational staff across all social care teams.
4. Most authorities do not charge carers for services, but were unable to commit to continuation of this in the future. This instability again contributes to inequity and additional stress to carers. Carers save the local economies hundreds of millions of pounds a year, and are affronted when required to pay for services which are provided to help them sustain their caring responsibilities.

Young Carers

1. Most authorities provide support to Young Carers via the voluntary sector. Authorities must ensure that they continue to provide appropriate and substantial support to these projects.

Carers and Employment

1. Only a minority of authorities have a specific carers policy. To meet the demands of an ever-changing workforce with skills shortages and problems in recruitment and retention, it is vital that carers who are trying to balance working and caring are offered the flexibility and support they need to sustain their position. All authorities should conduct a staff audit to ascertain how many working carers there are in their workforce and make appropriate plans to support them.

SURVEY ANALYSIS

(A copy of all the collated data is available electronically on request from Carers Wales)

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE – Carers Strategy

Have you developed a local Carers Strategy in your area?

18 Authorities: *YES*

3 Authorities (Blaenau Gwent, Gwynedd and Swansea): *“in progress of development”*

1 Authority (Flintshire): *“Good Health strategy is being developed which will form the basis for a joint commissioning plan”*

If yes, has it been published?

14 Authorities: *YES*

6 Authorities: *NO*

3 authorities in the stage of development – (Blaenau Gwent, Gwynedd and Swansea) Anglesey, Neath Port Talbot and Ceredigion who have not published

2 Authorities (Carmarthenshire and Flintshire) *did not answer*

If yes, is there an established Carers Strategy Group/Network which developed the Strategy?

18 Authorities: *YES*

1 Authority (Rhondda Cynon Taff): *NO*

3 Authorities (Blaenau Gwent, Gwynedd, Ceredigion) *did not answer*

Is the Carers Strategy Group linked to the Health, Social Care & Well-being partnership?

15 Authorities: *YES*

1 Authority (Neath Port Talbot): *NO*

2 Authorities (Blaenau Gwent, Carmarthenshire) *intend to link*

4 Authorities (Cardiff, Ceredigion, Denbighshire and Gwynedd) *did not answer*

Where is it placed within your overall planning group structure?

21 Authorities *described various structures*

1 Authority (Vale of Glamorgan) *did not answer*

Describe or list the membership of this group:

19 Authorities *described wide range of membership incl. Social Services, other LA depts., Health, voluntary organisations and carers*

3 Authorities (Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil & Vale of Glamorgan) *did not answer*

Do the Local Health Board/Trust/other Health Professionals work with your LA in partnership to support carers?

20 Authorities answered *YES*

2 Authorities (Blaenau Gwent and Vale of Glamorgan) *did not answer*

CARERS GRANT

Describe how decisions are reached in your area on the allocation of monies from the Carers Grant

9 Authorities *consulted widely before allocation*

8 Authorities *made decisions, mostly internally, some in conjunction with health*

5 authorities *invited bids and allocated accordingly*

Do you consult with carers before decisions on allocation are made?

20 Authorities *consulted with carers in various ways before decisions on allocation were made*

2 Authorities (Blaenau Gwent and Wrexham): *NO*

What arrangements have been made within your LA to safeguard services for carers when the ring-fenced Carers Grant is transferred into the RSG from April 2006?

Only 1 authority, *to date, has already committed to ringfence the Carers Grant from within – Cardiff for 2 years.*

5 others, Anglesey, Blaenau Gwent, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, and Neath Port Talbot *have committed to fund current services.*

The Director at Bridgend has made a commitment to *continue to fund carers services.*

Rhondda Cynon Taff state that *“it is written into the Council’s Carers Strategy & Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Strategy”.*

The remaining 14 Authorities describe a commitment to *continuing carers services, that plans have been submitted, but decisions are awaited.*

Do you have a dedicated lead officer for carers and carers issues?

17 Authorities have a dedicated lead for carers, but levels of seniority not identified in all cases. 5 are part-time but are permanent posts, 6 are funded from the Carers Grant.

3 Authorities (Blaenau Gwent, Gwynedd & Vale of Glamorgan): *NO*

2 Authorities (Denbighshire & Flintshire) state that *carers issues are part of other posts – one of which is funded via Carers Grant*

If no do you intend to create such a post?

2 Authorities (Blaenau Gwent & Vale of Glamorgan): *NO*

1 Authority (Flintshire) *considering such a post*

Are there any other officers with responsibilities for carers and carers issues?

15 Authorities: *YES* describing a range of different roles from Assistant Director to a project team of 5. 1 Authority stated "each and every one of them – although most don't realise it yet"

4 Authorities (Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot, Newport and Wrexham): *NO*

2 Authorities (Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan) *did not answer*

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Do you have a Carers Champion at Cabinet level?

Only 3 Authorities (Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea): *YES*

17 Authorities: *NO* but Merthyr Tydfil stated that *Council Members serve on the Carers Network Steering Group*

2 Authorities (Conwy and Monmouthshire) *did not answer*

Does your authority have a Carers Information Pack/Book/Leaflet?

20 Authorities: *YES*

2 Authorities: *NO*

Blaenau Gwent *stated information is given by Care Managers and vol.orgs.*

Bridgend stated that *the Carers Forum has identified information as a priority.*

Do you have a dedicated member(s) of staff to carry out Carers Assessments?

5 Authorities: *YES*

17 Authorities: *NO* - stating that *Care Managers/Social Workers carried out the task*

Do you record the numbers of Carers Assessments carried out?

17 Authorities: *YES*

5 Authorities: *NO*

Have the staff carrying out Carers Assessments received training on carers and carers rights?

16 Authorities: *YES*

2 Authorities (Conwy & Carmarthenshire) stated *there had been some training provided*

2 Authorities (Vale of Glamorgan & Wrexham): *NO*

2 Authorities (Anglesey & Denbighshire) *did not answer*

If yes, describe the training and when undertaken

Range of internal and external training offered

Do the staff carrying out Carers Assessments record unmet need?

- 14 Authorities: *YES*
6 Authorities: *NO*
(Blaenau Gwent, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Neath Port Talbot, Wrexham)
1 Authority (Carmarthenshire): *"sometimes"*
1 Authority (Ceredigion) *did not answer*

Does your authority use eligibility criteria in assessing carers needs?

- 14 Authorities: *YES*
5 Authorities: *NO*
(Carmarthenshire, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Wrexham and Newport) who stated they will in future.
1 Authority, Powys, stated it is *"currently under development"*
1 Authority (Flintshire) *"focus on regular & substantial for the carer, and that cared for meets eligibility criteria re. critical & substantial"*
1 Authority (Bridgend) *did not answer*

Does your authority charge carers for services provided?

- 3 Authorities: *YES*
Caerphilly *"subject to fair access to care guidance.*
Conwy – *"1st 6 weeks free & then subject to charging policy".*
Vale of Glamorgan – *"charging policy"*
18 Authorities: *NO*
1 Authority (Merthyr Tydfil) *did not answer*

If no, does your authority intend to charge carers for services in the future?

- 8 Authorities: *NO*
1 Authority (Conwy): *YES*
7 Authorities as follows:
Newport - *"hopefully not"*
RCT - *"not in the foreseeable future"*
Flintshire - *"not yet known"*
Ceredigion – *"not at present"*
Blaenau Gwent – *"don't know, there is a lack of equity in charging"*
Carmarthenshire – *"quite possibly, but unknown"*
Pembrokeshire – *"under some circumstances this may be deemed necessary"*
6 Authorities *did not answer*

Does your authority fund services for carers that are not funded through the Carers Grant?

- All 22 Authorities: *YES*
provided a range of services which help carers to continue to care

YOUNG CARERS

Do you have a Young Carers Officer in your area?

17 Authorities: *YES*

4 Authorities (Cardiff, Merthyr, Neath Port Talbot, Wrexham): *NO*

1 Authority (Pembrokeshire) stated *Young carers assessments were carried out by Assessment Team in conjunction with Child Care Team*

Is the Young Carers Officer attached to your Children's Department?

21 Authorities: *NO*

1 Authority (Pembrokeshire) as stated in previous question

If no, how is the Young Carers Officer supported?

20 Authorities stated that *a Young Carers Service was/will be supported via the Voluntary Sector*

2 Authorities (Cardiff, Neath Port Talbot) – *N/A as they did not have a Young Carers Officer*

CARERS AND EMPLOYMENT

Does your authority have a carer support policy in place for staff who are carers?

8 Authorities: *YES* (Anglesey, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Conwy, Merthyr, Monmouthshire, Pembrokeshire and Vale of Glamorgan)

10 Authorities: *NO*

1 Authority (Denbighshire) stated *"currently being developed"*

1 Authority (Rhondda Cynon Taff) stated *"I understand one is being developed"*

1 Authority (Swansea) stated *"HR are currently auditing all policies"*

1 Authority (Gwynedd) stated *"information will be forthcoming at a later date"*

If no, would your authority be prepared to carry out a staff audit to ascertain how many members of the workforce are carers?

9 Authorities: *YES*
(Blaenau Gwent, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Swansea, Torfaen)

1 Authority (Flintshire) stated *"currently auditing staff within Adult Social Care as precursor to rolling out more widely"*

1 Authority (Powys) stated *"an audit of staff would be a huge undertaking, but not ruled out as a future consideration"*

1 Authority (Monmouthshire) stated *"not applicable"*

10 Authorities *did not answer*

Dear

Carers Special Grant 2006/07

As you may be aware the Welsh Assembly Government has reviewed the Carers' Special Grant and it will be consolidated with the Revenue Support Grant from April 2006. Consequently, the grant will no longer be available as separate funding stream from 2006/07.

Carers rely on flexible, responsive services that are tailored to carers' needs to be able to juggle work and caring responsibilities. The Carers Special Grant has been a valuable resource to local authorities to support carers in maintaining their caring role. Services put in place as a result of the grant, have helped carers to continue to care and preserve their health and well-being.

We are fully aware of the considerable pressures on local government budgets, and, in particular, on social services' budgets. However, we are concerned that if the Carers' Special Grant is not kept as separate funding stream, essential services for carers will be lost. I understand that several local authorities are looking into maintaining the grant as a separate funding stream to safeguard services.

I would be grateful if you could ensure that:

1. your authority has plans to continue to support the services currently funded by the grant;
2. that money for carers' support services can be readily identified and monitored.

If you would like more information on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Francesca Montemaggi or Maggie Titterton at Carers Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Roz Williamson
Director

18th November 2005

Dear «Title» «LastName»

Survey on Support for carers and carers' services 2006/07

A letter was sent from Roz Williamson, Director of Carers Wales in October to all Elected Members with Responsibility for Social Services in Wales, drawing their attention to the possible risk to carers' support when the Carers Grant is transferred into the RSG from April 2006. We wished to ensure that members knew if satisfactory arrangements were in place to protect carers' services in each authority. A copy is attached for your information.

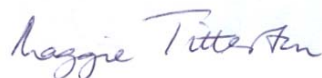
The attached survey form follows on from this initial letter. Part of Carers Wales' role is to ensure that the Welsh Assembly Government is aware of the issues in relation to service planning and provision for carers across Wales. With the recent moves to transfer the responsibility for supporting carers and carers' services to local government, we feel the time is opportune to gather current information from each local authority in Wales with regard to what support and services are available for carers based on the 5 priority areas set out in the Assembly's strategy for carers in Wales "Caring about Carers." (2000).

- Health and social care
- Information
- Support
- Young Carers
- Carers and Employment

I would be most grateful if you would complete and return the attached questionnaire by **Monday, 19th December, 2005**. Please use additional sheets if there is not enough room for some answers or comments you wish to make. An e-mail version will also be sent to you please reply to Pauline@carerswales.org.uk The survey data will be analysed and collated early in the New Year. This will provide a valuable snapshot of what services and support is available to carers across Wales and also identify any major gaps or risks that you raise. A short report will be sent to the Minister for Health and Social Services, Directors of Social Services and other interested professionals.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely



Maggie Titterton
Development Officer

NAME OF LOCAL AUTHORITY: _____

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE – Carers Strategy

Have you developed a local Carers Strategy in your area?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, has it been published?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, is there an established Carers Strategy Group/Network which developed the Strategy?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Is the Carers strategy group linked to the Health, Social Care & Well-being partnership? YES NO

Where is it placed within your overall planning group structure?

.....
.....

Describe or list the membership of this group:.....
.....
.....

Do the Local Health Board/Trust/other Health Professionals work with your LA in partnership to support carers?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If no, do you have plans to develop a Carers Strategy?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

CARERS GRANT

Describe how decisions are reached in your area on the allocation of monies from the Carers Grant:

.....
.....
.....

Do you consult with Carers before decisions on allocation are made? YES NO

If yes, please describe the methods used for consultation, and how often it is carried out

.....
.....

What arrangements have been made within your LA to safeguard services for carers when the ring-fenced Carers Grant is transferred into the RSG from April 2006?

.....
.....
.....

Do you have a dedicated lead officer for carers and carers issues?

YES NO

If yes, is the post

- (a) full time or part time
- (b) temporary or permanent
- (c) funded from the Carers Grant?

Please give name and contact details for this postholder:.....

.....

If no do you intend to create such a post?

YES NO

Are there any other officers with responsibilities for carers and carers issues?

YES NO

If yes, please describe.....

.....

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Do you have a Carers Champion at Cabinet level?

YES NO

Please give name and contact details:

.....

.....

Does your authority have a Carers Information Pack/Book/Leaflet?

YES NO

If yes, please give details:

.....

.....

If no, describe how you provide information on carers rights and support?

.....

Do you have a dedicated member(s) of staff to carry out Carers Assessments?

YES NO

If yes, please give name and contact details:.....

.....

If no, who in your authority carries out Carers Assessments?

.....

.....

Do you record the numbers of Carers Assessments carried out?

YES NO

If yes, how many carers assessments were recorded in:

2000:..... 2001:..... 2002:..... 2003:..... 2004:..... 2005:.....

Have the staff carrying out Carers Assessments received training on carers and carers rights?

YES NO

If yes, describe the training and when undertaken:.....

.....

Do the staff carrying out Carers Assessments record unmet need? YES NO

Does your authority use eligibility criteria in assessing carers needs? YES NO

If yes, please give details:

.....

Does your authority charge carers for services provided? YES NO

If yes, please give details:

.....

.....

.....

.....

If no, does your authority intend to charge carers for services in the future?

YES NO

Does your authority fund any services for carers that are not funded through the Carers Grant? YES NO

If yes, please describe.....

.....

.....

YOUNG CARERS

Do you have a Young Carers Officer in your area? YES NO

If yes, do you support the work financially? YES NO

If yes, does the financial support come from the Carers Grant? YES NO

YES NO

Is the Young Carers Officer attached to your Children's Department?

YES NO

If no, how is the Young Carers Officer supported?.....

.....

CARERS AND EMPLOYMENT

Does your authority have a carer support policy in place for staff who are carers?

YES NO

If yes, please describe briefly how this is operated?.....

.....

.....

If no, would your authority be prepared to carry out a staff audit to ascertain how many members of the workforce are carers? YES NO

YES NO

Name:

Position :

Date:.....

Carers Wales is part of Carers UK, the leading campaigning, policy and information organisation of and for carers. We aim to improve the lives of all carers.

We provide information and advice to individual carers and professionals working with carers. We campaign, seeking changes from policy makers, employers and service providers. Carers UK carries out research and develops policy solutions based on carers' experiences and what they want to see changed.

If you want to keep in touch with the latest developments and information on carers and caring you can become an Associate member. For further information ring: 020 7566 7602 or apply online at www.carersuk.org

For more information on the ACE National Partnership, go to: www.carersuk.org or www.acecarers.org.uk