

What is this consultation about?

Cheshire West and Chester Council wants all carers in Cheshire to feel valued and empowered and to have access to the right support at the right time.

In order to ensure that we are doing this, we would like to hear the views of all carers, parents, partners and stakeholders within Cheshire West on proposed changes to the way carers services are delivered. Carers play a valuable role in the community and we need to ensure the proposed service addresses the issues that are most important as well as providing the support you need in your caring role. The consultation will look at questions such as:

- How do you think the Carers Support Service should improve the health and wellbeing of carers in the borough?
- What do you think the Council and NHS Clinical Commissioning Group could do to support this to happen?
- How can you and your local community help to make this happen?

What you tell us will be used to:

- improve support for carers across Cheshire
- inform the development of the proposed service and
- identify priorities

We want to make sure that we understand the current experiences of carers and how they wish to be supported in the future. It is proposed that the outlined service is adopted as part of the long-term plan to develop and improve services for carers across Cheshire.

How was the proposed model developed?

In 2020, the council led an All Age Carers Strategy consultation with extensive engagement from local carers, service providers and key partners. The council used the information gathered through carers surveys and personal experiences of carers which were fed through carer groups held across the borough. The consultation results led to the development of the Cheshire West All Age Carers Strategy which outlines five key priority areas, with the aim of improving the lives of Cheshire West carers. Within these priority areas was a proposal to move to a carer hub model of

delivery which was supported by Cheshire West Carers. In this model the hub will be a central control/contact centre, which will coordinate more localised community services for carers

The All Age Carers strategy also considered key legislation and key national policy:

- Care Act 2014
- Children's and Families Act 2014
- The Children's Act 1989
- The Governments Carers Action Plan 2018-2020 'Supporting Carers Today'
- The Prime Ministers Challenge on Dementia 2020
- NHs England's Commitment to Carers 2014
- NHS Long Term Plan (Jan 2019)
- NHS Quality Markers 2019

It also considers research and evidence presented by organisations such as the Social Care Institute for Excellence, Carers UK, The Mental Health Foundation, The Children's Society and Barnardo's. The strategy has also been developed and informed by comprehensive research through the Carers Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (CJSNA) which analysed local and national data and trends. Through this process, five key priorities have been identified along with proposed actions to address each priority.

What does the current service look like?

Cheshire West and Chester currently commission services for carers like the carers service, young carers service and carer breaks service separately.

#### Carers Service

The current Cheshire West Carer Support Service comprises of six voluntary sector organisations with one lead provider. The organisations involved in this Carer Support Service work together to provide comprehensive information, support and advice to Carers aged 18+ in Cheshire West and Chester. These services include but are not limited to:

- Specialist support for carers of someone with a learning disability
- Specialist support for carers of someone with a mental health issue
- Specialist support for carers of someone with dementia
- Respite services
- Carers Helpline Monday to Friday 9-5
- Benefits advice, form filling and advocacy
- Quarterly newsletter
- Events for carers throughout the year highlighting Carers Week and Carers Rights Day
- Regular luncheon clubs
- Monthly support groups
- Well-being days
- Carers training programme
- Carer awareness training for professionals
- Essentials Fund to pay for white goods, gardening or decorating
- Personal budget to enable carers to take a break
- Carers in Crisis Fund
- Working Carers project
- Early identification of carers in primary care
- Weekly drop-ins at each resource centre
- GP link worker

## Carer Breaks

Cheshire West and Chester Council, in partnership with Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group grant fund eight organisations to deliver breaks and support services for carers across the borough. These services include but are not limited to:

- Mindfulness courses
- Walk and talk groups
- Complimentary therapies
- Outdoor activities
- Arts and crafts sessions

- Board/table games/Afternoon coffee/tea sessions
- Cinema/museum/theatre trips
- Young Carer respite support
- End of life Carer support
- Wellbeing breaks
- 1-1 support
- Exercise classes

### Young Carers Service

In addition to the Young Carers Respite support offered through the Carers Breaks Grant Scheme, a Young Carers Support Service is commissioned by Cheshire West and Chester Council. It is aimed at supporting children and young people who are between the ages of six and 18 who are helping a member of their family that may live with issues relating to mental ill health, substance misuse, learning disabilities, physical ill health or physical disability and who are either on a multi-agency plan such as Team Around the Family (TAF), Child in Need (CIN) or child protection (CP) or have social work involvement with a member of the family. These services include but are not limited to:

- Information and advice
- Emotional support
- 1-1 support
- Group support
- Day trips
- Focused activities such as the Young Leader programme
- Creative workshops
- Training
- Young Carers Forum

The Young Carers Support Service also work with schools to increase identification of young carers, understanding and support through staff training and assemblies, and guidance on how schools can work towards the Young Carers in Schools award.

What would the new service look like?

Cheshire West and Chester Council in partnership with Cheshire East Council and the NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning group are proposing that the current three contracts are integrated into one comprehensive service that operates across Cheshire using a hub model of support. The overarching hub model would involve having a central control/contact centre, which will coordinate more localised community services for carers. It is imagined that this community-based service for carers will be building on existing community resources and local spaces closer to where carers live. The service will provide a single point of contact for carers services and will coordinate and improve access to local support, building on support that is already available in the community. Some of the key services are outlined here:

- Single point of access – During the Strategy consultation carers agreed that accessing the right support at the right time was important and they supported clear pathways to access support. To help with this we are proposing the development of a single point of access to enable carers to have one clear way to receive the support they need, increasing the hours of delivery and looking at provision on weekends.
- Carers' assessments and online assessments – The increasing of carers' assessments was strongly supported during the Strategy Consultation and we are proposing that carers assessments are completed by the carers service provider and also include an online access point for a carer to complete self-assessment. An online self-assessment form will provide carers with more flexibility and choice in when these are completed.
- Information, advice and guidance – During the Strategy Consultation carers told us of the importance of good quality information about which services are available for them, particularly around advice for finances and benefits.
- 24/7 Carers Helpline – Carers told us that regular and timely communication is important and this is why we propose the introduction of a 24/7 helpline coordinated by the provider but run by trained volunteers (current or former carers).
- Peer Support, networking – The importance of carer activities, groups, networks and befriending schemes was highlighted during the Strategy Consultation to avoid loneliness and social isolation. We propose the

development of peer support with coordinated activities/events and information and shared by the service to all registered carers and health and social care professionals.

- Take a Break – Throughout the consultation, a number of carers commented on the need for more regular breaks from their caring role, and more support and guidance on how to access breaks. The introduction of the Take a Break service will look at more innovative ways carers can receive a break from their caring role i.e sitting services or day service options, without the need to go through social care.
- Care Well Fund – Carers flagged up the financial impact of caring as an issue for them. We propose the introduction of a criteria-based Care Well fund to support carers in crisis to purchase essential items to enable them to carry out their caring role.
- Community-based support – Coffee mornings, group meetings
- Hospital information – During the consultation, carers stressed the importance of being identified as a carer at the earliest possible point. This can be supported by having information and advice before and/or while attending hospital services with the cared for individual. This could be, for example, upskilling staff within an A&E department on where they can direct carers for support/assessment.
- Education and training – through the consultation the importance of identifying carers was highlighted, and there was strong support for increasing the efficiency of support. This can be achieved through the providing education and training for health, social care staff and other organisations
- Carers passports/ID card – A passport or ID card will help carers who need to identify themselves as carers as early as possible, so they can get the support they need. The importance of this was highlighted in the consultation findings.
- Young Carers service – The consultation noted the need for continued work with the education system in supporting Young Carers. We propose that work with schools is central to the Young Carers service.

How will this effect me?

- Carers across Cheshire will see an improved referral route, with the introduction of the single point of access preventing the need to tell their story several times to access support.
- The move to statutory carers assessments to be carried out by the Carers service will increase the numbers of carer assessments and reviews being completed annually. Previously this has been carried out by the local authority but locally and nationally there has been an increase in this service being delivered by Carers Services. This would also be supported by the introduction on an online portal allowing Carers to complete self-assessments at a time of their choosing.
- The introduction of a helpline that is available 24/7 (delivered by volunteers) will increase the accessibility of support for carers across Cheshire and support with the prevention of loneliness and social isolation.
- Building on the work from the introduction of the GP link workers in Cheshire West to incorporate hospitals will see an increase in the information and advice available to carers in health settings and support the early identification of carers in hospitals. This would be supported by the introduction of the carer passport/ID card which would help carers identify themselves and access support more efficiently.
- Cheshire West currently deliver a traditional model of respite care where carers receive up to three hours a week support for a maximum 12 week period. It is proposed that this is replaced with the Take a Break service which will look at more innovative ways in supporting carers to Take a Break from their caring role. This will see carers able to access more flexible and appropriate support.
- Through the work with schools, young carers and the issues they face will be more prominent, staff will be more informed, and we will see an increase in the number of young carers identified and supported.

How can I feedback my views?

Cheshire West and Chester Council and the Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group value the insight and feedback of all carers, to ensure the Joint All Age Carers Service addresses the issues that are most important to carers and provides the support they need in their caring role.

We will be reaching out to carers and running a number of engagement events that will support you to get involved and share your views:

- Consultation letter to all carers known to commissioned services will be sent via email and post week beginning 11/10/2021
- Focus sessions via telephone interviews by appointment (see Table 1) week beginning 18/10/2021
- Focus groups via Microsoft team online events – Proposed sessions across each area at least 12 sessions with capacity for eight participants to be led through a focussed discussion (see Table 1) week beginning 18/10/2021
- Formal consultation paper – available online via council website and linked to partner website week beginning 11/10/2021
- Paper consultation request via email or Telephone
- email: [engagement@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) week beginning 11 October 2021
- Tel: 0300 123 8123
- Online meetings

There are a number of ways you can take part in the consultation listed below:

- Request and complete a paper copy and return it to us in the pre-paid envelope provided.
- Complete a questionnaire online at:  
<https://surveys.qaresearch.co.uk/AllAgeCarersConsultation.asp>
- Easy read hard copy versions can also be requested by calling: 0300 123 8123
- Email your views to: [engagement@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Write to us at:

Joint All Age Carers Service Consultation Peoples Commissioning and Contracts

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Floor 2

4 Civic Way

Ellesmere Port



## CH65 OBE

Table 1.

- 19 October 2021 – 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 19 October 2021 – 1pm-2pm and 2pm-3pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 21 October 2021 - 2pm-3pm and 3pm-4pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 21 October 2021 – 6pm-8pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 25 October 2021 - 10am-4pm Active Engagement Day at Ellesmere Port Market no appointment necessary.
- 26 October 2021 - 10am-11am and 11am-12pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 26 October 2021 – 2pm-4pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 28 October 2021 – 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration
- 28 October 2021 - 6pm-7pm and 7pm-8pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 29 October 2021 – 10am-4pm Drop in session at Ellesmere Port Library
- 2 November 2021 - 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration.
- 2 November 2021 - 2pm-3pm and 3pm-4pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 3 November 2021 – 10am-4pm Drop-in session at Frodsham Library no appointment necessary.
- 4 November 2021 - 2pm-3pm and 3pm-4pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 4 November 2021 – 6pm-8pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration.

- To Be Confirmed – 8 November 2021 - 10am-4pm Drop-in session at Chester Storyhouse no appointment necessary.
- 9 November 2021 - 10am-11am and 11am-12pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 9 November 2021 - 2pm-4pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 10 November 2021 - 10am-4pm Active Engagement Day Chester Forum shopping Arcades
- 11 November 2021 - 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 11 November 2021 - 6pm-7pm and 7pm-8pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 15 November 2021 - 10am-4pm Drop-in session at Northwich Library no appointment necessary.
- 16 November 2021 - 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 16 November 2021 - 1pm-2pm and 2pm-3pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 18 November 2021 - 2pm-3pm and 3pm-4pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 18 November 2021 - 6pm-8pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration.
- To Be Confirmed - 19 November 2021 – 10am-4pm Active Engagement Day Northwich Market
- 22 November 2021 - 10am-4pm Drop-in session at Winsford Library no appointment necessary.
- 23 November 2021 - 10am-11am and 11am-12pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 23 November 2021 - 2pm-4pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 24 November 2021 - 10am-4pm Active Engagement Day Winsford Circle Shopping Arcades

- 25 November 2021 - 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 25 November 2021 - 6pm-7pm and 7pm-8pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 30 November 2021 - 2pm-3pm and 3pm-4pm Telephone interview by appointment.
- 30 November 2021 - 6pm-8pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration.
- 1 December 2021 - 10am-4pm Drop-in session at Neston Library no appointment necessary.
- 2 December 2021 - 10am-12pm Microsoft Teams Focus group. Maximum 8 participants by registration only.
- 2 December 2021 - 6pm-7pm and 7pm-8pm Telephone interview by appointment.

What happens next?

The consultation findings will be used to inform the development of the Joint All Age Carers Service and to shape future service delivery. The proposed service model will be reviewed by the Council's cabinet alongside the findings of this consultation in March 2022, to make an informed decision as to whether or not to implement it. If the model is agreed then any changes will be made by 1 January 2023. The results from the consultation will be available on the council's website in April 2022

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services.

Council information is also available in audio, Braille, large print or other formats.

If you would like a copy in a different format, in another language

or require a BSL interpreter, please email us at:

[equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0300 123 8 123

Textphone: 18001 01606 275757

Email: [equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

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