

Key Findings

Carers Survey

September 2015

The statutory 'Carers survey', commissioned by the Department of Health, is undertaken every two years, enabling councils to monitor changes and help them to improve the services they provide. This document presents the key findings of the 2014/15 survey and lists the actions that Strategic Commissioning will put in place over the next few months.

Questionnaires were distributed to 1,029 people who had received a carer assessment in the last 12 months (either as a separate assessment or a joint assessment with the person they care for).

399 questionnaires were completed and returned, a response rate of 40% compared to 38% in 2012.

- Two thirds of respondents are female
- The majority of people (82%) are aged 55 or over
- Nearly half of the respondents have a long-standing illness, almost a third have a physical disability or sight or hearing loss
- Over half have been caring for 5 years or more and almost half spend 100 or more hours of week caring.

Overall satisfaction with social care and support

- 79% of respondents are 'extremely', 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with the care and support they and the person they care for receive (76% in 2012).



Services used

- The top three support or services used by the person they care for in the last 12 months are equipment or adaptation, home care/home help and Lifeline Alarm (Telecare).

Needs and experiences of support

- The most used support service used by the carer in the last 12 months is 'Information and advice'.

Impact of Caring on Quality of Life

- Over two thirds of carers (67%) do some of the things they value or enjoy with their time, but not enough
- Over a quarter of carers (29%) have as much control over their daily life as they want, 58% have some control.
- Almost two thirds (62%) are able to look after themselves (this is in relation to getting enough sleep and eating well)
- The majority of people have no worries about their personal safety (90%)
- Almost half (45%) of the respondents have as much social contact as they want with people
- Almost half (48%) feel they have encouragement and support in their caring role.

Arrangement of support and service

- Of the carers who have been involved in discussions about the support or services provided to the person they care for, 82% 'always' or 'usually' feel involved.

Information and Advice

- A quarter of carers have not tried to find information or advice in the last 12 months (compared to 35% in 2012).
- Of those carers who have tried to find information or advice, almost three quarters (73%) think it is easy to find
- Of those who have received information and advice, the majority (93%) find it 'very' or 'quite' helpful
- The most popular methods are by telephone, face-to-face meetings (by prior appointment), printed newsletter/leaflet and the internet
- Community/voluntary organisations such as Age UK, Cheshire Carers Centre and Alzheimer's Society were the most popular places carers like to go for information, followed by the Council and GP surgeries.

Next steps

The full carers report outlines some key issues which carers have raised.

In terms of quality of life, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of carers who feel:

- They have less control over their daily life
- They are neglecting themselves
- More socially isolated

The main issues around information and advice include:

- Lack of awareness for who to contact, what to look for and where to go
- Information not being readily available
- Lack of time to find information
- Poor communications

Other issues raised were to do with their satisfaction with the services:

- Lack of support and help.
- Lack of understanding and/or co-ordination of their care package
- Insufficient communication
- Funding/financial problems

The Adult Social Care and Health department, together with key health partners, are addressing these issues in a number of ways using the following channels:

- The Joint Carers Strategy and revised action plan
- The Carers Interagency Group
- Carers Forum.

Some of the issues raised from the survey are already being addressed in the strategy; however, the Council will be reviewing the Joint Carers Strategy and using information from this survey to develop a joint work plan, which will contain a series of actions that the Council and partners will address.

The Carers Interagency Group is made up of officers from the Council, health representatives from carer groups and carers themselves. The action plan will be shared with the Group and we will provide regular updates on progress.

The Carers Forum has been established to help improve the awareness of what is being done to support carers in the Cheshire West and Chester area. The objective of the group will be to monitor the Carers' Strategy and then feed into the Interagency Group.

- A copy of the final report can be found at www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/jsna
- For further information please contact Sarah Gerrard (Research Officer) 01244 977366.
- Alternatively, you can also send an email to: research@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

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