



CARERS'  
STRATEGY  
2007-2012

**DRAFT**

Revised January 2010

## INTRODUCTION

### **Who is a Carer?**

A carer is someone who looks after a person with a disability, a long-term illness, mental health difficulties or who is older and frail. The type of support given varies – it could be providing physical help, emotional support or even helping with day-to-day affairs such as medicines or money. The person supported may be a husband/wife/partner, a child with special needs, a parent, neighbour or friend. Caring can vary from a few hours a week to a seven day/twenty-four hour commitment.

### **Why is the word “carer” important?**

Many people don't see themselves as carers. They think of themselves as husbands, wives, parents, children or friends. We don't want to take that away from **them**. However, the word is a useful description for people who have certain statutory rights and whose opinions and needs should to be taken into account. Without knowing how many carers there are we cannot plan services to support them.

### **Why do we need a Carers' Strategy?**

The Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services and our partner organisations, such as Health and the Voluntary Sector, value the contribution carers make to the well-being and continuing care of vulnerable people in the community. The Borough's estimated 35,000 carers provide hours of care that, on a conservative estimate, is worth over £105,560,000 yearly to the local economy.<sup>1</sup> The support that they provide to Health and Social Care services is incalculable and often costs them dearly in terms of their own health, finances and independence. We need this Strategy to help us offer the best support we can to carers and to help other Directorates and agencies **to** see how they too might support carers.

This strategy contains principles of good practice relating to carers and the way in which organisations will work with carers. It builds on the work of the 2004-2006 Carers Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on an average of 10 hours care per week per person at 2009/10 minimum wage of £5.80 per hour

## **The strategy aims to:**

- Provide practical support and information to support carers
- Improve carer well-being
- Promote choice to enable carers and service users to have more power and control over their lives
- Recognise the carer and cared for as valued people within the community
- Help people to identify themselves as carers

## **The Carers Strategy 2007-2012**

This document is a revision of the 2007-2012 Strategy. During 2009 the Carers Strategy Group consulted with Carers groups and has used their views to shape this draft. Further consultation on this draft took place at the Carers Strategy Group Meeting in February

## **The Consultation 2010**

It is envisaged that the revised strategy will be subject to a three month consultation period, the draft Strategy being sent out to all groups in the Borough who support people with illnesses, disabilities, age related frailty and of course carers. In addition it will be offered to all carers in the Borough by press release, email bulletin and through *The Dudley Carer* newsletter, which is sent to around 2000 individual carers as well as to groups, GPs and libraries. The Carers Co-ordinator will be involved in presenting the Strategy to relevant groups.

## **THE CHALLENGE**

This plan for the future takes a number of things into account:

- Our statutory obligations – the services we must provide
- The provisions of the 1995, 2000 and 2004 Carers Acts
- The forthcoming Equalities Bill
- National and local guidelines that the Directorate has accepted
- The wishes of Dudley's carers
- Issues that we have recognised
- Available resources
- What we have already achieved
- The comments made by the Care Quality Council Commissioners
- The Transforming Adult Social Care Agenda

It also reflects the vision and priorities identified in the 2008 National Carers Strategy. This cross government initiative set out the framework for a ten-year programme that envisages that:

- Carers will be respected as expert care partners and will have access to the integrated and personalised services they need to support them in their caring role;
- Carers will be able to have a life of their own alongside their caring role;
- Carers will be supported so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role;
- Carers will be supported to stay mentally and physically well and treated with dignity;
- Children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive, to enjoy positive childhoods and to achieve against all the Every Child Matters outcomes.

The national strategy seeks to respond to social and demographic changes and is linked explicitly to other policies such as NHS reforms, Putting People First and Every Child Matters.

It places greater emphasis on carers as partners in care with the NHS and gives prominence to the needs of young carers and the need for whole family support

It acknowledges the financial impact of caring and promised a review of carers' benefits.

### **Our Strategy also reflects:**

- That while some carers require substantial support from health and social care professionals many carer 'needs' are not social and health care needs at all
- Some carers require information and services that others should, and in many cases already do, provide
- The need to work in partnership so that the right support is provided.
- The recognition that early support can help the carer to care for as long as they, and the cared for person, wish it
- That there are many services in place that do, or could, support carers

And finally that:

Services should meet the Kings Fund's *Quality Standards for Local Carer Support Services* that the Local Authority has adopted. These relate to:

- **Information for carers**
- **Provision of breaks for carers**
- **Emotional support for carers**
- **Support to care and maintain carer's own health**
- **A voice for carers**

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## 1. INFORMATION

### What we do

- ✓ We maintain the Dudley Carers' Network, a mailing list of around 2000 carers. This provides a regular way of giving and receiving information
- ✓ We produce *The Dudley Carer* 3 times a year. This is sent to everyone on the Carers' Network and to voluntary sector groups, libraries, estates offices and GPs Newsletters are available on [www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk) Large print and translated copies are available on request. We actively encourage other agencies and groups to use our information
- ✓ Our Carers' Helpline deals with over 500 enquiries a year about benefits and services
- ✓ We produce the regularly updated Dudley Carer's Guides -topic based fact sheets available for everyone's use via our website
- ✓ We work closely with other agencies to promote benefits take-up by carers
- ✓ Over 500 individual carers and local groups have signed up to a twice monthly e bulletin giving up to the minute information
- ✓ The Local Authority is an associate member of Carers UK and actively promotes their campaigns. We support Carers Rights Day in December and Carers' Week in June
- ✓ We regularly submit articles to other publications so that information is widely available
- ✓ We helped the Primary Care Trust to develop a protocol for the identification of carers by GPs
- ✓ We work with services such as Patient Advice and Liaison Service to ensure that information is widely circulated
- ✓ We have produced a booklet *Unpicking the Jigsaw* that provides information on resources for parents with disabilities
- ✓ We maintain links with information providers in Children Services such as the Children's Disability Network and Kids Orchard Centre
- ✓ We have produced a leaflet to help carers decide if they can claim Carers Allowance

### **Good Practice**

1. In response to requests for 'one stop shops' in December 2009 we launched a Carers Information service in 13 local libraries- staff will help carers to access local and national information online and in the libraries' Community information folders. Additional books on caring have been added to the lending stock.
2. In Spring 2010 we plan to launch our *Carer Aware* online training course. This will help council, health and staff of other agencies, employers, the public and of course carers themselves to understand carers' roles, rights and services available in Dudley. Organisations/services whose staff have completed this course will be able to display a *Carer Aware* sticker alerting carers to the fact that they can call upon staff for support
3. Dudley Council for Voluntary Service sends the Carers Co-ordinator's email bulletins out by post to carers on its mailing list – thus spreading the information to carers who may not have computer access
4. Staff print off a set of the Dudley Carer fact sheets so that they have them to hand when carrying out carers assessments
5. We have produced Ageing Well in Dudley – a published and web based guide to what is available in the Borough for older people

### **What we aim to do**

#### **Outcome:**

Carers get the information they need at the time that they need it.

#### **What the carers of Dudley are saying:**

*"We want a one stop shop – Dudley or Merry Hill".*

*"We need information in community languages".*

*"We need consistent information at all points of entry into health or social care".*

*"Health and social care staff do not always have right information".*

*"Groups could do more to spread information".*

*"Importance of advice at diagnosis".*

*"People in health need to understand carers needs".*

*"More help and information from GPs".*

*"Need to reach people who don't know they are carers".*

	Outcomes	Actions	Strategic links	Target Dates
	<p>All Carers can access a comprehensive range of information and advice.</p>	<p>We will continue to work with the library service, our communications team and the independent and voluntary sector to develop an enhanced information system to assist carers in gaining information on specific conditions and disabilities, benefits, employment, support groups etc.</p> <p>We will continue to work with statutory and strategic partners to ensure that carers receive a seamless service and their rights are promoted under the Carers Recognition Act.</p> <p>We will undertake a media campaign to discover those carers that are not known to the council to ensure they receive the information and support that they are entitled.</p>	<p>Libraries strategy.</p> <p>Preventative strategy</p>	<p>March 2010</p> <p>Dec. 2010</p>
	<p>Carers can access skilled advice, which helps them maximise income available to them.</p>	<p>We will continue to work closely with Department of Work and Pensions and other agencies in providing specific advice to ensure carers receive the benefits they are entitled to.</p>	<p>National Carers Strategy</p>	<p>Sept. 2010</p>

	<p>Carers can access information in a variety of settings and formats</p>	<p>We will develop each library as a 'Carers Information' service.          We will ensure that information is available in a variety of media formats and community languages.          We will develop and roll out IT systems to support carer's awareness training to ensure that all Adult Directorate staff are 'carer aware'.          We will roll out this training to Children's Services Dudley Council Plus, GP s and their staff, community centre staff and community workers, the voluntary and private sector health staff and supported housing staff.</p>	<p>Library service.</p>	<p>Dec 2009           March - September 2010</p>
	<p>Carers have improved access to information on their rights and services in health care settings.</p>	<p>We will develop the role of the Carers Support Worker in the acute hospital sector ensuring that s/he is linked to the Hospital Social Work Team.          We will monitor the efficacy of this role in improving outcomes for carers.</p>	<p>National Carers strategy.</p>	<p>June 2010</p>

## **2. PROVIDING A BREAK FOR CARERS**

A break for carers needs to be looked at in two ways

- Our statutory responsibilities to provide “short breaks for carers”
- The wider aspect of enabling carers ' to be themselves' through access to work, leisure, social and educational opportunities

What we do

- ✓ In line with Government guidelines, we spend 95% of our Carers' Grant allocation to provide short breaks for carers. The Council is committed to this, this even though the Grant is no longer 'ring fenced' for this purpose
- ✓ In line with guidance, at least 20% of the total grant is spent on Children's Services offering a break to parents and young carers, and 70% on breaks for adult carers
- ✓ Part of the grant is spent on breaks for black and minority ethnic carers. This is in addition to non specialist provision accessed by carers from these communities
- ✓ The Local Authority provides some breaks but we also give a substantial proportion of funding to the voluntary sector to provide carer support. We give part of the Carers Grant to voluntary organisations to provide carer specific services
- ✓ Carers Direct provides one off payments to carers, following assessment, to allow them to take a break or pursue a leisure activity. We made 1024 grants in the first five years of the scheme
- ✓ We are working with partners to develop opportunities for young people with disabilities – this hasn't gone as well as hoped –there was a particular project which collapsed
- ✓ We are engaging with carers about the way services are to be developed.
- ✓ We offer a holiday floating support scheme to support people who can self-care but not be left without some support for a week/fortnight. The scheme allows their carers to have peace of mind when they go on holiday knowing that someone will check on the person's well being and offer support in an emergency
- ✓ We support Dudley Carers Forum with money from the carers grant which has been used to elect a social committee and produce a yearly programme of social events- some just for carers, others open to all.

## Good Practice.

Carers have used their Carers Direct payments to fund holidays, short breaks, days out, driving lessons, gym membership, season tickets and fishing permits, complementary therapies, pampering sessions, yoga and karate lessons. Some carers prefer to use the money to enable them to pursue hobbies at home and have used grants to buy arts and crafts materials, gardening equipment, IT equipment & Internet access.

## What we aim to do

### **Outcome:**

Carers are able to live their own lives whilst caring for someone by receiving the information and support they need.

### What the carers of Dudley are saying:

*"More support for cared for to give carer a break".*

*"Breaks shouldn't be means tested".*

*"More emergency support needed".*

*"Substitute care so carers can attend medical appointments"*

*"Longer 'respite' breaks (not just 3 hours)".*

*"Support workers for family breaks".*

	Outcomes	Actions	Strategic links	Target Dates
	Carers are supported by schemes, which are flexible and help carers to balance caring with a life of their own.	<p>We will develop with the independent and voluntary sector a range of support services, which are flexible and facilitate the use of direct payments and individual budgets.</p> <p>We will continue to make one off payments under the Carers Grant and consider how this service can be incorporated into Transforming Adult Social Care procedures".</p> <p>We will offer training for carers in 'self directed support'.</p>	<p>TSC Strategy</p> <p>TSC Strategy</p>	<p>March 2011</p> <p>March 2011</p>
	Carers have a range of well developed support of options to choose from.	<p>We will work with other statutory and independent agencies to increase the number of short breaks available to carers.</p> <p>We will increase the number of breaks for carers of people with a mental health problem.</p> <p>We will evaluate the specific needs of carers of people with complex needs or challenging behaviour in order to provide a more responsive short break service.</p> <p>We will explore the potential to offer home based respite care in order to enable carers to visit GP surgeries, dentists etc. and in order to allow them time away from the people they care for.</p>	<p>TSC Strategy</p> <p>Care Programme Approach</p> <p>OHOCOS 2007</p> <p>TSC Strategy</p>	<p>March 2011</p> <p>March 2011</p> <p>March 2011</p>
	Carers are confident that their needs will be met in a crisis.	<p>We will continue to develop and promote the carer's emergency service and the use of the carer's emergency card.</p> <p>The Carers Awareness Training will promote the understanding of carers needs in a crisis.</p>		<p>Sept. 2010</p> <p>March – Sept. 2010</p>
	Carers receive support, which is sensitive to cultural differences.	We will evaluate the needs of carers from BME and minority groups to ensure support is appropriate to meet cultural needs.		Dec. 2010

## 2.2 Supporting Carers to be part of the Community

### What we do

- ✓ We recognise the contribution of carers, not only to the well being of their family, but also to the community
- ✓ Work with other agencies to promote and develop services which may be available but which carers find difficult to access
- ✓ Recognise the importance of education, leisure and transport to carers
- ✓ Work with other 'non social care' services to see how they can ensure activities meet the needs of carers
- ✓ The Council's Options Plus leisure card is available to carers on the Carers Network
- ✓ Encourage awareness of carers needs by employers and promote schemes such as 'Time bank' that allow carers to 'bank' hours for use in emergencies
- ✓ The Dudley Carer fact sheet on leisure offers examples of accessible breaks, leisure opportunities and concessions such as the Cinema Exhibitors card.
- ✓ We promote *Caring with Confidence* – the training sessions for carers offered by OMEGA UK
- ✓ We contributed to the government's consultation on the right to ask for flexible working
- ✓ Dudley MBC has signed up to the Carers' Charter that acknowledges the role of those employees who are carers with and promises to promote flexible working policies
- ✓ Age Concern Dudley's Community Connect project provides social events and days out for older people
- ✓ The online Community information Database is gradually being developed so that it will be a major information source for people planning 'lives not services'

## Good Practice.

Dudley Carers Writing Group was set up as a result of writing workshops provided by the National Extension College. They receive funding from the Carers Grant to run the Group and arrange meetings in a variety of settings, which they use to inspire their writing. With the aid of a further grant from the Primary Care Trust they produced a widely admired anthology of writing called *Smiling is Allowed*. They sell this to help raise money for future projects – or copies can be borrowed as the libraries have purchased copies for their lending stock...

Carers commented-

“I had never done any creative writing before joining the writers group. Having a piece published gave me great pride. Other entries were so inspirational, and it is good to know that when caring gets you down that others are coping too”.

“My first encounter with writing was to respond to the article [in the Dudley Carer] encouraging carers to attend a taster session. From the first moment I was hooked...as the year rolled on I settled in to our writing group, sharing many happy and sad experiences. It became a very relaxing and enjoyable way to spend those stolen moments, away from my caring role”.

“As a group we felt that when you read about caring, people only tell you the sad side of life, we wanted to share the fun side, hence ‘Smiling is allowed’ our first anthology. Not all of the articles show the fun side, but they do show how we feel. People have commented on what a heartfelt anthology it is. We are now looking for new ideas on which to base our second...”

## Young Carers

### What we do

- ✓ Children's Services and Health jointly fund the Action for Children Young Carers Project. This aims to help young people in terms of education, leisure and the right to childhood by providing:
  - Personal support
  - Social and Recreational activities
  - Advice and information
  - A supportive environment where young carers can meet
  - Advocacy and befriending
  - Homework club with PC access
  - Parent support

- ✓ Further funding is provided via the Carers Grant to fund sessional work
- ✓ Liaise with the Project to maintain links and ensure the service is appropriately provided

## What we aim to do

### Outcome:

Carers are valued and treated as experts in their caring roles. Carers are supported to pursue employment and leisure opportunities outside of their caring roles.

#### What the carers of Dudley are saying:

*"We want the option to be able to work"*

*"We need leisure time to give us a break from caring".*

*"Carers should be treated as the experts we are"*

*"Carers need realistic advice on opportunities for work and the support that they can get"*

*"We need proper partnerships – not just lip service or tick box exercises".*

*"Personalisation might mean carers have less flexibility and even more to do!"*

	Outcomes	Actions	Strategic links	Target Dates
	Carers are treated as expert partners and their quality of life is supported equally to those they care for.	We will work with statutory partners to ensure the role of the carer is acknowledged in all social care and clinical pathways. We will work with colleagues in Health and other agencies to ensure that the needs of carers are understood and met using the principles identified in the report ' <i>Putting People First without putting Carers Second</i> '		
	Carers are included in consultation in the development of all service and community strategies	We will link the role of the carer to every service strategy and ensure that they have a role in developing the transforming social care agenda to deliver self-directed support.	Service strategies  TSC Strategy	2010-2012  March 2011

<p>Children and young People who are carers are supported so that their education and development do not suffer as a result of caring responsibilities.</p>	<p>We will continue to support the Action for Children Young carers Project to provide personal support, social and leisure activities.  We will continue to use the Carers Grant to provide sessional work.  We will give further consideration to how the Carers Grant is disbursed to Children's services.  With Children's services we will evaluate the need to provide a permanent worker to support young carers.  We will ensure that positive outcomes under 'every child matters' are promoted and that residential breaks are made equally available to boys and girls.  We are working together with Children's Services to adopt the ". recently agreed national protocol "<i>Working Together to Support Young Carers</i>".</p>	<p>TSC Strategy   Children's Strategy</p>	<p>March 2011   Dec 2010</p>
<p>Carers are supported to have choice and opportunity where they wish to maintain employment.</p>	<p>We will work with Welfare benefits Officers and the Department of Work and Pensions to ensure that specialist advice and support is available to offer carers an informed choice on returning to or continuing employment.  We will work through Job Centre Plus, the Chamber of Commerce and business link to promote flexible working within employment.</p>	<p>Equality Bill 2009</p>	<p>March 2010   Dec. 2010</p>
<p>Carers that work for Dudley council are supported by its approach to flexible working and other initiatives to promote carers employment.</p>	<p>Dudley Council as an employer will offer flexible working, paid/unpaid leave and other initiatives as required to support carers in their role.</p>	<p>Human Resources Strategy.  Corporate strategy.</p>	
<p>Carers, particularly</p>	<p>We will continue to support the Carers Strategy Group and ensure</p>		

	<p>those from diverse communities have specific opportunity to contribute and influence services.</p>	<p>its membership represents the diversity of communities in Dudley. We will develop a process of regular consultation in order to ensure that carers are involved in the design and delivery of services. We will ensure carers are involved in developing the Transforming social Care strategy to deliver Self directed support.</p>	<p>TSC Strategy</p>	<p>March 2011</p>
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### **3. EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR CARERS**

#### **What we do**

- ✓ We maintain links with existing Carers Groups and give practical help and encouragement in the development of new ones
- ✓ We have developed the 'Peace of Mind' Emergency Scheme to support carers in case of an accident or emergency
- ✓ The Carers Peace of Mind card, running successfully since 2005, has been improved following additional funding received from the **government** – the new scheme has two options – the Emergency Card which gives carers peace of mind that we will contact family and friends they nominate should the carers be unable to provide support as they have had a accident or emergency. For carers who do not have such support we can offer a Carers Emergency Plan which promises a certain level of support for up to 72 hours of a carer's emergency
- ✓ We provided initial funding for the Carers2carers helpline run by carers from the Carers Forum. We provide practical information for these carers on request
- ✓ The Carers' Co-ordinator provides signposting information and a 'listening ear'
- ✓ We provide funding to a number of organisations and groups in the Borough that provide support to carers
- ✓ The Primary Care Trust has allocated funding to Rethink to employ a support worker to work with carers of people with mental ill-health
- ✓ Dudley Counselling Service offers free counselling for carers
- ✓ Carers can access psychological support through the PCT's Improved access to psychological support scheme (IAPT)
- ✓ Community Mental Health Teams s offer Behavioural Family Therapy ( BFT)
- ✓ *Looking After Me*, the Expert Patient Programme for carers, can be accessed by carers with their own long term physical and/or mental health difficulties

Good Practice

Ehsas carers group was highly commended in the national *BME spark* awards. The group was set up, and is led by Asian women carers mainly from Mirpuri speaking communities. The award commended them for reaching 'a marginalised group within a marginalised community'.

Good Practice

The 'Peace of Mind' card was cited by Carers UK as good practice.

**What we aim to do.**

**Outcome:**

Carers are able to maintain their role in supporting individuals through a range of emotional and psychological support services in the community.

**What the carers of Dudley are saying:**

*"We need people to think of us sometimes- as people with needs, not just as a 'resource'".*

*"Alternative care is needed so that we can use some of the things that are available".*

	Outcomes	Actions	Strategic links	Target Dates
	<p>The psychological and emotional needs of carers are supported.</p>	<p>We will continue to provide emotional support to carers via arrangements with the voluntary sector.</p> <p>We will offer training to carers on offering peer support</p> <p>We will ensure that health partners support the psychological needs of carers in offering counselling and therapeutic services when required.</p> <p>We will continue to promote existing counselling services and develop further advocacy and counselling services for carers.</p> <p>We will acknowledge the needs of carers on being bereaved and work with voluntary and statutory agencies to provide support and counselling.</p>	<p>Preventative strategy</p>	<p>Dec. 2010</p>
	<p>Carers can gain support from both health and social care professionals</p>	<p>We will continue to work with partners to encourage the development of carer-led support.</p> <p>We will raise awareness of the emotional needs of carers with colleagues working in health and social care.</p> <p>We will raise awareness of carers needs with colleagues working with services such as Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who provide support to people in Health related settings.</p>		
	<p>Carers receive the same level of support regardless of where they live, their age or their cultural &amp; religious beliefs.</p>	<p>We will work with colleagues across the council and health to ensure that all communities are well served in supporting the emotional and psychological needs of carers.</p>		

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## **4. SUPPORT IN CARING AND MAINTENANCE OF CARER'S OWN HEALTH**

### **4.1 Support in Caring**

#### **4.1.1 Assessments**

##### **What we do**

- ✓ We recognise that assessment should focus on individual needs.
- ✓ We provide regular training to staff on carrying out Carers Assessments.
- ✓ We have trained mental health support staff on Carers and the Care Programme Approach
- ✓ We have produced a fact sheet to explain different types of assessments to carers
- ✓ We have revised the Directorate's Strategy for Supporting Disabled Parents to recognise the needs of adult and young carers
- ✓ Statistics show an appreciable rise in the number of assessments carried out and services provided

##### **Good practice**

The Carers Support Worker based with Rethink carries out assessments and provides ongoing support to carers. A survey carried out by Rethink showed that carers appreciated this service

##### **What we aim to do.**

##### **Outcomes:**

Carers are helped to assess their needs and plan personalised support.

##### **What the carers of Dudley are saying:**

*"Not all carers are even offered assessments".*

*"The Carers assessment needs to focus on us – not about how we look after people".*

*"Staff doesn't always understand what we are trying to say- they focus too much on the person we look after".*

*"What's the point nothing happens afterwards"?*

*"We need lots more information about personalisation, we don't understand it".*

*"We think you are doing it (personalisation) to save money, we think it will mean more work for us".*

*"Its all very well in principle but in practice where are the services".*



		Disabled parents, carers and young carers are assessed through joint working practices.		
	Carers have access to a wide range of services in the community to support needs and prevent referral to formal statutory services.	We will ensure that carers assessment, support planning and personalised service options prompt and identify the range of universal services available to promote emotional, leisure, social and cultural opportunities	Service Strategies - Team Plans	2010-2013
	Individual and personal budgets help carers to plan their support in a personal way, and to stay in control.	We will ensure that carers have access to Direct Payments and Individual Budgets enabling them to exercise choice and control over the way they receive support.	TSC Strategy  Service Strategies - Team Plans	March 2011  2010-2013
	Carers receive a service from well-trained staff across all agencies.	We will continue staff training on carers' assessment procedures and range of needs. We will roll out existing training to other staff including those in Children's Services		
	Carers have improved access to information on their rights and services in health care settings	We will appoint a Carers Support worker to work in partnership with the hospital social work teams to ensure that hospital discharge procedures are explained to carers and that carers are fully involved in decisions on discharge and they receive an assessment of needs in their own right.		Feb 2010

## **4.1.2 Housing**

### **What we do**

- ✓ Work closely with colleague in Housing Services on Housing with Care schemes
- ✓ Work closely with colleagues to improve older people's housing choices
- ✓ Promote schemes, such as falls prevention, that encourage a safer environment
- ✓ Recognise the importance of the home environment in assisting the caring role
- ✓ Promote the Disabled Living Centre as a source of minor aids and equipment
- ✓ We have developed the Community Equipment Service to improve provision and collection of aids and equipment
- ✓ We now have wide range of alarms, sensors and other technology (Telecare)
- ✓ We have produced fact sheets for carers which cover housing issues
- ✓ We are working to improve provision of aids and major adaptations

#### Good Practice

Dudley MBC Trading Standards and Age Concern Dudley produce the Fix a Home list of approved traders to help people find reputable and reliable trades-people for repairs, maintenance, gardening and housework

### **What we aim to do**

#### **Outcomes:**

Carers are able to enjoy the same choice and range of occupation of housing and accommodation as the wider community.

#### **What the carers of Dudley are saying:**

*"Carers living with council tenants are not supported when the person they care for dies or goes into residential care".*

*"Aids and adaptations take too long".*

*"Much of the housing for older people/people with disabilities is too small".*

*"There is not enough information about all of the options available - supported living/extra care/Housing Options/HOLD etc".*

*"Some of these options, supported living/extra care are very good".*

*"Younger people with (complex) disabilities need different things to older people".*

	Outcomes	Actions	Strategic links	Target Dates
	Carers are able to exercise preference on housing and accommodation via a wide range of services available to them.	We will ensure that carers are given information about funding for aids and adaptations. We will develop a set of procedures to support carers (especially living in council owned/RSL properties once the person they cared for (the tenant) has died or gone into residential care) We will consult with carers to establish their housing needs.	Housing Strategy	2010
	Carers are able to rely on a range of housing support to complement their role.	We will implement the Supporting People programme that offers vulnerable people the opportunity to improve their quality of life and support their carers.		

#### **4.1.3 Maintaining the Carer's health**

##### **What we do**

- ✓ Recognise that carers often neglect their own health
- ✓ Work with Health Promotion team on schemes to improve general fitness i.e. Walk Zones
- ✓ Raise awareness of carers' health issues with the Primary Care Trust and The Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust
- ✓ Work with the Primary Care Trust to ensure that those involved with the management of chronic disease in the community consider the needs of carers
- ✓ Work with Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) team to circulate information throughout Primary and Secondary Care Trusts about sources of help for carers
- ✓ We promote Looking After Me, the Expert Patients Programme for carers, which offers help to people with long term physical, and mental health difficulties
- ✓ We worked with the Primary Care Trust to write a protocol on the identification of carers and appropriate signposting. This includes information to help GPs provide advice and support.

Good practice

Carers can choose from two different programmes *Looking After Me* and *Caring with Confidence* depending on their information and support needs. Shortly carers will have a third option the online *Carer Aware* course

**What we aim to do**

**Outcomes:**

Carers are well informed and advised about physical and mental health and well-being.

What the carers of Dudley are saying:

*"Carers don't know what is available"*

*"Carers will always put the cared for people's health before their own"*

*"Carers don't have time to think about themselves"*

*"There is no one to look after the person we care for when we are looking after ourselves"*

*"Doctors could offer us health checks"*

*"Carers provide physical care that two paid carers have to do".*

	Outcomes	Actions	Strategic links	Target Dates
	Full and detailed information and advice on physical and mental health and wellbeing are widely available.	We will ensure that carers have access to a range of information to support their health and mental well-being. We will do this by extending the carers awareness training to all libraries, health centres, surgeries, leisure centres and community centres in the borough ensuring that services are 'Carer Aware' and can provide relevant advice, and signposting to support services.		March 2010- Dec. 2010
	Information and advice are provided quickly, and at convenient times.	We will offer Carers Awareness training to the staff at Dudley Council plus and all agencies operating an out of hours service. We will ensure that the web based Dudley information system is available to all.	Libraries Strategy	2010

	Carers are trained to move and handle people to reduce harm to themselves and the person they care for.	We will promote Manual Handling and other training for carers.		March 2011

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## **5. A VOICE FOR CARERS**

### **What we do**

- ✓ Our Consultation Strategy acknowledges the need to consult with and involve carers and sets out how we should do this
- ✓ We use the Dudley Carers' Network to invite carers to give their opinions
- ✓ We use *The Dudley Carer* and email bulletins to inform carers of involvement opportunities
- ✓ We work with carers groups to ensure that their views inform our practice
- ✓ We respond to issues raised by calls to the Carers' Office
- ✓ We encourage and develop initiatives that identify 'hidden' carers from all communities
- ✓ We fund Dudley Council for Voluntary Service to work with a carers and users groups and the 'umbrella' group *Action for Disabled People and Carers*
- ✓ We promoted the development of the consultation Groups Dudley Carers in Partnership in Mental Health and Dudley Carers in Partnership In Learning Disabilities
- ✓ We have produced a User and Carer Involvement and Payment policy

#### Good practice

We have agreed funding to support a Forum of representatives from a wide range of carers groups to comment on/ be involved in/ help to shape the delivery of the Carers Strategy.

### **What we aim to do**

#### **Outcomes**

Carers take part systematically in consultation and feedback. This is integral to the planning and monitoring of social care services.

#### **What the carers of Dudley are saying:**

*"Support for the groups need to be properly resourced"*

*"Carers need to be trained and supported to be effective representatives"*

*We need to promote the idea of carers as 'partners in care'"*

*"How do we involve those carers with the most caring responsibilities as they are those least likely to have the time to come to meetings"*

*"We need to make good our promise to call regular meetings of a Forum of carer groups to be involved with delivering the Carers Strategy"*

*"What is the policy on paying carers?"*

*"We need to do much more with the opinions and information the council receives at point of contact with carers".*

*"We need to ensure that the carer and user are both listened to in individual assessment – to build accurate picture of situation"*

*"Work with partners to develop carer involvement"*

*"How will carers fit into the User Led Organisations (ULO)s?"*

	Outcomes	Actions	Strategic links	Target Dates
	Organisations led by people who use services and carers are encouraged, active and strongly supported.	We will continue to support Action for Disabled People and Carers, the development of User Led Organisations and other carers and service user groups		
	Carers, including those from minority and hard to reach groups, are integral to the way social care services are run and improved. They have positive experiences in being consulted about services that will affect their lives	We will revise the Engagement Strategy. An action plan has been devised for each service area to ensure views and experiences of carers are effectively captured. We will devise a strategy to reach people who do not traditionally connect with statutory services.	Engagement Strategy	July 2010
	Carers, are appropriately represented on public bodies.	We are developing ways for carers to be involved, through the Trusts, in the planning of Primary and Secondary Care services: i.e. by promoting Foundation Trust membership.	PCT Strategies.	
	Carers receive remuneration for the services they provide	We will review the user and carer involvement and payment policy- in line with the Transforming Social Care agenda.	TSC Strategy	March 2011
	Carers are involved systematically in the planning and monitoring of social care services.	We will collecting and use information we receive from carers during assessment and other contacts with the Directorate.	Management Information Team	2010

<p>Carers have the opportunity to belong to organisations that represent their views effectively</p>	<p>We will continue to promote the involvement of a wider group of carers and in different ways to get a much more balanced view. This will be addressed as one of several core actions for our service during 2010/11. We will train Carers (groups and individuals) in order that they can be effective as well as active.</p> <p>We will explore the ways information technology can support carers.</p> <p>We will continue to support the training on effective engagement being offered through DOSTI and community engagement network.</p>		
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**To comment on this Strategy during the formal consultation period ending 07.05.10 please contact:**

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