

Understanding and supporting the needs of carers: The carers strategy

Consultation document

Spring / Summer 2016

2016 – 2019

A Summary for Consultation

Carers will be recognised and valued as being fundamental to strong families and stable communities, and respected as expert partners in care. The council and NHS will work with its own staff and voluntary and community sector groups to identify carers as early as possible in their caring journey.

We will ensure all carers, whatever their age, have access to information on what is available to support them to stay healthy and to balance their caring responsibilities with a life outside caring. We will continue to ensure carers are partners in the development of services. Carers are everybody's business.

There are 27,639 carers in South Gloucestershire. Caring can impact significantly on all aspects of a carer's life and wellbeing, and it is important that carers receive information and support in their caring role. We know that the number of carers in South Gloucestershire is set to grow.

This document summarises the key aspects of the Joint Carers Strategy consultation document. The focus of the consultation document is how the council, Clinical Commissioning Group and partners will identify, support and enable carers of all ages to balance their caring responsibilities with a life outside caring. The documents have been developed with a group of carers and ex-carers, as well with key partner organisations.

Over the coming months we are consulting on three issues that significantly impact on older people's wellbeing: dementia services, falls prevention and support for carers. Many carers care for older people, and many are older people themselves. However we recognise that becoming a carer can happen at any age. We are also asking adult carers under the age of 50, and young carers, under the age of 18, what they think our priorities should be. We would like to encourage you to take the time to let us have your comments and feedback on any one or all of these draft strategies.

Why we need Better Care

People tell us that the local health and care system doesn't always work well for them. It can be complicated and difficult for people to move from one service to the next. Health and care professionals often work independently of each other, rather than together, when looking after people. We also know that some services which

are currently delivered in hospitals would be better delivered in the community, close to people's homes.

At the same time, we know that the demand for health and social care is rising. This is due to mainly to our ageing population and a growing number of older people needing more intensive care and support. Without a significant increase in resources to meet these challenges it is clear that we need to work differently to meet these needs, now and in the future. This consultation focuses on how we can use the resources we have and work together to more effectively identify and support carers.

Who are carers?

"Anyone can become a carer. Carers come from all walks of life, all cultures and can be of any age. Many feel they are doing what anyone else would in the same situation – looking after their mother, son or best friend, and just getting on with it." Carers, sometimes called family carers, are relatives, friends or neighbours who look after someone who cannot manage at home without them. This could be caring for a relative (a parent, grandparent, sibling, child or other relative) or a spouse, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or who has mental health or substance misuse problems. Carers do not necessarily live with the person they are looking after.

Carers can be of any age, including young carers. Parent carers are adult members of families with children with additional needs.

Carers of all ages have never had stronger rights or recognition.

Our Priorities for Action

We have achieved a lot since our last Joint Carers Strategy 2011 – 2014, but there remains a lot to do to support identify and support carers. Our priorities are taken from The Carers Strategy Second National Action Plan 2014 – 2016, and are as follows:

Priority area 1: Identifying carers at an early stage, recognising their contribution and involving them in designing local care and in planning individual care packages.

Priority area 2: Carers releasing and realising their potential in education and employment.

Priority area 3: Carers having a family and community life alongside caring, personalising support for carers and providing good quality information, advice and support.

Priority area 4: Supporting carers to stay healthy, mentally and physically.

Find out more and have your say

We welcome comments on our priorities and the steps we need to take over the next three years. Consultation is open between 23rd May and 22nd August 2016.

We are particularly interested in hearing the views of residents and stakeholders to ensure we get the balance of the strategy and our priorities right. For each priority we have set out tasks that will help us meet the priorities. We would like to hear how important you feel these tasks are or whether there are any that you feel are missing.

Following this consultation we will analyse the feedback we receive from carers and organisations and ensure it influences the final version of Understanding and Supporting the Needs of Carers.

The full consultation document, survey and Equalities Impact Assessment is available on our consultation webpage:

www.southglos.gov.uk/consultation or from your local South Gloucestershire library and One Stop Shops.

You can find out more and tell us your views by:

Email: consultation@southglos.gov.uk

Write to: FREEPOST Plus RTCT-JXLE-EETT, South Gloucestershire Council, Corporate Research & Consultation Team, Carers Strategy Consultation, Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, BRISTOL, BS15 9TR

Phone: 01454 868408

If you would like someone to talk to your group or organisation about these proposals, please contact us using the details above to arrange.

