

Working together



Penrith Working Together Forum Penrith Methodist Church 30th July 2009

This month's topics:

Carers Strategy and Emergency Card for Carers

Carers Strategy:

In June 2008 the government launched the 'Carers at the Heart of 21st Century Families and Communities'. The document included recommendations and actions in support of carers:

- Regular, planned respite breaks.
- Annual Health checks for Carers.
- Cover for Carers attending hospital appointments.
- Greater awareness amongst employers for flexible working and recruitment of Carers.
- Hospital and medical staff to treat Carers as experts.
- Closer joint working between Health and Social Care services.
- A National helpline.
- Emergency/Crisis breaks cover.

The full report can be accessed on line from the Department of Health website www.dh.gov.uk

Each county is responsible for developing their own Carers Strategy to implement the above action points. Cumbria have produced their strategy along with an action plan which is being distributed throughout the county for consultation and feedback. The main areas include:

Breaks for Carers

- Creative breaks

Emergency Breaks

Emotional Support

- Specialist support groups
- Increase support for end of life care and Dementia

Employment and Learning

- Balancing work and caring

Former Carers



- Support

Health and Well being

- provide annual health checks for Carers

Discharge planning – make sure carers involved

Training for Carers and people working with Carers

- Caring with confidence – national programme
- Make training about carers mandatory for key staff in organisations (including health staff)

Eden Carers are currently or in the process of providing the following services linked to the new strategy:

- Cumbria Carers Organisations have employed 2 people to work with employers to raise profile of carers in employment
- About to start health and well-being project linking with Eden Mind for funding purposes.
- Provide moving and handling training for Carers.
- Time limited outcome focussed befriending scheme – being rolled out around rest of County

Carers Emergency Card:

The emergency card is available to any carer with an assessment. The card is carried by the carer and should anything happen to them which means that they cannot provide care, emergency services or others would use the card to contact a 24hour response centre to make sure the cared for person is looked after.

When applying for the card a plan is made to make sure that the person cared for receives the right support. This may include contacting a named person who can sit with the person or up to 72 hours of free care from Adult Social Care. The plan would also include where medication is kept; specific needs; organising kennels for pets etc.

Accessing the card can be done through your local Carers organisation.

Eden Carers

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Great Dockray, Penrith,
Cumbria CA11 7DE.

Telephone: 01768 890280

Fax: 01768 890281

Email: enquiries@edencarers.co.uk

Feedback from groups:

1. Information dissemination and communication is difficult. So many agencies but no one-stop contact number. This also includes making sure that professionals and services are aware of what is available so that when someone becomes a carer, the first point of contact they have (i.e. hospital; GP) can give them information and not just get handed a leaflet.
2. Carers Annual Review needs to be more robust and have more continuity – not just a telephone review.
3. Out of hours health access.
4. How do we make professionals aware of carers' services?
5. Intermediate care team are a vital service offering practical support, advice etc.

6. Employers need a clearer understanding of carers needs – understand the importance of a phone call or the anxiety created by the cared for person not answering the phone so the employee may need time to check everything is ok.
7. Processes within hospitals – more information.
8. 'Treat people as customers'.
9. Action plan needs to be more user friendly and less jargon.
10. How do we find out about updates to the action plan; review dates; progress of actions?
11. Carers' breaks – not necessarily to 'do things' but to have a rest. Support to manage the anxiety around wanting time out. Enable carers to manage time to look after their own health.
12. During summer and Christmas breaks a lot of services/activities are closed and this can cause difficulties.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 17th September 2009

Penrith Methodist Church