

A Greater Manchester commitment to improving support for informal carers

1. Introduction

This document sets out a commitment, agreed by organisations across Greater Manchester, to support the implementation of an integrated approach to the identification, assessment and meeting of carers' health and wellbeing needs.

2. Background

There are approximately 280,000 carers in Greater Manchester, who make up a crucial part of the health and social care system. Together, these individual carers make an invaluable significant contribution to Greater Manchester, improving the wellbeing of the people they care for and reducing the demand on a range of Local Authority and NHS funded services. However, as well as supporting the people they care for, carers themselves have many needs of their own, not all of which are currently being consistently met within Greater Manchester.

The Care Act 2014 was designed to improve support for carers, but the 'State of Caring 2016' report by Carers UK and the Carers Trust report 'Care Act: One Year on' both show that carers are still struggling to get the support they need to care well, maintain their own health, balance work and care and have a life of their own outside caring.

In recognition of the potential that the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership has in ensuring that organisations work together to meet the needs of our carers, a Strategic Advisory Group on Carers has been established. The group has worked together to identify how new arrangements could be put in place within Greater Manchester will improve the support offered to informal carers across our city region.

This group has brought together representatives from the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership team, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Local Authorities, Higher Education, NHS England, Carers Trust and local carer's organisations.

This Commitment:

- Outlines a vision for carers in Greater Manchester;
- Seeks commitment from partners across the Health and Social Care Partnership and beyond to work together to transform our approach to meeting the needs of carers;
- Sets out how we plan to work together to meet carer needs and the principles which will underpin this work;
- Details the key priority areas for action which will be delivered over the next year.

3. Our vision for Carers

Our vision was developed and informed by the Greater Manchester Carers consortium. We believe that Greater Manchester should be a place where carers are recognised, valued and supported, both in their caring role and as an individual.

As a carer in Greater Manchester you should be able to expect the following:

- To be identified as a carer as early as possible, be informed, be respected and included by health and social care professionals;
- To have choice and control about your caring role, get the support you need as a carer to meet you and your family's needs;
- To be able to stay healthy and well yourself, and for your own needs and wishes as an individual to be recognised and supported;
- To be socially connected and not isolated;
- To fulfil your aspirations in education and employment;
- If you are a young carer or young adult carer, you are able to thrive and develop educationally, personally and socially, and you are protected from excessive or inappropriate caring roles.

4. Working together to support Carers

By signing this Commitment, organisations agree to work in partnership with each other to promote the wellbeing of individual carers, and to adopt a whole family approach in their work to support local carers of all ages, in order to:

- Support and encourage the independence and physical and mental health of carers and their families;
- Empower and support carers to manage their caring roles and have a life outside of caring;
- Ensure that carers receive the right support, at the right time, in the right place;
- Respect carers' decisions about how much care they will provide and respect Carers' decision about not providing care at all

5. Key principles

The integrated approach to identifying, assessing and supporting carers' health and wellbeing needs rests on a number of supporting principles that underpin this Commitment.

- **Principle 1** – We will support the identification, recognition and registration of carers in all organisations including primary care.
- **Principle 2** - carers will have their support needs assessed and will receive an integrated package of support in order to maintain and/or improve their physical and mental health.
- **Principle 3** - carers will be empowered to make choices about their caring role and access appropriate services and support for them and the person they look after.
- **Principle 4** – The staff of partners to this agreement will be aware of the needs of carers and of their value to our communities.
- **Principle 5** - carers will be supported by information sharing between health, social care, Carer support organisations and other partners to this agreement.
- **Principle 6** - carers will be respected and listened to as expert care partners, and will be actively involved in care planning, shared decision-making and reviewing services.
- **Principle 7** - The support needs of carers who

are more vulnerable or at key transition points will be identified early.

- **Principle 8** – the implementation of the Commitment (and Charter) will be consistent with intentions of Duty to Co-operate as determined in the 2014 Care Act.

6. Moving forwards

This Commitment, its accompanying Charter and the principles which are set out above will be delivered through a programme of change which forms part of the delivery of Taking Charge. It will be expected that across Greater Manchester:

- Carers are recognised as 'experts by experience', in monitoring and reviewing services, and when seeking to redesign, commission or procure Carer support services.
- Programmes for learning and development are put in place to raise the awareness and understanding of the needs of Carers and their families, and of local Carer support services.
- Training is designed to support those undertaking Carers needs assessments to have the necessary knowledge and skills. This will include ensuring that practitioners in the local authority and partner agencies are aware of the specific requirements concerning Carers of the Care Act 2014 and amendments to the Children and Families Act 2014 and accompanying Guidance and Regulations.
- We will develop a standard set of outcome measures that will, in future, be able to capture and report on the outcomes we aspire to in this Commitment. This is part of making the changes real, although it is fully acknowledged that outcomes measurement will require careful development so that it represents the real experience of carers in Greater Manchester.

7. Thinking care across the system

Across Greater Manchester we recognise that by supporting carers we are also supporting the person with care needs and we believe that no one should have to care alone.

Through the work that will be undertaken following the signing of this Commitment, it is expected that the following outcomes will be delivered:

- Carers will receive the right support, at the right time, and in the right place and carers in Greater Manchester who indicate that they require additional support or that their capacity or willingness to continue caring is diminished, will be able to access support from locally based Carer support organisations to have their immediate needs addressed.
- When a Carer indicates they have a health need during an interaction with the NHS, this health need will be addressed as soon as possible, after which it is expected that healthcare practitioners initiate a discussion about the Carer's wider support needs and refer to the local Carer support organisation.
- Partnership working and co-operation will be enhanced in order to provide joined up, seamless services. This will include joint working in each locality between the local authority, the NHS, voluntary organisations, education, public health, housing and local communities to support Carers.
- Local data and information sharing processes between agencies will be developed so that information follows the Carer across their own care and support pathway without them constantly having to re-tell their story.
- Employees in all organisations are able to understand who carers are, thereby ensuring they are able to identify and provide appropriate advice and support.
- The needs of Carers will also be recognised by commissioners and planned for. This work will co-ordinated through each Authority's Health and Wellbeing Board, the Better Care Fund Board, and underpinned by effective Joint Strategic Needs Assessments, which will include identification of the needs of Carers, including Young Carers and Young Adult Carers. This identification will be crucial in planning services which reflect the prevention agenda that underpins the Care Act 2014.

- Through this work we will ensure that local transformation plans recognise the specific roles, needs and contexts of different members of the carers communities including: Young Carers and Young Adult Carers; Parent Carers; Carers of people with Long Term Conditions (Dementia, Alzheimer's, Health Failure, COPD, HIV, Mental Health etc.); Working Carers; Carers within particular communities of interest (e.g. BAME, LGBT etc), and Carers within particular communities of place (e.g. urban communities, rural communities, deprivation, neighbourhoods etc). This work will be undertaken with due regard to Equalities, Diversity and Human Rights strategies of all partners.

- All locality plans will contain significant reference to carers and detail how the provision of effective advice and health and social care interventions will be key to delivering the 'prevention agenda' that underpins the Care Act 2014.
- All local Health and Wellbeing Strategies will include shared strategies for meeting Carer identified needs, and setting out arrangements for working together and the actions that each partner will take individually and collectively.

8. Summary

It is recognised that to deliver these outcomes, there will need to be a transformational change to the way that organisations across Greater Manchester work, both on an individual basis and together to meet the needs of Carers. It is believed from the stock take undertaken to date, that this could impact significantly on many organisations and that transformation funding support will be required to deliver the fundamental changes required.

A detailed improvement action plan has been developed that supports putting the principles and aspirations contained in this Commitment into reality.

Through delivery of the action plan we will ensure that, by 2021, our vision and ambitions for improved support and outcomes for carers will be achieved. This memorandum of understanding will be subjected to an annual review.

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Signatories on behalf of Greater Manchester Health and Social Care:

Lord Peter Smith, Chair of Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership

Jon Rouse, Chief Officer of Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester

Lynne Stafford, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise representative
Chair of Greater Manchester Carers Partnership and
Chief Executive of the Gaddum Centre

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