

NHS England Carers Toolkit - An integrated approach to identifying and assessing Carer health and wellbeing

Introduction

This toolkit was released in May 2016 and provides a useful framework to take forward collaborative working between health and social care services.

"a resource to help promote working together between Adult social care services, NHS commissioners and providers, and third sector organisations that support Carers, of all ages, with a specific focus on developing an integrated approach to the identification, assessment and support of Carers and their families across health and social care. To support this joint working, a template Memorandum of Understanding, to be discussed and agreed locally"

Context

The national Carers Strategy refresh is due to be released in March 2017. There is likely to be a strong focus on prevention, early intervention and working collaboratively to make the best use of limited resources. This latest toolkit intends to further the goals of the NHS England *Commitment to Carers* published in May 2014.

Content

The paper covers:

1. A new framework for carer health and wellbeing - the duty to cooperate, promote wellbeing, to address the needs of Young Carers, Parent Carers and to adopt a "whole family approach" and delegation of authority for carers' needs assessments
2. An integrated approach to the identification and assessment of Carer health and wellbeing needs
3. Moving forward with the NHS England commitment to carers

The focus on whole systems working supports the shared focus of organisations represented at Carers Executive Board. The paper is supported by a Memorandum of Understanding which can be adapted for local use. This could provide the Executive Board with an opportunity to move forward in areas such as primary care where there have been significant barriers to joint working.

" The Better Care Fund (BCF) was launched in 2014 and aims to transform local health and social care services so that they work together to provide better joined up care and support, through CCGs and local authorities agreeing joint plans and agreeing to pool elements of their budgets.

Local Health and Wellbeing Boards are responsible for overseeing agreement of the joint plan and for ensuring that funds are used in accordance with the agreed plan.

There is a requirement that plans outline the support that would be made available to Carers, reflecting the retention of £130m to fund Carers breaks in 2016/17.

Given the above responsibilities, it is suggested that all partners on the local Health and Wellbeing Board sign the Memorandum of Understanding at Appendix One in order to demonstrate commitment to the duties of co-operation and promotion of wellbeing, as well as the wider commitment to identifying, recognising, assessing and supporting Carers."

Local Use

This document could be used as a basis for a one year action plan for the Carers Executive Board as much of the focus of the current Carers Strategy Action Plan (2015-2017) has become business as usual. This would contribute to the planned review of Carers Services due to take place this year and could provide a lever to progress in areas where collaborative working around carers has been difficult to establish.