

CARERS SURVEY 2016

Last autumn, the government commissioned a survey of carers at all local authorities; this is done every two years. Set questions are sent to carers who are selected according to prescribed eligibility criteria.

In Portsmouth, 939 carers were sent the questionnaire and we had 519 replies (55% which is a wonderful response - thank you!)

Many of the questions are used by the government to calculate part of the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework - a way of estimating how each local authority is doing against the national average.

We cannot release the results at this stage until the national data is available later in the year, but as soon as it is, then we will let you know how Portsmouth is doing in relation to the rest of the country.

At Portsmouth we have looked at the survey data very closely and especially concentrated on the written comments on every questionnaire.

"The Carers Centre have been amazing, supportive and have kindly helped my husband and I have a weekend break away this year".

"Caring can be difficult hard work, some of the time and frustrating. It takes over your life. Until we were in this position wouldn't have understood.."

A comment that was made more than once was that no-one would read the comments and nothing would happen to change anything. We'd like to reassure all carers that every single comment has been added to the report that went to the senior management team at Adult Social Care. Every comment has been logged and considered carefully. We have made a list of the top issues you reported to us.

1.1 WHAT THE SURVEYS TOLD US

There is a clear correlation between the number of services accessed by carers and the carers satisfaction. This is great, it means the work we do to support carers pays off. However we can never do everything we'd like to and carers have been hit by the local authority cuts as much as anyone, this was clear in the responses.

The main comments were in the following areas:

- You'd like us to keep in touch more often, just to see how you are. This was the most frequent comment and one we'd like to address.
- You are very positive about the services you receive from the Carers Centre and we want to ensure that continues.

- You raised some issues about the quality of some care received from care agencies.
- You told us how difficult it can be to contact Adult Social Care and we'd like to work on that by improving our procedures.
- You told us your experiences trying to organise respite care in Portsmouth and we have already started to make plans which should alleviate this issue soon.

1.2 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We are going to continue to ask carers for their ideas about how the above points might be addressed, within the tight restraints we have, and ask if there is anything else pressing we have missed. We will then look to put a plan in place and assess the situation in a few months' time.

Also later in the year, the national figures will give us a good idea how Portsmouth is placed nationally.

"I have phoned three times this week and on each occasion was told I would be phoned back, I am still waiting."