Carers Annual Meeting

25th September 2014 at the GWRSA Club, Hereford

The fourth Herefordshire Carers Annual Meeting took place on 25th September 2014 at the Great Western Railway Staff Association Club in Hereford. The Carers Annual Meeting is an opportunity for Carers to hear about the work that HCS does to support Carers in their caring role.

It began with Joy Rickwood, a musician from the Music Pool, leading a group of Carers in a rendition of “rounds” that she had put together especially for the day, starting with ‘Algie met the bear’!!

Janet Fellowes, Chair of Herefordshire Carers Support, reported on the work that staff and trustees had carried out during 2015, which included the Royal visit, Healthwatch and Sainsburys Charity of the year, to name but a few!! However, she also mentioned that Herefordshire Carers Support’s contract was up for renewal in March 2015, meaning uncertain times ahead.

Chair of the Carers Forum and HCS Trustee, Valerie Fitch reported back on the work of the Forum.

In the past year the Adult Carers Forum has looked at how we can reach out to more Carers who wish to make their voices heard. The Forum exists as a driver to getting your views across to the Council, the NHS, 2gether Trust and anyone else who should hear us. After much discussion amongst Carers who attended various meetings, we decided to take the Forum to some market towns, to change the timings and days, so that we could hear more of your voices. This has resulted in a greater input of ideas and issues and we hope this will continue, as it is important that we understand what is troubling Carers, so that we can act as your advocate to get your messages across to anyone who needs to hear your voices.
As the Chair of the Forum I became part of the Autism Partnership Board, on behalf of HCS and as a Carer for someone with autism. The membership of this Board is made up of various bodies, such as the Council, people on the autistic spectrum, the police, etc. HCS has action points to follow to ensure that the local Autism Strategy is implemented, such as: to enable families, Carers and people on the autistic spectrum to form their own community groups. During this past year only the inaugural meeting took place. However, I am hopeful that the membership of this Board will ensure that the voices of those on the spectrum and their Carers will be heard.

We also discussed with Carers the "Virtual Ward" scheme which was being trialled in Hereford city for a year. Some of its aims are to prevent patients from going into hospital unnecessarily by treating patients at home but, also to discharge patients more quickly and continue their treatment in their own environment. We had some interesting discussions on this topic. Some Carers were concerned that they "weren’t nurses", but one of the outcomes is to teach Carers how to manage the condition that they are being asked to deal with. Carers were further assured that they would not be forced to participate. HCS is evaluating the Carers' experiences of taking part in this scheme and would like to hear from any Carer who has been involved. So if any of you in the audience today would like to speak to someone about your experience of the "Virtual Ward" please make contact.

The review of the Carers Charter has been uppermost in the work of the Carer Forum this year and John Hayward, vice-chair of the Carer Forum and Carers Charter Lead, was next to take to the stage and report on the feedback from the five signatory organisations.

The Carers Charter was written by HCS Carers for all Carers across Herefordshire and was launched at Carers Rights Day, December 2011.

The purpose of the Charter is to enable the role of the Carer to be recognised, respected and valued by all local Service Providers. It’s based on key National Standards so aligns with many of the Service Providers expected standards.

The Service Providers also agree, when signing up, to provide an annual report for this meeting.

There are currently 5 signatory organisations and below is a summary of how they are committing to the Carers Charter.
Wye Valley NHS Trust

- Dementia Working Group

A working group headed by Dr Kit Byatt is focusing on dementia and has representation from HCS ensuring carers’ needs are considered.

Questionnaires have been distributed around wards in the County Hospital to carers of patients with a confirmed diagnosis of Dementia/Alzheimer’s.

An action plan has been produced, essentially relating to effective communication with and the provision of information for carers.

Herefordshire Council

- An on-line Carers Awareness Course is now integral to their CPD (continued professional development) programme and is available to all employees.

- Employees in Adults and Children’s Well Being are actively encouraged to attend a variety of courses and events put on by Herefordshire Carers Support, with specific encouragement for those who may themselves have caring responsibilities.

- They worked with HCS to develop the new Education and Health Care Plan.

- They submitted, with significant input from HCS, bids for a range of areas including Integration Pioneer, Employees as Carers.

- Carer’s views are taken seriously and have helped to shape policy and HCS have a place on several strategic Boards including the Health and Wellbeing Board.

- Community development work has had Carers/HCS as a core participant and HCS has chaired the Dementia Implementation Group and the Falls Group.

2gether NHS Foundation Trust

- They actively support Carers with weekly drop-in session at the Stonebow Unit.
Over the past years, 2gether have also undertaken focus groups with Carers at Stonebow to gather feedback and learning about the way in which they work with Carers.

They also implemented the 15 Steps Challenge which provides feedback on the ‘first impressions’ of their services and ideas to make the environment more welcoming.

Examples of changes made as a result of this initiative are:

- Welcome signs, staff photograph boards, easy read information, tidy and clear notice boards and easy access to activity resources.

Ward Managers have reported the value of service user and Carer involvement in this which provided a ‘fresh perspective’ on the clinical environments.

- From August, Diane Topham (Community Services manager) will be spending an afternoon a month at each Resource Centre across Herefordshire where she will be happy to meet with any service user or carer regarding any query or concerns they may have.

These are at:

- 27a St Owen Street, The Linden Centre, Gaol Street, and Widemarsh Street, Hereford
- The Knoll, Ross-on-Wye and Etnam Street, Leominster

- Carers from Herefordshire have also been involved in 2gether staff recruitment and have also taken part in their strategic development engagement sessions helping them to shape the future of services.

- HCS also have a place on their Service Experience Committee.

**Herefordshire Housing**

Promotion of support for Carers in HH’s Newsletter and local press

Awareness sessions held at team meetings and with their Leadership Team and Senior Management to explain the Carer’s Charter, the key issues for Carers and how to refer a customer to HCS.

They are aware of the importance of encouraging people who are Carers to recognise themselves as such, and to encourage them to register with HCS so that they can access relevant support, information and advice.
Promotion of their Careline service with clear information about the costs and the benefits to Carers

Promotion of their Aids and Adaptations Services with information about how Carers can access this including assistance with completing applications and liaison with Occupational Therapy

Family activities are promoted to all of their residents and Carers are welcomed on family trips and play-scheme activities. Older resident’s activities and trips also include places for carers

They also offer support for staff who are Carers including flexi-time working practices, which the aim of supporting a work/life balance.

**Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group: CCG**

While they don’t have a single lead for Carers, they ensure that much of their work includes a component specific to Carers and their needs.

Examples include:

An emotional mapping exercise for Carers within the urgent care consultation.

The provision of dementia support workers connected to Herefordshire GP practices

Launch of a new NHS e-referral service, by the end of this year, which will reduce the burden on carers by patents not having to attend hospital so often.

This is a step towards creating a more patient-centred, people-powered service, making the NHS much easier to do business with, and supporting the drive towards paperless referrals and a paperless NHS by 2018.

There is Carer representation on the diabetes network and every published care pathway includes information for clinicians supporting carers.

In addition to these 5 Service Providers, I’m pleased to be able to report that 5 GP Practices have recently signed up to the Carer’s Charter.
They are:

Kingstone Surgery; Mortimer Medical Centre; Nunwell Surgery, Bromyard; The Marches Practice Leominster & Bodenham and Weobley & Staunton Practice. In addition to these Fownhope Medical Centre has been involved in a national piece of work to help GP Practices improve carer identification and support

Finally:

As you can see, by working in partnership with these Service Providers, the role and value of the Carer is being raised by HCS.

Heather Pyne, Chair of the Parent Carer Forum, reported on the work that ‘The Voice’ had been involved with during the past year.

For Parent Carer Voice the year to April 2014 was dominated by three main themes: the implications of the Children and Families Bill and the Care Bill, the process for the commissioning of Short Breaks for children and young people with special needs and disabilities and the proposal to charge for school transport for young people over 16 with SEN.

In June 2013, my predecessor as Chair of the Voice, Sheridan Butterfield handed over the baton to me, but not before winning the Midlands Area, Marsh Carer of the Year Award in recognition of the volunteering work she has undertaken to support other Carers.

Parent Carers were heavily involved in the Short Breaks commissioning process from the outset, including Parent Carers determining the outcomes for the prospectus through ‘meet the commissioner events’ and one member of the voice was a member of the Social Value Panel which evaluated the bids from service providers. Although a good example of co-production in the design of prospectus, there were issues around service providers not coming forward to bid for some of the services in the prospectus.
The Children and Families Bill (now the Children and Families Act) seeks to replace the Statement of Special Educational Needs with an integrated Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan for 0-25 year olds; to require every local Authority to provide a Local Offer which brings together in one place all the information about support and services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities; and to give an option for a Personal Budget for those with an EHC plan; it also requires that children and their parents and young people have a strong voice in the process.

The Voice has been involved in the co-production of the format of the EHC plan template and the Local Offer in Herefordshire through Voice meetings and a Parental Steering Group. As well as sending representatives to attend National Network of Parent Carer Forum meetings where these issues were discussed, the Voice hosted a workshop in November, facilitated by IPSEA (Independent Parental Special Education Advice) on the draft SEN Code of Practice. This workshop equipped a number of PCV members to respond to the consultation and we were thrilled that many of our comments were taken into consideration in the final version as it will have massive implications for the provision of services to children and young people with SEND and their families.

The Council’s proposal to charge for school transport for students over sixteen with SEN and disabilities caused considerable concern amongst parent carers and members of The Voice were active in the campaign against the introduction of this charge. Disappointment following the council’s decision, in December, to introduce the charges was replaced by relief when the decision was called in however, a new vote only resulted in the delay of the charges by a year and parent carers remain concerned about the potential implications.

Another matter of concern for Parent Carers was the failure of the new legislation to give Parent Carers the same rights as other Carers, in particular the right to a Carer’s Assessment. This issue was raised at a Parent Carer Voice (PCV) meeting with local MPS in December, along with the need for more financial support for working Carers who do not qualify for Carer’s Allowance and a better financial settlement for Herefordshire, as cuts to services are disproportionately affecting Carers and those they care for.

The working year ended with HCS Patron Baroness Jill Pitkeathley continuing to table amendments to the Children and Families Bill in the House of Lords to secure greater rights for Parent Carers, with the result that Parent Carers now have the same rights in law as other Carers, a Carer’s assessment in their own right and new rights to services for Parent Carers.
At Carers Rights Day last year Herefordshire Council’s Chief Executive Alistair Neill praised the work of Parent Carer Voice and promised the local authority would continue to work closely with the group in the year to come.

The penultimate presentation came from Ed Roberts and Susan Brace, on the achievements of Young Carers and Young Adult Carers over the past twelve months.

Our activities tie in with the Every Child Matters outcomes:
- Stay healthy
- Be safe
- Achieve economically
- Contribute to society positively
- Enjoy life

We are very active in the use of Social Media and now have a Twitter feed for Herefordshire Young Carers (YC’s) - which currently has 131 followers.

A Young Carer Forum has been created and the outcomes from the first meeting are below:
- To meet once every half term = 6 meetings a year
- Young Carers aged 13 and over can be a part of the forum and younger YCs will have their views put forward by their older peers who will liaise at club
- Main theme for YCs is a lack of time
- To keep in touch between meetings via Facebook

In response to the Forum meeting we now have a closed Facebook group for YCs aged 13 and over, as per Facebook rules. (Younger YCs can still get in touch online via main HCS website).

First thing the Forum decided as a group was to open up the Facebook forum to any Young Carers in Herefordshire so that they can air their opinions and see what’s going on.

Schools Award Scheme now live - similar to the GP Awards, with Young Carers nominating schools/teachers who have given best support as well as awards for school who make the most referrals.

There was also a full program of trips throughout the summer holidays.

Nathan and Hannah attended the Young Adult Carer media panel & training sessions in Manchester in April. Ed took them and 3 other Young Adult Carers (YACs) to a “Time to be
Heard”, event at Nottingham University later this month. Over the 2 days, there was time for them to meet other Young Adult Carers from across the country, chill out, play sport and relax. They got to see how other Carers have balanced further education and training with their caring role, find out about the application process and student finance, talk to decision makers about their concerns and stay overnight in their own room in university accommodation.

A video was shown, which was presented by Abi, one of our Young Adult Carers on “Managing Further Education and Caring”. To access this video please click this link: [http://www.herefordshirecarerssupport.org/young-carers/2014/09/26/young-carer-films/](http://www.herefordshirecarerssupport.org/young-carers/2014/09/26/young-carer-films/)

Finally, the financial business of Herefordshire Carers Support was delivered by Bernard Disley, who is a Trustee and Treasurer of HCS.

For those who would like to examine the small print, we are very happy to provide you with copies of our full accounts which are filed with the Charities Commission and Companies House.

The large majority of our income last year came from our contracts. The main one is with Herefordshire Council for our services to Carers and we also participate in the council’s Healthwatch contract with HVOSS.

Most of the remaining income came from other funding organisations awarding grants for specific projects that benefit Carers. We continue to apply for such grants and we have been recently successful with a contract from the Dept. of Education to create a service for Parent Carers and their families, called Independent Support! Everything that we spend is to support Carers in Herefordshire, whether this is at the front line or in essential common services underpinning our front line staff and Carers activities. We have spent more than our income for the last 2 years. For the three years in total we have spent £ 67,548 more than our income.

We will repeat this for the present financial year; we have allocated £43,059 from funds brought forward including a reduction in our contingency reserve to supplement expected income.

We think that this is the last year we will be able to do this.
The many activities we undertook in Supporting Carers using this money are detailed in our Impact Report which you should have a copy of. I’m sure that you will notice that we again spent substantially more than our income last year - £26,944 more. We were able to do this by using our retained funds from previous years to maintain our services to you.

The funds that we carried forward on 31st March into this year were reduced as a result of our spending more than our income. We keep a contingency reserve in line with Charity Commission guidance that “A charity should provide reliable and consistent services to its beneficiaries beyond the immediate future. It needs to be able to meet unexpected expenses, absorb setbacks and take advantage of change and opportunities for development when they arise.”

We are in uncertain times! Our trustees review our contingency reserve regularly to ensure it is at an appropriate level.

Anyone wishing to access the full presentation can find it here.

Carers Annual Day finished with a “never ending game of bingo”, which raised a few “titters” around the room!!

The result of the Colour Quiz, for all those Carers waiting with baited breath are on the next page!!
Please find below answers to the Quiz from Carers Annual Day at GWRSA

All answers are associated with a colour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Serrated cutters.</td>
<td>Pinking shears</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Soldiers of the Queen.</td>
<td>Blues and Royals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Fox chasers’ apparel.</td>
<td>Hunting Pink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Author of ‘Brighton Rock.’</td>
<td>Graham Greene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ship of the desert.</td>
<td>Camel</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Anna Sewell’s famous horse.</td>
<td>Black Beauty</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. The merry men’s attire.</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Hopefully 25th December for Bing</td>
<td>White Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Item of granny’s makeup</td>
<td>Rouge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. A famous insect’s aquatic transport.</td>
<td>Yellow Submarine</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Short Sally could start the week off?</td>
<td>Salmon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. It was meant for silver to be included.</td>
<td>Magenta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Was he always late and unprepared?</td>
<td>Ethelred the unready</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Pair in a bed.</td>
<td>Apricot</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. The senior service.</td>
<td>Navy</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Member of the duck family.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Peas I swap for an old picture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>This heroine could have been blown away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Root and stem pop from the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Accompaniment to Christmas dinner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>A penny apiece for this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Celebrated in music by Rimsky Korsakov.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Offspring of buck and hind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Judas' betrayal handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Not the gay Gordon we were hoping for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>The choral society had to do without Henry's help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Scottish island which can make one depressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Finger / Fish / Standard / Sovereign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Colourful feline or sparkling Gem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Tony Orlando's hair accessory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Have it when twisted, by the sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Jo rang Ether for this succulent half-time treat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>It used to be small change to call the Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Did you put this on your pancake?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Event Evaluation

Over 50 Carers, staff and colleagues attended the Annual Carers meeting. 14 participants completed an event evaluation form. Here is a summary of their feedback:

All, except one who responded to question 2, ‘Did the event meet your expectations?’ answered, ‘yes’ to this question. Likewise, everyone who answered question 4, ‘Based on today’s event, do you think you would attend future HCS events?’ said that they would attend future events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timings</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject/content</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

- “Get bingo equipment sorted! Great fun though! First person to ever get me singing – well done. Loved Young Carers presentations and films.”
- “All excellent – including the cakes!!”
- “Not over keen on songs/ singing.”
- “Would it be possible to have meetings (or some) at Town Hall or Shire Hall (as they have been occasionally previously) as this would be a centre of Hereford venue, near bus station and parking places?”
- “Thank you for being there when I phone”

Over 50 Carers Voices filled the hall as the fourth Carers Annual Meeting drew to a close at the Great Western Railway Staff Association Club. Musician Joy Rickwood guided the assembled Carers through a song in two part harmony which she had composed during last year’s event. A great way to finish yet another fun filled event!!

We all left happily singing to ourselves, ‘Together our voice is louder, together our voice is louder’.