

Herefordshire
Carers Support

**IMPACT REPORT
2008/2009**

*Report of progress made by
HCS during the year*

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR AND DIRECTOR

This impact report allows us to report back on the activities of Herefordshire Carers Support over the year 2008-2009 and to determine our progress in attaining the outcomes for carers.

We have continued to provide much needed advice and support to carers through the support groups and network groups we have run throughout the year. In addition we have focused on collaborative working with other organisations through the 'Carers Hub to maximise the resources available to carers and add value to the excellent work already being done by pooling expertise and sharing good practice.

The Carers Rights Conference held in December was a great success, which we hope to repeat again this year, with the addition of "What's On" for carers days held in the market towns, which again brings together organisations working with carers.

During this year, Sue Rennie and Penny Harding retired from the Trustee Board. We would like to extend our thanks to them for the enormous contribution they made to the development of the organisation. I would also like to welcome two new Trustees, Simon Nicholls and Alison Davies, who bring with them a wealth of personal experience and expertise to add to the skills mix on the Board.

This past year has been a challenging one, with constant change and adjustments. The organisation has approached this period with a commendable degree of professionalism and I am confident that the Trustee Board and staff team will continue to strive to build an organisation that reflects the needs of carers in Herefordshire.

Diane Jones
Chair

Jacqui Bremner
Director

2.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Herefordshire Carers Support exists to ensure that carers are universally recognised as fundamental to the communities in which they live and to ensure that there is a balance between their caring responsibilities and their lives outside of their caring role.

2.2 WE AIM TO DO THIS BY:

- ***Actively involving carers to tell us what services they wish to receive.***
- ***Sharing our knowledge and skills to inform others about best practice.***
- ***Promoting the participation of carers in their communities by recognising and overcoming the barriers that they face.***
- ***Participating in the development of policies that enhance equality and thereby challenging discrimination.***
- ***Working in partnership with other voluntary, statutory and private organisations.***
- ***Efficiently delivering services that are of a high quality and work across professional and administrative boundaries***

2.3. OUR VALUES:

Herefordshire Carers Support works with the principles of The Strengths Perspective which are

- **Every individual, group, family and community has strengths**
Support is based around respect for the resources and expertise carers already possess. Identifying and mobilizing carers' assets is the foundation for improving their lives and experiences.

- **Crisis, illness and struggle may be injurious but they may also act as sources of challenge and opportunity**

We do not deny the personal and emotional costs of caring but we also see the opportunity and learning that springs from adversity; the love and commitment from which caring comes. Recognising and supporting skills of resilience empowers people to value and develop their abilities.

- **Growth and change have no upper limits**

The strengths perspective takes individual, family and community aspirations seriously. Our realism is optimistic; we focus on the future rather than the past.

By fully believing in the potential of carers and keeping an alliance with their hopes and values we engage with their potential, not what they are limited by.

- **We best serve clients by collaborating with them**

HCS works to ensure that individual voices are heard and valued at every stage of support, including at a strategic level, in the way services are planned. We don't lead carers, we learn from them. The strengths perspective focuses on the choices, goals and expertise that people form for themselves and ensures these are reflected in all our work with them.

- **Every environment is full of resources**

Each person's environment is rich with possible sources of help but carers sometimes need the confidence support work brings, to access and coordinate these. When given the opportunity both formal and informal partnerships can contribute assets that may not be intensive or costly but that people greatly value because they bring sustainability to a situation.

- **Caring, caretaking and context**

Caring relationships are fundamental to human well-being. Our role is to assist families, neighbourhoods and communities to care for their members and for themselves. By engaging with the full social identity of carers we recognise their importance within a network of relationships.

2.4 QUALITY STATEMENT

We will aim to provide high quality services at all times. It is the responsibility of all staff to strive for the highest standards and quality in their work.

Quality is everyone's business and its constant pursuit is integral to the work of Herefordshire Carers Support.

2.5 CORE STANDARDS FOR OUR WORK WITH CARERS

- ***Carers are treated with respect and courtesy at all times***
- ***Information is kept confidential unless it is against the law to do so and carers won't be asked to repeat information they have already given us.***

- ***Carers will know who their contact person is and we will aim to resolve problems from the first time we are contacted.***
- ***We do what we say***

2.6 SERVICE STANDARDS

- Adult carers feel supported and better able to continue their caring role
- Young carers feel supported and better able to enjoy their childhood and protected from inappropriate caring roles.
- Carers are recognised and supported as expert care partners.

2.7 EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR HEREFORDSHIRE CARERS SUPPORT

1. Carers have access to appropriate, relevant and accurate information
2. Carers have recognition and respect for their role and offered an assessment in their own right
3. Carers have access to a support system that includes cover for emergencies
4. Professionals in Health and Social Services recognise and respect carers in their role.
5. Carers have financial security through access to work and benefits
6. Carers have access to training to develop skills and lifelong learning
7. Carers have a choice about maintaining the carer role and a choice of support options
8. Carers are emotionally, mentally and physically healthy
9. Young carers will achieve the standards of Every Child Matters
10. An Organisation fit for purpose.

PROGRESS MADE DURING 08/09

- 1. We said during 08/09 we would provide carers with relevant and up to date information.**

ACHIEVED

All publicity materials for Herefordshire Carers Support have been updated. The website has been re-designed and a feedback facility has been added. Young Carers and Parent Carers have separate spaces on the website and separate leaflets appropriate to them.

A Carers Rights Conference was held in December, over 120 people attended and a conference report has been published.

Information events have started with a 'What's On' for carers in Leominster.

- 2. We said during 2008/09 we wanted carers to have recognition and respect for their role.**

ACHIEVED

We have increased the number of carers registered on the database by 458. We have doubled the numbers of parent carers who were registered.

The newsletter was relaunched and distributed to the 1,900 carers on the data base.

Parish Planning guidance now includes a question on carers and a section on the support that can be offered by HCS.

We have established the Herefordshire Parent Carers Voice, which is a forum for parent carers to contribute to policy and planning.

We have delivered training to 12 carers of people with Parkinson's Disease and 30 parents of young people who have had a psychotic episode. 9 parent carers are being trained as befrienders.

105 carers were seen on a one-one basis by the Carer Support team. Many of whom were supported through a carers assessment to gain services.

40 families participated in the Family Fun Day

3. We said that during 08/09 we wanted carers to have access to a support system that included cover in emergencies.

ACHIEVED

105 carers seen for one-one support. 150 carers were given emergency cards, to access the emergency scheme.

60 carers were supported through Support Groups in Ross, Bromyard, Leominster and Ledbury.

70 carers were supported through the network groups when addressed specific service issues e.g. advocacy for carers using respite care services.

Parent carer befriending scheme has been initiated.

4. We said during 08/09 that we wanted carers to have a choice about maintaining their caring role and a choice of support options.

ACHIEVED

5 families are signed up to 'In Control' as part of Plan UK.

HCS contributed to the tendering for short break provision.

We are contributing to the pilot for individualised budgets for carers to assess their effectiveness with carers.

We have contributed to discussions that help to re-define short breaks to be in line with the types of services that carers are asking for.

5. We said that during 08/09 we wanted carers to be emotionally, mentally and physically healthy.

ACHIEVED

We have directly worked with GP Surgeries and primary health care staff to encourage them to identify and target carers for active support. Presentations have been given to district nurses and occupational therapists, health visitors and social work teams to raise awareness of the needs of carers.

20 carers have been directly supported to access stress management services including complementary therapies.

60 carers attend the 'pamper day' to raise awareness of health and well being.

Therapeutic care was delivered to the carers support groups.

6. During 08/09 we wanted young carers to achieve the goals of "Every Child Matters".

ACHIEVED

A consultation about a newsletter was completed and a new format will be launched during 09.

60 young carers were supported through youth clubs and holiday activities.

25 young carers were supported through one-one sessions and family support work.

Young carers created a video to inform professionals about how they would like to receive services.

Presentations given to school nurses, co-ordinators of the extended schools programme, co-ordinators of the children centres.

In addition to the above HCS has been present at numerous open days and events organised by other organisations, and given presentations to the WI, Rotary Clubs and other interested groups, which might contain carers, potential carers and ex carers.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT YEAR:

1. Carers Count Campaign

Continue to find hidden carers who otherwise would not get help

2. Find the right information

On everything from getting benefits or specialist care to the nearest coffee morning for carers.

3. Fighting for Carers Rights

We will make the difference between someone struggling alone and receiving their entitlements.

We will ensure that carers voices are heard by decision makers both local and national, directly and through the Princess Royal Trust.

4. Supporting Carers emotionally

Carers need a service that understands the journey they are on, whether they have just found out their new baby has a lifelong disability, feel isolated caring for their partner with dementia or are trying to rebuild their lives after caring for many years.

5. Help to make caring a positive experience

By ensuring that carers can share their experiences with others in the same situation and can access breaks, education and employment.