

# Worcestershire Carers Strategy 2015-17

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# Introduction

1. Health and social care is changing, not only in Worcestershire. The Care Act 2014 comes into force in April 2015 and heralds huge changes for people who need social care, their carers and the providers of services. Alongside this, the Government is committed to greater integration of health and social care, reflected in the Better Care Fund which makes specific provision for pooling funding for carers (and service users). Furthermore, the Children and Families Act 2014 includes changes to section 17 of the 1989 Children Act that coincide with the implementation of the Care Act and clarifies the law relating to young carers.
2. At the same time the public sector is facing a continuing and significant financial challenge, with less money available to support an increasing number of people who need support, be it because of their age, disabilities or other reasons. Increasingly communities, families and individuals will have the opportunity to take greater responsibility for their own health and care.
3. Worcestershire is responding to these challenges by:
  - Continuing to integrate health and social care services, through the Well Connected programme and as a national Pioneer.
  - As part of this working through the County Council's Future Lives programme to promote well-being and independence and reform adult social care so that it allows greater choice and control, meets the requirements of the Care Act, and is sustainable within the funding available.
4. This Strategy is set in the context of this changed environment and will attempt to respond in a realistic yet imaginative and creative way to face the challenges ahead.
5. Clause 10 (3) of the Care Act defines a carer as:  
"an adult who provides or intends to provide care for another adult ("adult needing care").  
Another definition is included in "Recognised, Valued and Supported: Next Steps for the Carers Strategy, 2010" which defines a carer as:  
"A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help. This could be caring for a relative, partner, a child or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems"

This definition includes:

**Adult carers:** any adult who provides care to another adult, but who is not under contract to do so or as part of voluntary work. Care includes providing assistance to enable someone to carry out basic care activities, access necessary facilities or services, or engage in work, education, training or volunteering.

**Young carers:** any young person under the age of 18 who is in some way affected by the need to take physical, practical and/or emotional responsibility for the care of another person, often taking on a level of responsibility that is inappropriate to their age or development

**Parent Carers:** any parent of a disabled child or young person up to the age of 19 who provides substantial and regular carer beyond that which would usually be expected for a similarly aged child.

6. The **Care Act** for the first time gives adult carers and young carers who are transitioning into adulthood the same rights to assessment and support as the persons they care for. It includes duties for:
- **Well-being:** the Care Act gives local authorities the duty to consider in all its actions the well-being of adult carers and young carers who are transitioning into adulthood.). It requires the local authority to provide information, advice and support to ensure that carers' wellbeing is promoted. Each carer will have different needs and aspirations and all service providers and commissioners will work towards reflecting this in all their actions.
  - **Information and advice:** local authorities have to provide relevant information and advice so that adult carers and young carers who are transitioning into adulthood can find out about how to look after themselves as well as finding out about support and care available from adult social care services.
  - **Prevention:** local authorities have a duty to meet the needs of adult carers and young carers who are transitioning into adulthood to reduce their support needs by maintaining independence and good health and promoting wellbeing. All partners will work with carers to identify the resources already available to them in their family and community networks and put support in place to complement these where necessary. This will work in different ways, through whole population approaches and through individual approaches. An associated commissioning plan and action plan will explain the approach in more detail and how achievements will be measured.
  - **Assessments:** carers assessments under the Care Act 2014 will consider the impact of caring on the carer and what needs to happen to secure carers' general health and wellbeing, making best use of available resources and support in the community.
  - **Meeting support and care needs:** there is now an entitlement for support for those carers who are eligible.
7. In addition, the new provisions of the **Children and Families Act** include
- The right to an assessment of needs for support or all young carers under 18 regardless of who they care for, what they provide or how often they provide it.
  - A duty on local authorities to undertake such an assessment on request on the identification of need.
  - A duty on local authorities to assess a parent carer or a young carer if it appears they may have needs for support, or if they request an assessment, where the local authority are satisfied that they may provide or arrange for the provision of services under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. The parent carers' needs assessment must have regard to the wellbeing of the parent carer (as included in the Care Act) and the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the disabled child cared for, and any other child for whom the parent carer has parental responsibility.
  - A requirement that local authorities must be proactive in identifying young carers and give consideration as to whether they are "child in need".
  - Making links between adults' and children's legislation to enable the assessment of a young carer to be aligned with the assessment of the person they care for with the aim of assessing the impact of the cared for persons needs on the wellbeing, welfare, education and development of the young carer (i.e. preventing inappropriate caring).

## Context

8. The development of this strategy has been informed by the following national and local strategies, policies and other documents.

## National

- 'Recognised, Valued and Supported: Next Steps for the Carers Strategy' (HM Government, 2010) setting out the current government's commitment to working with carers  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recognised-valued-and-supported-next-steps-for-the-carers-strategy>
- Carers Strategy: the Second National Action Plan 2014 to 2016 identifies key actions to be taken by Government between 2014 and 2016 with four priorities: identification and recognition, realising and releasing potential, a life alongside caring and supporting carers to stay healthy  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/368478/Carers\\_Strategy\\_-\\_Second\\_National\\_Action\\_Plan\\_2014\\_-\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/368478/Carers_Strategy_-_Second_National_Action_Plan_2014_-_2016.pdf)
- NHS England's Commitment to Carers – May 2014 sets out the key areas where the NHS will support carers, including raising the profile of carers, education, training and information and well-coordinated care. [www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/commitment-to-carers-may14.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/commitment-to-carers-may14.pdf)
- Care Act 2014 and Statutory Guidance "... putting carers on an equal legal footing to those they care for and putting their needs at the centre of the legislation"  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-2014-statutory-guidance-for-implementation>
- Children & Families Act 2014 links young carers into the overall carers discussion, including the preparation for adulthood, choice and control for young carers and the regard for young carers' health and well being. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/section/97/enacted>

## Local

- Five Year Health and Care Strategy for Worcestershire sets out the strategic direction for the three Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Council in Worcestershire  
[www.wyreforestccg.nhs.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allid...](http://www.wyreforestccg.nhs.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allid...)
- Future Lives is Worcestershire County Council's major change programme in Adult Social Care  
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/futurelives>
- Worcestershire Joint Health & Well Being Strategy  
[www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/.../Joint-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-2013-16.pdf](http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/.../Joint-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-2013-16.pdf)
- Worcestershire Carers Strategy 2009-2014: this is the original Carers Strategy in Worcestershire which is being refreshed with the current document  
[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4364/carers\\_strategy](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4364/carers_strategy)
- Worcestershire Carers Charter 2010. This charter states the commitments by public sector providers to support carers [see Appendix 1]
- Worcestershire Carers Survey (2013) – this survey confirms the aspirations and needs of carers which reflect those identified at a national level.
- Improving access to training, knowledge and skills to support carers in their caring role (2014, ADASS WM) – a survey undertaken into the training needs and requirements of carers to ensure they can have the confidence and skills to continue to care.
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment update September 2014: includes information about the current and projected monitor health and social care needs of the local population.

## The local picture

- There are currently 67,000 adult carers and young carers in Worcestershire [estimated] – the majority of these are supported by informal networks of friends and relatives or are self-sufficient. In addition there are who identified themselves in the 2011 Census.

- Carer support organisations and Worcestershire County Council are in contact with some 9,000 carers and this has been increasing every year and our commissioned support organisation for young carers is working with over 260 young people. All of these numbers have been increasing every year.
- Worcestershire County Council undertook 5,389 carers assessments in 2013/14.
- A carers pathway exists for adult carers which includes a process that reduces waiting times for carers assessments and signposts carers to the appropriate support services.
- Carers are involved in key discussions through consultative groups with both the Council, the Clinical Commissioning Groups and the main NHS Provider Trusts.
- Worcestershire Health and Care Trust and Acute Trust both have carer's policies/strategies which have been developed with substantial input by carers.
- Young Carers have a voice through the Young Carers Focus Group and they are actively involved in consultation and representation about the particular circumstances and needs of young carers. In June 2014, they organised a conference to inform and inspire local stakeholders.
- A Memorandum of Understanding between the County Council's Directorates of Adult Services and Health and Children's Services is in development to ensure strategic and operational joint working so that young people with caring responsibilities and those looked after by parent carers are able to make a successful transition into adulthood with the information, advice and support that is appropriate to their needs. Alongside this, referral and response pathways are also being updated to ensure that young and young adult carers are effectively identified and enabled to receive the support they need.

## Vision

9. Our vision is that adult, parent and young carers will be recognised and valued by the wider community and statutory agencies in Worcestershire for the support and care they provide to vulnerable adults. They will receive appropriate support where necessary to help them provide care safely and maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring. We will assist them in achieving their potential, maintaining mental and physical health and wellbeing, access training and employment and support them to be as independent as possible.

## Worcestershire's Commitment to Carers

10. The development and implementation of this Strategy is based on the following principles that have been agreed by carers' representatives.
  - **Focus on carer outcomes** – the desired outcomes of carers should inform decision making and any services provided.
  - **Recognition and respect** – the vital role of carers in complementing statutory health and social care services means that carers should receive recognition and respect for their contribution, both from statutory agencies and the wider community.
  - **Involvement in decision making** – carers should be recognised as 'expert care partners' and actively engaged by health and social care professionals in the statutory and voluntary sectors wherever feasible in discussions about the provision of services for patients and service users.
  - **Caring safely** – there should be support available where necessary for carers to help them provide care safely and ensure that they and the people they care for are safeguarded.

- **Equitable support for all** – the needs and aspirations of carers, whatever the reason for their caring responsibility or whatever their personal circumstances may be, should be equally addressed.
- **Personalised support** – any services carers receive should be tailored to meet their individual needs and aspirations.
- **Co-ordinated services** – organisations that provide services for carers and patients or service users should work together to ensure that outcomes for carers are met.
- **A life of their own** – carers have a right to their own life and their personal needs and aspirations should be considered to help them maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring.
- **Co-production** – all partners are committed to working collaboratively with carers and their support organisations.

## Outcomes – what do we want to achieve?

11. The outcomes in the original version of the strategy were reviewed by carers in March 2014, and were found to be appropriate. Consequently they have been retained in this refreshed strategy. These national and local outcomes will be used to develop a framework to evaluate the impact of support for carers.
12. The views of carers themselves will be key in determining whether or not these outcomes have been achieved. Their views will be sought to assess the effectiveness of support services, and the extent to which key agencies and front line services consider their needs and aspirations.

National Outcomes from National Carers Strategy 2014-16	Local Outcomes
Carers will be respected as expert care partners and will have access to the integrated and personalised services they need to support them in their caring role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am recognised and respected in my role as a carer</li> <li>• I feel confident that there is a support available</li> <li>• I feel able to care safely</li> <li>• The caring I do is appropriate to my age and capabilities</li> <li>• I understand how to access support</li> <li>• I am involved &amp; can influence the assessment of my needs and aspirations</li> <li>• Any services I receive meet my needs and aspirations</li> </ul>
Carers will be able to have a life of their own alongside their caring role. Carers will be supported so that they can achieve a good quality of life and are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I feel able to achieve a balance between my caring role and my personal life</li> <li>• I feel connected to others in the community</li> <li>• I know how to maximise my income to meet basic needs</li> <li>• I feel able to fully participate in education or</li> </ul>

	training and enter or re-enter the employment market when I wish
Carers will be supported to stay mentally and physically well and treated with dignity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My physical health and emotional wellbeing has been maintained</li> <li>• I am able to manage stress</li> <li>• I feel confident to fulfil my role as a carer</li> <li>• I am able to maintain a dignified relationship with the person I care for</li> </ul>

## Key themes and approaches - how are we going to achieve it?

### Information and advice

13. We will ensure that there is comprehensive and accessible information and advice available for carers, including:

- How to maintain health and well-being
- How to find support in the community
- How to find support to manage finances
- How to find support into employment
- How to access a carers assessment
- Details of the services available for patients, services users and carers themselves to help people take control and make an informed choice.

14. Information and advice will be available on Your Life, Your Choice and through the Digital Inclusion Strategy we will put in place measures to support people to use the internet.

### Support in the community

15. Many carers find support in local carer groups which are run by and for carers themselves. We will encourage and support the development and maintenance of local carer groups that can offer support to carers, and ensure that carers know how to access this support.

16. We will work with local providers of education, training, and support into employment and with leisure services to promote access for carers and remove barriers to employment and training, and ensure that carers know how to access these opportunities.

### Training

17. We will develop and commission a carers training programme to help carers develop the practical and emotional skills they need to feel confident to maintain their health and well-being and sustain them in their caring role.

### Health and other universal services

[www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk)



18. We will encourage partners to become "Carer Aware" and will offer training to staff in all local organisations that provide support and care to help them become "Carer Aware" and "Young Carer Aware".
19. We will encourage schools, colleges and other local services to recognise and support young carers and young adult carers, and will assist them in this by piloting the Young Carers in Schools programme.

## Adult social care assessments

20. We will offer an assessment to any adult carer and young carer who is transitioning into adulthood who requests one to help them decide the extent of their caring role, identify their key outcomes, maximise their own potential, find support locally, and determine whether they are eligible for any additional funding from adult social care. Assessments will be undertaken separately for services users and carers or as whole family assessments depending on their preference.
21. We will offer online assessments which will be simple and easy to access for those who have access to the internet.
22. Based on the outcome of the assessment, we will work with carers and – where appropriate the cared for - to develop a personalised support plan that describes how their key outcomes will be met, maximising their own resources, accessing support in the community and any additional support from the Council and NHS partners.
23. We will offer an assessment to every young or young adult carer that is identified or who requests it. Based on the outcome of this assessment, a personalised support plan will be developed with the young or young adult carer that describes how their key outcomes will be met, maximising their own resources, accessing support in the community, and where appropriate through support from Council commissioned services or Children's Services Social Care (including whether they are deemed to be a Child in Need).

## Adult social care funded services

24. Carers who are eligible for additional funding from adult social care will be offered a personal budget. They will be able to take this as a direct payment and purchase their own services. For those that do not wish to take a Direct Payment, they will have access to a third party to manage the personal budget on their behalf.
25. We will ensure that there is a range of services and providers for carers to choose from –and that details about these, including quality and cost where applicable are available on "*Your Life, Your Choice*", the new the e-marketplace.

## Safeguarding

26. We will ensure that carers know how to raise concerns about the person they are caring for or themselves, and what to do in an emergency. The Council and its partners will co-operate in safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults and children as set out in the Care Act 2014 and the Children Act 1989. Contingency planning for carers will be part of the assessment and support plan.

## Governance

27. We value the involvement with carers and their support organisations and this is supported by our commitment to co-production. We will ensure that engagement mechanisms are in place for carers to discuss service developments and keep the Health and Well Being Board informed about carers issues on a regular basis.

## Implementation and evaluation

28. This Strategy will run from April 2015 to March 2017 and the Health and Well Being Board will receive an annual update about progress against agreed outcomes. Outcomes will be developed by commissioners and partners including carers and carer support organisations. These will reflect the requirements of the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014. We will evaluate the success of this strategy against the agreed outcomes, celebrate successes, and take appropriate corrective action where necessary.

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# Appendix

## Worcestershire Carers' Charter 2010



# Worcestershire Carers' Charter 2010

Carers in Worcestershire can expect:

- Choice about undertaking their caring role - regarding the level and extent of care they offer, depending on age, ability and circumstance
- Respect and recognition for their contribution, and inclusion as valued care partners when planning support for the person they care for
- An assessment of their needs and aspirations, irrespective of their personal financial situation
- Personalised information, advice and support that addresses their individual situation
- Support to maintain their own health and well being
- Support for and recognition of their right to a life outside of caring
- Support to provide care in a safe environment
- The right to their say over the support services they receive
- To be treated with respect and dignity, especially regarding their age, gender, disability, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation
- Awareness and understanding by all key agencies of carers issues
- Commitment by all key agencies to identify carers in the community, including those from under-represented groups, and provide appropriate information and signposting to relevant services
- Appropriate support from agencies working in a co-ordinated way
- The right to their say over the delivery of carer support services at a strategic level (if they wish)

### What is this charter for?

The purpose of this charter is to describe what carers can expect when accessing support from key services in the county. The charter is a statement of commitment from these key services.

### Who is this charter for?

This charter is for all carers aged 18 years and over in Worcestershire who provide care for other adults.

A carer, as defined in the county's new Carers Strategy 'Carers at the Heart of Worcestershire's Families and Communities', is "a person who, free of charge\*, looks after over a period of time a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour who because of disability, illness, the effects of old age or any other needs cannot manage at home without help."

\* some carers receive Carers Allowance but this is not payment for their caring work but recognition of the extra costs associated with being a carer

## Where does it come from?

This Charter has been developed jointly by Worcestershire County Council's Adult and Community Service Directorate, NHS Worcestershire, Carers Action Worcestershire, and wider representatives of the countywide Carers Consultative Group.

## Signatories

The following organisations have also given their commitment to the charter:

- Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
- Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- The District Councils of Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester City, Wychavon and Wyre Forest
- The Worcestershire Association of Voluntary Organisations in Community Care
- Worcestershire's Older People's Forums
- Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce
- Job Centre Plus
- Worcestershire's Citizens Advice Bureaux
- West Mercia Police
- Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
- West Midlands Ambulance Service

Clearly each organisation will only be able to deliver specific aspects of this charter, and therefore if we are to meet the aspirations of the charter in full we need the full range of organisations to fully commit to its delivery.

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