



What we would like to see in the market



Carers have a vital role in supporting people who are ill, disabled, frail or who have mental health problems or learning disabilities so they can remain living at home. We want to see more services in the borough that :

- Enable carers to support the person cared for to regain independence, where possible
- Support the carer's health and well being to sustain the caring role
- Support carers to have a life outside of caring in order to maintain their caring role
- Help employers, organisations and staff to better identify and support carers
- Provide early intervention and preventative support for carers
- Involve carers as expert partners in the care of the person they look after
- Embed carers support in patient pathways and primary care
- Support young carers - together with our Children's Services.

The facts

It is estimated that 60% of the population will care for someone at some point during their lives, and this informal care makes an enormous contribution to society.

In Barnet we estimate that well over 30,000 people (around 9% of the population) are currently carers, and that over a quarter of these provide care for over 20 hours each week. At least 2,000 are 75 years or older, with nearly 5,000 providing 50 hours or more of care per week. These rates are relatively higher in the North and West of the borough.

Background

The demand for carers is projected to increase over the coming years due to:

- The increase in life expectancy and the prevalence of dementia
- The increase in people living with a disability needing care
- Changes to services provided in community settings away from institutions.

Caring for a friend or relative comes with a risk of increased social isolation, physical and mental health problems and strain, particularly where carers are experiencing declining health themselves. In Barnet we recognise the role that carers, including young carers fulfil and the pressures that they can experience. We want to ensure that the local market for care and support services can inform, bolster and empower carers. We have identified four priorities:

- Embedding the carers support pathway¹
- Identifying and supporting Young Carers
- Identifying Hidden Carers
- Access for carers to information, coping strategies and local support.

The plan

The Barnet Carers Strategy (2009- 2012) which was updated during 2012, sets out recent developments, investment in carers support and an action plan for 2012/13.

The main focus of the strategy is to build support for carers in health services, review emergency planning for carers to ensure carers have back up plans in case of emergency. We are also working with Children's services to develop a Young Carers Action Plan and agree joint protocols for working with young carers.

The Carers Strategy Partnership Board meets four times a year to oversee the strategy and to ensure that carers' interests are reflected in social care and health service development.

Barnet Carers Centre (BCC) is the new carers Lead Provider. It provides a broad range of carers' services working as part of a Carers Hub with six local voluntary sector organisations that have experience of supporting carers. These are the Alzheimer's Society, Age UK Barnet, Caring4carers, Friend In Need, Jewish Care, and Barnet Mencap.

Carers support is being aligned with the dementia pathway. As part of this process a number of carer's dementia support services are to be provided. These include a dementia café, dementia hub and carer's dementia training.

Carers

Carers, particularly those with long-term caring commitments, are especially vulnerable to physical and mental ill health. This can increase demands on health and social care services and undermines the viability of informal care arrangements.

Greater mainstream support is needed to support carers in transition, moving from Children's to Adult's services. In line with the carer's support pathway, training and information for carers is required on the health conditions and coping strategies of the person cared for. There is an emphasis on developing coping skills and strategies to enable carers to continue in their caring

¹ The pathway includes carer enablement and ensuring that carers have emergency and contingency plans in place.

role. This is particularly important for carers caring for someone with mental health problems and autism. Development of a venue suitably equipped to offer manual handling training to carers is an important element of this.

Enablement support is also needed to ensure that the person cared for remains as independent as possible for long as possible.

Residential and nursing home providers also need to give thought to supporting families and carers and using them as expert partners in care.

Young carers

Some carers are young people caring for someone in their family and, while this can be very rewarding, it is important that they can access support to help them to cope with the particular pressures that come with this responsibility.

Further work with schools and local agencies is encouraged to identify young carers and provide relevant signposting to support services.

Hidden carers

Many carers do not identify themselves as carers and therefore, these 'hidden carers' may not be accessing the support and advice available to them.

In order to identify more carers there is an increase in joint working with health professionals in primary and acute settings. The plan is also to work with organisations such as supermarkets to help identify carers.

Access to information, coping strategies and local support

Carers should be provided with access to information and a range of support options that will help them to feel confident and skilled in their caring role, which will help them to manage the pressures that they will experience. Care services should assist young carers and hidden carers to recognise their caring role and to receive recognition, while offering access to information and support. Specific services that can provide carers with knowledge and skills development should be part of the array of supports on offer.

The workforce

Thought needs to be given to how to develop the skills and confidence of all who provide care and support whether paid or unpaid, in a cost effective way. Paid workers require training and development to support the person being cared for and to engage with carers and families, acknowledging their skills and knowledge.

Practitioners who work in support of carers are likely to increase and a cohort of skilled, capable and confident workers is essential

The Integrated Social Care Workforce Plan 2012-15 seeks to develop mechanisms to actively involve family members and other carers as expert care partners, with appropriate training and practical support to enable carers to develop their skills and confidence.

Useful links for more information

- adults.commissioning@barnet.gov.uk for queries relating to: the provision or future plans, de-registration or new opportunities relating to assets or capital funding.
- Barnet's [Social Care Connect](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/SocialCareConnect) <http://www.barnet.gov.uk/SocialCareConnect> online directory to market your services online to people who fund their own care or to search for available local providers
- [Barnet Centre for Independent Living](http://www.barnetcil.org.uk) <http://www.barnetcil.org.uk> to get information, advice, advocacy, brokerage and support or if you are a provider to inform independent support planners about your services
- Barnet Carers Strategy Refresh (2012)
http://www.barnet.gov.uk/BarnetSocialCareMarket/downloads/file/14/barnet_carers_strategy_refresh_2013-2013
- Barnet Integrated Social Care Workforce Strategy
http://www.barnet.gov.uk/BarnetSocialCareMarket/downloads/download/4/integrated_social_care_workforce_plan
- Carers UK
<http://www.carersuk.org/>
- Barnet Carers Centre
<http://www.barnetcarers.org>