

Adult Social Care Select Committee
19 December 2014

Interagency Young Carers Strategy for Surrey

Purpose of the report: Policy Development and Review

Surrey's Young Carers Strategy "Making It Real for Young Carers" is a three year plan. It sets out how the Council, NHS and other partners will work together to improve support for young carers. The process is coordinated by Adult Social Care but young carers have been central to the development of the strategy. This report summarises the key issues for Adult Social Care and describes how plans involving young carers will drive implementation, including new young carers assessment tools.

Introduction:

1. The term "Young Carer" applies to: "anyone under the age of 18 Years who helps to look after someone with a physical or long term illness. This may be a physical disability, frailty due to old age, a learning disability like autism, a mental problem like depression or a drug or alcohol problem" (definition from the Strategy).
2. The Surrey Young Carers Strategy (attached as Annex 1) was launched on 28 October 2014 following a joint meeting between the Cabinet and Young Carers Forum. The strategy, which runs from 2015 to 2018, is based on what young carers have said and changes to the law that give important new rights to young carers. Many organisations touch the lives of young carers and their families, so working together to improve support for young carers is crucial.

Young Carers in Surrey

Numbers of Young Carers

3. Research by Nottingham University "**Kids who Care**" 2010, undertaken for the BBC, suggests that there are about 700,000 young carers in Britain which equates to about 14,000 in Surrey. More details of the numbers of young carers in Surrey are included in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment chapter on young carers.
4. The young carers service "Surrey Young Carers" supports 1650 young carers a year; a service highly valued by professionals in social care, health and education. It now supports double the numbers helped 5 years ago but this still represents only 12% of all young carers; so there is much more to be done. The types of help provided by the young carers service include:

- a) Fun days and residential activities
 - b) Issue based workshops
 - c) One to one support and advocacy
 - d) Work to identify and support young carers in schools
 - e) Helping arrange young carer support payments
 - f) A Young Carers Forum to represent the views and opinions of young carers
5. Young carers are also currently supported through packages of support from Adult Social Care to the people they look after. At present 167 young carers are identified in this way on the adult social care database (AIS). Progress in this area is monitored through the service's Carers Practice and Performance Group and will inform future reports to the Select Committee on work with carers in the light of the Care Act.
 6. A new set of assessment tools have been produced, working in partnership with Surrey Young Carers. The result is a pictorial version for those under twelve year olds and a more text based but friendly version for older young carers. Young carers who tested the new assessment tools said these helped them feel much better able to talk about their lives and what they need. Copies of these will be tabled.
 7. There is also a substantial amount of work undertaken in Surrey Schools. A "Members Motion on Young Carers Research Group" reported to Council July 2014 about how this can be enhanced. A further report will be made to the Childrens Select Committee following a Young Carers Audit being undertaken with Surrey Schools.

New Rights for Young Carers

8. The Government have significantly strengthened the rights of young carers. An amendment to Section 17 of the Children Act gives young carers new rights to assessments from 1 April 2015. These changes have also been reinforced through the Regulations and Statutory Guidance for the Care Act 2014. These changes to the law apply equally to adult and childrens services. Young carers will either be entitled to a young carers assessment, or the assessment of the person they look after will need to ensure sufficient support to avoid young carers having to undertake inappropriate care.
9. The assessor will also be required to establish whether the young carer is a "child in need" who may need to be referred to Children's Services. Councils also have new responsibilities to identify young carers in the community and to take steps to reduce their need for support by providing early help and preventative services.
10. The Care Act will require councils to consider what support disabled parents and adult carers need to help them in their parenting role. There is a key responsibility to ensure that adults are supported so that inappropriate caring responsibilities do not fall to children or young people.
11. Young carers have often said that they need more help with the transition to adulthood and more help is needed for young adult carers (aged 18 to 24). Councils have new duties through the Care Act to support young carers in transition (aged 14 to 17). The Government are setting up a national Task and Finish Group to improve support for young adult carers. In Surrey, research on the needs of young adult carers has already led to work aimed at supporting this group.
12. The Care Act reinforces the need for partnership work with health. A Young carers health survey highlighted the need to do more to address young carers health needs and NHS England are planning new initiatives to promote better support for young

carers. Adult Social Care staff are working with the NHS locally on the improvements young carers have asked for.

Updating the Strategy

13. Our challenge was to ensure that young carers were involved from the start when reviewing the strategy. Twelve members of the Surrey Young Carers Forum helped run a conference in May. Two young carers co-chaired this and all 150 attendees at the conference joined a workshop run by a young carers themselves. The views expressed by young carers have underpinned the development of the strategy.
14. It is also hoped that each organisation that signs up to support this strategy will develop its own set of complementary priorities so that young carers needs are recognised and supported across the whole system. These are called “to do lists” in the strategy. Issues identified for inclusion in an Adult Social Care “to do list” are detailed below:
 - a) Use of new young carers assessment forms (designed together with young carers)
 - b) Staff training including use of e-learning
 - c) An updated joint protocol between adult and childrens services to ensure that practitioners have clear advice about who does what
 - d) Named key workers
 - e) Supporting young carers in their transition to adulthood
 - f) Improved support for young adult carers including opportunities for peer support and to help enable them to fulfil their education and employment potential
 - g) More age appropriate information for young carers
 - h) Explore options for increasing capacity of the young carers service
 - i) Work with surrey schools and colleges to promote identification of young carers and their support within the educational setting

Conclusions:

15. The multi agency Young Carers Strategy is based on a whole system and whole Council approach to responding to young carers new rights. It is designed to provide a mechanism for ensuring that young carers are centrally involved in this work.

Recommendations:

16. It is recommended that:
 - a) The Committee express views about how an implementation plan is developed as described in Paragraph 14
 - b) That future reports on the implementation of the Care Act, where appropriate, include consideration of its impact on young carers and their families

Next steps:

The Multi agency Surrey Young Carers will coordinate work between all the agency supporting the Strategy and work with the Surrey young carers forum to ensure that their views are central to implementation.

Report contact: John Bangs, Senior Manager Carers Commissioning
Contact details: Tel 01483 519145 Email john.bangs@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

Multi agency Young Carers Strategy for Surrey – 28 October 2014

[http://carersworldradio.ihoststudio.com/carersnet/Strategy%20PDF%20\(FINAL%20VERSION%20FOR%20ONLINE\).pdf](http://carersworldradio.ihoststudio.com/carersnet/Strategy%20PDF%20(FINAL%20VERSION%20FOR%20ONLINE).pdf)

More information about the numbers of young carers and their needs can be read in the Surrey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Chapter on Young Carers and Young Adult Carers

<http://www.surreyi.gov.uk/ViewPage1.aspx?C=resource&ResourceID=659&cookieCheck=true&JScript=1>

Motion on Young Carers Research Group – report to Council July 2014

Young Carers Assessment tools (launched November 2014)