



Shetland Islands Council

Carer Information Strategy

2007 - 2010

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Executive Summary

Recent research emphasises the need for good information and advice services as part of a range of resources and supports for carers.

The aim of the Carer Information Strategy is to provide better support for unpaid/family carers to enable them to continue in their caring role for as long as they are willing and able to do so, by identifying carers at an early stage and at any point of contact with NHS Shetland or the Council and providing them with the information and advice they need.

Shetland's first Carer Information Strategy was produced in April 2005. This has now been updated and includes a summary of the work undertaken since then to implement the Strategy. The revised Strategy is for 2007 – 2010.

The Strategy states the principles adopted by both agencies when working to support carers. These reflect the specific needs of young carers (aged under 16) and carers from black and minority ethnic groups.

Areas for future service developments have been identified and include ideas for new information materials such as information packs for care at home services or residential care; displays in public places; "Quick Guides" to services; an interactive web site for carers; videos and audio tapes.

The strategy highlights the need for early identification of carers. Key posts are identified within NHS Shetland and the Council to act as Carer Identification Officers with responsibility within their area of work for carer identification and the promotion of information to carers, in particular their potential right to an assessment of their needs as a carer.

Carer awareness training for staff from the statutory agencies and independent sector will be developed and included in staff induction training.

A training programme for carers will be developed and cover topics such as moving and assisting, medication, stress management and benefits advice.

Shetland's Single Shared Assessment has a section devoted to carers' assessments and Joint Future Local Improvement Targets include carers' assessments as a priority.

The Carer Information Strategy complements and should be read alongside the Shetland Young Carer's Strategy and Carers' Strategy.

Introduction

Scottish Ministers now require all NHS Boards in Scotland to prepare and submit to them for approval by 31 October 2006 a “Carer Information Strategy” covering the period 2007 – 2010.

This is Shetland’s second Carer Information Strategy. Shetland’s first Carer Information Strategy was prepared jointly by NHS Shetland and Shetland Islands Council as part of the implementation of the Joint Future Agenda locally. The Strategy has been updated and a new section summarising activities undertaken in 2005 and 2006 to implement the strategy has been added.

The Strategy helps NHS Shetland to:

- Meet the statutory duty under the terms of the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002 to inform carers of their potential right to an assessment of need; and
- Meet the requirement of the Patient Focus Public Involvement (PFPI) initiative to have a strategy that meets the information needs of patients, relatives and carers.¹

Objectives

Carers are identified at an early stage and at any point of contact with NHS Shetland or the Council and provided with the information and advice they need.

The specific information needs of young carers (aged under 16); of older carers and of carers from black and minority ethnic groups are met appropriately.

Carers are supported so that they can continue to perform their caring role for as much and as long as they are willing and able to do so.

¹ NHS Shetland is the generic name for Shetland NHS Board

Consultation

The Strategy was drafted by staff working with Shetland's Community Health Partnership drawing on work with colleagues in the Council; the wider NHS; voluntary and independent sector service providers; service user and carer representatives and the local carers support group.

The Strategy was circulated for comment in draft form to a number stakeholder groups. These included:-

- Voluntary and Independent Sector Organisations operating in Shetland
- NHS 100
- PFPI (Patient Focus Public Involvement) Steering Group
- Older People's Strategy Group
- Disability Strategy Group
- Social Forum of Shetland Islands Council
- Shetland Mental Health Partnership

All comments received by 15 October 2006 have been considered in finalising the strategy.

Progress made in implementing the strategy will be monitored via the Joint Future management arrangements and reported regularly to the NHS Shetland's CHP Committee and Council 's Services Committee. An annual report will be produced and submitted to the Scottish Executive in line with current national guidance.

The Carers' Strategy and Young Carers' Strategy will be updated by March 2007 and an executive summary covering all three strategy documents will be produced and published.

Background

There are 660,000 unpaid carers in Scotland². The 2001 census shows that 1,968 people in Shetland identified themselves as carers. Of these, nearly 60% are female, just over 66% are in employment and nearly 3% are under 16 years of age. Shared Care Scotland in their newsletter for January 2005 draws attention to research which demonstrates that unpaid carers are more likely to have health problems than non-carers and that this can be attributed in part to a lack of information and support³.

The theme for National Carers week in June 2006 was "In Sickness and in Health" and emphasised the importance of carers' health and emotional well-being. Of 5,600 carers who took part in the 2006 Carers Week National Survey, 9 out of 10 thought that carers should be offered an annual health check.

A key feature of effective support services for carers is early access to information and advice.

Information Needs

Service users and carers need information to:

- Understand their health and care needs
- Know what services are available to them
- Participate fully and effectively in assessments of care needs and reviews
- Access and use care services appropriately
- Participate in the delivery of care
- Complain about services if they are unhappy about the care they receive
- Access other related services such as benefits advice

Work done previously in Shetland

In 1999, NHS Shetland and the Council completed a review of information available to service users and their carers. Staff worked with a carers' representative nominated through Shetland Voluntary Care Forum to produce a report which made a number of recommendations. These included:

- Review of existing leaflets
- Better systems for distributing leaflets ensuring up to date copies were on display
- Developing new leaflets based on care group sections in the Joint Community Care Plan.
- Developing a web-site for social work incorporating links to other agencies web-sites including voluntary sector organisations operating in the care sector.

More recently work on the information needs of service users and carers has been undertaken through the PFPI initiative.

² 2001 Census

³ Shared Care Scotland News, January 2005

Information on services and service developments is made available routinely on the Council and NHS Shetland websites. This includes publication of all reports, policies, procedures and strategies as well as minutes of meetings and a number of discussion papers.

Policy Framework

Nationally

This strategy has been developed within the context of national developments and legislation affecting carers. Key national policy documents and legislation include:

- Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968
- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002
- Fair For All, 2002
- Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- NHS & Community Care Act 1990
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2002
- Scotland's Health White Paper "Partnership for Care" 2003
- Strategy for Carers in Scotland 1999

Locally

The Carer Information Strategy complements and should be read alongside Shetland's Joint Carers' Strategy, Shetland's Extended Local Partnership Agreement and Community Care Plans, Shetland's Local Delivery Plan for Health, Shetland's Joint Health Improvement Plan and Shetland's Young Carers' Strategy. These contain additional information relating to the services available to support carers locally and service developments planned for the future.

The **Young Carers' Strategy** identifies a number of objectives and planned actions to achieve these under the following headings:

- Identifying young carers and assessing their needs
- Reaching full potential
- Encouraging good physical and mental health
- Allowing choice and control for young carers

Shetland's **Joint Future Extended Local Partnership Agreement** sets out joint management and resourcing arrangements for Joint Future services including services for carers. Service developments are initiated and progressed through the

Joint Future management framework, which is linked to the CHP and is set out in the Scheme of Establishment for the CHP.

Race Equality Schemes for NHS Shetland and the Council have been developed co-operatively under the auspices of the Community Planning Board and the principles are reflected in this strategy.

Definitions

“A **carer** is generally defined as a person of any age who provides unpaid help and support to a relative, friend or neighbour who cannot manage to live without the carer’s help due to frailty, illness, disability or addiction. The support a carer provides may include moving and handling, help with feeding, personal hygiene and administering medication as well as providing emotional support, acting as an advocate or guardian for the cared-for person and enabling the person with support needs to access leisure and recreation.”⁴

Adult Carers are recognised by the Scottish Executive as “**key partners** in providing care” with local authorities, the NHS and other support agencies.

Young Carers i.e. carers aged under 16, are recognised as a distinct group with specific needs. There is a multi-agency Young Carers’ Strategy for Shetland that has been developed by the Children and Young People’s Services Planning Group. Specifically all agencies are committed to ensuring that a child does not have a level of caring responsibilities that may undermine their ability to participate in education, leisure or social activities.

Carers have a **right to an assessment** to establish their “ability to provide or continue to provide care” for another person. Assessments for carers are an integral part of the Single Shared Assessment process and are available to anyone who provides “**a substantial amount of care on a regular basis**” – Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002.

⁴ Introduction of NHS Carer Information Strategies Draft Guidance – August 2004

Principles

- **Adult carers will be recognised and treated as key partners in the provision of care.**

This means that:

- Carers knowledge and expertise will be taken into account to ensure the cared-for person receives services that are right for their needs.
- NHS and local authority staff will share information equally with carers provided the cared-for person has given their consent.

- **Young Carers under the age of 16 will be recognised first and foremost as children.**

This means that:

- Young carers will be supported so that their caring role does not have an adverse affect on their own social, leisure and educational opportunities.
- Young carers will not have a greater caring role than they want.
- Young carers will be informed of their right and eligibility for an appropriate assessment.
- Staff in the NHS and the local authority will be sensitive to possible tensions between young carers and their parents/guardians.

- **Older carers will be supported to enable them to fulfil their caring role for as much and as long as they wish and are able to care.**

This means that:

- NHS and Council staff recognise that caring is likely to demand more of an older carer.
- NHS and Council staff will focus on the impact of the caring role on the individual carer.

- **All carers will have access to information, advice and guidance in a format appropriate to their needs.**

This means that:

- General information will be made available in formats and languages that are accessible to, for example, young carers, carers with learning disabilities or sensory impairment, older carers and carers from black and minority ethnic groups.
 - Carers will be identified through the assessment process and specific information relevant to their own circumstances will be made available and accessible to them as appropriate.
 - Carers will be advised of NHS and Council complaints procedures.
 - Staff will understand the needs of carers and having the knowledge to meet carers' needs for appropriate information and advice.
- **All carers will be treated equally and will be able to access services to meet their needs irrespective of their race, religion/faith, sexual orientation, age, disability or gender.**
 - **Carers from black and minority ethnic groups will be recognised and supported in accordance with the requirement of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and NHS responsibilities under "Fair for All".**

This means that:

- Staff in NHS and the Council will recognise the effects of discriminatory behaviour and eliminate discriminatory practices affecting carers.
- Staff will value diversity and demonstrate this through appropriate communication styles, attitudes and behaviour.

- **Carers of people with a mental disorder as defined by the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 will be recognised and supported in ways appropriate to their specific needs.**

This means that:

- Carers will be given information that is appropriate to their caring role with the cared-for person. This may include information about the types of disorder, medical condition, medication, treatment and practical issues relevant to their circumstances.
 - Where service users are unable to consent through incapacity and there is no formal arrangements already in place to support them, NHS and Council staff will work together with the nearest relatives and consider what action may need to be taken under the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.
- **Staff at all levels of NHS Shetland and in the Council will work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders to promote the needs of carers.**

This means:

- Working in partnership with carers themselves in line with “Partnership for Care”
- Working with other agencies through the Community Planning Board and the Community Health Partnership on planning for the future.
- Working jointly with carers and others on health improvement and well-being.

Roles and Responsibilities

Lead Officer

The Lead Officer for NHS Shetland with responsibility for the effective development and implementation of the Carer Information Strategy is the Director of Clinical Services (DCS). The DCS reports directly to the Chief Executive and sits on the Senior Management Team.

Patient Focus and Public Involvement Initiative

The Lead Officer for the Patient Focus and Public Involvement Initiative locally is the Director of Service Improvement (DSI). The DSI reports directly to the Chief Executive and sits on the Senior Management Team.

Through PFPI locally carers will be invited to take part in focus group activities on a range of topics and contribute to reviews of policies and procedures including:

- Discharge Protocol
- Complaints procedures
- Information availability / accessibility
- Sign posting
- Key workers / named nurse role in providing information and advice

Carer Identification Officers

The post holders identified below will be responsible within their area of work for the promotion of information to carers and for carer identification.

GP practices	CHP Manager
Community Nursing Teams	CHP Lead Nurse
Gilbert Bain Hospital	Hospital Manager
Montfield Hospital	Hospital Manager
Hospital and Community Pharmacy	Chief Pharmacist
Community Mental Health Team	Senior CPN (Community Psychiatric Nurse)
Children & Young Peoples Mental Health Team	Children's & Young People's CPN
Therapy Services	Hospital Manager
Community Care and Joint Future Services	Head of Community Care

Human Resources Managers

The Director of Human Resources for NHS Shetland and the Personnel Manager for the Council will be responsible for the development and promotion of carer-friendly employment policies. These will be in addition to and complement existing family friendly policies.

Training Managers

Induction programmes will be reviewed regularly as part of the implementation of the Carer Information Strategy to ensure all staff are aware of the need to identify carers at an early stage.

Line Managers/Supervisors

All staff with supervisory responsibilities will be aware of and responsive to the needs of employees who are carers. Employees should have the opportunity to discuss any issues they have in their roles as carers confidentially in supervision or with the staff welfare officer/personnel section.

Carer Identification & Assessment Process

Information Sharing

There is an Information Sharing Protocol jointly agreed by the Council and NHS Shetland. The protocol underpins the Single Shared Assessment and all joint working across agencies.

Information is shared on a case by case basis subject to the agreement of the service user that information about them can be shared.

Aggregated Information is also shared and published by the Council and NHS Shetland to inform planning processes.

There is a procedure and forms in place to collect carers contact details through primary care and social care services. The information is used to create a mailing list held by the Community Health Partnership.

Hospital Discharge

The Discharge Liaison Nurse and Health Service Liaison Social Worker each have a key role in ensuring effective carer identification and carers assessment where appropriate prior to discharge.

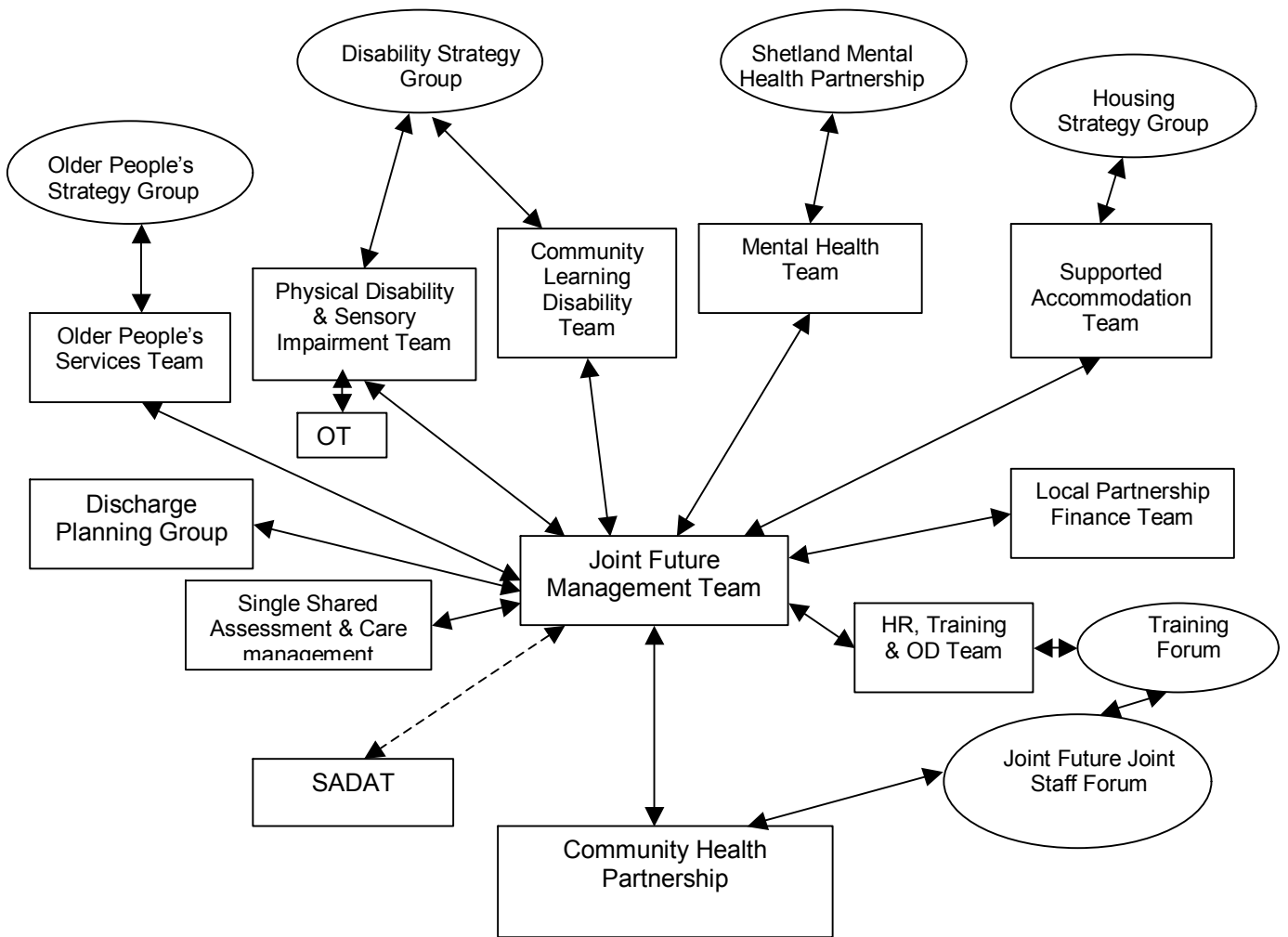
Both post holders work together to ensure carers' issues are taken into account fully during discharge planning. They ensure that specific information is made available to carers in a format that is accessible to them and relevant to their particular circumstances, including signposting other resources which may be useful.

Partnership Working

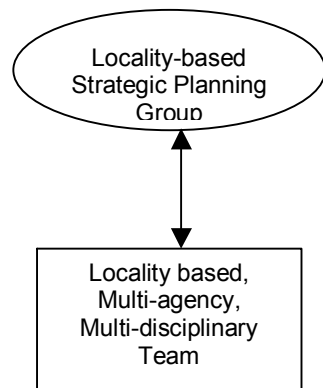
Community Health Partnership (CHP) and Joint Future

The Scheme of Establishment of the CHP locally incorporates Joint Future planning and management arrangements. These are shown in the diagrams below:

Specialist Services



Generic Services



There are 7 localities:

- North Isles
- Whalsay & Skerries
- North Mainland
- West Mainland
- Central
- Lerwick & Bressay
- South

Service users and carers are represented on the strategic planning groups and on the Public Participation Forum (PPF). The PPF for Shetland is being developed as a network closely linked at locality level with the seven Local Service Delivery Groups.

One of the main roles of the PPF is “to engage local service users, carers and the public in discussions about how to improve services to enable the CHP to respond to the needs, concerns and experiences of patients, carers and families”.

Carers service developments are promoted by the Joint Future Management Team which brings together lead officers from all specialist care groups, human resources and finance specialists in a functional management relationship across the NHS and Council.

This group is responsible for monitoring progress against the objectives of the Carer Information Strategy and Joint Carers Strategy advising the NHS Board via the CHP.

Children’s Services Planning Group (CSPG)

The CSPG draws together a wide range of professionals from the statutory and voluntary sector. The group has developed a Young Carers’ Strategy and promotes the identification of and provision of information and resources to support young carer’s through all staff who come into contact with children and young people including health professionals, teachers, youth workers, social workers.

The CSPG links into the CHP. The Children’s Service Plan draws together all aspects of planning for children’s services including the needs of young carers.

Voluntary Sector

Shetland Council of Social Service has established and continues to support a local carers group which meets regularly to discuss issues affecting carers. Staff from the Council and NHS Shetland attend these meetings to provide information and advice and to listen to the concerns of carers.

Information and Advice Services

Current Service Provision

The Council and NHS Shetland routinely produce a wide range of information on the services available from the statutory agencies and voluntary sector organisations. Information is made available in the following ways:

- **Booklets / Fact sheets** – NHS Shetland provide booklets / fact sheets on specific conditions, illnesses and treatments. These include advice to all patients and their carers on discharge from hospital.
- **Leaflets** – are available on all community care service provision in different languages and Braille or audio on request, including leaflets for carers or young carers giving information on the right to an assessment and a range of useful contacts.
- **Websites** – the Council and NHS Shetland websites (as below) provide up to date information on all services and contact information. Further work is needed to develop interactive sessions and use the internet to consult carers and the public on needs.
SIC: www.shetland.gov.uk
NHS: www.shetlandhealthboard.org
- **Local Area Co-ordinator (LAC)** – The Council employs a full time Local Area Co-ordinator. The LAC provides information and advice to people of any age who have a learning disability, their family and carers. The LAC acts as a link worker across agencies to help sign post resources and support services available.
- **Single Shared Assessment (SSA)** – Carers are identified as part of every SSA and on referral for an assessment. Referral forms and the SSA prompt for identification of carers and whether or not a carer's assessment is required/requested.
- **Carers Assessment** – Carers who provide a “substantial amount of care on a regular basis” are entitled to an assessment of their needs as a carer in their own right. There is a separate section in the SSA process that focuses on the needs of carers. Training on carers assessment is an integral part of multi disciplinary training on the SSA which is available to a wide range of professionals in the NHS, the Council and voluntary sector. CareNap D is used to provide additional information for people with dementia and their carers.

- **Voluntary Sector Organisations** – the Council and NHS Shetland work in partnership with a number of organisations in the voluntary sector providing information on the services they provide and who to contact. These include:

Advocacy Shetland	Epilepsy Shetland	Shetland Crossroads Care Attendant Scheme
Age Concern	Firth & Mossbank Family Centre	Shetland Hospitals and Community Friends
Arthritis Care	MS Society (Shetland Branch)	Shetland Link-up
Association of Shetland Community Councils	Moving On	Shetland Pre-School Play Ltd
Befriending Scheme	Red Cross	Shetland Stroke Support Group
Breast Cancer Support Group	Scottish Pensioners Association	Shetland Womens Aid
British Heart Foundation	Shetland Alcohol Support Services	Shetland Youth Information Service
Cancer Care	Shetland Autism Support	Shoard
Care for Unst	Shetland Childcare Partnership	Special Needs Action Group (SNAG)
C.O.P.E Ltd	Shetland Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	Stepping Stones Club
Couple Counselling	Shetland Club for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	The Samaritans
Diabetes UK	Shetland Community Drugs Team	Voluntary Centre Shetland
Disability Shetland	Shetland Council of Social Services (SCSS)	WRVS

- **Shetland Citizens Advice Bureau** offers free, confidential advice to any member of the public. They also operate a **Welfare Rights Service** with funding from Shetland Charitable Trust and a **Direct Payments Support Service** commissioned by the Council.
- **Volunteer Resource Centre** - Many other local voluntary organisations provide information, advice and support to carers. In June 2005, SCSS opened a new Volunteer Resource Centre in Lerwick bringing together many local voluntary organisations under one roof. NHS Shetland and the Council work closely with SCSS to ensure that a comprehensive range of materials is available to service users and carers at the new centre.
- **Independent Advocacy Services** - NHS Shetland and the Council jointly commission a range of independent advocacy services. These include:
 - Generic advocacy service for all users of health and social services
 - Carers' advocacy specifically for unpaid/family carers.

- Specialist mental health advocacy services to meet the needs for advocacy of people with a mental health disorder as defined by the Mental Health (Care & Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003.

- **Counselling Services**

Counselling services are available through each of the 10 Health Centres across Shetland. Some voluntary sector organisations also provide counselling from COSCA trained counsellors. These include:

- Shetland Alcohol Support Services
- Shetland Community Drugs Team
- Women's Aid
- Shetland Link Up
- Shetland Youth Information Service (SYIS)

Future Developments

Ideas for additional information resources include:

- Using audio-visual formats e.g. videos, audio tapes. Recently a training DVD was produced with the help of a service user with multiple sclerosis.
- "Quick guides" to services
- Laminated cards with key contact details
- Information packs including
 - Discharge pack
 - Care at home pack
 - Residential care packThese would complement the "Helping Hands" pack prepared by Disability Shetland for families with a child or young person with disabilities.
- Displays in public places

Training

For Carers

Shetland's Joint Future Joint OD and Training Plan includes courses developed specifically for carers covering the following topics:

- Moving and assisting
- Benefits advice
- Stress management
- Administering medication
- Dementia
- Challenging behaviour

Carers can also access funding via the Social Care service to cover reasonable travel and accommodation costs and course fees for specialist training courses in mainland Scotland on care for specific conditions. This contributes to the development of the role of "expert carers" in the community.

For Staff

Carers issues are included in induction programmes for all frontline staff / practitioners and will cover carers potential entitlement to an assessment, identification of carers and diversity /equality issues.

Multi-agency training in Single Shared Assessment Procedures covers the carer's assessment. SSA training is available to a wide range of professionals including community and hospital nursing staff, GPs, social workers, occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

Carer awareness and disability awareness is being looked at together in some training programmes for NHS staff.

Diversity training is a key priority for all NHS staff.

For Voluntary Sector Staff and Volunteers

Training opportunities will be made available to staff in the voluntary sector and to volunteers to support them in their work with cares.

Funding

Many of the costs of providing information and advice services are included in other service budgets. The main sources of funding for services that include a focus on information and advice for carers that can be identified separately are indicated below.

The figures shown are for 2007/08 and are expected to be annually recurring unless otherwise stated.

NHS Shetland

TBA⁵

Shetland Islands Council

Public Information e.g. leaflets.	£8,050
Training for carers	£2,500*
Local Area Co-ordinator	£29,940
Direct Payments Support Service	£12,480
Independent Advocacy	£15,000

* Training opportunities are available for carers organised by the Council and NHS Shetland for which the funding is not identified here. A Joint Training and OD Plan is available separately

Shetland Charitable Trust

Welfare Rights Service	£ 34,000
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⁵ To Be Advised

Action Plan

Task	Timescale	Lead Officer / Agency
Review public information with carers in mind. Reviewed in 2005/06 and new information made available	On-going	Snr Planning & Information Officer, SIC/NHS
Increase amount of information available on websites. Done	On-going	Director of Service Improvement/ Clinical Governance Support Team
Develop interactive website for carers	2005/06	Snr Planning & Information Officer, SIC/NHS
Develop on-line carers support network	2006/07/08	TBA
Review and formalise distribution processes for information on services to ensure up-to-date versions are available in all locations e.g. GP surgeries, hospital wards, Council offices, websites, voluntary sector organisations, social care settings.	Sept 07	Snr Planning & Information Officer, SIC/NHS
Revise Discharge Protocols to include explicit reference to the identification of carers and their right to an assessment of need.	Reviewed annually	Snr Planning & Information Officer, SIC/NHS
Publicise training plans for carers and include training for staff on carers issues in Joint OD and Training Plans.	Reviewed Annually	Training Manager, SIC Social Care Service
Develop training programmes for carers including moving & handling, benefits advice, stress management, administering medication and challenging behaviour.	By April 07	Training Manager, SIC Social Care Service
Promote carers issues via Health Centres and Primary Care staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Include carers issues in training for all staff including receptionists - done ➤ Provide literature for patients and their carers e.g. leaflets, fact sheets - done ➤ Develop health promotion libraries at health centres for patients and their carers - done ➤ Publicise contact details for carers services, information and advice – done 	2006/07	CHP Manager

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure monitoring mechanisms for new GMS contract. Organisational Quality Indicator 9 – in place ➤ Develop the role of community and GP practice nurses in identifying and supporting carers – on-going. Directed and Enhanced service being implemented in 7 practices, 3 others doing via community nursing. Community Nurse Bixter & Walls, as part of degree course, is doing a piece of work on the improvement of health care for carers. 	2006/07	
<p>Promote carers issues via community pharmacists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure community pharmacists have a range of up-to-date information available for carers e.g. sign posting. Post Cards in dispensed medicines bag in 2005. ➤ Develop community pharmacists role in identifying and supporting carers. Detailed proposals to be produced by March 2007 	<p>On-going</p> <p>Review 2006/07</p> <p>Consultation 2006/07</p>	<p>Chief Pharmacist</p>
<p>Publicise carers' issues through events in annual national Carers Week and Carers Rights Days. Events organised in collaboration with Shetland Council of Social Services in 2006.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>CHP Manager</p>

Progress against the action plan will be monitored regularly by the Joint Future Management Team and reported to the CHP Committee and the Council's Services Committee.

Summary of Progress 2005 – 2006

Shetland's CHP

The Primary Care Facilitator within the CHP has taken forward a range of tasks from the 2005 Carer Information Strategy. These include:

- Development of a carers' database / mailing list.
- Production of a range of information materials including:
 - postcards and pre-paid letters
 - posters
 - leaflet on support available for carers
 - booklet on current support services and future plans.
- Carer awareness training for GP practices.
- Representation at conferences on carers' issues, including:
 - Highland Carers Forum annual conference and launch of Care 21 report September 2005;
 - Carers Scotland "Carers into Employment Workshop" in February 2006.
- Support for GP practices on carers' issues:
 - promoting Directed and Enhanced Services for carers;
 - reviewing performance against quality indicator 9 at Quality Outcomes Framework Review visits;
 - encouraging GP practices to maintain their libraries of health promotion literature as part of the GMS contract;
 - developing the roles of community nurses and GP practice nurses in identifying carers.
- Carers Week Activities:
 - arranging information stands in health centres and care centres;
 - registering for Carers Week and Carers Rights Days;
 - arranging programmes for events to be held on Carers Rights Day in 2005.
- Representation at local groups:
 - attending Carers Link Group;
 - attending Social Forum in Carers Week;
 - attending PFPI meetings.

Shetland Council of Social Service and Carers Link Group

The Development Worker with Shetland Council of Social Service (SCSS) has taken the lead in setting up a Carers Link Group to support Carers in Shetland. The Link Group includes representatives from SCSS, SIC Social Care and CHP.

In 2005/2006 the Link Group has met regularly to discuss carers issues and support a local carers' group. Work has included:

- Hosting and facilitating the local carers' group. The group meets once a month to:
 - share experiences / peer support

- receive information e.g. benefits advice;
- social activities.

Attendance varies between 5 and 10 carers per session. A report on the Carers' Group is available separately.

- Planning and co-ordinating activities for National Carers Week 2006. An evaluation report of Carers Week activities is available separately
- Publicising carers issues e.g. through press releases; poster and leaflet campaigns.

Future Plans are to:

- support and encourage the Carers' Group to become autonomous; to self-organise and develop the Group;
- adopt a simple constitution;
- support the Group in making applications for funding;
- encourage individuals in the Group to train to be "expert carers"⁶ to:
 - take part in Carer Awareness Programmes for front-line staff;
 - develop peer support networks through meetings, internet and telephone contact;
 - be the voice of carers in a range of forums e.g. on Carers Link Group; on strategic planning groups and service redesign project teams;
- be a sounding board for service providers in all sectors;
- organise carers-led events in National Carers Week and for Carers Rights Day.

⁶ Ref: Scottish Executive NHS Carer Information Strategies, NHS Circular HDL (2006)22, July 2006

Quality Framework and Monitoring Mechanisms

Specific targets and monitoring mechanisms for key deliverables are identified in the table below.

Information materials

Review by PFPI group taking into account the following attributes:

- Status (formal, informal, generic, specialist etc.)
- Accessibility / availability
- Relevance
- Accuracy
- Timeliness (of availability to users / carers)
- Clarity (language, style, format) including arrangements for minority ethnic groups.
- Diversity (culturally sensitive, available in other languages)

Training

- Feedback from participants (“happy” sheets)
- Numbers accessing training opportunities
- Numbers of carers from minority ethnic groups accessing training

Carers Identification & Assessment

- Local Improvement Targets (LITs) for the Joint Future Agenda include targets for numbers of carers assessments completed and times for assessments from referral to completion and service provision. The LITs are reported to the Scottish Executive and published.
- Numbers of carers identified will be published locally by age and ethnic group.

Carers Complaints

- Issues arising from carers’ complaints will be reported to the Joint Future Management Group and acted upon.
- All information will be made available to DPS as lead for the strategy. Information will be published with details of any action taken as a result.
- The individual carer’s right to confidentiality will be respected at all times.

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