

Professional Carers Awareness Bulletin

April 2014

This bulletin contains national and local updates, news items of note and links for all things 'carer'. If there are others you think would benefit from this please forward it to them.

If you have any thoughts, comments or areas of interest you would like us to consider for future editions please contact Julie at Carers' Resource on jrainer@carersresource.org or by calling 01274 449660.



Carers' Resource

Web: www.carersresource.org | Email: info@carersresource.org

Professional Carers Awareness Bulletin – April 2014

Social Care

[The Care Bill, Department of Health, news and progress](#)

The Care Bill has now completed all stages in the House of Commons and proceeds to the House of Lords for consideration of late amendments at the beginning of May 2014. One late amendment allows for the introduction of an appeals process to challenge council's decisions on care provision following an assessment. The Bill proposes the introduction of a single framework for adult social care and increases carers' rights to assessments and services. It is expected that the Bill will receive Royal Assent in May 2014 and be implemented in April 2015. The latest version of the Bill is found below.

The Department of Health has issued a series of [19 factsheets](#) to explain the Care Bill. This includes The Care Bill – the law for carers (factsheet 8).

Adult Social Care in England: overview, National Audit Office, March 2014

This report highlights risks and challenges as adult social care continues to change radically. It identifies that although the care needs of adults are rising there has been a reduction in total spending on adult social care. It reveals that the majority of care and support is provided by unpaid family, friends and neighbours who make up 5.4 million carers (2011 figures) and provide an estimated £55 million value of informal care and support.

[Full report](#) and [Summary](#)

[Care in Crisis: what's next for social care? Age UK, March 2014](#)

This report reveals that despite significant increases in the number of older people the amount spent by local authorities on social care for the elderly has fallen appreciably leading to a widening funding gap. Following research in 2012 Age UK identified seven building blocks for reform of social care including one 'ensuring carers are supported so that family or friends providing care are not expected to sacrifice health, career or financial security'. Age UK welcomes the reforms detailed in the forthcoming Care Bill, including the improved provision for assessments and service for carers but expresses concern that any benefit could be undermined by the funding situation.

Professional Carers Awareness Bulletin – April 2014

[Focus on: social care for older people: reductions in adult social services for older people in England, Nuffield Trust, March 2014](#)

This report examines the extent of recent cuts to social services for older people. It reveals that most local authorities are tightly rationing social care for older people in response to cuts which has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of people receiving services like day care, home care and meal delivery services. Data concerning the impact of these measures on the health and wellbeing of carers, and the people they care for is not collected in a comprehensive way at present.

[Making Our Health and Care Systems Fit for an Ageing Population, King's Fund, March 2014](#)

This report aims to be a guide to help people improve services for older people. It details nine components of high quality, person-centred care including helping people to live well and independently with appropriate support available locally and swiftly. Hospital care needs to be of a high quality with appropriate treatment, good discharge planning and re-ablement services. There needs to be residential care available for those who need it and people given choice, control and support towards the end of life. The report explains that in order for the health and social care system to work effectively there needs to be a greater focus on integration, innovation and collaborative ways of working.

[A New Settlement for Health and Social Care: interim report, Commission on the future of Health and Social Care in England, March 2014](#)

The Commission was established to look at ways of determining people's entitlement to health and social care services and how these could be funded in the future. It recognises the confusion and frustration faced by carers and patients in dealing with two distinctly different systems of health and social care. The report proposes that England needs to move to a single, ring-fenced budget for health and social care that is singly commissioned as one service. Although the final report is due in September 2014 further evidence, opinions or ideas may be submitted before 16 May 2014.

Professional Carers Awareness Bulletin – April 2014

Financial Issues

[Budget 2014: what it means for carers, Carers UK, March 2014](#)

One of the main elements of the Budget 2014 which will affect carers and their families is the increase in the Carer's Allowance earning limit from £100 to £102 a week from May 2014. This will mean that carers will be able to work 16 hours a week on the minimum wage without losing Carer's Allowance. This will also satisfy the requirements for Working Tax Credits for carers who may be eligible for this benefit.

[Caring and Family Finances Inquiry, Carers UK, February 2014](#)

This enquiry looks at the financial impact of caring, the impact of benefit changes on carers and their families and suggests policy reform for the future. The report details additional costs faced by carers and their families including higher costs for heating, transport, food and general living costs. It shows that 2.3 million people have given up work to care and 3 million people have reduced their working hours to care. There is a concern that as the number of carers is rising and the amount of care they provide increasing, it appears that support carers receive from benefits and social care is failing to keep up with their needs.

The inquiry proposes that;

- alleviating carers' financial hardship needs to be a core priority of the National Carers Strategy
 - there needs to be an assessment of the impact on carers of the Welfare Reform Act 2012
- future policy and legislation needs to be 'carer proofed' so as not to negatively affect
- families ability to care.
 -

[Summary](#) and [Full report](#) are available.



Professional Carers Awareness Bulletin – April 2014

Dementia

[Supporting Employees Who are Caring for Someone with Dementia, Carers UK, March 2014](#)

The study found that employees are increasingly under stress due to combining work with caring for someone living with dementia. This causes physical and mental health problems as well as a reduction in productivity and a possible loss of valuable staff. A lack of support for carers and a perceived stigma around dementia means many carers do not identify themselves to their employers as a carer. The survey highlighted the need for the workplace to be more 'dementia friendly', for clearer more accessible information on dementia to be available to employers and employees, and for care and support services to be accessible and appropriate to people living with dementia.

Create at the Carers' Resource is a service to support carers in employment or getting into employment through workshops and personalised support. For more information contact Stella Elson on selson@carersresource.org

Other Issues

[Children and Families Act, Department for Education, March 2014](#)

Following agreement by both Houses the Bill received Royal Assent on 13 March 2014 and has now become an Act of Parliament. One of the provisions of the Act will strengthen the rights of young carers and parent carers by giving clearer access to support from local authorities. The Act also includes greater rights for people to request flexible working which will benefit many carers.

[Carers UK](#) have issued a press release concerning the new rights for parent carers.



Professional Carers Awareness Bulletin – April 2014

[Hospital discharge: the patient, carer and doctor perspective, BMA, January 2014](#)

This document aims to identify factors that can help or hinder an effective and smooth hospital discharge. It contains a checklist to support patients and gives experiences of patients about their hospital discharge.

[Think Autism: fulfilling and rewarding lives, the strategy for adults with autism in England: an update, Department of Health, April 2014](#)

This report gives details of fifteen priority challenges to improve the lives of people with autism as identified themselves, their carers and those who work with people with autism. This includes one about carers – “I want to know that my family can get help and support when they need it”. It asks that local Autism Strategies are linked to local Carers Strategies and recognises changes that will take place as a result of the Care Bill.