



Carer forum Bradford

Thursday, July 12, 1.30pm to 3pm

Carers' Resource, Shipley

1. Welcome and introductions
Chris Whiley (CEO), Caroline Firth (communications officer), 3 carers.
2. Apologies
3 carers
3. Notes from last meeting.
 - Feedback on point 8 (none of our posters up in Airedale Hospital triage cubicles).
We have a member of staff linked to Airedale and the hospital has recently been refurbished and redecorated, so there are limited posters allowed. There are also various rules around hygiene etc. We do have posters elsewhere in the hospital and our staff member regularly attends to give information to staff and carers.
4. Carers Action Plan – follow this link to read the document:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/713781/carers-action-plan-2018-2020.pdf
Chris Whiley discussed the action plan and explained the feedback work Carers' Resource carried out with carers. Carers said when pension is received Carers Allowance stops but there are obviously still outgoing bills related to caring. Carers Allowance should be recognition of carers working full time – retired carers are actually not retired at all.

A carer said caring is emotionally tough and carers need support. Another said benefits are tough to live on and hard to get. "Things have got worse since the Bedroom Tax and Atos tests." Carers said these types of issues are only going to get worse.

It's not easy to fit GP appointments etc around caring. You can't have a hobby. You're constantly wondering what your next job is – ie there is a mental strain associated with caring. People need to relax more. Stress levels build over time. Missing appointments for your own health cause a vicious cycle.

Carer said: "When I see the GP it's someone different each time or triage – that's when I eventually do get an appointment."

Discussion around how the people we care for get a fast-tracked appointment but the carer doesn't get one. Carer said: "It's not a GP's job to decide if someone needs support, such as paid-for care."

CW said the CQC will now mark down GPs for not supporting carers well enough. Carers' Resource tries to work with all GPs.

5. Carers Rights Day: Carers telling professionals how life *really* is – Friday, November 30, 2018, 10am-noon at The Hockney Room, Margaret McMillan Tower, Bradford city centre.

CW explained this is an event aimed at professionals who work with unpaid carers. It will give carers the opportunity to help health, council, social care workers etc understand how difficult it can be to look after someone else. Carers will lead discussions about how we can all work together make their lives a little easier. CW invited carers to get involved in the planning via Jan Burrows on 01274 449660 or email jburrows@carersresource.org

6. State of Caring report

CW explained that national charity Carers UK has produced its annual carers survey results. See link <https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/state-of-caring-survey-2018>

7. Carers Week

CW and CF passed around pictures and information about the various events that took place during Carers Week in June. CF explained 100+ carers attended activities such as information stands, relaxation classes, craft sessions, afternoon tea, appeared on our Carers Show on BCB radio etc.

8. Carer issues

A carer said it would be good to be able to take the person they care for along to groups, and have the chance to attend groups alone. CW and CF said there are a range of groups across all our areas and some are also open to people who are cared for as well as their carers, but the idea of our groups is often to give the carer a break from caring and an opportunity to speak about

how they are feeling and coping, which can be difficult if the person they care for is present. CW said Carers' Resource would take this on board and welcomed feedback from carers about what kind of groups they might want in the future.

A carer said they attended a discharge planning meeting recently and echoed a point made at the last meeting that we should not be in total awe of professionals, as carers are often experts too about the person they care for.

Another carer said that anecdotally they know of many times when people have cancelled paid-for care because of the poor quality. There is "no giving of themselves" and paid carers are often looking for excuses to get out of the house. They do not have training in communications. They make meals and get out of there as fast as possible.

9. Date of next meeting –

Weds 17 October, 2-4pm, Harrogate

Thu 18 October, 1.30-3pm, Bradford

Fri 26 October, 10am-12pm, Skipton