

# STRATEGY FOR CARERS IN EAST CHESHIRE 2011 - 2015

“To support all carers to live their lives on their own terms”



A partnership between Cheshire East Council and  
Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust, carers  
and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector  
organisations

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### **Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector**

Through the development of the carers strategy we wish to acknowledge the wider contribution from the following organisations:

- Alzheimer's Society
- Crossroads Care Cheshire East, Manchester and Tameside
- Making Space
- St Luke's Hospice
- The Neuro Muscular Centre
- The Princess Royal Trust Cheshire Carers Centre

We also would like to acknowledge the contribution made by a wide range of smaller and locally based Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector, health and local government organisations that support carers and their families across Cheshire East.

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# 1. FOREWORD

We welcome the creation of 'A Carers Strategy' that sets out the commitment to carers as well as clear outcomes that we plan to achieve collaboratively.

We are delighted that this has been developed with a wide range of partners, carers, Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector.


There is still much to do as this commitment to carers' needs will lead to a work plan that will ensure that carers are recognised and supported by businesses, employees and whole organisations, as well as at local community level with access to services/support. This broader recognition of carers' needs is an ambition that we need to work together to achieve.

To support this wider recognition, this carers strategy will be shared corporately within the council and in other areas by health and social care staff.

Continuing to work collaboratively to develop a work plan ensures that carers –

- are recognised and valued as partners
- have access to services that are empowering, supportive, and give choice and control
- are assured that the allocated funding provides flexible and personalised services

The scale of the work to be done will be challenging in the current economic climate. However, by working together, using the framework outlined in this strategy, we will be able to progress towards priorities identified by carers themselves.



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## 2. INTRODUCTION

This strategy has been developed in partnership with carers, Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust, Cheshire East Council and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations. It sets out our commitment to carers across Cheshire East.

Our vision is **‘to support all carers to live their lives on their own terms’**.

To achieve this vision, this document presents our objectives and outcomes for the next four years. It will be reviewed annually to reflect the changing needs and views of carers, and will be delivered through an implementation plan.

The carers strategy for Cheshire East also reflects national developments in law and policy over the last 20 years, defining and describing carers’ rights and the responsibilities of local authorities and health services in meeting the needs of carers.

Most recently the national strategy document “Carers at the Heart of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Families and Communities” detailed the Government’s vision for carers and the actions required over the next 10 years to make it a reality. This was reinforced by the publication of ‘Recognised, valued and supported: Next steps for the Carers Strategy’ in 2010. To make a real difference for carers requires attention to issues including breaks, income, information and advice, the workplace, access to employment and training, emotional support, the health of carers and the specific needs of young carers. The expertise of carers is recognised through the personalisation of services and support arrangements, enabling them to design and direct their own support and be engaged in the support plan of the person they care for. Additional policy details can be found in Appendix 2 on page 16 of the strategy.

The 2001 Census identified 36,704 carers in Cheshire East. It is likely that the 2011 Census will show a significant increase in this number. In Cheshire East alone carers save society an estimated £500 million each year.

The strategy will provide a framework for carers, local statutory and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations to identify, develop and deliver the best possible services to meet the needs of carers in Cheshire East.

### 3. VIEWS OF CARERS AND VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

In order to achieve the vision set out in this strategy it was important to engage with carers and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations to identify needs and priorities that would help shape the objectives and outcomes for local carers. The full range of views expressed by carers can be found in Appendix 1. Some of the key messages from carers in Cheshire East are:

**"Young carers need to be identified and supported to ensure that they do not take on inappropriate caring roles"**

**"To help maintain good health and wellbeing, health checks should be offered to carers through GP practices. These should include support in developing coping strategies"**

**"There is a need for carers to identify themselves in the caring role so that they will be able to access available help and support"**

**"GPs, other medical professionals and community services workers need to be trained to identify carers and recognise the role that they play and to be able to signpost them to the vital support services"**

**"Parent carers often feel that services do not meet their needs, and they have difficulty in accessing social care support and communicating with education services"**

**"Carers require access to a range of information relevant to their needs in a timely manner and easily accessible formats"**

**"There should be access to a range of breaks for carers which are flexible, affordable and at times that suit them"**

**"All carers' situations are different, and a range of services are needed to suit the individual"**

**"Services should enable carers to design and direct their own support, have access to direct payments and be engaged in the support plan of the person they care for"**

**"Learning and development opportunities should be available for carers about a range of issues including carer health, health of the cared for person, personalisation and direct payments, coping strategies, and what it means to be a carer"**

The Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector plays an important strategic and operational role in supporting carers in Cheshire East. The main Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector carers' organisations are represented on the Carers Interagency Group and collectively support around 5000 carers. There are many Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations providing support for carers in Cheshire East ranging from very small community based groups to local branches of large national charities. These groups make a substantial difference to the lives of the carers they support.

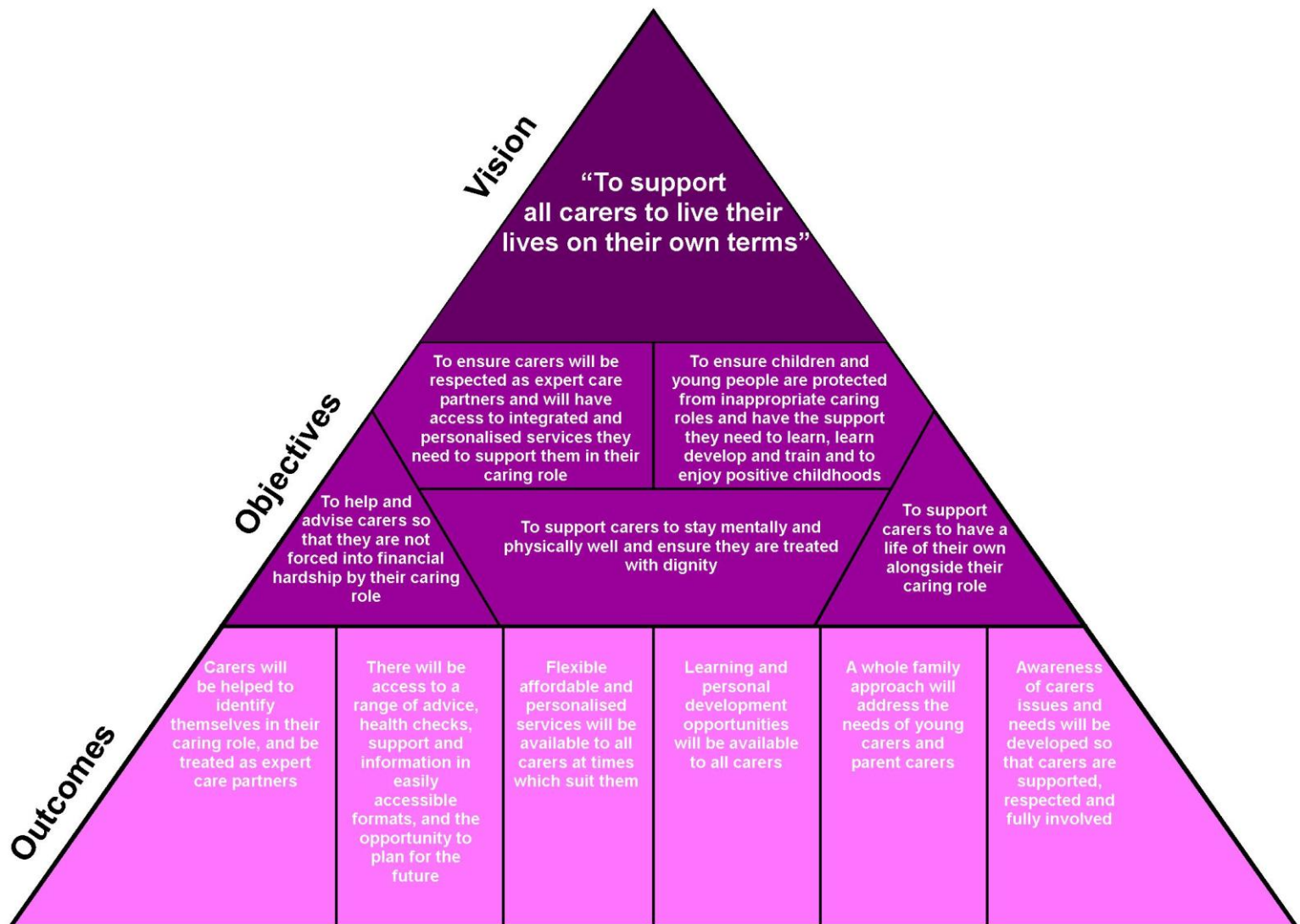
The key messages from these organisations in Cheshire East were that:

- Partnership is an essential part of working to support carers. No single agency can provide the wide range of services and support required by carers with diverse individual needs.
- Personalisation presents both opportunities and challenges for Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations and at a time of considerable change they are being encouraged to extend their role and widen their services that support carers.
- Representatives of the sector are keen to see the continued development of a range of quality, flexible and appropriate support services for carers across the borough, reflecting each organisation's expertise.
- Avoiding duplication is essential as resources are limited but there should be a choice of service providers who complement each other.
- The vast majority of carers are unknown to any organisation and therefore helping carers to identify themselves as carers and to access support is a key priority.
- Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations recognise the importance of carers' assessments in providing a comprehensive view of carers' needs and ensuring they get the help and support needed.
- Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations will be instrumental in continuing to develop and improve support for carers in Cheshire East.



## 4. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The vision, objectives and outcomes set out in this strategy are demonstrated in the pyramid below.





The objectives shown in the pyramid are taken from the National Carers Strategy: 'Carers at the Heart of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Families and Communities'.

The outcomes identified relate directly to the views of carers and the priorities of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations as well as addressing the national objectives.

Underpinning these outcomes are a set of work areas that will be met by Cheshire East Council, Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust and a variety of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations. Full details can be found at [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk)



## 5. HOW WILL WE DELIVER THIS?

Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT and Cheshire East Council have responsibility for commissioning services for carers in Cheshire East.

Putting the strategy into practice involves planning, contracting, provision and monitoring of services. This will be managed through the Carers Interagency Group which meets every two months. Members of the group come from the PCT, the Council, other local government and health organisations, local Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations and carers.

The outcomes of the strategy will be delivered and measured through an action plan. This plan shows the detail of the steps that will be taken to achieve the outcomes. The Carers Interagency Group will monitor and review the action plan with carers at their bi-monthly meetings. It will also be informed by the national carers' survey which is due to take place every two years.

It has been agreed that the strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Carers Interagency Group and independently through Cheshire East Carers Reference Group.

## 6. RESOURCES

Cheshire East Council commissions a range of services from Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations. These include information, advice and support, breaks for carers, an emergency response service and respite care services. Council resources are also used to provide community care services, including day and respite care for cared for people.

On a national basis the Government has provided additional funding to support the needs of carers which will be made available through Primary Care Trusts. Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT will continue to provide services through many Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations. A number of diverse projects to support carer breaks are delivered across the central and eastern Cheshire area.

The Department of Work and Pensions also provides services to help carers into work and training.

## 7. LOCAL STATUTORY CONTENT

Cheshire East Council's Corporate Plan 2011-13 sets out key targets and priorities for the council based on what our communities have told us they want and need. The key objectives identified across the whole council are:

- a. To give the people of Cheshire East more choice and control about services and resources
- b. To grow and develop a sustainable Cheshire East
- c. To improve life opportunities and health for everybody in Cheshire East
- d. To enhance the Cheshire East environment
- e. Being an excellent council and working with others to deliver for Cheshire

These objectives form the basis of the council's strategies, priorities, and service plans, and underpin this carers strategy.

The council will be monitored against the performance of other councils through the national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework. This will allow all residents of Cheshire East to see how their council is performing on certain measures against the performance of other councils around the country. Two specific measures relating solely to carers are the extent to which:

- carers can balance their caring roles and maintain their desired quality of life; and
- carers feel that they are respected as equal partners throughout the care process.

Cheshire East Council continues to be committed to providing quality carers' needs assessments and increasing the number of these over the next four years. The council will report on the percentage of service users whose carers have an assessment of their needs and support plans for the year 2011/12.

Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT is statutorily accountable for ensuring that the key requirements set out in the 'Operating Framework for the NHS in England' are fully implemented to meet the needs of the local population.

The Operating Framework 2011/12 clearly sets out priority areas for supporting carers. PCTs are accountable for agreeing policies, plans and budgets to support carers with local authorities and local carer's organisations, and for supporting the provision of carer breaks.

An equality impact assessment is available on the carers' pages of the Cheshire East Council website:  
[http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/social\\_care\\_and\\_health/carers\\_service\\_information.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/social_care_and_health/carers_service_information.aspx)



## 8. DECLARATION OF APPROVAL

Cheshire East Carers Interagency Group has been involved and engaged throughout the development of this strategy and fully supports the vision that carers should live their lives on their own terms.

Cheshire East Interagency Group will ensure that the outcomes described are delivered through close monitoring of the implementation plan which underpins this strategy and supports the development and delivery of the best possible services to meet the needs of carers in Cheshire East.



## 9. WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT YOUNG CARERS

### **‘Working Together to Support Young Carers’ – a Memorandum of Understanding between Statutory Directors for Children’s Services and Adult Social Services – December 2009**

This protocol, drawn up between the Association of Directors for Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Association of Directors for Children’s Services (ADCS), encourages statutory Directors of Adults and Children’s Services to ensure that children who are carers

**“should be able to learn, achieve, develop friendships and enjoy positive, healthy childhoods just like other children.”**

Directors of Adults and Children’s Services should make sure that:

- Young carers are identified, assessed, and their families supported in ways that prevent inappropriate caring roles - regardless of which service is contacted first, children’s or adults.
- Earlier, better integrated and more effective responses to Young carers and their families are available.
- Children are protected from excessive or inappropriate caring roles; further inappropriate caring is prevented; parents feel supported in their parenting role, and that transition to adulthood is supported.
- No care or support package for a parent or sibling relies on excessive or inappropriate caring by a young carer to make it sustainable.
- Young carers are helped to achieve their potential, and to have the same access to education, career choices and broader opportunities as their peers.

Cheshire East Council, Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust are committed to working with Children’s Services staff and partners to ensure that the needs of children and their families across East Cheshire are met through this strategy to ensure that young carers **“are able to learn, achieve, develop friendships and enjoy positive, healthy childhoods just like other children.”** Work is in progress across Children’s Services to identify a work plan for young carers, children and families.

## APPENDIX 1: CARER VIEWS

The following are the views provided by carers in Cheshire East which have been used to form the outcomes that we will work towards in the next 4 years.

- There is a need for carers to identify themselves in the caring role so that they will be able to access available help and support.
- GPs, other medical professionals and community services workers need to be trained to identify carers and recognise the role that they play and to be able to signpost them to the vital support services.
- Education of all workers on carers' issues should be a priority, with particular emphasis on senior managers to bring about a culture change towards carers within organisations.
- Carers want people to take the time to understand their needs and the best way in which they can be supported, and to develop services to reflect this.
- All carers' situations are different, and a range of services are needed to suit the individual – personalisation does not suit everyone.
- Carers require access to a range of information relevant to their needs in a timely manner and easily accessible formats.
- There should be access to a range of breaks for carers which are flexible, affordable and at times that suit them.
- Services should enable carers to design and direct their own support, have access to direct payments and be engaged in the support plan of the person they care for.
- Both generic and specialised support groups are needed. These provide an opportunity to gain mutual support, share information, advice and caring experiences, and help to reduce isolation.
- Support needs to be in place in case of an emergency.
- There is concern about what will happen to the cared for person when they can no longer care for them – long term planning is essential.
- Young carers need to be identified and supported to ensure that they do not take on inappropriate caring roles.
- Carers and service user needs should be considered in the context of the whole family.
- Parent carers often feel that services do not meet their needs, and they have difficulty in accessing social care support and communicating with education services.
- There are major concerns around the transition from Children's to Adults' Services.
- To help maintain good health and wellbeing, health checks should be offered to carers through GP practices. These should include support in developing coping strategies.

- Learning and development opportunities should be available for carers about a range of issues including carer health, health of the cared for person, personalisation and direct payments, coping strategies, and what it means to be a carer.
- Carers want to be involved in co-production, working on the design of services from the start, not consulted at the end of the process.
- How can individual carers or small groups of carers get access to funding for work that they want to do to?

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## APPENDIX 2:

# POLICIES AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO CARERS

Carers' rights are enshrined within legislation which sets the responsibility of Social Services to carry out a carer's assessment for all carers. This legislation includes the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995, the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, and the Carers (Equality Opportunities) Act 2004.

### **The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004**

This Act gives carers more choice and the opportunity to lead a more fulfilling life. Previous legislation only offered carers support in their caring role and carers' assessments did not have to take into consideration wider issues of carers' lives, such as training, employment and leisure.

The principle aims of the Act are to:

- Ensure that work, learning and leisure are considered in a carer's assessment.
- Give local authorities new powers to enlist the help of housing, health, education and other local authorities in providing support to carers.
- Ensure that carers are informed of their rights.

### **The Work and Families Act 2006**

This Act gives carers new rights at work. It builds on the right to request flexible working for parents of children under 6 years old, or under 18 years for a disabled child, and extends this right to include employees who care for or expect to care for adults.

The white paper **Our Health, Our Care, Our Say** (DoH, 2006) announced a New Deal for carers to improve support, reflecting developments in carers' rights, direct payment regulations, carers' assessments and grants. It also announced plans to:

- Establish an information service/helpline for carers.
- Ensure that short term, home based emergency care is established for carers in crisis or emergency situations.
- Allocate specific funding for the creation of an Expert Carers Programme.

### **Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care (HM Government 2007)**

This protocol sets out the Government's commitment to independent living for all adults. It recognises that the care and support system should be fair, sustainable and unambiguous about the responsibilities of the state, the individual and the family. This includes treating family members and carers as experts and care partners; supporting programmes where carers develop skills and confidence, and strengthening universal information, advice and advocacy for people needing services and their carers.

### **Carers at the heart of the 21<sup>st</sup> century families and communities (HM Government 2008)**

This gives the Government's vision for carers and the actions required over the next 10 years realising it. Support will be tailored to meet individuals' needs, enabling carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside of caring, while enabling the person they support to be a full and equal citizen.

Specifically, by 2018:

- Carers will be respected as expert care partners and will have access to the integrated and personalised services they need to support them in their caring role.
- Carers will be able to have a life of their own alongside their caring role.
- Carers will be supported so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role.
- Carers will be supported to stay mentally and physically well and treated with dignity.
- Children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive, to enjoy positive childhoods and to achieve against the *Every Child Matters* outcomes.

### **Next Steps for the Carers Strategy**

This document was published by the Government in November 2010. It identifies the actions that the Government will take in the next four years to ensure the best outcomes for carers and those they support, including:

- Supporting those with caring responsibilities to identify themselves as carers at an early stage, recognising the value of their contribution and involving them from the outset both in designing local care provision and in planning individual care packages
- Enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential

- Personalised support both for carers and those they support, enabling them to have a family and community life
- Supporting carers to remain mentally and physically well

### Carers and personalisation: improving outcomes

This document was published by the Department of Health in November 2010. It provides practical examples for achieving better outcomes for carers through greater involvement, choice and control for carers and by adopting whole family approaches.

The personalisation of services and support involves tailoring solutions as far as possible to the specific needs of carers and their families. Universally available services should also be flexible in their approaches in order to respond to the variety of ways in which carers can be supported. To achieve this, there is a need to recognise the expertise of carers and enable them to design and direct their own support, have access to direct payments, and be fully engaged in the support plan of the person they care for.

The document identifies four key themes in personalising support including:

- Carers as expert care partners and whole-family approaches
  - *Ensuring that carers' expertise is recognised and utilised in assessing, planning and reviewing support to the person they care for, and in determining and meeting their own support needs.*
- Early intervention and prevention
  - *Ensuring accurate, up-to-date and reliable information is easily available from a broad range of sources. This involves having a range of services and support that is available to all carers.*
- Making self-directed support processes work for carers
  - *Personal budgets and self-directed support can contribute to a greater independence for both the carer and the person they support, and enable carers to have a life outside caring.*
- Market and provider development
  - *Giving people more choice and control through personalisation means the market and providers need to ensure that a range of quality, personalised support is available. This should be based on the strong engagement of carers in setting the direction for local commissioning.*



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