

Carmarthenshire Strategic Partnership Board for Carers

Annual Report 2015/16

During the year, we have continued to implement the two work streams that support unpaid carers and were identified as our priorities for 2015/16:

- The regional Carers Information and Consultation Strategy (commonly known as the Carers Measure) led by Hywel Dda University Health Board.
- The Welsh Government's Refreshed National Carers Strategy local action plan delivered by Carmarthenshire County Council and partners.

Below are respective reports on progress.

- **Carers Measure** - The **Carers' Measure**, introduced in 2013 has been supported by a dedicated funding resource that is managed locally by HDUHB and is utilised to implement the Key Actions within the strategy. Investors in Carers, the E-learning around Carers and Young Carer Awareness and dedicated performance management account for the greater part of the resources available whilst partner organisations contribute further resources, fiscal and human that support the Measure's regional approach. In January 2016 the WG announced through Carers Wales that it would be sustaining the Measure's funding for two years, albeit in a reducing framework that will see 5% lost annually. However, it is reassuring for the people dependent on the resource for their jobs and provides additional momentum to the work stream that is trying to embed recognition of unpaid carers in the hearts and minds and practice of our collective workforce.

Last year we reported on the successful Investors in Carers (IIC) programme that facilitates a framework of evidence demonstrating how GP practices support unpaid carers. All GP surgeries in Carmarthenshire have now completed the Bronze award level, one surgery has achieved the Silver award and several others are working towards this. There has been an expected increase in the numbers of carers recognised and referred on for assessment and support (*Fig 1*). However, it has required a revised approach to manage the additional demand being placed on social services for carer assessments. In partnership with HDdUHB, the Carmarthenshire Carers Information Service has been expanded to include a domiciliary service that offers a county wide approach, based on the locality footprints, to provide information advice and guidance to carers (*Fig 2*).

This new service also offers screening, ensuring that the levels of support are appropriate to the initial needs identified. Carers who are under pressure and obviously not coping well are referred on to social services for assessment whilst others, with less demanding commitments, are signposted to community and third sector based services for information and support. Effectively this revised service ensures that carers get the correct level of support at the right time with far fewer carers being referred for inappropriate formal carers' assessment whilst those being referred for assessment are receiving earlier intervention due to the managed demand.

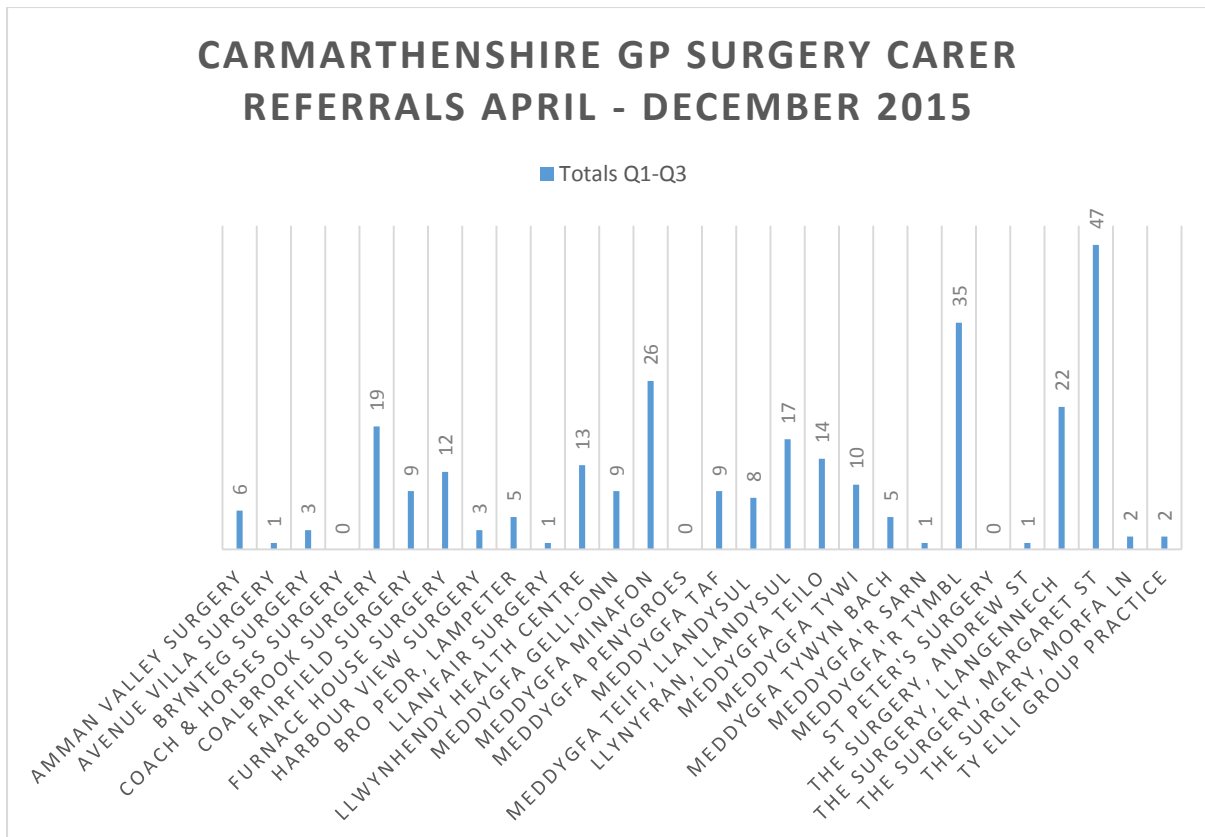


Fig 1.

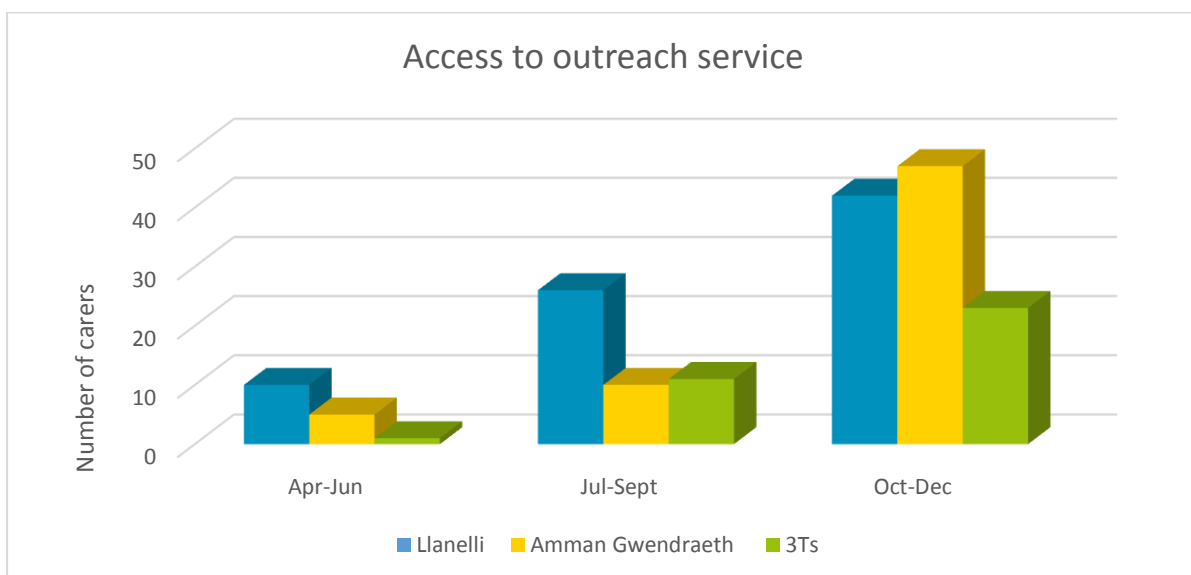


Fig 2.

During the year the programme has been extended to inpatient areas, community pharmacies and to schools (young carers) so that a wider variety of sources to recognise carers and signpost them to support are available:

- 2 Pharmacies now hold a Bronze award with a further 18 working towards this
- 3 Inpatient units have embarked on the Bronze programme

- 3 Schools are participating in an attempt to raise the profile of Young Carers and 1 school in Llanelli has achieved the Bronze Award

In addition to the IIC programme Mental Health and Learning Disability teams are implementing the 'Triangles of Care' scheme as a pilot across 5 sites. Crucially, the scheme endeavours to promote inclusion of family carers in the process of care planning for service users and recognises the huge contribution they are making.

Alongside the IIC scheme the Carers Measure introduced an e-learning programme to raise carer awareness across public and third sector organisations. The licence for the programme has been secured for a further twelve months and during the year there has been a steady increase in the number of staff completing the course (see Fig 3). In addition, a new Young Carer Aware version of the e-learning has been commissioned and promoted with a gradual but definite increasing number of registrants and completers (see Fig 4).

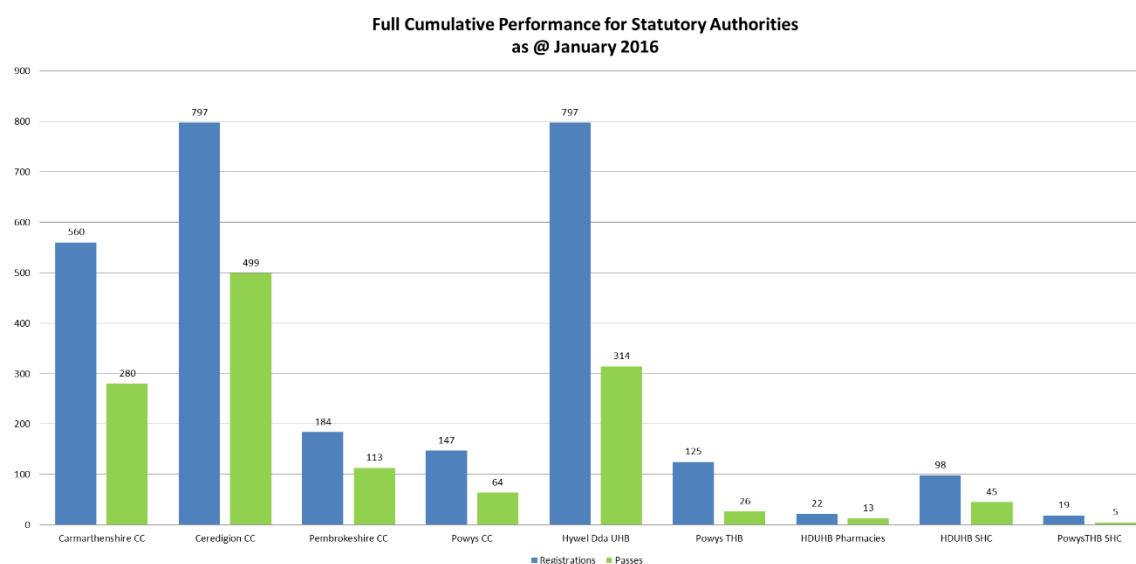


Fig 3

Young Carer Aware e-Learning - January 2016 Report (as @ 18/01/2016)

Period		Authority / Organisation							2014/15
		Carmarthenshire	Ceredigion	Pembrokeshire	Powys	Hywel Dda	HD SHC	HD Pharmacies	
2014/15	Registrations	22	6	44	21	28	17	0	141
	Passes	3	5	8	3	7	5	0	38
2015/16	Registrations	138	41	89	5	27	20	3	
	Passes	37	33	59	4	17	11	1	
Totals Registrations		160	96	133	25	64	37	3	518
Total Passes		41	38	67	7	25	16	1	178

Notes

HDUHB totals include SHC & Pharmacy figures

County figures, include 3rd & VSO within their area

Fig 4.

Throughout the duration of the Carers Measure to date there has been an emphasis on information for carers. Given the breadth and diversity of information available the Strategy Implementation Group adopted a 3 tier approach:

1. General Awareness raising
 2. Specific and condition/caring related
 3. Information through engagement (advice and consultation)
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1. Much effort has been made to rationalise level 1 so that basic information across the region maintains a common theme and appearance in an attempt to assist carers to recognise relevant posters, leaflets and promotional materials. A new 3 counties leaflet has been developed and is being distributed at hospital pharmacies where carers will collect take home medications. All hospitals now have dedicated carer information boards placed strategically in the DGH's with Prince Philip having 17, Glangwili having 10 and two at each of Amman Valley and Llandovery Hospitals. Linked to the Carers Outreach service these information boards are maintained on a monthly basis ensuring information posted remains relevant and up to date with events and new initiatives promoted.
 2. During the year the book "Say I'm fine and mean it" – a dedicated resource to assist carers – has been reprinted for regional distribution whilst it is also made available on partner's web pages as a free download and as a QR Code accessible via mobile devices. Carmarthenshire Information Service also maintains a Facebook page and actively Tweets information so that optimum levels of available information can be achieved. In an effort to reduce printing costs and avoid waste due to printed materials becoming out of date the majority of specific information being developed is web based. This information covers a wide variety of topics related to health and social care as well as carer specifics about their rights and entitlements and can be printed off to give to carers or carers can look at it on line.
 3. A draft Best Practice guide on informing carers, related to the three tiers, offers health and social care staff a framework describing how to achieve the standards therein. When finalised, the guide will be circulated extensively and promoted as an aide to meeting the expectations of the Carers Measure and the Social Services and well Being Act. The guide informs those responsible for producing information on how to include information for carers and extends to explaining how engaging with carers at critical points in the care pathway can ensure they are included in care planning and delivery thereby upholding the Measure and the Act.

- **National Carers Strategy local action plan** - In 2013 the Welsh Government refreshed the National Carers Strategy and published a revised version. Many of the original themes were kept as they were deemed appropriate still and a new theme surrounding Young Adult Carers was introduced. In response to the refreshed strategy Carmarthenshire developed and published (through consultation and collaboration with carers) in November 2014 a local Carers Action Plan (CAP). The plan describes actions to be taken to achieve some of the outcomes identified by the national strategy and takes into account the work being driven by the Carers Measure.

Four themes are reflected in the CAP:

- Health and Social Care
- Carers and employment
- Support and a life beyond caring
- Young carers and young adult carers

Recognising carers and giving carers information is seen as the domain of the Carers Measure and is therefore excluded from CAP to avoid duplication with activity emanating from the carers Measure Strategy.

Health and Social Care

Some of the actions planned for the reporting period have been rescheduled for future implementation to allow for the introduction of the Social Care and Well Being Act (SCWBA) which requires mandatory training attendance by the social services workforce. In addition the planned workshops will need to adapt to consider the implications of the SCWBA on unpaid carers. Work to develop the workshops is ongoing.

Auditing case files to establish standards and best practice is also deferred as the internal review of TASC and the revision of care management practice will impact on the way we recognise and support carers as illustrated above (Carers Measure report).

A revised Carers Emergency Card scheme has been designed to incorporate :

1. Carer identity card
2. Carer discount card
3. Carer emergency card
4. Contingency care plans

Work to establish the processes around the administration and allocation of the new card has been ongoing throughout 2015 and an agreed implementation procedure is now in place. The new procedure will align the CEC to the CareFirst data base thereby reducing duplication. Carers not wanting support from the department will be able to access the CEC that allows them some comforting reassurance whilst away from the cared for person. Carers not wanting the 'emergency' element can take advantage of the discounts available by getting the card from the Carers Forum. Anyone issued with a card will have the means to prove their identity as a carer which will afford them free or concessional access to leisure facilities in Carmarthenshire and beyond.

Good practice in care planning will recognise the contribution of unpaid carers to the sustainable wellbeing of service users. Consequently, the same good

practice must make consideration for circumstances that prohibit the primary carer from continuing. The Carers Emergency Card requires the identification of up to 3 substitute carers who are committed to helping out when emergencies or unplanned events render a carer unavailable to continue and therefore provide a standard of contingency planning.

Increasing the recognition and referral rate of carers from primary and secondary care for assessment through the IIC scheme has proved largely successful, at least within primary care where an ever increasing number of carers are being identified (see above for outcomes). However, engaging with secondary care teams to implement IIC is proving a bigger challenge but inroads have been made and pilot schemes are underway in 4 clinical areas.

Carer support groups have grown during the year with third sector commissioned services continuing to establish groups or increase attendance at existing groups.

Increased activity within primary care settings is generating many more carer referrals – see above, and a new system is evolving that will view the carer and cared for as more of a unit that warrants a holistic approach and assessment. However, the introduction of the Carers Information Outreach service in 2014 is now beginning to pay dividends as so many carers are being served without the need for formal intervention, ensuring that they are informed and able to make decisions whilst those whose caring role is obviously acute are appropriately referred on to the department for formal assessment.

Carers and Employment

The Action for Carers Equality group was reformed during 15/16 and developed its own action plan within the framework of the CAP. During the year there was a campaign targeting employers and employees to flag carers' rights and good employment practice around unpaid carers within a workforce. Three new information fact sheets were developed and circulated:

- Working Carers
- Carers who want to return to work
- Employers and working carers

Employers across the county have been targeted and this will form part of an annual campaign to improve awareness amongst carers, working carers and employers. To complement this a brand new award scheme was launched during the year which saw the introduction of the Carmarthenshire Caring Boss Awards. Widespread promotion through leaflet dropping and a press release saw a significant number of submissions that resulted in the presentation of the awards at national Carers Rights Day held on the 20th November 2016. Four awards were made with, unsurprisingly, a GP Practice manager being awarded the very first Gold Good Boss Award. The Awards will be promoted again this year to build on the momentum and further raise awareness.

The CAP has identified that carers often seek training on a variety of subjects. Gaining skills to assist their caring role and to ensure their personal safety should be readily available but as yet are not. Learning or honing skills that enable carers to return to or to enter employment are available but can be

difficult to source especially when carers have committed caring responsibilities. Carers are often tied to the home as caring doesn't allow them the freedom most of us enjoy. Being at home can sometimes be very challenging and carers report that they would like to have a hobby or pastime that could assist the boredom sometimes experienced. Looking after their own wellbeing is very important for all concerned as the sustainability of the caring role is paramount in these times of austerity. Having accessible courses that promote wellness to carers is very desirable.

ACE has identified in partnership with the Carers' Forum the concept of a "Carers College" where all of the above (and more) can be promoted to carers. The idea is that of a virtual college that exists as a web based entity. It will host all manner of training and education information that carers may require from types of training to the dates and places and to the costs involved. To facilitate the development of the College a brief questionnaire for carers and interested partners has been conducted between January and February with a view to the analysis informing direction in true co-production with carers. This work remains ongoing.

Support and a life beyond caring

The CAP identified five desirable outcomes within this chapter. They revolve around breaks for carers, appropriate and comprehensive assessment that includes an examination of their needs for work, education and leisure, maximising income from available benefits and contingency care planning.

Breaks for carers (respite) are the most sought after form of support following information. Carmarthenshire has recognised and committed resources to this type of help for carers for many years by contracting with third sector partners for service provision and through dedicated residential placements within our own care homes. Day care and meaningful activities for service users is another means of supporting carers with a variety of provisions across service areas that have been sustained throughout the year. Adult placement services are growing With a mixed provision of residential respite and day activities.

The main provider of replacement care is Crossroads Sir Gar Carers Trust an organisation that has established itself as the premiere local charity in the sector. During the year they have delivered 11,882 hours of replacement care and 3,764 hours of community support.

In March 2014, the Carers Information Service was allocated to Crossroads Sir Gar and now forms part of a bigger organisation who specialise in supporting Carers. Added to this is new Carers Outreach Service that was launched in June 2014. This provides a home visiting service for carers who, for a variety of reasons, cannot get to the service's office or to other events held around the county. Having bedded in, the service is now held in high regard by carers and is evolving well as a model of carer support. Interventions with carers are monitored utilising the Carers Outcomes Star which provides evidence of need and a framework for eligibility.

The service ensures that carers' information is accessible in a wide variety of formats, maintains a presence at health and social care events throughout the

year, and is a key contributor to the planning and delivery of Carers Rights Day and Carers Week annually.

In 2014, the Carers Forum was constituted into a Registered Charity. The Forum has over 120 members, which provides an independent voice for carers and a distinct group for consultation and planning. The Chairman has been invited on to the Partnership Board giving further recognition and credence to unpaid carers.

The group is planning a training event for carers, as well as practical initiatives such as discount cards.

Replacement care continues to be the second most requested service by carers after information. During 2014/15, 34 (18%) more people have received replacement care (a year-on-year increase from 192 to 226).

In terms of our commissioned services:

- The Stroke Association (SA), through its Stroke Health Improvement Programme, sources most of its beneficiaries (carers) at hospital ward level where there is excellent partnership understanding between the nurses and the SA worker.
- The Alzheimers Society retains a Carers Domiciliary Support Service and a generic Society/Dementia awareness service for the county.

Within Mental Health services, carers' support is delivered primarily by Hafal and Eiriol who are commissioned for a variety of replacement care and carers advocacy service respectively. During the year to date the services have provided nearly 200 carers with regular breaks from caring and 123 carers have benefited from the support of an advocate.

Learning Disability services continue to support families and carers with a variety of opportunities to benefit from breaks. These include adult placement, residential care and other community supported activities such as Coleshill Centre and the STEPS programmes.

Carers Flexible Support Grants are small 'one off' direct payments to carers and continue to provide carers with solutions to identified needs that are not available from regular sources. Grants are used in a variety of ways to provide a break from caring, meeting the well-being needs of carers or practical support to meet the day-to-day costs of caring.

Effects on people's lives

How we impact on the lives of carers is critical to the sustainability of their caring role. However, with 24,000 carers in the county we have to be realistic and taper the focus of our energy and resources onto those carers whose role is impacting on their lives and those who actively seek support. The importance of recognising and supporting carers cannot be overstated when their collective annual contribution is estimated at more than half a billion pounds in Carmarthenshire. As stated above, the increased awareness and activity around the carer agenda is bringing more and more carers to the department's attention and as a consequence the numbers of carers being supported is growing.

With increased expectation on the public (carers) to deliver more and more care at home it is imperative that their contribution is properly recognised and where appropriate, supported. Many carers state that they don't want any help, that they are glad to be able to care for a loved one in a way that others couldn't and we don't want to interfere with any of that. However, through information, advice and signposting we are enabling Carers to understand their rights and direct them to support that they can access if they wish to or need to. Effectively this empowers Carers and affords them a degree of confidence that should the caring role become burdensome then support is available to them and they know how and where to get it.

Having such high numbers of Carers and increasing demands on services for interventions and support we are being proactive in the way we are trying to help people recognise themselves as Carers in the first instance and secondly, as service providers and commissioners we are actively recognising them ourselves. On the two strategic fronts; the Carers Measure and the Carers Action Plan we are demonstrating a commitment and no small amount of innovation.