

Western Isles Carers, Users & Supporters Network. (WICUSN).

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Breasclete
Isle of Lewis.
HS2 9EA

Carers Branch (Consultation),
Adult Care and Support Division,,
The Scottish Government,
2ER, St Andrew's House,
Edinburgh.
EH1 3DG

26/03/14

Dear Sir/Madam,

WICUSN's Views on Carer's Legislation.

Do you agree with changing the name of Carer's Assessment to Carer's Support Plan? **YES**
Should all carers be eligible for a Carer's Support Plan? **YES**
Can you think of any drawbacks to widening eligibility? **No**
Do you agree with the proposal to have different levels/ depths of carer's Support Plans? **YES - as long as the level used matches the needs of the carer.**

Do you think that statutory guidance on content of Carer's Support Plans is sufficient? **No -We feel there should be a timescale from request to initiating the making of the Support Plan of 2 weeks and some support arranged immediately following recognition of the need with the full support plan in place within a maximum of 12 weeks.**

Do you agree in removing the need for the cared for person to be receiving community care or children's services? **A resounding YES.**

Do you agree with removing the assessment of the carer's ability to provide care? **Yes- in so much as it refers to their skills but the carer's health and physical ability must be considered in the provision of level of support.**

If you live in a different local authority to the person you care for, which authority should carry out your carer's assessment.
The sensible thing would be cooperative working between the authorities but the authority you live in must ensure that your needs are met.

Should there be a duty for local authorities to establish and maintain a service for providing carers with information and advice? **YES**

Should Carer Information Strategies be scrapped, provided that Health Boards would still continue to provide funding for carer support :- **A difficult one as the strategy has raised the profile of carers but here in an area in the Western Isles there are over 20 carers on a Crossroads waiting list for 4 hours support a week some for over a year, this form of support is the first choice of many carers in the Islands but as it is a long established means of support is not eligible for finance from the Change Fund so there needs to be Government scrutiny to ensure adequate core funding of such long running popular schemes by both Health Boards and Local Authorities.**

Should the government introduce a DUTY to support carers and a DUTY to promote and provide short breaks? **YES and to encourage carers to take breaks from the very beginning of caring so that they don't get trapped in a situation where the cared for becomes totally dependent on them. A situation that is very difficult and stressful to change later.**

What are your views on the introduction of eligibility criteria? :- **The only criteria needed is whether or not the cared for could continue living in their own home should the carer for whatever reason be unable to continue providing whatever level of support - big or small. The support plan would be determined by this. E.g. if a carer gives replacement care one day a week then the Support Plan should be that this carer can have perhaps 6 days a year support to allow him/her to have 6 weeks holidays like all other part time workers. At the other end of the scale for any one providing care 24/7 Support Plan should be a minimum of one day off a week plus the 6 weeks holidays.**

What are your views on local authorities having to produce a short breaks statement? **This would need to look at whether it was meeting the need of all carers not just that there is a Short Break Project giving respite to a few carers. Also WICUSN feels that the Government providing small pots of money that require voluntary organisations to bid for is uneconomical as so much of the coordinators time is taken up in preparation of a business case. We feel money should go directly from Government to each voluntary organisation, amount in ratio to population etc, each year voluntary organisation to submit exactly number of hours and days of carer support delivered proving good value for money.**

Should the Government issue guidance on managing stages of caring so that Carer Support Plans always take into account the effect that different stages of caring may have on carers? **YES**

Should young carers who are likely to become adult carers have a Carers Support Plan agreed before they reach 18? **YES. Planning needs to begin at least 12 weeks before their 18th birthday.**

Should carers be involved in planning, shaping and delivery of services for the people they care for? **YES**

Should carer's organisations be involved in the planning and delivery of services and support for carers? **YES both carer's organisations and at least 2 carers should be on any committee.**

Should the Government legislate to include a principle of carer involvement in care planning of the person they care for (with their consent)? **YES and without their consent if the cared for does not have a proper understanding of their situation, some people following head injury, stroke or just growing old may not need someone to have power of attorney but could still be quite illogical about their care requirements- still think and tell assessors that they can do much more for themselves than they actually can, it has been our experience that some assessors choose to believe the cared- for. Sometimes this appears to us to be to save money. Assessors should be able to recognise this scenario and then involve the carer.**

Should local authorities have to produce a local carer's strategy? **YES and the strategy should have an outcome that benefits carers.**

Should young carers be included in this strategy? **YES with a specific part devoted to their particular needs.**

Should local authorities ensure that there are sufficient services in their local area to meet the needs of carers? **YES strategies, support plans etc are useful but meaningless to carers without the necessary services to meet their support needs**

Should the Scottish Government introduce a duty on GP practices and local authorities to develop/ maintain a carer's register to support the identification of carers? **YES all professionals need to think 'carer' and quietly help people to identify themselves as carers and encourage them to go on the register and seek support which MUST be there. GPs and their practice staff frequently are the first point of contact, sometimes even the only point of contact.**

Should the Scottish Government ensure that good practice on the use of carers' registers is promoted amongst Health Boards.? **YES**

Should the Scottish Government place a Duty on Health Boards to monitor compliance with the GP contract? **YES.**

Should the Scottish Government introduce a DUTY on health boards to involve carers in hospital discharge planning? **YES and a Duty on Health Boards to ensure that the care package for the patient is in place prior to discharge.**

WICUSN would also like to see penalties imposed on professionals or policy makers of the authorities charged with implementing the Laws made to protect or provide for vulnerable people. If those charged with delivering care are allowed to ignore statutory requirements then why make Laws? Authorities must be made to comply with these Laws, ignorance of the Law being no excuse.

Yours sincerely,



Jinty Morrison,
Chair WICUSN.