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# **THE UK's NATIONAL CARERS STRATEGY 2008**

## **How did we get there and where are we going?**

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### **OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION**

- Definitions
- The National Carers Strategy 2008 in context
- The National Carers Strategy 2008
- Building carer empowerment
- The next steps.....

### **DEFINITIONS 1**

- carer (UK) = caregiver (Finland)
- carers = "people of any age who spend a significant proportion of their lives providing unpaid support to family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems"

## DEFINITIONS 2

- information about carers in the UK
  - 2% of the population carers
  - 60% are women
  - 25% are over 65
  - 8% are under 16
  - 58% care for someone with a disability
  - 37% care for someone with a chronic illness
  - 17% care for someone who is elderly
- service users = people who use services

## DEFINITIONS 3

THE NATIONAL CARERS STRATEGY 2008 = "Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities: a caring system on your side, a life of your own"

empowerment = "degrees of empowerment are measured by the existence of choice, the use of choice and the achievement of choice" (Alsop and Heinsohn, 2005:4)

## THE NATIONAL CARERS STRATEGY 2008 IN CONTEXT

- the carer empowerment it embodies has taken place in the context of empowerment of both service users and carers
- therefore carer empowerment cannot be understood without a brief explanation of service user empowerment

## The journey to service user empowerment so far

.....



### User involvement

- development of services
- professional training and social work education
- design and conduct research
- user-led organisations e.g. National Service User Network
- hold positions in national social care organisations

### **Self-management**

- service users manage their condition and their treatment themselves (self- manage)
- Expert Patient Programme (EPP) (<http://www.expertpatients.co.uk/>)
- more control over their health
- the 'expert' about their own condition

### **Personalised models of care**

- more independence, choice and control
- enable service users to live life as they would wish
- service users design their support to suit their own requirements
- receive resources which they control and manage e.g. Personal Budgets

### **The journey to carer empowerment so far .....**

This has been facilitated through:

- the carers movement
- legislation



## Carers movement

- growth in the size and power of national and local carers organizations
- advocacy role increased
- government website for carers (<http://www.carers.gov.uk>)
- Carers UK - "the voice of carers" (<http://www.carersuk.org>)



## THE NATIONAL CARERS STRATEGY 2008

"by 2018, carers will be universally recognised and valued as being fundamental to strong families and stable communities. Support will be tailored to meet individual needs, enabling carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring, while enabling the person they support to be a full and equal citizen"

"carers and their caring role are inextricably linked to the people they care for. If the support and services are not right for the person being supported then both the individual and the family are affected"

## The vision for carers.....

- respected as expert care partners
- access to the integrated and personalised services they need to support them in their caring role
- to have a life of their own alongside their caring role
- to be supported so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role
- supported to stay mentally and physically well and treated with dignity
- children and young people to be protected from inappropriate caring

## CARER EMPOWERMENT

- carers now have a high political profile in the UK
- entitled to several benefits: eg
  - Carer's Allowance
  - Carer's Assessment
  - Housing benefit
  - Other benefits
- the building blocks for carer empowerment are now in place

**SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS**

**INFORMATION AND TRAINING FOR CARERS**

**EMPHASIS ON SUPPORTING CARERS  
CARERS RESPECTED AS "EXPERT CARE PARTNERS"**

**CARERS INVOLVED IN DESIGN & DELIVERY OF EDUCATION & TRAINING**

**CARERS ORGANISATIONS ARE CONSULTED ABOUT POLICY**

### **1. CARERS ORGANISATIONS ARE CONSULTED ABOUT POLICY**

- consulted before strategies published, and involved in changes
- National carers organisations conferences address policy issues
- local carer groups are involved in consultations about social care in their areas

### **2. CARERS INVOLVED IN DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

- carers knowledge and experience recognised as being central to staff training programmes
- recognition this knowledge is equal to professional and academic knowledge
- provision of support and training to carers to maximize their input

### **3. CARERS RESPECTED AS 'EXPERT CARE PARTNERS'**

- acknowledgement of their role and expertise
- dignity, treatment with respect and partnership working in care
- personalised models mean more choice and control for carers
- involved in design and planning of services



#### **4. EMPHASIS ON SUPPORTING CARERS 1**

- right to have needs assessed
- development of the right care package so they can 'lead a life outside their caring role'
- personalised model of care mean that carers now have more choice and control over their support services

#### **EMPHASIS ON SUPPORTING CARERS 2**

- better co-ordinated and culturally competent services
- support groups
- support so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role
- more support for carers to stay mentally and physically well

#### **5. INFORMATION AND TRAINING FOR CARERS**

- Department of Health "Caring with confidence" programme
- local training schemes e.g. relaxation, communication skills
- information services and helplines
- advice about welfare and finance

## 6. SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS

- training is now provided for professionals across a broad range of services
- emphasis is on increasing all professional's awareness of carers' needs
- shared education and working in carers' organisations

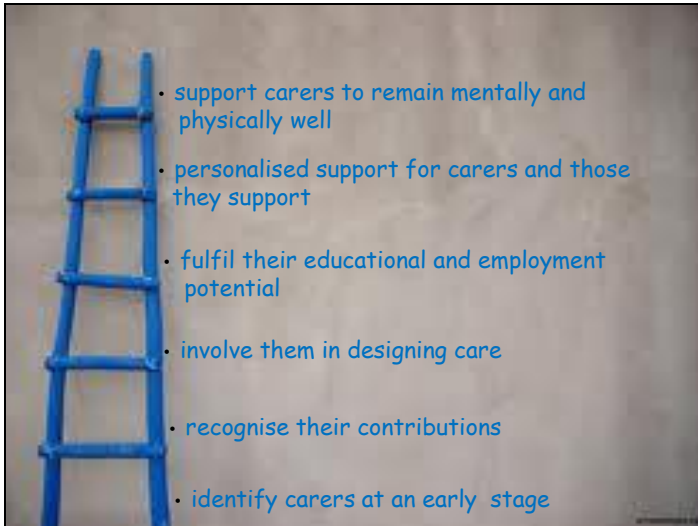
## THE NEXT STEPS.....

Recognised, valued and supported: next steps for the Carers Strategy (2010)

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_122077](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_122077)

- cross-Government strategy
- how the Coalition government will work with carers and carers organisations
- building on the strategic vision for carers in the National Carers Strategy 2008
- consultation with 4,000 carers

Priority areas until 2014 .....



## IMPLEMENTATION

- Carers and personalisation: improving outcomes (Department of Health, 2010)
- [http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_122107.pdf](http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh_122107.pdf)
- Aim = "to work more effectively, making better use of what we know and what we have" (Department of Health, 2010:5)

## THE FUTURE?

- there is evidence that efforts to support and empower carers will continue
- BUT the economic climate in the UK could thwart these efforts
- continuing importance of learning from others

**CONTACT ME !**

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