



Wiltshire Carers Strategy

2012 - 2015



Policy cover Information

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Policy control sheet

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Policy author(s)	Sue Crisfield
Lead Director	Robin Townsend, Service Director, Executive Office
Target audience	Frontline health and social care staff Commissioners Partner organisations Members of the public
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This policy should be read alongside	Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Support Strategy Personalisation Policy Young Carers Joint Commissioning Strategy Eligibility (how we prioritise needs) Policy Charging Policy
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This policy can be made available in a range of accessible formats if required.

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Introduction

The Wiltshire Carers Strategy 2012 – 2015 has been designed with Carers at its centre and is about making sure that action takes place. It outlines the commitments of various organisations in Wiltshire to develop and deliver good quality services to Carers. These organisations include **Wiltshire Council**, **NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group**, and providers of services to Carers, including those in the voluntary and community sector listed in Appendix 3.

In the 2011 Census, there were 47,608 people who said that they provided unpaid care in Wiltshire.
(See Appendix 1)

Definition of a Carer

In Wiltshire, a Carer is defined as follows:

“A Carer is someone who provides unpaid support to a family member, partner, friend or neighbour. This could be because they are ill, frail, disabled or have mental health or substance misuse problems.”

“A young Carer is a child or young person (up to the age of 25) whose life is affected by caring for someone with a disability or long-term illness, mental ill health or substance misuse, over and above just helping out.”

The term 'Carer' can be misused and should not be used for paid staff, such as care workers, because it can lead to misunderstanding relating to the recognition, status and rights of Carers. Many Carers do not recognise themselves as Carers, because they see the support and help that they give as part of their normal relationship with the person they care for.

Carers will be from any ethnic, faith or social background. They can be any gender and of any sexual orientation. Becoming a Carer might happen suddenly or it might be a gradual process which grows over time, with caring responsibilities that can vary over time and be difficult to predict day to day. Carers give practical and emotional support and may look after someone to keep them safe and the caring role can continue whilst the person being cared for is in hospital or another setting.

Parents and guardians of disabled children are Carers as well, and their role goes beyond that of a parent of a non-disabled child. This should be recognised by the services that support them in their role as both a parent and a Carer.

Some people with learning disabilities find themselves in a caring role. They have the same wishes and needs as other Carers,

but often they may find it even more difficult than other Carers to be recognised for what they are doing and to be offered any information, advice and practical support.

Carers of people with issues of problematic substance use can be an extremely hidden group of Carers. In the UK nearly 1.5 million adults are affected by a relative's drug use. There are also many thousands of unidentified problem drinkers and drug-users based on national and local data, so we can assume that at least one person will be providing care and support to them and many of these are likely to be parent Carers.

Each Carer will have their own individual needs based on their own life as well as their caring role, and this has been addressed in the action plan derived from this strategy.





Development of the Wiltshire Carers Strategy

This strategy has been developed in line with 'Recognised, valued and supported: Next steps for the Carers Strategy 2010'. It also builds upon the previous Wiltshire Carers Policy and Strategy, the Strategic Health Authority Self Assessment undertaken in 2011; national Carer's research and, most importantly, it reflects the main issues for Carers in Wiltshire.

Ongoing consultation and discussions with Carers and the organisations that represent them have taken place in recent years through various means including Carers' focus groups, [Wiltshire Carers Action Group](#) and other carers' groups and events. The feedback and views of Carers have been taken to form this strategy and influenced the commitments of [Wiltshire Council](#) and [NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group](#).

The Strategic Health Authority Self Assessment, which took place in early 2011, has also contributed to this strategy. It involved a process of consulting with Carers to identify what works well and what needs to be improved in terms of Carer's services in Wiltshire.

In developing this strategy an equalities analysis was completed and this has shown that there may be more specific activities required to ensure that the needs of all Carers are met. This will be further explored through consultation and investment in development work which will be ongoing throughout the term of the strategy. Issues identified will be incorporated in to the strategy and action plan through regular updates.

The users of the Wiltshire Carers Strategy

The [Wiltshire Carers Action Group](#) is responsible for the strategic development and implementation of the accompanying Action Plan. This strategy document is to be used by Carers, commissioners and those organisations which provide services to support carers.

It should be noted that within the definition of Carers there are three broad groups:

- Adult Carers
- Parent Carers
- Young Carers

Within these groups there are people who have differing needs and identities which we have taken account of through equalities analysis work.

[The Wiltshire Young Carers Joint Commissioning Strategy and Implementation Plan](#) should be read in conjunction with this Carers Strategy.

These groups of Carers are included within this strategy although it should be noted that there is a range of services that support these individual groups of Carers which are also identified in other local strategies and commissioning plans.





These documents look specifically at the different types of groups of people that Carers care for:

- Mental Health Strategy and Commissioning Plan 2008 – 2013
- Wiltshire Physical Impairment Strategy 2009 – 2014
- Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults in Swindon and Wiltshire (2006)
- Joint Learning Disabilities Commissioning Strategy
- Joint Dementia Commissioning Strategy
- Wiltshire Participation and Community Strategy (Children and Families) 2009 – 2011
- Wiltshire Commissioning Strategy for Aiming High
- Wiltshire Alcohol Strategy and Implementation Plan
- Wiltshire Drug Strategy and implementation Plan
- Wiltshire Young Carers Joint Commissioning Strategy and Implementation Plan
- End of Life Strategy

Principles of the Wiltshire Carers Strategy

Carers in Wiltshire tell us that they want to be respected and recognised for the valuable work that they do, that they want to be heard and acknowledged and that they want high quality services that meet their needs in a timely and appropriate manner.

The following principles inform this Carers Strategy, Carers and those providing services for Carers.

- Carers should be respected as expert care partners and recognised for the valuable work that they do.
- Carers should have timely access to the integrated and personalised services which they need in order to support them in their caring role.
- Carers should be heard and acknowledged as an important group of people, who should be treated with dignity.
- Carers should receive the support required to keep them physically and mentally well.
- Carers should be able to have a life of their own alongside their caring role.
- Carers should be supported so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role.
- Young Carers should be protected from inappropriate caring and should be given the support they need to learn, develop and enjoy thriving childhoods.
- Carers should be free from discrimination, so that they have free and equal access to services.¹

¹ Principles based upon outcomes within 'Recognised, valued & supported: Next steps for the Carer's Strategy' – 25.11.10 – Department of Health





Commitment to Carers in Wiltshire

There is commitment to Carers in Wiltshire to ensure that this Carers Strategy is carried out. This commitment is exemplified by the following:

- Carers are an important priority for all partner organisations.
- There is an action plan in place so that organisations and Carers can work together to plan, develop and improve future services.
- Work is being carried out to increase the number of people who recognise themselves as Carers and who are in contact with Carers' services.
- Carers can access timely and high quality Carers Assessments.
- Carers can access timely and high quality information, training and support services that meet their needs as Carers.
- Carers can access timely breaks from their caring role.
- Carers are treated as equal partners in care.
- Carers are free from discrimination when accessing services and carer support and when contributing and voicing their opinions.
- Support is in place so that Carers have access to the same life opportunities as non-carers.

Funding commitments

In October 2011, NHS Wiltshire pooled their budget for Carers with Wiltshire Council's.

Wiltshire Council took responsibility for the commissioning and regular monitoring of all services for Carers. The total annual pooled budget covering Carers of all ages for 2012/13 is **£1,411,169**.

In September 2012, the NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group confirmed they would continue to honour the arrangement and would match NHS Wiltshire's annual contribution into the pooled budget for a further two years, until 31 March 2015.





Next steps

The partner organisations in Wiltshire which have signed up to this Carers Strategy are listed in Appendix 3. They are committed to a set of actions and targets, which form part of the Wiltshire Carers Action Plan (WCAP).

Wiltshire Carers Action Group (WCAG) is the strategic planning group for the development of new and existing services to support Carers in Wiltshire. **WCAG** meets four times per year and its membership comprises Carers and representatives from all the partner organisations. The group members will review the Wiltshire Carers Strategy, together with the WCAP and act on identified Carers' issues.

The Wiltshire Carers Strategy will be reviewed annually and updated when necessary to reflect progress achieved and to respond to further improvements.

Appendix 1

Facts and figures

Within the UK, a national organisation called Carers UK has estimated that:

- more than three million Carers balance caring with paid work ²
- £11,000 is the average amount of income per year that someone loses as a result of being a Carer ³
- 58% of Carers are women and 42% are men ³
- 2.3 million people in the UK either become or stop being a Carer every year ³
- 21% of Carers look after a friend or neighbour ³
- there are 500,000 Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) Carers in England ⁴

In the 2011 Census ⁵, there were 47,608 people who said that they provided unpaid care in Wiltshire. The real figure is likely to be higher than this, as many people do not see the support they provide to their family or friends as unpaid care and so would not have identified themselves.

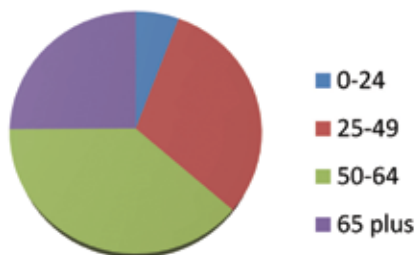
In 2011, Carers UK estimated that the value of unpaid care given by Wiltshire Carers is £727.6 million per year.

The tables and graphs below give information about the Carers in Wiltshire and this information was collected in the 2011 Census ⁶.

In Wiltshire:

- 42% of Carers are men and 58% of Carers are women
- 2,723 Carers are aged 24 and under: 5.8% of Carers in Wiltshire
- 11,876 Carers are 65 or over: 25.1% of Carers in Wiltshire

Proportion of Carers by age range



² Caring at a Distance: Bridging the gap, Carers UK, 2011.

³ Policy Briefing: facts about carers, Carers UK, 2009.

⁴ Half a million voices: Improving support for BAME carers, Carers UK, 2011.

⁵ Census, Office for National Statistics, 2011.

⁶ Valuing Carers 2011: Calculating the value of carers' support, Carers UK and University of Leeds, 2011.

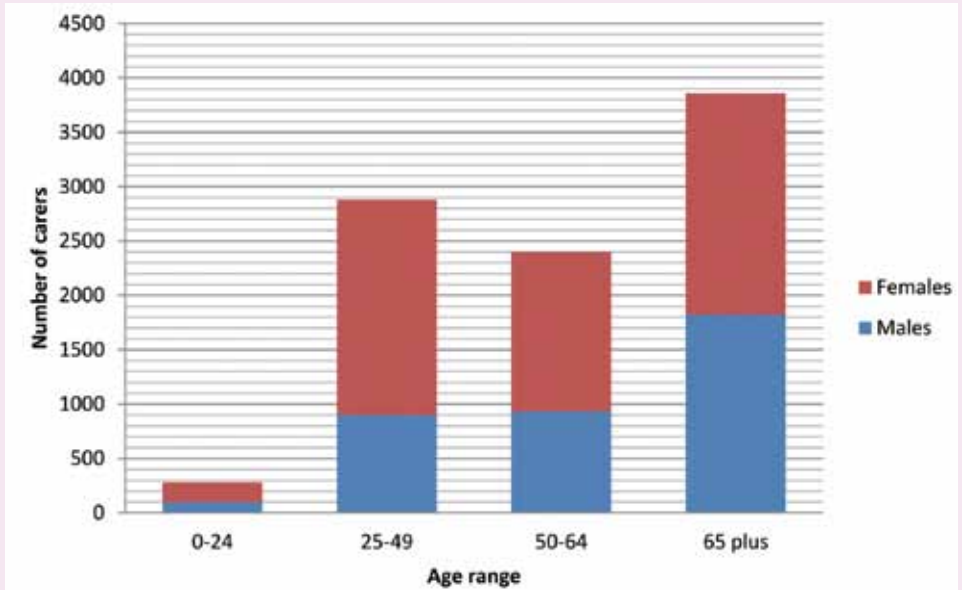
Carers by community area

Area	Number of Carers	% of population who are Carers
Amesbury	2,926	8.9%
Bradford on Avon	2,057	11.5%
Calne	2,362	10.2%
Chippenham	4,398	9.7%
Corsham	2,071	10.0%
Devizes	3,307	10.3%
Malmesbury	1,938	10.0%
Marlborough	1,794	10.0%
Melksham	3,146	11.1%
Mere	670	12.0%
Pewsey	1,475	10.6%
Salisbury	4,096	9.8%
Southern Wiltshire	2,457	11.2%
Tidworth	1,304	6.8%
Tisbury	816	11.1%
Trowbridge	4,261	10.2%
Warminster	2,552	10.4%
Westbury	1,986	10.1%
Wilton	1,038	11.4%
Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade	2,952	10.3%
Wiltshire	47,608	10.1%

The community areas that have the greatest proportion of Carers within their populations are Mere (12.0%), Bradford on Avon (11.5%), and Wilton (11.4%). The community areas that have the lowest proportion of Carers within their population include Tidworth (6.8%), Amesbury (8.9%) and Chippenham (9.7%).⁷

⁷ Census, Office for National Statistics, 2001.

Number of Wiltshire Carers providing 50 hours or more support per week



In Wiltshire, 69.5% of Carers provide 1 – 19 hours care per week, 10.6% provide 20 – 49 hours care per week and 19.9% provide 50+ hours care per week.⁸

It should be noted that the needs of a Carer do not solely relate to the number of hours care they provide. Other factors such as other sources of care provision, personal commitments such as children, family, employment and education and the Carer’s own health and wellbeing must be taken into account.

It should never be assumed that a Carer is able and willing to provide the care that they do.

The figures in the table below demonstrate that Carers in Wiltshire are more likely to have poor health compared to non-carers. This is particularly true for those Carers aged under 50 years. However, for Carers aged 50 and over their health is likely to be better than their non-caring counterparts.⁹

⁸ Census, Office for National Statistics, 2011.

⁹ Census, Office for National Statistics, 2011.

Age	Wiltshire population who are non-carers and who are in bad or very bad health		Wiltshire Carers who are in bad or very bad health	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
0-24	722	0.6%	47	1.7%
25-49	3,200	2.4%	545	3.8%
50-64	4,053	5.5%	807	4.4%
65 plus	7,420	10.5%	1,013	8.5%
Total	15,395	3.7%	2,412	5.1%

Carers of people with issues of problematic substance use are an extremely hidden group of Carers. Approximately 400,000 benefit claimants, which is around 8% of all working age benefit claimants in England, are dependent on drugs or alcohol and generate benefit expenditure costs of approximately £1.6 billion per year.¹⁰

In Wiltshire in 2011/12, there were approximately 1,352 people in treatment for drug and alcohol misuse, with around 30 new clients being referred per week. There are also many thousands of unidentified problem drinkers and drug-users based on national and local data, so we can assume that at least one person will be providing care and support to them and many of these are likely to be parent Carers.

¹⁰ Hay, G. and Bauld, L. (2008) Population estimates of problematic drug users in England who access DWP benefits: a feasibility study. DWP Working Paper No. 46. Department for Work and Pensions; and Hay, G. and Bauld, L (2010). Population estimates of alcohol mis-users who access DWP benefits. DWP Working Paper.No. 94. Department for Work and Pensions.

Appendix 2

National Policy and Legislation

The services and support available to Carers in the UK have come a long way in the last 20 years and one reason for this is the development of national policy and legislation. Some of the most important of these are:

- Carers (Recognition & Services) Act 1995 – This entitles Carers who provide or intend to provide regular and substantial care to someone who has a community care assessment and care plan to have an assessment of their own needs as a Carer.
- Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 – This extended the rights of Carers to an assessment of their caring needs, even when the person they care for refuses to be assessed. It also gave local authorities the power to provide services directly to Carers.
- Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 – This places a duty on local authorities to ensure that Carers receive information about their right to an assessment. This assessment must take into account the Carer's wishes in relation to taking part in leisure, education, training and work activities.
- Work and Families Act 2006 – This gave Carers the right to request flexible working.
- Carers at the Heart of 21st Century Families and Communities 2008 – This national strategy set out central government's short-term agenda and long-term vision for the future care and support of Carers.
- Recognised, Valued and Supported: Next steps for the Carers Strategy, 2010 – This is central government's agenda for carers and is a refresh of the previous National Carers Strategy, mentioned immediately above.
- Equality Act 2010 – This brings previous Acts and pieces of legislation in relation to anti-discrimination together into one single piece of legislation. Within this the protected characteristics which form the foundation of the Act include:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

For Carers the Equality Act is important because if they are caring for someone who is elderly or disabled, the law will now protect them against direct discrimination or harassment because of their caring responsibilities. This is because they are counted as being 'associated' with someone who is protected by the law because of their age or disability.¹¹

There have also been various other key pieces of legislation and policies that are important to Carers, which amongst others include:

- Valuing People (2001)
- Independence, Well-being and Choice (2005)
- Our Health, Our Care, Our Say (2006)
- Putting People First (2007)
- Aiming High for Disabled Children: Transforming Services for Disabled Children and their Families (2007)

¹¹ Equality Act 2010: What do I need to know as a carer?, Government Equalities Office, 2010.

Appendix 3

Partner organisations in Wiltshire

Wiltshire Council

NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Carer Support Wiltshire/Carers Trust

Alzheimer's Support

Alzheimer's Society

Spurgeons

Wiltshire Parent Carers Council

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

Wiltshire Addiction Support Project

Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living

Age UK

Information about Wiltshire Council services can be made available on request in other languages and formats such as large print and audio. Please contact the council by telephone on 0300 456 0100, or email customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk