

Report of the Cabinet Member Adult Social Care and Health Services

Introduction

I have been asked to report as follows for Full Council on 3 December 2020:

1. By Councillor Hannaford on the progress and outcomes of the new care home testing pilot scheme in Devon.
2. By Councillor Hannaford as follows: Devon County Council and Exeter City Council have worked successfully together to develop Edwards House an Extra Care Housing facility in Exeter. The needs assessment identified a further requirement for another extra care housing scheme for the West of Exeter.
3. By Councillor Connett on the work being undertaken to support Carers and Young Carers across Devon since March 2020 and over the coming months to the end of March 2021. I would like the briefing to cover the number of carers the council is assisting and identify any increases/decreases in requests for support so far this financial year.

Response

1. Care Home Testing Pilot Scheme

This is a small-scale pilot involving eight care homes in Devon and we are one of three Local Authorities (also Hampshire and Cornwall) who were selected, based on low prevalence rates.

The aim of the pilot is to examine the role of how testing of visitors, alongside other existing infection prevention/control measures, maximises safety. It will run for four weeks from 16 November to 13 December 2020. Homes received training through online webinars on 12/13th November before commencing the pilot on 16th November.

The testing will use a combination of new rapid-results tests as well as the tests already in use:

- weekly swab testing of regular visitors, using existing PCR swab testing technology
- new Lateral Flow Devices (LFD) tests which are taken before visitors enter the home with results available within 15 to 30 minutes.

As LFDs are new technology, any positive tests will be confirmed with a PCR test.

Feedback from the homes is collected through weekly online sessions, facilitated by the DHSC. The first one was held on 19th November.

Feedback from the homes has been mainly positive, reporting that the process is simple to follow and meaningful contact whilst wearing full PPE is appreciated. Relatives and residents have been very emotional with the pilot bringing hope and a glimpse of the new normal.

30 visitors had been tested as of 20th November. One visitor tested positive and went home to isolate whilst awaiting the result of the PCR result. One visitor refused testing because they didn't feel comfortable.

The DHSC will evaluate the pilot through interviews with homes and visitors, observations and review of all training and guidance.

The DHSC will lead a phased rolling out of the visitor testing to care homes in the first two weeks of December, ensuring all homes have this in place in time for Christmas.

2. Extra Care Housing Scheme

Devon County Council's Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care Housing (ECH) was approved by Cabinet in 2010 and included within it a needs assessment. The needs assessment was refreshed in 2015 by DCC's ECH lead, working with the DCC strategic planning team. The current needs assessment aligns to the strategic planning period up to 2033. This informs the Local Plans of the District Councils and is the one we use to inform our work with our housing/planning authority partners to identify suitable sites.

Edwards Court in Exeter is being developed by Exeter City Council and is due to complete in April 2021. We are in the process of jointly tendering for a housing and care operator for the scheme as a whole, with the City Council. This will provide 53 flats, leaving a forecast unmet need of a further 252 flats by 2033. We have stated that we would want these distributed across the city, which would include at least one scheme west of the Exe.

We are exploring the opportunity for a further ECH scheme of approx. 80 units on a site close to Morrison's supermarket.

Regarding the west of the Exe, we are continuing to look for a suitable site/opportunity, and are working closely with the City Council and the DCC strategic planning team to achieve this.

3. Carers and Young Carers

Adult carers of Adults

The Council supports adult carers both through its care management service and through its contract with Devon Carers.

Devon Carers is in contact with and providing support to 22,704 adult carers of adults.

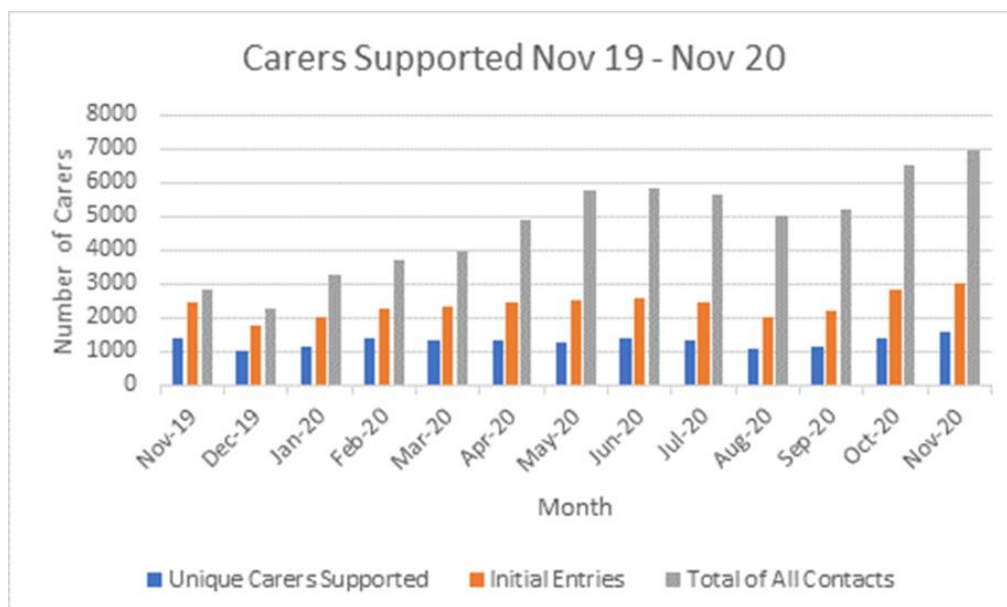
5,723 additional carers are known to the Council's care management services who are not known to Devon Carers, representing those cared-for people with the most complex needs, including those who require replacement care which numbered 536 in the last financial year (this financial year's figures will be heavily skewed due to COVID-19 and are unable to be reported).

The impact of the pandemic on carers is significant and, although the actual numbers of new carers is not yet known estimates are that, overall, the number has increased significantly. National estimates are that the total of people caring for adults may have increased by 50%. If replicated in Devon this would bring the number to of carers to 130,000 overall. At this stage it is unclear how long term this effect would be.

Calls to the Devon Carers contact centre increased in the quarter to end September to 3660, a 33% increase over the same time last year.

In 2019 the average number of new carers registered with Devon Carers was circa 300 per calendar month. In 2020 this has risen to 390 pcm. In May, August, and October this figure has been over 440 per month, with a peak at 489 in October

The chart below, backdated to November 2019 to show pre-COVID-19 support, shows that carer contacts have more than doubled over this period with a clear correlation to the pandemic's 'waves'.



Support offered to carers

In addition to the usual programme of support we have:

- A programme to identify carers early has been a long-standing part of the work but this has been strengthened in a new campaign, launched on 30th November to identify as many carers as possible
- A carers passport was also issued early in 2020 so that carers can show why they are travelling if stopped by the police
- PPE is also offered to carers free of charge where needed to fulfil their caring responsibilities
- The Devon Carers website and helpdesk provides a comprehensive service to carers seeking information, advice and support – both to those who are newly presenting and carers who are already in contact with the service. This is largely virtual or by telephone due to Covid restrictions
- Launched an invitation to care providers in October to join a list of replacement care services. This will shortly be made available to the public to access directly as well as to our staff to help them respond to carer need. A top priority for 2021 will be to develop this market
- A key feature of our response this year has been the early delivery of a service in the hospitals to support carers, prevent admission of cared for people and support discharge. Between April 2019 and end October 2020 this scheme helped 2,193 carers, 1,740 were not previously known to Devon Carers. This has been shortlisted for an award by the Health Service Journal and identified nationally as an exemplar of best practice
- Enhanced the availability of small Breaks payments, moving this to be available as quickly and as early as possible for carers to receive without the need for full assessment
- From mid-October offered a new small payments Covid 19 grants scheme for carers whose caring role has been adversely affected by Covid, and who otherwise might need an unscheduled review and an adjustment to a Direct Payment
- Provided ICT equipment to enable carers to stay in touch and also for Carer Ambassadors to participate in planning our response to carers
- Prioritised other improvements considered likely to be most urgently needed by carers such as online Peer Support and support to Contingency Planning.

Some aspects of our development programme for carers has had to be slowed or delayed to enable us to prioritise resources to offer this support to carers. We are also working with Devon Carers and the Carer Ambassadors to review the Carers' Offer and developing an action plan of priority areas of work for January-March 2021 that will improve support for carers as we enter a second wave recovery phase, these areas of priority are:

- **Personal wellbeing.** Focusing on supporting carers with developing personal resilience, coping skills, and stress management.
- **Promoting the independence of the cared-for person.** Focusing on empowering carers to be expert partners in care.
- **Breaks.** Focusing on both replacement care and enabling breaks which do not require replacement care.

- **Changes in care.** Focusing on supporting the cared-for person to live independently and supporting carers to develop the skills and confidence to enable this to happen.

Young carers who are being supported by the Young Carers Service from January 2020 to September 2020.

Summary

- There has been **an increase** from January 2020 in the number of young carers being supported by the service. **1,663** as at the end of Sept 2020
- Data indicates an increase in the number of open cases for young carers on The Early Help system, Right for Children, from February 2020. Also a small increase in the number of young carers known to the service and being supported through statutory Child in Need (CIN) and/ or child protection services and assessment. (see 'Getting More Help' below)
- There has been an increase in the number of 1st assessments the service have undertaken for young carers from January 2020 to September 2020. It is also worth noting the number of young carers who are awaiting an assessment from the service has also increased since January 2020 to September 2020. The Service Provider has a 'triage' process in place to help them to determine the priority for assessment. All young carers will receive communication indicating if they are waiting for an assessment. Work is underway with the provider to reduce this.

Service Support Offer	Number of Young Carers		
	Jan – Mar 2020	Apr – Jun 2020	Jul - Sept
Getting Advice	500	566	501
Getting Help	808	831	828
Getting More Help	82	86	83
Awaiting Assessment	165	217	251
1st assessment complete	92	126	131
Young carers known to the service also supported through CIN assessment	49	57	60
Young carers known to the also supported through child protection	34	36	44

Due to COVID many of the service functions have moved to a virtual delivery, however the service has worked to target face to face services for some young carers where this has been needed and in line with safety measures and national guidance to ensure safety of young carers and staff members.

- Assessments for young carers. The service has continued to undertake 1st assessments and review assessments using the outcomes to determine the level of service support which will best meet the needs of the young carer.
- Getting Advice support offer- This has continued through the period. Mode of delivery has been mainly through virtual methods with young carers.
- Getting Help service support offer: - This offer has seen the biggest impact due to COVID. Number of trips and activities and peer support group sessions run by the service and accessible locally in communities has significantly reduced due to COVID. Virtual groups have been created, developed and now offered as an alternative. Going forward likely a blended offer to continue with some face to face groups and virtual groups being available for young carers to choose from.

Additional activity in response to Covid/ Lockdown restrictions

- **Introduction of young carer ID cards** - ID cards were introduced following a request from a group of young carers for these during spring lockdown restrictions. Young carers have found these helpful in allowing them to continue with caring responsibilities through restrictions.
- **Getting More Help:** - Service have increased involvement with Early Help/ Multi-Agency support for young carers. The service are continuing to support partnership activity and engage through attending locality Early Help Triage and picking up relevant pieces of work.
- **The service has undertaken weekly 'check ins'** with as many of the most vulnerable young carers as possible through the period. Service have offered additional support and encouraged young carers to contact the service if they have needed less help previously but are now in need of additional support.
- **Transition support enhanced**, mostly delivered through virtual delivery method. Effective links with schools.
- **Continued multi-agency working** through the period to support young carers through Early Help and the Multi-Agency Steering Group This includes continuing to raise awareness of young carers as a vulnerable group of children and young people. The service have worked closely and successfully with Devon schools to facilitate support for young carers

Councillor Andrew Leadbetter
Cabinet Member
Adult Social Care and Health Services