

18 May 2015**Agenda Item: 10****REPORT OF THE ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN, FAMILIES
AND CULTURAL SERVICES****YOUNG CARERS UPDATE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update to the Children and Young People's Committee on the identification of and support for young carers across Nottinghamshire.

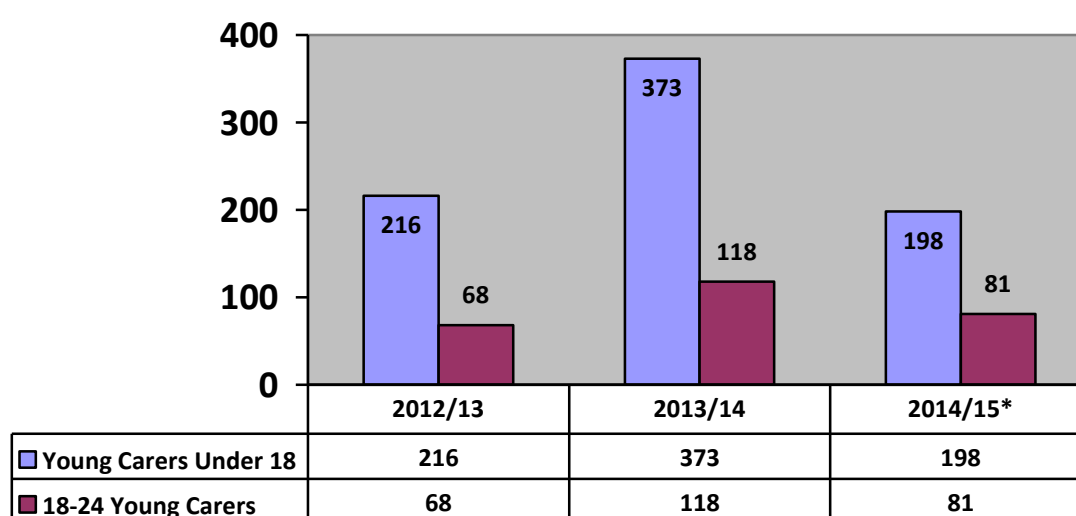
Information and Advice

2. The definition of a young carer is set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. A young carer is anyone under 18 years of age who provides care to a parent, sibling or other adult within the household on a regular basis. A young adult carer means a young person aged 18-24 years who is caring for or making a contribution to the care of a disabled parent. The parent or sibling being cared for can usually be characterised as having a:
 - Learning disability
 - Physical or sensory impairment
 - Long-term and/or chronic illness
 - Mental illness
 - Drug or alcohol related difficulty.
3. The Care Act (2014) requires local authorities to identify any children who are involved in providing care and to consider whether the child or young carer should be referred for a needs assessment under the Children Act 1989, or a young carer's assessment under section 63 of the Care Act. The assessment must explore:
 - the impact of the person's needs on the young carer's wellbeing, welfare, education and development;
 - whether any of the caring responsibilities the young carer is undertaking are inappropriate.
4. The majority of disabled parents carry out their parenting role without needing either NHS or social care support, particularly if they have the support of family and friends. However, for some families the illness or impairment is much more acute and they require input from support services. In such circumstances taking on a caring role can impact heavily on a child or young person's ability to maintain relationships within the family and with their peer group, prevent them from accessing education or cause them to be regularly absent

from school. They may become involved in activities which are not age appropriate such as administering medication and/or providing personal care such as bathing or toileting to the person being cared for.

5. Based upon the Census 2001 projections, it was estimated that there were over 4,700 carers in the 5-24 years age range across Nottinghamshire, of which approximately 2,900 were in the 5-19 years age range. The average age of the young carer was 12 years and the average number of hours per week spent caring was 19. According to research conducted by the University of Nottingham in 2010, 8% of secondary school children could be a young carer i.e. 9,600.
6. The overall number of young carers identified through referrals to services in Nottinghamshire has been significantly lower than the projections above might suggest. This may in part reflect a lack of confidence amongst practitioners (who historically work with adults) in feeling equipped to assess and respond to the needs of children. So as outlined in the Ofsted report 'What About the Children' (2013), there may be some benefit in bringing practitioners from adult and children's services together more frequently for joint training around this issue.
7. In April 2011, Nottinghamshire County Council agreed an additional investment of £1.8 million to support and improve the lives of young carers and their families. This investment supports personal budgets for disabled parents to reduce their dependency on the support of young carers, and also delivers personal budgets to meet the needs and outcomes of young carers in the form of direct payments.
8. As the chart below indicates, since April 2012 almost 800 assessments have been completed for young carers under 18 years and 267 assessments completed for adult young carers aged 18-24 years. The figure for 2014-15 only includes assessments completed during the first three quarters.

Assessments for Young Carers



9. Work is being undertaken to source some comparative data as there is no information published nationally at present.

10. Young carers (and those people assisting young carers) can access information about services in a number of ways. The recently created Carers Information Pack contains a number of factsheets to support carers; this pack also includes a sheet specifically for young carers which is available as a background paper. The Carers Information packs were distributed to CCG's, Carers Federation and Community Health Teams in 2014. A number of Carer Roadshows were run in the Autumn of 2014. There is a link to a variety of useful website for carers from www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk and we make use of social media channels including the Councils Facebook page and Twitter feed to communicate information to young carers.
11. Support is offered to young carers to meet their outcomes, encompassing a whole family approach to supporting disabled parents (with a physical, learning or mental illness, including substance misuse) and their children. The Adult Social Care Younger Adult teams conduct young carers' assessments for those looking after disabled parents and provide support for the parent so that the young person is not conducting caring that is inappropriate for their age. Three dedicated posts have recently been agreed and are being recruited to within Adult Social Care and Health.
12. A managed personal budget is available to a disabled parent who needs additional care or respite through existing care agencies in order to give the young carer a break. This care must be commissioned in the disabled parent's name with funding from the Community Care Budget and will therefore be financially assessed. Financial support is also available to the young carer through a personal budget.
13. The University of Nottingham developed two excellent and well researched tools to use with young carers. The MACA (multi-dimensional assessment of caring activity) is a questionnaire completed by the young carer to determine the amount of caring they undertake. The PANOC (positive and negative aspects of caring), also completed by the young carer, is a series of questions to determine how the young carer rates the activities they carry out. Both the MACA and PANOC questionnaires are now part of the young carers' assessment process. All young carers are asked to complete these questionnaires as part of their assessment and Adult Social Care and NHS staff are encouraged to complete a review after four months and ask the young carers to complete the questionnaires again.
14. Designated face to face support for young carers is commissioned by Targeted Support and Youth Justice. The Young Carer Workers are seconded from the Service Provider into the Targeted Support Locality Teams. These are multi-disciplinary teams dealing with a range of issues which require an Early Help response and as such this ensures that support to young carers is provided in an integrated manner. At any one time Targeted Support provides more intensive support to about 30-40 young carers. In addition to this, Targeted Support undertakes about 10 Sibling Young Carer assessments or reviews monthly.
15. The support starts with an assessment and from this the allocated Targeted Support Case Manager/Officer will agree a plan of work with the child, young person and/or family. This could include: providing some emotional support; helping sort out problems with their education; help and advice about activities or community resources they can access; advice and support for accessing assessments for the adult or sibling being cared for through a personal budget; or access to a personal budget for themselves. The service

will also help young carers to develop coping strategies and provide information to help the young carer to understand their parent's illness.

16. In addition 'What About Me' offers support to young people living with someone who is misusing alcohol or drugs. Some of these young people are also young carers and it is intended to further align the support for this group of young people within the Integrated Family Support project.

Evaluation

17. The key method of evaluation of services and the effect on young carers is most effectively determined through the MACA and PANOC questionnaires. The University of Nottingham young carers' questionnaires (MACA and PANOC) were used for evaluation purposes and, as previously mentioned, are now part of the young carers' assessment process. The MACA represents the amount of caring where scores over 15 represent a high amount. The PANOC has two scores where a positive score below 12 or a negative score about 8 would represent cause for concern.
18. In 2013, 145 young carers were part of an evaluation process and were asked to complete MACA and PANOC questionnaires. The young carers were asked to complete these questionnaires as part of their assessment and were then reviewed after four months and asked to complete the questionnaires again. **Appendix 1** provides some case studies where the MACA/PANOC were used and describes the support put in place and the impact of this for the young person.
19. The results identified a significant reduction in the negative impact of caring. These results show that there was no significant difference to the amount of caring or the positive impact that the personal budget was having, but it has demonstrated a significant reduction (24%) to the negative impact. These results are in line with national statistics produced by the University of Nottingham. Providing personal budgets to young carers to meet their educational needs, social and leisure activities has made a significant reduction to the negative impact that caring is having.
20. It continues to be a challenge to identify young carers. Young carers report that it is often the 'stigma' of caring which sets them apart from other young people, which may inhibit them from seeking help. The overall volume of referrals remains low, particularly from schools despite significant effort to develop awareness amongst universal services. Identification by universal services remains low (schools and health), and identification by Adult Social Care services is patchy.
21. A number of promotional activities have been undertaken by the Local Authority in an effort to increase the awareness of practitioners about the needs of young carers and as a result to increase the identification of young carers. These include:
 - the use of social media channels (Facebook and Twitter) to promote activities to young carers
 - the posting of online resources for young carers on the Council's web pages
 - eight carer road shows took place in September and October 2014 attended by over 700 people

- 7,500 carer packs including specific information about young carers were distributed to services and practitioners across Nottinghamshire in the Autumn of 2014.
22. The Local Authority works very closely with all Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and partners across the voluntary and community sector. The Council has an Integrated Carers Strategy and a joint budget managed on behalf of the CCGs.
23. Following a Serious Case Review, a survey of social care staff was undertaken in 2014 to ascertain staff perspectives on supporting carers across Nottinghamshire. The results indicated varying degrees of experience and confidence amongst Adult Social Care Staff to undertake assessments of young carers. Whilst clearly many workers will never come into contact with young carers, it is important to encourage all staff to be aware of young carers in their work.

Other Options Considered

24. No alternative options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

25. To ensure elected Members remain informed about the support to young carers in Nottinghamshire.

Statutory and Policy Implications

26. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the update on the identification of and support to young carers be noted.

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Constitutional Comments

27. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (SS 18/03/15)

28. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

'What About the Children' - Ofsted report (2013)

Carers Information Pack - young carers factsheet

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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