**Monmouthshire County Council**

**Responses to Carers Wales Track the Action Information Request**

**Submitted by Carers Team, Adult Social Services, September 2024**

**Information Provided Relates to 2023/24 Financial Year**

Section 1: Please can you tell Carers Wales:

**Please describe the standard journey of an unpaid carer in your local authority area from identification through to a Carers Needs Assessment. If this is modelled in your local authority, then please feel free to share this with us.**

Adult unpaid carer

* Unpaid carer will either self-identify as such or be identified by a professional
* Unpaid carer will request or be offered a carers needs assessment
* If an unpaid carer accepts a carers needs assessment it will be undertaken by
1. A social care professional who is already involved with the cared for. However, if the social care professional deems it will be a conflict of interest for them to undertake the assessment it will be handed over to a Carers Information and Support Worker.
2. If the cared for is not known to social services, the assessment will be undertaken by a Carers Support and Information Worker.
* The assessment will be undertaken in a place of the unpaid carers choosing.
* The outcome of the assessment/conversation will determine needs and how best to meet identified needs.

Young carer

* A young person can be referred for support by an adult or by self-referral
* The referral will go through the SPACE panel
* The SPACE panel will determine which agency(ies) are best suited to support the young person
* If the young person is referred to the Young Carers & Young Adult Carers Assessment Worker, the worker will have an initial conversation with the young person and their family to ascertain
1. Who the adult is within the caring network, and where and with whom the caring responsibilities lie. If the caring responsibilities lie with an adult, they (adult) will be offered a carer needs assessment.
2. If caring responsibilities sit with a young person, a carer needs assessment is offered.
* Predominately an initial assessment is undertaken in the young person’s home.
* The outcome of the assessment/conversation will determine needs and how best to meet identified needs.

**In what ways can unpaid carers receive information and advice from your local authority and how many unpaid carers received information and advice through these sources?**

* Monmouthshire County Council website
* Monmouthshire Carers Network Facebook page
* Young Carers Facebook page
* By telephoning the duty desk
* Young carers workers attending schools and providing young carers school-based activities
* Ad hoc conversations with a range of social care professionals
* Talking to a social care professional who is supporting the person they (unpaid carer/young carer) care for
* Carers needs assessment
* Adult and young carers newsletters
* By attending carers/young carers events and activities
* Through commissioned carer service providers

It is not possible to quantify the numbers receiving information, support and advice through these different channels. These numbers are not recorded.

**What carer-related training and development do staff supporting unpaid carers receive and how many staff have accessed carer-related training and development? This could include customer service, social workers/OTs, carer teams, housing teams etc.**

Adult Services Training– Unpaid Carers are discussed in training re the following

* Carers' right to an assessment
* Meeting care and support needs
* Legislation, includes unpaid carers in relation to Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014
* Direct care induction including newly qualified social workers
* How paid carers and unpaid carers may do things differently in relation to tasks such as giving medication and moving and handling.
* Safeguarding training. Discussing carer stress as a risk factor and the need for preventative steps such as Carers Needs Assessment, providing respite. 126 Participants
* Preparing to register for direct care workforce 28 Participants
* First year in practice social work workshops 18 Participants
* Professional boundaries 27 Participants
* Collaborative communication 9 Participants
* Dementia Care Matters
* Manual Handling 114 Participants
* Care of Medications 80 Participants

Children's Services have access to self-guided learning through the Community Care Portal.

* Section 24 – Duty to assess the needs of a carer for support
* Young carers: quick guide to the law
* Support for parent carers and young carers: guide to the law

**How many fulltime equivalent posts were available and able to undertake Carers Needs Assessments in your local authority and/or funded by your local authority?**

This number cannot be quantified. It is not possible to determine the capacity of individual social workers to undertake a carer needs assessment, alongside their capacity to undertake other aspects of their role. We have 3 part-time Carers Support & Information Workers, whose role includes undertaking carers needs assessments alongside other tasks and responsibilities that support unpaid carers. Full-time equivalent = 1.78. We have a Young Carers & Young Adult Carers Assessment Worker = 1 full time equivalent. However, children’s social workers are also qualified to undertake carers needs assessments.

**How many Carers Needs Assessments have been undertaken in your local authority area? Please define the total number of Carers Needs Assessments and how many were stand alone and how many were part of a combined disability needs assessment.**

It is not possible to determine which were part of a combined disability needs assessment. Data recording does not allow us to collate this information.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Adults | 2023/24 |
| The total number of carers needs assessments for adults undertaken during the year | 147 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Young Carers | 2023/24 |
| The total number of young carers needs assessments undertaken during the year | 16 |

**On average, how long did a Carers Needs Assessment take in your local authority, from referral to when carers are informed of the outcome of their assessment?**

This cannot be accurately quantified. Each assessment is individual. An outcome may be determined and actioned in-situ e.g. the outcome of the assessment is the carer needed the time to talk to someone about their caring role, a chance to off load. If the outcome determines other agencies need to be involved that will take time to source.

**Within the relevant 2023-24 budgets, how many Carers Needs Assessments could be theoretically delivered each calendar year in your local authority area? (We understand this may be an estimate)**

This cannot be quantified. We can only report on numbers of assessments undertaken. Not everyone takes up the offer of a carers needs assessment, and not everyone responds when they are being contacted to arrange a carer needs assessment.

**How many unpaid carers were in receipt of a support package or direct payments? If possible, please split between where a carer has been included as part of a disabled person’s support package and where a carer gets support in their own right.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Adult Carers | 2023/24 |
| Needs could be met with a carer’s support plan or care and support plan | 34 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Young Carers | 2023/24 |
| Needs could be met using a young carer’s support plan or care and support plan | 12 |

**What is the cost of an average support package or direct payment over a financial year for an unpaid carer?**

Unable to quantify this answer. Each carer/young carer needs are individual. The carer needs assessment does not always result in a care and support package. However, a support package could be deemed as the unpaid carer/young carer having the ability to talk to a professional about their caring role, having access to free events and activities, receiving regular information (newsletters) or being able to access carers grants.

Section 2: Please can you tell Carers Wales:

**What new services for unpaid carers were commissioned and delivered by the local authority in the financial year April 2023 to March 2024?**

Bridging the Gap Gwent. This service was commissioned by Newport City Council and is accessed by all local authorities within the Gwent region. NEWCIS manage and deliver this respite scheme which provides unpaid carers/young carers with a short period of rest from their caring role.

**What ongoing services for unpaid carers continued to be funded and delivered by the local authority in the financial year April 2023 to March 2024?**

Commissioning third sector organisations to provide unpaid carers services.

* + Adferiad –supporting unpaid adult carers, and young carers (where applicable) of adults with a mental health illness.
	+ Age Cymru Gwent and Care Collective\* -A flexible respite service that affords carers time away from their caring role, knowing that the person they care for is being supported during that time.
	+ Building Bridges – supporting parent carers to have time away from their caring role, and to meet up and enjoy fun activities with other parent carers.
* Offering a range of free unpaid carers events and activities directly managed by Carers Team and Young Carers Service, Monmouthshire County Council
	+ A yearly programme of free events for young carers and unpaid adult carers including events for Carers Rights Day and Carers Week.
	+ Regular newsletters
	+ Discounted MonLife membership
* Providing information, advice and adult/young carers needs assessments
* Working alongside community groups and health and social care professionals, so they are more able to identify and support unpaid carers and young carers.

\*Care Collective ceased to be in operation from March 2024.

**Please provide examples and how these have supported unpaid carers so we can share good practice.**

Carers events and activities continue to be a valuable offer for young carers and adult carers alike. They provide an opportunity for young carers and adult carers to meet new people, in some instances develop friendships and for the Carers Team to informally check in and see how the caring role is.

Feedback from a young carers trip to West Midland’s Safari Park

“Was an amazing opportunity not just for the kids but for the parents to enjoy that one to one time watching them enjoy there self while your self being able to enjoy and share that treasured memories together.”

Feeback from an adult carers trip to Birmingham Christmas Market.

“Thank you so much for organising the Coach Trip so well to Birmingham on Tuesday. Both L and I had the most wonderful day, without any worries at all about driving or trying to navigate our way into the centre of Birmingham, and more especially trying to find a parking space. For me in particular, the trip was totally hassle and stress free, and very, very relaxing.”

Section 3:

**There is currently a gap between the aspirations of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act regarding unpaid carers receiving information, advice and support and the reality of carers receiving this. We understand that this is due to a variety of reasons. How do you think the gap could be closed and more specifically, what would help your local authority to do this?**
The default position places a Carers Needs Assessment as the central pillar of support for a carer/young carer. The Carers Needs Assessment is one aspect of support in a multitude of other options that might better suit a carer’s needs. Similarly, the Social Services and Wellbeing Act implies that the responsibility to support a carer/young carers lies predominately with the Local Authority. This has made Local Authorities the default agency for which carers are referred to, when it maybe the referring agency or another agency which is best suited to support the carer/young carer.

The Act implies that the offer of a Carers Needs Assessment will automatically result in a carer accepting the offer, engaging with the assessment process and being able to or willing to take up the offers of support. For instance, if the outcome of an assessment is a carer wants a break from their caring role, and the only way to meet that need is for the cared for to also engage in facilitating the carers need, if the cared for is not willing to engage, the carer’s needs cannot always be met.

Consistency of information should be provided across the board about what a Carers Needs Assessment is and is not.

* That it is the responsibility of all agencies to look at how they can support a carer/young carer so that they are not putting the young carer/carer into a revolving door situation.
* That young carers should be regarded as a young person first and foremost, and that it should always be clarified who is the adult in the caring network.
* Having more open conversations about understanding where the responsibility lies for a carer/young carer to achieve the outcomes they are seeking.