

Background information for Carers Report to Executive October 2009

Defining carers

1. The term 'carer' applies to people who provide care on an unpaid basis. Carers help friends or relatives who are ill, frail or disabled to live with as much independence and dignity as possible.
2. Carers can be adults or young people.
3. Adult carers are also people with parental responsibility for a disabled child who provides, or intends to provide, a substantial amount of care on a regular basis for the child.

Prevalence

4. 1 in 8 people are, or will be, carers (source: Carers UK).
5. Carers save £84 billion in health and social care costs each year (source: Carers UK)
6. There are approximately 25,210 carers in Central Bedfordshire (source: Office of National Statistics)
7. There will be an estimated 28,960 carers in Central Bedfordshire by 2021 (source Office of National Statistics).

Carers Legislation and Local Authority Responsibilities

8. Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
 - (a) Carers aged over 16 who care for someone aged over 18, and parents of disabled children, have the right to request an assessment of their needs even when the person they care for refuses an assessment.
 - (b) Local Authorities have the power to provide carers with services (Direct Payments and Vouchers) which can help them to care
9. Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
 - (a) Local Authorities have a duty to inform carers of their right to an assessment
 - (b) Ensure that work, life-long learning and leisure are considered when a carer is assessed

(c) Local Authorities have the power to enlist the help of Housing, Health, Education and other Local Authorities to provide support to carers

10. Work and Families Act 2006

(a) Carers have the right to request flexible working from their employer

(b) The employer may only refuse flexible working if it will damage the business or have an impact on other employees.

James Robinson-Morley
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