

**From:** Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing

**To:** Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

**Decision No:** 15/00102

**Subject:** **COMMISSIONED SERVICES FOR ADULT CARERS OF VULNERABLE ADULTS**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** Social Care Health and Wellbeing DMT/ CCG Accountable Officers - 4 November 2015  
Adult Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee - 3 December 2015

**Future Pathway of Paper:** Cabinet Member decision

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:** The Short Breaks contract supports adults who care for other vulnerable adults, including older people, people with a learning disability or people with mental health problems. It is jointly funded by Health and Kent County Council (KCC) and has been in place for three years. The contract is coming to its natural end on 30 April 2016. However, funding has been identified to re-commission the service for a further two years until 31 March 2018.

**Recommendation:** The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health is asked to:-

- a) agree to re-commission the short breaks for adult carers of vulnerable adults; and
- b) delegate authority for the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to authorise the letting of the contract.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Carers make a significant contribution to the health and social care economy and their important role has been identified at a national level. KCC has new duties towards carers under the Care Act 2014 and the Five Year Forward View commits the NHS to find new ways to support carers, to build on the new rights created by the Care Act and to help some of the most vulnerable carers.

- 1.2 There is widely accepted evidence that carers contribute £119bn to the UK economy each year by supporting vulnerable people to remain outside of formal services for longer<sup>1</sup>. A report by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services concluded: “There is significant evidence ... that suggests that investment in carers’ services to support them in their caring role is financially beneficial for social care and sees a significant return on any investment made”. However we also know that carers are more likely to be in poor health themselves and to be economically deprived. The Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises the importance of maintaining carers to continue their caring roles and particularly highlights the need to support carers of people with dementia by *increasing the numbers of carers assessments and carers accessing short breaks*.
- 1.3 Carers play a pivotal role in supporting those they care for to achieve their outcomes and enabling them to remain living in their own home. Carers have repeatedly told us that accessing regular short breaks and access to breaks in a crisis is key to supporting them to continue in their caring role, whilst enabling them to have a life of their own and reducing the likelihood of carer breakdown.
- 1.4 Research carried out by the Personal Social Services Research Unit in Kent in 2012 showed that 31% of residential or nursing home admissions are caused by carer breakdown and although it is harder to evidence links between preventative community based work and whole systems outcomes there has been a reduction in care home admissions since we strategically commissioned carers’ services in 2013.

## **2. Short Breaks service to Adult Carers**

- 2.1 KCC and the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in Kent have been working in partnership to co-commission carers’ services since April 2013.
- 2.2 On 1 November 2013 an 18 month contract (plus a one year optional extension) was awarded to the local carers’ charity Crossroads Care Kent to provide a suite of new services to widen the preventative offer to carers, aiming to avoid hospital and residential care home admission.
- 2.3 The Short Breaks contract provides for the delivery of practical help through planned and unplanned breaks in the home which are delivered to the ‘cared for’ for the benefit of the carer. The contract includes:
- 2.3.1 Planned sitting services** (short breaks) of three hours per week to 400 carers of vulnerable adults.

Losing touch with friends, colleagues and family members can cause carers to become socially isolated. Almost half of carers reported that they had lost touch with friends and experienced difficulties in their relationship with their partner due to their caring role. A major contributory factor was the lack of practical help<sup>2</sup>. The planned breaks service provides regular opportunities for carers to maintain social networks outside of the caring role. It promotes

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<sup>1</sup> Buckner and Yeandle, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Alone and Caring (Carers UK)

carer resilience by supporting them to achieve their own outcomes, improve wellbeing and maintain the caring role for longer.

### **2.3.2 An urgent 24hr crisis response service** with the additional funding from CCGs to target those caring for people with dementia.

Caring can be a fulfilling role but it can have negative effects, with 84% of carers reporting they feel more stressed due to caring<sup>3</sup>. Carers are also at greater risk of suffering from depression and combined with increased stress levels the potential for the caring situation to breakdown is high. Carer breakdown not only impacts on the carer but also the cared for person and without the right support at the right time the default intervention is often a hospital or residential home admission.

The 24hr crisis service responds within two hours of referral and works to stabilise the caring situation by providing replacement care in the persons' own home and avoiding most costly residential and hospital services. In 2014/15 the crisis service prevented 119 hospital and 220 residential care home admissions.

### **2.3.3 Health appointment service** which provides replacement care to enable a carer to attend their own health appointments.

Many carers are unable to find the time for medical check-ups and treatment and those providing round the clock care are more than twice as likely to be in bad health than non-carers<sup>4</sup>. The health appointment service provides carers with a single point of access to book their own replacement care and provides peace of mind that the person they care for will be supported. This service provides opportunities for carers to look after their own health to prevent conditions from deteriorating which leads to more costly health and social care services being required in the longer term.

## **3. Financial Implications**

3.1 Carers' services have been commissioned as universal, preventative services, free at the point of delivery because they help avoid the costs of a residential, nursing or hospital admission.

3.2 The current Short Breaks contract has used all available extension periods and expires on 30 April 2016. A budget of £800k per annum is available from KCC for the short breaks service for the next two years. CCGs are seeking their own governance regarding the £700k they have invested in previous years. If CCGs continue to invest in the service, the total value of the contract will be £3m over the two years.

## **4. Links to KCC's Strategic Framework**

4.1 Carers' support services contribute to KCC's Strategic Outcome: Older and vulnerable residents are safe and supported with choices to live independently and the following Supporting Outcomes:

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<sup>3</sup> State of Caring 2015 (Carers UK)

<sup>4</sup> Census 2011

- Families and carers of vulnerable and older people have access to the advice, information and support they need
- Residents have greater choice and control over the health and social care services they receive
- The health and social care system works together to deliver high quality community services

## 5. Impact on residents

5.1 Last year the service provided 11,800 hours of urgent support to 474 carers and delivered 40,444 hours of planned breaks to 400 carers. The health appointments service delivered 1,603 hours to 275 carers.

5.2 Some example Case Studies are showcased in Appendix 2.

## 6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Care Act 2014 makes clear that carers have the same rights as those they care for and should have access to the support they need. Local Authorities must offer carers an assessment based on the appearance of need and have a duty to meet unmet eligible needs. Local authorities must also provide or arrange services that help prevent people developing needs for care and support or delay people deteriorating so that they would need ongoing care and support.

## 7. Equality Implications

7.1 None

## 8. Other Options Considered

8.1 Do nothing: the services provided through this contract will end. This will mean the Local Authority's capacity to meet its statutory responsibilities to carers will be limited. This would result in more carers going into crisis and increasing admissions to care homes and hospitals. 400 people will lose their planned break each week.

## 9. Recommendations

**Recommendation:** The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health is asked to:-

- a) agree to re-commission the short breaks for adult carers of vulnerable adults; and
- b) delegate authority for the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to authorise the letting of the contract.

## 10. Background Documents

Buckner and Yeandle, 2011

<http://circle.leeds.ac.uk/files/2012/08/110512-circle-carers-uk-valuing-carers.pdf>

Alone and Caring (Carers UK)

<http://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/alone-caring>

State of Caring 2015 (Carers UK)

<https://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/state-of-caring-2015>

Census 2011

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/index.html>

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