

Denbighshire Community Support Services

Summary of the Carers Wales ‘Track the Act’ Briefing 2 (published Sep 2017)

The following table sets out the most salient findings from the Track the Act programme which monitors the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. It also includes Carers Wales’ response to the findings, and provides a Denbighshire response together with actions that Denbighshire intend to take to further ensure that it is meeting its statutory obligations to carers in line with the requirements of the Act.


The findings of the report are based on:

- Freedom of Information requests to local government - 7 local authorities didn’t respond. For this reason, the information from the FOIs hasn’t been collated and there are no comments on individual performance in case it distracted from their overall findings *[Denbighshire provided a response from adults and children’s services.]*
- Carers ‘Track the Act’ survey – 517 Carers completed the survey. Those who responded represent every Welsh council. There is no information, however, on how many responded from each county and which ‘carer group’ they represent. The majority of respondents were already in the social care system.
- Analysis of statistics published by Welsh government
- Review of council websites.

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<p>General</p> <p>Some councils have well thought out and clearly articulated strategies for ensuring they are meeting their statutory duties.</p> <p>There are however significant differences between these strategies and consequently how councils are</p>		<p>Despite the lack of response from some councils, It would have been helpful if the data had been collated, and compared with the last FOI in September 2016. It is difficult to see at a glance how pertinent the findings are to each local authority area and what actions they might want to take.</p>	<p>CSSIW report also calls for strategies to be refreshed in line with the SSWBA and have coherent commissioning plans. Denbighshire’s Carers Strategy 2016-19 does reflect the SSWBA. It has elements of commissioning within it but is not primarily a Comm Strategy.</p>

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<p>now delivering services on the ground. This means carers experience a 'post code lottery' of how and when they are assessed, if at all, and the services they subsequently receive, if any. This lack of consistency also obstructs a clear view on whether councils are delivering effective services.</p>		<p>Some additional profiling of the respondents (e.g. number of Carers from each county, age, carer 'group' would have been helpful to enable councils to determine whether the lack of consistency in fact relates to a specific carer group, and to help councils to address this.</p>	<p>All the FOI data, however, has been published, and all 6 NW authorities provided a response. So it would be possible to get a regional picture.</p> <p>The data could be used to further inform the NW Carers Regional Business Plan in terms of consistency of approach and provision of services.</p> <p>Discuss report at Carers Strategy Group to gather views and any concerns.</p> <p>Take up Carers Wales offer to meet up & discuss challenges/opportunities under the Act/provide them with more detail on how DCC supports Carers.</p>
<p>Information Advice & Assistance</p> <p>Carers are happy with the advice received from someone working for a council (or a third party acting on their behalf). Increasing numbers of carers are also seeing information produced by councils which is designed to support them in their role.</p> <p>Research indicates that most councils still do not know how many carers they are providing IAA to. Although there is</p>	<p>WG should</p> <p>Review how the data it collects on IAA and carer's needs assessments can be used to contract and compare the performance of councils.</p> <p>Local Government should</p>	<p>Denbighshire does gather this data, however, the accuracy and completeness of performance information for 2016/17 was problematic due to the significant changes in operational and systems practices which occurred incrementally throughout the year, some of which are still ongoing. These changes resulted from the transition to new ways of working in response to the SSWBA.</p>	<p>Denbighshire currently gathers this data from SPoA & Paris systems. Manual statistics are gathered from Talking Points.</p> <p>Statutory assessments undertaken by NEWCIS on behalf of DCC are all entered onto Paris.</p> <p>Currently working on enabling NEWCIS Well Being Officers to enter their own assessments directly onto Paris if the Carer is in need of statutory assistance</p>

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<p>no specific duty to collect this data, it seems counter intuitive that councils have chosen not to put in place systems that can collect relatively basic data given its importance.</p>	<p>Collect data on the number of carers contacting them</p>		<p>(including the new voucher pilot scheme). This will streamline the process for Carers needing statutory assistance.</p> <p>Carers Data Book – manual tool to collate data across statutory & third sector. Could be more diligent about completing & keeping up to date.</p>
<p>Carer’s Needs Assessment /’ What Matters’ Conversations</p> <p>From figures produced by WG on the number of assessments undertaken by each council, there remains significant unexplained variability in the level of assessments.</p> <p>The approach to providing CNAs varies significantly between authorities, indicating that, despite training & support from WG, there isn’t a national approach to how assessments are undertaken. This creates a ‘postcode lottery’ where carers in some areas will receive an assessment, and others won’t.</p> <p>Where councils are using ‘What Matters’ conversations as an</p>	<p>WG should</p> <p>Review the current use of ‘What Matters’ conversations as carer’s needs assessments in order to gather evidence of:</p> <p>i) Whether carers are given adequate written notice of an assessment, arranged at a convenient date, time and place for the carer</p> <p>ii) Whether carers are being offered support such as advocacy before they are assessed</p> <p>iii) Whether carers are aware that they are being assessed during</p>	<p>Prior to the SSWBA, we were aware that many Carers who were taken through a full statutory assessment process in fact only required basic information and signposting that was proportionate to their needs at the time so, in many respects, the proportionate approach under the Act has been welcomed.</p> <p>In addition, historically, carers have said that the term ‘assessment’ can in itself be a barrier as it suggests an assessment of their ability to care (despite efforts to use the term <u>needs</u> assessments) so, again, a move away from the term ‘assessment’ was welcomed.</p>	<p>Now that the new processes are in place, use the following opportunities to ensure staff are fully aware of referral & assessment process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPoA Training - Carers services (two sessions in November) • Carers Locality & Complex Dis Staff Meetings - update on Carers services (requested by managers) • Talking Points meetings with NEWCIS • NEWCIS monitoring meetings & QA sessions

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<p>assessment process they may not be meeting their statutory duty to offer and undertake a Carer's needs assessment. The Act encourages relevant proportionate assessments but councils may be acting unlawfully if carers do not know the legal basis of the conversations or assessments they are having.</p> <p>Concern as to how the CNA process is working for carers of people under 18, including families with disabled children. FOI indicates that most Welsh councils do not capture any data on this group in part because systems are not set up to record if cared for is under 18 yrs.</p>	<p>the 'What Matters' conversations</p> <p>iv) Whether sufficiently detailed records are being collected as part of 'What Matters' type carer's needs assessments.</p> <p>v) Whether the carer is given a duplicate copy of the records and is aware that they can raise any further concerns they may have.</p> <p>Local Government should</p> <p>Provide carers with a copy of their assessment.</p> <p>Require commissioned services to provide carers with a copy of their assessment.</p>	<p>In line with the Act, the 'approach' should be the same across Wales for all citizens, including carers, i.e. a proportionate approach to establish 'what matters' to the individual. It could therefore be argued that it is the councils <u>not</u> using the What Matters approach who are in fact acting unlawfully.</p> <p>Perhaps it is the process rather than the approach that is causing concern. The list of actions for Welsh Government would apply irrespective of the approach, and should not be confined to those councils using the What Matters approach.</p> <p>A copy of Denbighshire's pathway for proportionate assessment of Carers is attached.</p> <p> Process for referring carers V2.pdf</p>	

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<p>Eligibility for Services</p> <p>The FOI data clearly indicates that there is significant variability between authorities in this area. This variation may, however, may be in part due to some councils counting the support to carers within a package provided to the cared for whereas others separate it out, i.e. the carer's needs are being met through the 'cared for' support plan.</p> <p>This may be true, though it does obscure how many carers are having their needs met under the Act. It goes against the spirit of how the Act was framed and this may mean that councils are not meeting their statutory duties in this area.</p>	<p>WG should</p> <p>Require councils to collect data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) In the disabled person's plan that identifies if carers have been offered a carer's needs assessment, and if so how long ago the assessment took place. ii) In the disabled person's plan that identifies if carers needs have been meet through the disabled person's plan. 	<p>In Denbighshire, we do not routinely monitor or count support to carers which is provided via the provision of domiciliary care, day services, or residential respite although this can be gathered manually if needed. Support for Carers is a by-product of these services.</p> <p>In Denbighshire, the only service which is delivered to the disabled person but counted as a Carer's service is a sitting service. The service is provided to meet an outcome identified by a Carer and is recorded on the Carer's support plan and regularly reviewed. However, there is always joint working with the disabled person's practitioner to ensure that the provision is appropriate for the disabled person.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Simple Support Plan requires practitioners to record Carer details, level of care and outcome of the offer of a carer's assessment. It doesn't ask how long ago the assessment took place. ii) Currently the Int Care & Support Plan doesn't ask for Carer details. Needs to be added. Practitioners may record as an outcome that a person's care needs should not impact on the Carer but there is no specific field for this.
<p>Charging</p> <p>There is concern that carers are being charged for services through the back door. Although councils no longer charge carers to access their services they are increasingly referring carers to paid-for services (third sector). These</p>	<p>Local government should</p> <p>Ensure transparency for audit and governance purposes, by publishing details of fees charged by organisations it refers to as part of a support plan.</p>	<p>In Denbighshire we are not aware that Carers are increasingly being referred to outsourced services that require a payment to access their services. It would be helpful if information could be provided on the location of the 20%</p>	

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<p>charges can accumulate in significant amounts of money which adds to carer poverty.</p> <p>Carers Wales are concerned that this outsourcing of support needs to be recognised so it can be properly monitored and regulated for audit and governance purposes.</p>		<p>of carers who think they are being charged so that, if necessary, we can look into this in more detail.</p>	