



COUNTY DURHAM LINK

**CARERS WORKING GROUP
27 April 2010 in PCP, Newton Aycliffe**

LINK members attending

Colin Burton, Kath Toward, Christine Wood, Kathleen Young

Neil Jarvis, Durham County Council

Apologies: Audrey Chapman, Sheila Grant, Sue Orton

Facilitator Liz Greer

1.	Introductions & welcome to Neil Jarvis from DCC who is leading on implementation of the Carers Strategy	
2.	Kathleen Young (Age Concern) told the Group about some research which is being carried out by Age Concern about older carers-due to be published in December 2010	
3.	<p>Neil Jarvis circulated hard copies of the Carers Strategy and some copies of the latest information for Carers developed as part of their communications strategy which includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Guide for professionals • A Guide for employers and carers • A Guide for carers wishing to return to work and • A Guide for carers of those coming out of hospital <p>Each Guide contains an opportunity to join DCC mailing list for carers and these will be circulated widely including to hospitals where every patient who is discharged should receive a copy.</p> <p>The new DCC website for carers is now operational and can be found at http://www.durhamcarers.info/Pages/Home.aspx. Neil was keen that LINK members offered feedback about the site which has a standard feedback form. One query was whether there was a contact form on the site.</p> <p>1. Social Care Direct</p> <p>Group members talked at length about the substantial problems they have been encountering when trying to contact Social Care Direct- significant (and costly) waiting times were described up to 40 minutes,</p>	

<p>being cut off and being provided with incorrect information by the service. Agreed to propose to the LINK that some mystery shopping was carried out to establish if this is a widespread problem.</p>	Liz
<p>2. Carers Emergency Support Service http://www.ddcarersemergencysupport.org.uk/ The Group asked Neil for more information about this service as the company, Unique Home Care, was not known to those attending. Neil explained that they are a private domiciliary care company who won the contract to provide this service for 3 years from DCC, the NHS Darlington & County Durham and Darlington BC.</p>	Liz
<p>3. Carers Breaks The county-wide Carers Breaks pilot started in February & a number of questions were raised with Neil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If carers book breaks themselves, how are they reimbursed through the scheme? • Kath Toward asked whether reciprocal arrangements were in place with other Local Authorities for breaks ie would care be provided by local Council carers on a quid pro quo basis rather than carers having to source their own carers when on holiday in the UK; Neil agreed this would be a significant benefit & he will explore further 	Neil
<p>4. Core carer services New core services contracts are in place which place all the carers Centres on an equal footing with the same service specification</p>	Liz
<p>5. JCP replacement care scheme Neil described the Job Centre Plus (voluntary) replacement care scheme which provides support to carers wishing to take up job interviews and that JCP Advisers will have training in understanding carers issues. Job Centres should also receive copies of the DCC booklet listed above. Local contact for this scheme is Enid Dalton, Care Partnership Manager on 0191 382 4192 enid.dalton@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk</p>	Liz
<p>6. Research DCC have commissioned two lots of research on carers issues as part of the Strategy –older carers from Age Concern and young adult carers from Barefoot Research</p>	Liz
<p>7. Risk issues We discussed whether anything in the Strategy was at risk of slippage – most is on track; Neil is revisiting the idea of carers consultation events and considering a information day/marketplace approach. Kath pointed out that travel to these big events is always an issue for members- especially those not based in urban centres.</p>	Neil

