

MINUTES OF CARERS FORUM MEETING
MONDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2007
RIVERSIDE CENTRE

PRESENT:

Daron Perkins (Chair), Bill McKenzie, Rose McKenzie, Joan Wills, Stan Reeve, Bob Marks, Rob Paton, Bridget Paton, Jan Wood, Marilyn Tildesley, Roy Green, Margaret Green, Betty Edwards, Mary Blake

APOLOGIES:

Penny Soley, Christine Law (will be late), Joyce Begoni

Daron opened the meeting by asking carers to agree the dates of the meetings for 2008. These would be:

21 January
7 & 8 February – Carers Conference
21 April
21 July
20 October

It was further agreed that the meetings would start at 11am. All meetings would be held at the Riverside Centre.

Minutes of the previous meeting were distributed to colleagues who had not received them. Matters arising included bus passes. The National Scheme would be revised from next year. Companions would still be allowed free transport on the Island. Daron would be discussing any outstanding issues with Martyn Mullins.

It was agreed that transport still needed a “shake-up”.

The activities list and minutes of the Carers Forums would be included on the website.

Bob Marks then undertook his presentation on Access to Healthcare.

Bob opened his presentation by emphasising that the NHS and the Council work alongside and the NHS is not necessarily the lead agency.

The NHS’ role includes support for people with profound learning disabilities, challenging behaviour and also people with mental illness.

Bob informed the group that there were increasing numbers of people with a learning disability because of the improvements in technology. There was consequently a need for more specialist health provision.

Bob was also at pains to point out the distinction between the NHS and Continuing Care – medical and social care. Medical care is paid whereas social care is not free at the point of delivery. Under Continuing Care criteria health needs will be paid for by health services. This has implications when reviewing what Individual Budgets could or should be used for.

Bob stated that by 2010 all residents of Council run residential care should be supported within a community context.

Bob then went on to describe how some people with learning disabilities have mental health issues as well – plus emotional issues. “Life is stressful and we are talking about lifelong disabilities and health issues”.

Where NHS funded services are provided at Medina or Meadowbrook, then those services will continue to be paid for.

Bob then discussed how some facilities were no longer fit for purpose given the modernisation agenda.

We need new purpose built modern day service buildings. Carers then asked to be kept informed about the modernisation report and its implementation.

Bob then gave an up-date on staffing. A Speech Therapist is to be employed on 3 December and an Assistant Psychologist is also to be employed.

Bob said that we needed to reduce the use of psychotropic drugs and to use other behavioural approaches instead. We need to be involved more in decisions taken in residential homes.

Carers expressed concerns regarding how their concerns were disregarded by residential care homes. This prompted discussions regarding contracts and Daron was asked to contact Allan Murphy to address our Forum in January regarding these issues.

Mary Blake then helped carers understand some of the legal terminology surrounding these concerns – such as Power of Attorney.

Carers asked for a “sensible” involvement as we continue to be best placed to understand our people’s needs – notwithstanding “confidentiality” issues.

Daron and the carers thanked Bob for a very interesting presentation.

Daron introduced updates on current issues. Bill informed the group that some students from local universities had been commissioned to review respite options. They had now produced a report which would go before the Partnership Board.

Bill then informed the group that although carers were represented on each Sub Group of the Partnership Board, we needed more carers to become involved.

The meeting closed at 13.30 with a further vote of thanks for Bob Marks.