

**Carers Champions Service (contract number 06069)  
Carers Services, Adult Social Care.**

**Introduction**

Carers (Equal Opportunities Act 2004) placed an obligation on the Local Authority of a 'duty to inform' carers through an information strategy. This would pay particular attention to informing carers that they may be entitled to an assessment of their own needs and informed of their rights. Further to that, attention is also focused on identifying 'hidden' carers (those not known to the local authority) and ensuring that they are being reached.

The Carers Champions, Advice and Information contract is part of Plymouth's Carers Services response to this.

The contract was awarded to a partnership between Colebrook Housing Association and Plymouth Age Concern. This partnership has recently been dissolved and the contract is the sole responsibility of Colebrook Housing. The contract was awarded for a term of three years, which commenced 1/9/07 and is due to end 1/9/10

**Service aims**

The aim of the Service is to provide a focal point of contact for carers outside the statutory sector. The Service will have a strong identity so that carers throughout the city are readily aware of it. Carers will be able to access the Service easily to gain information and advice about their rights and the issues that affect them and their ability to care, and about the services that may be available to support them. Carers will also be able to contact the Service for emotional support so that no carer is isolated or reaches crisis point before they get the support they need.

The price of the contract is £98,500 per annum. Apart from Carer Support Workers, the Service has introduced a hardship fund of £2,000 for each year. The hardship fund has been match funded and administered by Colebrook. This is specifically for carers in crisis who may be suffering from financial difficulty, and which takes the form of short-term support or a one-off piece of equipment.

- The number of new carers identified per year increased from 300 to 530
- Emotional support provided per year increased from 50 to 150 for individual carers

## **Performance targets**

- Identify a minimum of 530 new carers per year in order that information can be given to them as to their rights and the services available to them.
- Support the development and delivery of the Carers' Training Programme and take part in a minimum of 10 Carers' Awareness Training days per year.
- Deliver a minimum of 12 Awareness Sessions relating to carers' issues to a variety of audiences each year across all localities so that the awareness of carers and their issues is raised across the city.
- Provide acknowledged and evaluated emotional support to 150 individual carers per year.
- Provide administrative / practical support to 8 carers' groups per year.
- Provide other, evaluated support to 6 carers' groups each year (making a total of 18 separate groups supported in this way over the 3 year contract).
- Demonstrate the active involvement of at least 12 adult carers of adults from a variety of cultural and caring backgrounds, in the planning and monitoring of the Service.
- The development of one new service for adult carers of adults per year, as agreed with statutory and other voluntary organisations. It should be set up with additional available funds from outside the statutory sector, and available to at least 20 carers or the people they care for, with clear access arrangements and plans for monitoring and evaluation.

All of the above have been achieved.

## **Added Value**

Carers Champions can be seen to have been extremely successful in adding value to the contract through other funding sources, namely: Awards for all; Carers UK; Plymouth City Council; Colebrook Housing; British Heart Foundation, and many other smaller sources of funding. Further Carers Champions have sorted out funding sources for independent carers support groups and have advised these groups on how to access these small funding grants.