

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW**  
**Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

**Report of Scrutiny Review of Services to Carers 2003**

**1 Executive Summary**

This report sets out the findings of the Scrutiny Panel review of services provided to support carers. The review took place over the period January 2003 to April 2003.

The report provides details of the services examined and the investigation undertaken by the panel.

The report concludes that there are many services available to support carers particularly in the area of respite care. Most services are of a very high standard and are valued by carers. However it is concluded that there are areas that could be improved and these are highlighted.

The report recommends further work is carried out and calls for the Director of Social Services to produce an action plan including timescales and any funding implications.

**2 Background**

This review of services available to carers of dependent people living in Harrow was commissioned by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee at its meeting on 19 September 2002.

The review was conducted by:

Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan (Chair)  
Councillor Myra Michael  
Councillor Eric Silver

The objectives of the review were to examine the effectiveness of the current funding arrangements in:

- ◆ supporting the achievement of the carers strategy
- ◆ achieving the best use of scarce financial resources.

The review took place over the period January 2003 to April 2003.

**3 Context**

For the purposes of this report a carer is defined as a person caring for another individual who by reason of physical or mental infirmity is unable to care for themselves.

The following data is available from the 2001 census:

Total number of people living in Harrow	206,814
Total people of people providing unpaid care	20,550

Individuals caring for 1 - 19 hours per week	14,598	71%
Individuals caring for 20 - 49 hours per week	2,456	12%
Individuals caring for 50+ hours per week	3,496	17%

To meet the needs of carers in Harrow the Council makes available a total £880,000. See Budget and Service Inventory Appendix 1.

In addition to the services targeted directly at carers the Council directly provides and commissions services such as day and domiciliary care that help to support dependent people living in the community with carers. These services also support people living independently or in care homes.

The Harrow Carers Strategy was completed in 2001. This strategy covered the main objectives set out in the National Carers Strategy. It now requires revision and updating in line with changing needs and circumstances. A review group consisting of representatives of the Council, the PCT and the voluntary sector groups meet regularly and will oversee this work.

#### 4 Services Examined

The following table outlines the service areas examined, the key points discussed and the action points agreed.

Service Area	Strengths Identified	Action Points
<p>1 Care Management – interviewed Heads of Care Management</p> <p>Assessment of community care needs of individuals including carers</p> <p>Organisation of care packages to meet assessed needs</p> <p>Strategic overview of the process to influence commissioning</p>	<p>Carer's assessments are being carried out following implementation of training of care management staff.</p> <p>Respite care is provided up to 1 week in 8 for carers of elderly people, and up to 2 weeks in 8 for carers of people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>The Harrow Adult Placement Scheme provides the sort of flexibility carers need.</p>	<p>There is a need for more flexibility in the way services for carers are provided e.g. there is a need for weekend breaks.</p> <p>Carers are not seen as a client group separate from the person they are caring for.</p> <p>There is a need to develop a register of carers. This will be progressed when I.T. systems allow.</p>

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Strengths Identified</b>	<b>Action Points</b>
<p>2) Services directly provided by the Council – interviewed Head of Provided Services</p> <p>4 day centres 4 learning disability day centres 2 mental health day care units Harrow Adult Placement Service</p>	<p>All centres provide high quality care to service users.</p> <p>Service users needs are reviewed at regular intervals. Carers are involved in the review process.</p> <p>Some centres carry out service user and carer satisfaction surveys.</p>	<p>Respite services could be extended. They provide high value for money compared to alternative services.</p> <p>There is a need to develop more services for people who do not meet the minimum criteria for services (prevention). These might include drop in centres, clubs etc. This might reduce or avoid referral to main stream services.</p> <p>Need for better communication with voluntary sector service providers.</p>
<p>3) Services Commissioned by the Council - interviewed Contracts Manager</p> <p>Contracts and Service Level Agreements in place to provide a range of services to carers including:</p> <p>day care residential care domiciliary respite care support services; advocacy, training, and counselling etc.</p>	<p>Good partnerships established with the independent sector.</p> <p>The voluntary sector providers Crossroads and Carers Support Harrow have brought flexibility and innovation into service provision.</p> <p>The Contracts Team collect monitoring information about service provision</p> <p>The Contracts Team is represented on the Management Committees of both vol. sector carers groups.</p>	<p>There is a need to review the way in which services are provided including transport and day and times of delivery.</p> <p>More use could be made of existing resources at evenings and weekends.</p> <p>More information about carers is required to support the commissioning process. This could be delivered through the voluntary sector.</p> <p>The voluntary sector needs proper support including core funding in order to continue to provide services.</p>

Service Area	Strengths Identified	Action Points
<p>4) Support from the PCT - interviewed Carers Support Worker</p> <p>Carer involvement in the joint planning process</p> <p>Organisation of Carers Forum</p>	<p>There are 6 joint planning groups covering the main service area.</p> <p>Each group has 2 places available for carer representatives.</p> <p>Most of these places are taken up and where vacancies exist carers are being encouraged to come forward.</p> <p>Carers forums have been well attended.</p>	<p>Need to provide additional respite to allow carers to become more involved in joint planning.</p> <p>Need for better access to information about services and criteria for eligibility.</p>
<p>5) Carers Support Harrow - interviewed the Director</p> <p>provision of a range of direct and support services for carers including:</p> <p>a night sitting service</p> <p>a volunteering project</p> <p>training projects</p> <p>a respite scheme for carers of autistic children whilst the carers access training</p> <p>A health liaison project</p> <p>support for young carers</p> <p>respite for carers of people with mental health problems</p> <p>advocacy</p>	<p>The organisation is very flexible and because of this is able to bring new services on stream very quickly and can adapt and change existing services to meet changes in need or demand.</p> <p>The organisation has received good support from Council Officers.</p> <p>The volunteering project is particularly successful and is providing respite care directly to carers on a fortnightly basis, and monthly outings to 15 carers.</p> <p>The Health liaison project has helped identify carers that would otherwise be "hidden" by establishing contacts with GPs and health professionals and carers desks in surgeries.</p> <p>A revised Young Carers Project has been devised for 2003/04.</p>	<p>The organisation is reasonably resourced for project work but requires additional support for core funding. This would enable the provision of a more comprehensive database of carers in Harrow and help identify their needs.</p> <p>Communication with carers is poor - the occasional newsletter. Perhaps better use could be made of the Council Website.</p> <p>The Council could organise a forum to bring together all the voluntary sector service providers to discuss common issues and improve co-operation.</p>

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Strengths Identified</b>	<b>Action Points</b>
<p>6) Harrow Crossroads – interviewed the Director</p> <p>provision of domiciliary respite care services</p>	<p>Currently providing a regular weekly respite care service to 150 carers.</p> <p>High quality well trained carers support workers</p> <p>The organisation has recently been awarded Investor in People status.</p> <p>Carry out quality assurance audits via questionnaires.</p>	<p>Underprovision of service - this is being addressed by Crossroads recruiting more care support workers.</p> <p>Because of the underprovision the unit cost of the service is high.</p> <p>There is a need to re-establish the night sitting service quickly.</p>
<p>7) Sancroft Hall – interviewed the Manager and Area Manager</p> <p>Sancroft Hall offers a mix of provision for elderly people consisting of residential care for</p> <p>Elderly frail people in one 10 bed unit</p> <p>Elderly frail Asian people in two 10 bed units</p> <p>Elderly people with a mental frailty in one 10 bed unit</p> <p>Day care for elderly people with a mental frailty 25 places per day (Byron Day Centre)</p> <p>Day care for elderly Asian people 25 places per day (Anjali Day Centre)</p> <p>These services are provided under a block contract with the Fremantle Trust</p>	<p>Carers view the services prior to cared for people starting to use them.</p> <p>Consultation meetings with carers are held annually.</p> <p>The day care service operates 5 days per week and generally users attend on just one day, therefore there are up to 250 people making use of the service most are supported in the community by a carer. There is a waiting list for access to the Anjali Day Centre.</p>	<p>The day service could be made to be more flexible and could offer services at weekends, and into the evenings.</p> <p>Transport for day centre users restricts the range of activities that are offered because of fixed arrival and departure times.</p> <p>The day centres when empty could be used for other services such as carers groups with the co-operation of the Fremantle Trust.</p>

Service Area	Strengths Identified	Action Points
<p><b>8) Bedford House – interviewed the Manager</b></p> <p>Bedford House is a resource centre for adults with learning disabilities. There are three aspects to the service:</p> <p>Day care providing a service to 10 people with Autism or on the Autistic Spectrum</p> <p>Residential care providing long term care for people with severe / multiple disabilities</p> <p>Respite care taking various forms including short tea visits, overnight stays and longer episodes.</p> <p>The service is wholly contracted by the Council from the Harrow Consortium for Special Needs.</p>	<p>Carers are involved in viewing the service prior to clients using it.</p> <p>An annual quality assurance questionnaire is sent to carers.</p> <p>Carers are involved in planning services for service users.</p>	<p>Because of the very specialist nature of this service the scope for flexibility is limited.</p> <p>Often the requirements of transport dictate the start and finish times of services.</p>
<p><b>9) The Firs - interviewed the Manager</b></p> <p>The Firs provides a respite care service for carers of young people with severe learning disabilities aged between 8 and 19 years.</p> <p>Services include:</p> <p>After school care Overnight and week end care Holiday play schemes Extended (off site) play schemes in the summer holidays</p>	<p>Currently the service supports 36 families. Service users require support on a one to one basis.</p> <p>The service provided is of a very high quality and is generally regarded as enabling families to care for the young people in the community and avoids institutional care.</p>	<p>There is currently no outreach service available to families.</p> <p>There are no close links with the voluntary sector.</p> <p>The facilities although generally very good are sometimes restrictive e.g. only one downstairs bedroom.</p>

In addition to the above members visited Milmans and Bentley Day Centres and the Brember Centre.

## 5 Consultation with Carers

An open forum was held to assess the level of satisfaction among carers with services provided. Invitations were sent to all carer members of Carers Support Harrow, and Harrow Crossroads. The invitation sought comments from carers in writing if they were unable to attend on the day. Of the comments received in this way most were supportive of respite care services provided.

At the meeting that was attended by 75 carers a short questionnaire was provided for attendees to complete. This questionnaire provided details of the nature and extent of caring provided and brief details of the level of satisfaction with the services. The responses showed that people caring for dependent people with a range of disabilities were present. It also confirmed that there was great value placed on services provided.

The open forum provided an opportunity for carers to talk directly about their experiences of caring in Harrow to elected members and senior managers of services.

The key issues discussed were:

- ◆ The need for care managers and fieldworkers to recognise the needs of carers when carrying out community care assessments
- ◆ The need for more respite care services generally
- ◆ The need for better information about services that are available to carers
- ◆ The need for more flexibility in the way services are provided.

There was general satisfaction with services particularly those provided by Harrow Crossroads and Carers Support Harrow.

Members wish to record their appreciation of the contributions made by the carers that attended the open forum and the huge impact made by carers in Harrow generally in meeting the needs of dependent people.

## 6 Findings

The members are able to conclude from carrying out this review that:

- ◆ The Council is fulfilling its statutory requirements in respect of assessment and provision of services to support carers. However the process appears cumbersome and would benefit from further review and monitoring.
- ◆ Services are available to provide breaks from caring for carers of all client groups.
- ◆ Services are available to carers to provide support services such as training, advice, and advocacy.
- ◆ Services are generally of a very high quality and are provided by dedicated staff who demonstrate commitment and professionalism.

- ◆ There are good partnerships with the voluntary sector and independent sector delivering innovative and flexible services.
- ◆ Day care services are often inflexible because of the dependence on Council transport.

Members welcomed the recent appointment of the Prevention and Carers Manager.

## **7 Recommendations**

7.1 Members consider that the following service areas should receive further examination:

- ◆ There is insufficient detailed information available about the number, degree, and nature of carers in Harrow. This needs to be addressed to enable better planning and access to services. This should include the development of a Carers Register.
- ◆ More work is required to identify and support young carers and through joint working with the Education sector.
- ◆ The Council provides high quality day care services for all client groups and these support carers. However services are usually dependent on the availability of Council transport, operate only on weekdays, and within restricted hours. The services should be reviewed to see if there is the demand and potential to develop more flexible services.
- ◆ The Council should ensure that resources such as premises are used to their fullest potential for the benefit of carers and service users.
- ◆ There is a need to improve the quality and accessibility of information available to carers.
- ◆ The development of more preventative services in partnership with the independent and voluntary sectors should be considered in order to reduce the reliance and demand on main stream services e.g. the successful bathing service.
- ◆ There are concerns that the voluntary sector may not be properly funded for its core activities.

7.3 Members are requested to note the contents of this report.

7.4 The Director of Social Services is asked to produce an action plan with a timetable for its implementation and details of funding implications in response to the recommendations in this report.

7.5 Copies of this report will be distributed to the individuals and organisations listed in Appendix 2.

### **For Consideration**

**Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan (Chair)**

**Councillor Myra. Michael**

**Councillor Eric Silver**



## Appendix 1

SCHEME	FUNDING	AIMS OF THE SERVICE	SERVICE PROVISION
<b>HARROW CROSSROADS</b>	£106,400	To provide practical support to carers where they need it most in the home	Contracted to provide 9360 hours per year (180 hours per week), currently providing an average of 147 hours per week of actual contact time. Included within this is the overnight service which until the end of September had provided 876 hours of contact time (an average of 34 hours per week).
<b>HARROW CROSSROADS Night Sitting Service</b>	£25,000	This service is currently being provided from within the carer's grant hours	
<b>CARERS' SUPPORT Night Sitting Service</b>	£5,500	A night sitting service to support carers. The intention of this project is to relieve stress and prevent carers' breakdown, while giving them the opportunity to look after their own general health. The service is intended to be a short emergency service or a 'one-off', until appropriate emergency assessments can be made.	Up to the end of August 2002 the service had provided 360 carer hours, the equivalent of 45 nights.
<b>CARERS' SUPPORT Volunteering for Carers</b>	£47,100	To develop a volunteer programme in the community to support carers, enabling them to take a break from their caring responsibilities. Also provides support such as shopping, befriending and enabling carers to attend hospital appointments. Works collaboratively and in partnership with voluntary organisation.	The majority of service provision has been undertaken by CSV volunteers and GAP year workers. There are currently 20 volunteers. The 2 GAP volunteers provide up to 35 hours of contact time per person per week, currently 1315 hours of respite care have been provided. £1500 has been spent on training, including first aid, risk assessments, manual handling and autistic and Asperges training. 13 carers per month have been on outings. 40 volunteer office hours a month have been provided. There have been 603 hours provided of alternative respite care.
<b>CARERS' SUPPORT SCATT (NASH) Supporting Carers of Autistic Children Through Training</b>	£20,000	Training programme for carers of children and adults who are on the Autistic Spectrum. The training programmes offer carers a break from their caring, whilst the cared for person receives appropriate respite services. Importantly, they are designed to raise awareness amongst carers of those affected by Autism within the family, and help improve the ability of the carers to care appropriately. The project works closely with families for whom Autism is the main issue, and then refers them to NASH (National Autistic Society	Training programmes were carried out earlier in the year, and have now ceased. A six week course was being run at the carers centre, this included providing respite care for their children. Fund now transferred to NAS National Autistic Society. SCATT programme is free of charge to carers within this category.

		Harrow).	
<b>CARERS' SUPPORT Autistic Respite Scheme</b>	£10,000	To provide support to families of children with Autism.	554 respite hours have currently been provided to families.
<b>SCHEME</b>	<b>FUNDING</b>	<b>AIMS OF THE SERVICE</b>	<b>SERVICE PROVISION</b>
<b>CARERS' SUPPORT Health Liaison Project</b>	£15,500	To develop a health liaison project to raise awareness with GP practices of carers' health needs. Carers identified within GP practices receive advice on support and services available. The organisation sets up regular Carers' desks within Harrow GP practices to raise awareness of the information available. The service should refer people to the appropriate service.	20 surgeries are linked with this project, in each there are information desks. The service has gradually extended to cover AMs and PMs. 97 carers have personally been contacted through this project and information in various forms has been provided. Several programmes have been run to train professionals and practice staff to raise awareness of carers' needs.
<b>CARERS' SUPPORT Young Carers Project</b>	£15,000	To develop a volunteer programme in the community, inclusive of respite, outings and activities, to support young carers and enable them to take a break from their caring responsibilities. The project targets young carers for whom 'caring' has serious educational, mental and physical effects and subsequently has led to social isolation and problems affecting their education.	There have been 23 referrals, 13 children have been on holiday for 1 week. Four monthly meetings have been held totalling 32 children.
<b>CARERS' SUPPORT Core Funding</b>	£21,200	Carers Support Harrow is the first point of reference for Harrow carers. Carers Support Harrow links carers with appropriate services and provide emotional and practical support. Including a range of supporting activities, benefit advice and support, info/signposting/referrals, respite programme, health liaison GP linkages, outings and activities for carers, complimentary therapies offered, volunteer project, mental health advice and support, young carers project.	Carers are encouraged to take part in the evaluation of the service, including compilation of a quality assurance survey. Number of carers supported by ethnicity and type of support provided. Budget expenditure update.
<b>HCRE HOLIDAY BREAKS FOR B &amp; EM CARERS</b>	£25,800	Provision of holiday breaks for carers from the B & EM communities.	The service is providing holiday grants on a regular basis.
<b>CHILDREN &amp; FAMILY Family Link Scheme</b>	£68,690	Provision of respite care support for severely disabled children up to the age of 19. The service will involve the provision of personal and social care, and will initially be offered within the child's home by specifically recruited and trained home carers.	

<b>OPEN ACCESS PROGRAMME</b> Youth & Community Services	£5,200	Project plans a package of measures to improve and increase access of children and young people, aged 5-21, with physical and/or learning disabilities to holiday provision. Objective is to meet the needs of disabled children and their families by provision of joint information services and integrated play and leisure facilities.	
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SCHEME	FUNDING	AIMS OF THE SERVICE	SERVICE PROVISION
<b>HITS CLUB FOR DEAF PEOPLE</b> Youth & Community Services	£3,100	To provide support for carers of people who have a hearing Impairment.	
<b>CARERS' SUPPORT HARROW</b> Retreat Breaks for Carers of People with Mental Illness	£30,000	To develop short breaks for carers of people with mental health problems and arrange a mid week or weekend break within a retreat or special respite establishment.	The Service Level Agreement required respite breaks for 15 carers. Currently 7 respite breaks have been provided, a further 12 are planned for January. 5 people have been on a residential training break. In January, the 12 people are intending to go on a training course over 6 weeks. The 8 cared for breaks have not been taken up.
<b>ADVOCATY AND TRAINING FOR FORMER CARERS</b>	£25,000	To provide a support service for people with a specific need.	There have been 218 referrals at a cost of £117 per case. The service is provided across the spectrum of carer support, for example help with benefit entitlement and form completion, hospital work particularly working with drug over prescription in mental health cases and help with pensions and attendance allowance.
<b>THE FIRS</b>	£456,950	Provision of respite care service to 40 families of children and young people with profound learning disabilities.	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£880,940</b>		

## Appendix 2

### Acknowledgements

The Members wish to offer their appreciation for the support and cooperation given by the following individuals and organisations in the preparation of this review:

David Burnell	Head of Community Care	LB Harrow
Roland Pettitt	Contracts Manager	LB Harrow
Kirsty Jeeves	Support Officer	LB Harrow
Celia Eckersley	Head of Provided Services	LB Harrow
Dick Van Brummen	Head of Care Management	LB Harrow
Clare Walker	Head of Care Management	LB Harrow
Sue Springthorpe	Director	Harrow Crossroads
Maria Murphy-Price	Director	Carers Support Harrow
Chris Bozier	Manager	Bedford House
Nicky Gold	Manager	The Firs
Kirsty Green	Carers Support Worker	Harrow PCT
Brian Cox	Manager	Brember Centre
Mark Miles	Manager	Bentley Day Centre
Mary-Anne Murphy	Manager	Milmans Day Centre
Anne Courtney	Manager	Sancroft Hall (Fremantle Trust)