Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 Fact Sheet

On 1st April 2018 The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 came into effect. The Act extends and enhances the rights of carers in Scotland to help improve their health and wellbeing so that they can continue to care, if they so wish, and have a life alongside caring.

The Act places a duty on local authorities and health boards to prepare a Local Carers Strategy covering both adults and young carers. Aberdeen’s strategy consequently encompasses all ages and relates equally to young carers as it does to adult carers.

The strategy sets out how the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership and the Integrated Children’s Services Partnership within the city intend to deliver the requirements of the Act particularly in relation to identifying both adult and young carers, understanding the care that they provide and their support needs, and providing comprehensive and easily accessible information on the type of support available as well as how and where to get it.

Importantly, the Act brings changes to how carers can access support through ‘Adult Carer Support Plans. Under previous legislation, a carer had to provide ‘regular and substantial’ care in order to access a support plan. This has been removed and all carers will be entitled to one, if they want one.

Additionally, the new act requires a focus on assessing the needs of the carer separately from the needs of the cared for individual.

The Act also brings a range of new duties and powers:

**Adult Carer Support Plans**
These plans and statements will replace Carers Assessment and consider a range of areas that impact on a carer.

**Eligibility Criteria**
Eligibility criteria for access to social care services for carers must be published. However, not all support offered to carers will be subject to the criteria.

**Local Carers Strategy**
Local Carers Strategies, must be produced and reviewed within a set period.
Carers Involvement
Carers must be involved in both the development of carers services and in the hospital discharge processes for the people they care for.

Information and Advice
An Information and advice service must be provided for relevant carers, with information and advice about rights, advocacy, health and wellbeing (amongst others).

Short Breaks Statements
To prepare and publish a statement on short breaks available in Scotland for carers and cared for person.

Hospital Discharge
To place a duty on all Health Boards to involve the carer before the cared for person is discharged from hospital.

VSA Carers Resource Service continues to be involved with the Partnership in moving forward towards the implementation.

If you would like additional information or you would like to be involved, please get in touch with us on 01224 212021 or e-mail carers.info@vsa.org.uk