

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Development of Respite Care Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities in North Lanarkshire
FROM: Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 22 August 2000	
REPORT AUTHOR: Duncan Mackay	
REF: DM/RCS	

1 CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the position in terms of the development of respite care for children and adults (under 65 years) with disabilities in North Lanarkshire and identifies the need for further service development in the context of the Strategy for Carers. The Committee is requested and to consider giving in principle support to exploring the viability of donating the Pyramid Site in Motherwell for the purpose of building a new respite and carers centre to be managed by PHEW.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In March 1996 the Scottish Office issued a circular "Guidance on Respite Care." Reported to Committee in May 1996, this recognised that Social Work Departments have the lead responsibility to arrange and fund respite care other than where short term health care is required.
- 2.2 The circular defined respite care as "any service of limited duration which benefits a dependent person...(which) may extend from a few hours to a few weeks." This acknowledged that respite care can take many forms such as home based care, day care, family based shared care or residential care. It is often highly valued by carers as a service which enables them to continue caring for their disabled friend or relative.
- 2.3 The Scottish Executive introduced a Strategy for Carers in Scotland on 24 November 1999. This Strategy is part of the Executive's Programme For Government and its central aim is to introduce a package of measures which support the many carers in Scotland who look after sick, disabled and vulnerable relatives and friends. It was reported to Social Work Committee in January 2000.
- 2.4 In June 2000 a further report was presented to Social Work Committee to approve use of new monies for carers, which had been agreed with carers groups. This included £95,000 to supplement the Department's budget for respite care to allow it to maintain spending at the level incurred in 1999/2000.

3 CURRENT PROVISION

3.1 At the point of local government reorganisation the only residential respite care available in North Lanarkshire for children and adults with disabilities was at Clifton House, Coatbridge, for 2 or 3 nights at a time though other services had been commissioned at Kilsyth, Gartcosh and Coatbridge. Additional funding was allocated so that Clifton House could open 7 days a week, bringing the total number of respite places in dedicated resources to 20 for the authority. Over the past 3 years the budget allocation for this purpose has risen from £268,000 to £805,000 and actual spending rose to £900,000 by March 2000. By the end of 1999/2000 this had resulted in:

- ◆ Numbers of adults receiving residential respite care increasing from 138 to 231 (+67%)
- ◆ Numbers of children receiving residential respite care increasing from 47 to 113 (+140%)
- ◆ Numbers of episodes of residential respite care for adults increasing from 362 to 927 (+156%)
- ◆ Numbers of episodes of residential respite care for children increasing from 131 to 589 (+350%)

3.2 In addition to residential respite care the Social Work Department provides a number of support services to carers. Excluding the wide range of home and day care services, specific provision for carers includes:

- ◆ £97,000 for the Shared Care family based respite scheme
- ◆ £42,000 to establish a Carers Network in North Lanarkshire
- ◆ £21,000 to the Princess Royal Trust for Carers
- ◆ £79,000 to the Young Carers Project
- ◆ £24,000 to CLASP, a carers support project in Wishaw/Shotts
- ◆ Various grants to parents groups and organisations.

3.3 All of the above does not include services to carers of older people, which are not addressed in this report.

4 ISSUES

4.1 It has been said that carers are North Lanarkshire's greatest asset. It is certainly the case that the cost to the local authority would be enormous if significant numbers of carers gave up this task and looked to the Social Work Department to make arrangements for the care of their children, relatives or friends.

4.2 Demand for respite and other forms of support to carers is growing rapidly, and is likely to continue to do so in future years. This is mainly because:

- ◆ Improved health care has meant people survive longer with greater degrees of disability and higher care needs

- ◆ Changes in society has meant that it is largely no longer acceptable for people with severe disabilities to live in institutions such as hospitals
 - ◆ Growing awareness of the rights of carers to help and support.
- 4.3 The National Strategy for Carers has clearly signalled the Government's intention to give carers issues a high priority. New monies earmarked in the 2000/2001 local government settlement for services to carers had to be approved by carers groups and accompanied by a letter from them in future Joint Community Care Plans. It is important that the actions of North Lanarkshire Council are seen to give carers the appropriate level of priority.
- 4.4 The establishment of a Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care will lead to the introduction of national standards. Buildings currently used for respite care such as those managed by PHEW in Coatbridge are likely to be considered inappropriate for such purpose.
- 4.5 Despite the level of increased investment in residential respite care services, it is evident that current provision does not offer carers some essential components of a quality service including:
- ◆ Accessibility - capacity in existing services is limited for people who require to use wheelchairs or otherwise have mobility problems
 - ◆ Availability at Time of Need - respite services normally have to be booked ahead and there is little scope for providing support at times of emergencies/crises
 - ◆ Availability All Year Round - respite services have certain weeks of the year set aside for children, and others for adults which restricts use
 - ◆ Child Centred - services shared between adults and children are not sufficiently child-orientated
 - ◆ Specialised - existing services struggle to meet the needs of children and adults with more specialised needs arising from their disabilities.

5 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 For some time PHEW, a voluntary organisation commissioned by the local authority, has been concerned with the constraints imposed by the nature of the buildings from which they deliver respite care services. Both are located in Coatbridge. Clifton House is patently unsuitable in terms of both premises and location, being former janitor accommodation in the grounds of a school; Buchanan House, though relatively new and built by the predecessor authority for residential care, is very poorly designed for such a facility.
- 5.2 As a result PHEW have been investigating the possibility of consolidating the services onto a single site which would allow:
- ◆ The creation of a Centre of Excellence in national terms within the authority
 - ◆ Modern and attractive premises, designed for purpose to a high specification

- ◆ A separation of children and adult services (and all year round availability for both groups) but one which also enables a smooth transition from one service to the other as young people enter adulthood
- ◆ Opportunity to incorporate other features in the building such as facilities for carers and space to demonstrate equipment and adaptations.

5.3 The organisation have identified a specific location, known as the Pyramid Site, in Motherwell as suitable for their purposes. This lies between the Aquatec and offices of the Motherwell Times and is in Council ownership. It is ideally located close to leisure and town centre amenities and would replace a presently vacant site with a prestigious development. Limitations on the Council's own capital funds would mean that such a facility would probably be beyond available resources. However PHEW have made enquiries about Lottery funding as a way of securing a significant amount of capital whilst revenue costs would continue to be met through the Social Work Department's budget for respite care.

5.4 Whilst it would be necessary to carry out work to establish if the site is suitable, the Council would require to consider donating the land for this purpose in order for the financial package to be viable.

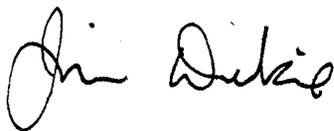
6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Respite care is an important element in the range of support services available to carers. It often helps carers to continue looking after a person without needing to seek long term care so enabling the person with a disability to remain in their own home.

6.2 It is evident that action is required to tackle the inadequacies of the present respite care service delivered by PHEW and, in a wider context, seek to address the increasing needs of carers for high quality, accessible and available respite care.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Committee are asked to consider giving in principle support to exploring the viability of donating the Pyramid Site in Motherwell for the purpose of building a new respite and carers centre to be managed by PHEW.



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Director of Social Work
2 August 2000

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