



Camden Carers' Voice meeting
Minutes – 22 June 2017, 10.30 am – 12.30pm
Argenta House, Aspern Grove, Belsize Park, NW3 2AB

Attendance	<p>21 carers</p> <p>Chair: Jacky Spigel (Steering Group)</p> <p>Presentation/ Guest Speakers:</p> <p>Geoffrey Taylor Meade Partnership Support Manager, North London District, Department for Work & Pensions</p> <p>Bob Dowd Supporting Families Manager, Centre 404</p> <p>Steering Group - Kate Harwood, Jessica Buck, Sue Parry-Davies, Janet Cabot, Eamonn Cashin</p> <p>Allegra Lynch, Chief Executive, Camden Carers Service (CCS)</p> <p>Angela Edwards, Support Worker (CCS)</p> <p>Philippa Russell, Engagement & Outreach, CCS & C404</p> <p>Apologies: Sharon Hammond, (CCS), Constantine Louis (Steering Group)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chair welcomed everyone to meeting, went through the ground rules. The Steering Group were introduced. Cllr Lorraine Revah was introduced as the new Carer's champion. She is a carer for three family members. • Sharon, CCS was unable to attend today to talk about "Working for Carers"
Carer feedback and actions from last meeting	<p>Action and feedback from last meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your Patient Participation Group for any issues with your GP. Speak with practice staff at your surgery around confidentiality issues and information sharing. Any carers interested in attending the Camden Patient & Public Engagement Group (CPPEG) can let Abbie or Philippa know. Abbie attends and would be happy to go with a carer. • Camden Carers Emergency Card run through Careline – available from Philippa or Jay at Camden Carers Service • Carers discount card is in hand and may be a London wide card. It will link the discount and carers card run by Careline. • Carer's Week – Jessica thanked all for a great week. Charlie Ratchford as a location makes a big difference. Discussion around decisions for Day Centres – Charlie Ratchford will close. A new smaller centre will be built with provision for the carers service. Day centre service users will relocate to Kingsgate. <p>Action - Lorraine to feedback on the decisions from the cabinet meeting on 21 June.</p>
Guest Speaker Geoffrey Taylor Meade	<p>Geoffrey covers a large area, with partnership organisations across the 7 boroughs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers' Allowance - paid to carers age 16 or over providing care for at least 35 hours for a person getting Attendance Allowance of Disability Living Allowance. Cannot claim if in full time education, or earning more than £116 per week. Weekly rate of carers allowance is £62.70. It is means tested so other benefits may

<p>Questions & Answers</p>	<p>be affected.</p> <p>Action Bob to look at benefits check to see how you're affected.</p> <p>Concerns raised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of hours a week caring is all quantified by physical time spent. The form gives no space for the mental stress of caring. It is unquantifiable and many carers do not claim it • Carers are shocked that £64.70 in no way reflects the time spent caring. This is £1.79 per hour, for 24/7 care and anxiety. Should be reflected in any consultation • Shows how little the carer is considered or valued • Conversion to Personal Independence Payments – questions are less intrusive and better gateway to getting carers allowance • Carers Allowance – carers noted different advice they had received around the shortfall. Bob to check directly with carer • Unpaid carers save the government £132 billion a year. Lobbying power in that figure. Geoffrey cannot justify the figure. He is not in a position to change it. • The thinking needs to be challenged that caring is your duty. • Question as to whether DWP has any policy around unpaid working carers. It should be a standard to offer help. Camden Carers Service work closely with HMRC to support working carers. Good to look at this model. • Frustrations with form filling – can now be done online and is simpler but still you cannot claim if in full time employment • Young carers in education – maybe entitled to income support but conflicts if they have caring responsibilities • Action: Carers talked of ways of highlighting the value of unpaid carers which is not recognised. Speaking to local MPs – Tulip Siddiq, Keir Starmer. The carer's champion can help with contacting MPs if needed. <p>Break for refreshments. Angela from Camden Carers' Service introduced to speak to anyone with particular support needs.</p>
<p>Questions & answers</p>	<p>Universal Credit (UC) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is being replaced by PIP, and can be claimed by those 16-64. Payments of DLA will be made until the PIP outcome is clear.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many chase up calls / letters as many people and particularly those with mental health issues or learning disabilities may not open mail? If benefits are stopped people are likely to be more ill or anxious. • Action PIP reminder to carers in Camden Carers Service newsletter • Carers were advised to become a DWP appointee • 70% of new moves from PIP to DLA involve face to face assessment with a health professional who relay information back to DWP. • A carer said people should automatically be moved to PIP. The condition may have changed / deteriorated and get a better rate. PIP is more beneficial to those with learning disabilities - eg provides cover without night time needs • Universal Credit – working age benefit from 16-64. Aims to simplify those claiming different working age benefits to move from benefit to world of work. Monthly payments bringing 6 claims to one (Income support, Employment Support Allowance, Jobseekers Allowance, Housing benefit, Child Tax & Working Tax Credit) • Being rolled out by end of September 2018

<p>Questions & Answers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you do not have access to IT, there are local authority budgets to help • Threshold- some are not aware they can claim • How flexible is it and how do people budget if they work erratic hours? 960,000 have flexible contracts. Payment is calculated on Real Time Earnings Information and is shared between the DWP and Tax office to register employee details 4 times per day to work out Personal allowance. Claim managed digitally so claimant knows award 7 days later. • Its promoted by radio adverts and through previous claimants. Will need more information, help and advice when its actually rolled out • Carer noted someone living here doesn't always know about benefits someone from different country knows. Perhaps a welfare advisor gives information. There is around £1.4 billion unclaimed benefits. Shows information gap.
<p>Guest Speaker Bob Dowd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From date of letter, there is a month to appeal. If unhappy with a decision, its your right to appeal. • Process (with the exception of housing) DWP consider and if they still disagree, there is a month to go to tribunal. Always get advice and put issues in writing • Original decision letter should state why the benefit is reduced. • Tribunal / Appeal – take copy of reason to appeal to tribunal board and apply for Mandatory Reconsideration. • Tribunal comprises independent board of a chair (eg retired judge / legal person), medical expert and lay person with experience of disability. They hear the circumstances. Bob strongly advises taking someone. The representative will receive papers but if you go as legal advice the person will not be empowered to speak. Statistics show over 60% are successful • Help with form filling – Camden Carers Service can help through a support worker or through Mary Ward. Advice and information handout circulated.
<p>Questions & Answers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Geoffrey to give Philippa details on becoming an appointee. • Action: Circulate any key information / signposting (PR)
<p>Feedback & AOB</p>	<p>Sue fedback on Mobility Forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of eligibility for Taxi cards–bring all transport services in to the “personal budget’ – this arises from the consultation • TFL – looking at air quality improvement to reduce emissions and no “idling” in traffic. Also driver courtesy and interaction with the public. • Wheelchairs on bus –its still not mandatory, but strongly advised for buggy user to make way for wheelchair. • Plus Bus – this service for Adult Social care and Special Educational Needs may be reduced. Dial A Ride may not take you to hospital appointments <p>Speakers were thanked and people invited to have some lunch.</p>
<p>Next Meeting: Thursday 21 September, Argenta House – 10.30-12.30pm (since changed to 28 September)</p>	