



Women's caring work –new thinking for challenging times

Care Matters Conference
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4th July 2012
University of Leeds

In her own words...



- ▶ Linda talks about her life caring for her mum.

Impact on Families

- ▶ The number of people over 80 will double by 2020
- ▶ 11 million people alive today expected to live to 100
- ▶ Number of carers will increase by 50% in next 25 years to 9 million
- ▶ Grandmothers: transitions and disruptions for caregiving (Musil et al, 2010)
- ▶ Sandwich generation metaphor not adequate
- ▶ Need for a holistic view of caring that encompasses not just the immediate family and social network but the wider society

Juggling Work & Care

- ▶ Of the 6 million carers in the UK (a number set to rise to 9 million over the next 30 years) one in five of them have had to give up work to care full time
- ▶ Although three quarters of the current caregivers feel capable of providing care, 49% feel overwhelmed, 36% report depression, and 65% have not had a vacation in the past year (*Women and Alzheimer's Disease: The Caregiver's Crisis, 2012*)
- ▶ 1 in 7 people juggle paid work with caring for a loved one and 8 in 10 report ill health as a consequence
- ▶ LSE study calculated the public cost of carers LEAVING work at £1.3 bn a year, due in part to lost tax revenues.
- ▶ More than half of the current caregivers say they needed to adjust their work schedules to accommodate caring, and 39% say they passed up promotions because they couldn't manage additional responsibilities. Nearly half of the respondents say they're having difficulty managing the demands of work and home, and one third don't think they're doing their best on the job. (*Women and Alzheimer's Disease: The Caregiver's Crisis, 2012*)

Caringa womans' job?

- ▶ Low income women spend significantly more time on caring work
- ▶ Family structures are changing to meet multigenerational caring responsibilities as parents, grandparents and great-grandparents juggle childcare and 'eldercare' between them.
- ▶ More people need to manage 'distance caring'
- ▶ More people in families are having to provide care when services let them down
- ▶ Where men and women have the same caregiving demands:
 - ▶ Women do more emotional support
 - ▶ Women experience more worry, guilt and anxiety (Arbor, 2001)

After the Caring Role?

- ▶ 70 per cent of bereaved carers in a sample population had cared more than once—the 'serial carer' (Larkin, 2009)
- ▶ A bitter sweetness? A sense of freedom yet a sense of loss
- ▶ Loss of sense of worth, value and confidence leading to increased isolation
- ▶ Financial pressures
- ▶ The return to working life

Final thoughts...



What does Carers Leeds do?



- ▶ We provide a one-stop service for information, advice and emotional support either by telephone, drop-in or appointment at our city centre premises, at home (via our outreach workers), or through our city-wide carer support groups—depending on the carer's own choice.
- ▶ We provide assistance with disability and carer benefit claims, access to services, employment issues, support with coping strategies etc.

Key achievements

- ▶ In 2010 Carers Leeds directly supported **over 3,500 carers**, as well as **8,000 carers & professionals** on our newsletter database.
- In just one month last year we helped carers to a total reported weekly gain from benefit claims of **£2,899.77 or £11,599.08 a month**
- ▶ We also helped carers in that month to a total reported back payment awarded of **£29,043.63**
- ▶ We provide 16 facilitated Carer Support Groups across the city a month supporting on average 8 carers at each session.
- ▶ We worked directly in partnership with over 400 separate organisations last year to provide services to carers
- ▶ We recently successfully bid to develop a Young Adult Carer (aged 18–30) service, Combat Casualties (for families of service personnel), partnership work with Alzheimer's Society Leeds for a Dementia Carer Support Worker, and a seconded Social Worker helping carers with direct payments/respite access

Key Agencies for Carers in Leeds



Carer aged 5–17?	Willow Young Carers
Carer of a person with Mental Health Problem using secondary services?	L&YPFT MH Carers Team
Older Carer caring for person with Learning Difficulties?	Age UK Older Carers Support Service
Carer of person with dementia/memory problem?	Alzheimer's Society Leeds Carer Support Service
Carer of a person using drugs/alcohol?	Carers Leeds
Parent carer/carer of a disabled or unwell child?	Carers Leeds
Carer of someone with a physical health condition?	Carers Leeds
Carer of an individual with learning difficulties?	Carers Leeds
Carer of a person with a sensory impairment?	Carers Leeds
For any other caring enquiry	Carers Leeds