



Carers Space Notts: Session 1

The New Approach to Carer Assessments

Summary

- The first meeting of Carers Space Notts took place on Thursday the 27th of January 2022 at 1:30pm.
- The session had 34 attendees.
- 19 of the attendees completed an online survey. Results showed that this sample was composed of:
 - 14 carers
 - 2 carer group representatives.
 - 2 Nottinghamshire County Council staff
 - 4 Nottinghamshire Carers Association staff
 - 1 TuVida (Nottinghamshire Carers Hub) staff member

(Some individuals reported having more than one role)
- Adrian Hartley gave an introduction and history of Carers Space Notts, outlining how it came to be as well as its aims, objectives and principles. (These aims and objectives can be viewed in the “about us” document which can be found at <https://nottinghamshirecarers.co.uk/carersspacenotts>)
- Senior Commissioner in Health and Social Care Dan Godley gave a detailed presentation on the new approach to Carer Assessments in Nottinghamshire (slides available at <https://nottinghamshirecarers.co.uk/carersspacenotts>)
- Marion Wardill talked in-depth to the group about her first-hand experience with the new assessment. She explained how both she and

the social worker completing the assessment found the process much more pleasant and less rigid than on previous occasions with the old form.

Dan Godley answered the following questions from the group:

1. Will guidance be available to help a carer plan for the conversation ahead of the assessment?

This isn't something that we do currently, however it might be something that we could consider. As this is a conversation-based approach to assessment, the process should be less formal and the worker undertaking the assessment will ensure all bases are covered during the conversation.

2. What is the time frame for the new assessment? I quote "Carers told us the offer didn't meet their needs" that was in 2017 - 5years ago..... will this be quicker?

If this is relating to waiting times for an assessment, there has been a backlog due to high demand for other services and recent staffing issues, however it will depend on which team is undertaking the assessment if there is a backlog of assessment requests and will vary between different teams. If the carer hasn't heard anything in a couple of weeks, please call the Customer Service Centre to chase up the assessment.

With regard to the support offer not meeting carers needs back in 2017, this new process is designed to specifically meet carers needs based on their own individual circumstances as identified through the conversation. The support offer is much wider and more personalised than the support offer previously of a one off personal budget of a fixed amount (£150).

3. Will a carer be able to have a copy of the assessment and be able to provide feedback on the process?

Yes, a copy of the assessment should always be provided to you.

4. What is the waiting time, as I have had a letter saying that I am in a waiting list. How long is that list?

Please see answer to question 2, however with regard to a letter, I'm not aware of one that is sent out with this information. If a copy can be provided, I would be interested to see it. Carers are usually informed when to expect a call or an appointment for their assessment to be undertaken.

5. Will the social workers / community care officers delivering the assessments have full training prior to delivering this new style assessment?

Social workers and CCO's are trained and should know how to assess, however workers have been briefed on the new assessment process and how they should approach this. A detailed staff guidance document has been produced which staff should refer to.

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- Several members of the group gave their thoughts on potential topics for Carers Space Notts' future monthly sessions. These included but were not limited to:
 - Transport
 - Nottingham University Hospitals discharge procedures
 - The Mental Capacity Act and The Care Act
 - The formal care offer

- Addressing loneliness

Meeting follow up

- The planning group met following the meeting to discuss how it went and plan for future sessions.
- We shared the information from the survey which suggested that most of those who attended the first session would like to have future meetings mid-week in the afternoon. However, we have also identified a need for some evening sessions to improve accessibility for working carers.
- We talked about how to run the next session to enable more people to contribute to the discussion, using 'break out rooms' for smaller group discussion and having more of the session lead by carers.
- We want to reach as many carers as possible, and as such will begin to telephone carers groups as well as continue to use email and social media to generate interest.
- We felt that it would be beneficial for the next session of Carers Space Notts to be focussed on co-production and its impact. Some of the group's founding members and other carers who have been/are currently involved in co-production projects could share their experiences with the group. This may help to illustrate to carers the kind of opportunities which they may be able to get involved in in future and how the process can and does work to improve services for carers.

Specialist terms needing clarification:

'Strength-based approach' in the context of changes to carers assessments –

Commissioner Sarah Craggs has asked one of the Social Work team to create a short video explaining 'Strength-based approach' which we will share on our website once it is completed.