

Prevention

KEY FINDING

Not all carers were sufficiently well supported

Local authorities have a duty to offer assessments to a carer where it appears that the carer has support needs. Many of the services carers rely on understandably stopped operating during the pandemic. Although we found examples of carers being offered support during the pandemic, we were told by some they felt abandoned and the impact on them had been severe leading to the breakdown of care arrangements.

More positively, we heard some local authorities had worked with local carers organisations to put in place innovative arrangements to promote engagement.

Practice

- Rhondda Cynon Taf had updated carer resources, for example, digital resources and engagement with carers' network and as a result they had identified carers requiring additional support. This resulted in an increase of approximately 30% more carer's assessments completed than in the same period the previous year.
- In Gwynedd, we heard from carers in adults services about excellent support from the local authority, with the innovative delivery of craft boxes followed by a virtual craft activity undertaken together with other carers to reduce isolation.

Documents viewed and practitioners and carers spoken to confirm carers' assessments were not routinely offered or completed in line within statutory duties. When assessments had been completed processes for communicating outcomes to carers required improvement. Samples of assessments evidenced that practice needs to improve to ensure carers' outcomes and eligibility are clearly recorded, along with reference to whether carers are able and willing to provide care. There was evidence that practitioners would benefit from further training in relation to identifying eligibility and undertaking assessments for carers. Local authorities need to ensure carers are routinely informed of their rights to an assessment and this is understood and promoted by all staff. Carers' assessments when applied consistently will ensure that opportunities for supporting carers and promoting their well-being will be more effectively identified.

