



Winchester & District Young Carers Film Project

Part of Healthwatch Week 2014

Executive Summary

- Film & Music Project with 15 young carers aged 15-19 from Winchester & District Young Carers Group.
- The project consisted of two consultation workshops followed by a full day workshop in which most of the filming and music creation took place.
- Key issues identified by the group were a lack of communication between young carers and health professionals, problems with young carers collecting prescriptions for the people they care for and a general lack of awareness of young carers amongst health and social care professionals.
- Potential solutions identified by the group included:
 - A 'Young Carers ID Card' for use in health settings to allow them to access more information, collect prescriptions and increase awareness.
 - Personalised Information Packs for professionals in which Young Carers could record all of their duties and understanding of their caring responsibilities.
 - Further training for professionals to increase understanding, awareness and responsibilities of young carers.
- The final film was viewed at an event attended by health professionals, carers, young carers and other interested professionals to begin a dialogue and consider how the views of the group can be taken forward.
- Some of the group have now started volunteering for Healthwatch Hampshire as Healthwatch Champions. They have been provided with materials and support and are now spreading the word in their schools and friendship groups.

Background

The 2011 census identified 4109 young carers aged 0-18 in Hampshire. 722 were providing over 20 hours of care each week, carrying out duties including:

- Personal/nursing care such as giving medication, changing dressings, assisting with mobility.
- Emotional support such as monitoring and meeting the emotional needs of the person.
- Accompanying the cared-for person to hospital.
- Intimate care like washing, dressing and assisting with toilet requirements.
- Acting as a translator for non-speaking sensory impaired, or those whose first language is not English.
- Recent evidence has shown that many young carers are responsible for administering medication to parents who have serious mental health problems. This has serious implications for the safety of both the young carer and the parent.

Asking young carers for their views, experiences and suggestions for improvements surrounding health and social care will provide a valuable tool for highlighting issues and providing suggestions for commissioners.



Aims & Objectives

In October 2013 Healthwatch made contact with Winchester & District Young Carers Group based in the King Alfred Youth Activity Centre (KAYAC) in Winnall, Winchester. A short workshop was carried out with the young people in the 15+ group in which they were asked to identify which health and social care services were most important to them and why. The workshop identified a number of issues that affect young carers specifically including support they receive at home, use of pharmacies to collect prescriptions for family members, CAMHS, and treatment in hospitals.



The idea of a more substantial consultation project was talked about and the group decided that a creative film project would be a good way to articulate their ideas and it would also give Healthwatch the ability to take these ideas forward to a larger audience at the same time as promoting Healthwatch and its aims and objectives. The group also expressed an interest in song writing and music. Winnall Rock School (WRS) are based in the same location as the Young Carers group so a meeting was set up to establish links with them. They have agreed to work with some members of the group to write a song and produce some music for the film. In summary the project:

- Produced a 5-10 minute film that can be used to promote the work of Healthwatch and take forward the views of Young Carers. This could be used at events and on the Healthwatch website.
- Allowed approx. 15 young carers aged 15-17 to share their thoughts on health and social care services that affect them and how they could be improved.
- Produced a music for use on the film and at events.
- Raised awareness of issues effecting young carers.
- Raised awareness of Healthwatch Hampshire.

Timescale & resources

This project was facilitated by Karen Ringwald and Steve Manley. The project included one preparation and planning workshop with the group plus one whole day workshop to create the film and music content.

Film content



The film content was planned primarily with the young people involved, however it was important to keep them focussed on:

- Their experiences of health and social care in Hampshire
- Positive and negative experiences
- Thoughts about how services could be influenced and improved
- Importance of feeding back to services

A number of activities were planned in advance to ensure that the film stayed on topic. These included visually interesting and engaging activities that work well on film. The film will also feature interviews with the young carers and the music created by the young people will provide the soundtrack to the film.



Initial Consultation Session

In an initial planning session, before we started filming, the group were asked to consider what problems they have faced with health and social care services as a young carer. We then asked the group to consider possible solutions. The results of this session are shown in the table below:

Problem	Poor communication between GPs and YCs and a general misconception of what a YC is and the importance of support.
Example	'I have been asked to leave a consultation room in a GP Surgery even when my mum was happy for me to stay'
Potential Solution	Information Pack for professionals to 'break the barrier and stigma' of what a YC is. Prioritise patients with families and be sure to assess the impact on the whole family not just the patient.

Problem	Not enough support for people with Mental Health issues.
Example	'My mum doesn't get enough support with her condition which leaves me to deal with the effects at home'
Potential Solution	More professional support for the whole family in the home.

Problem	Healthcare professionals don't 'think outside the box' they deal with the condition not the whole family.
Example	YC has sister with Hip Dysplasia. The family thought she would benefit from the use of a walking frame but healthcare pros thought she wouldn't be able to walk and would need further surgery. The family 'fought' for 18 months to receive a frame. Her sister now walks around the home with a frame and her condition has improved so much that there is no longer any need for surgery. This experience has led to a desire for this YC to become a Physiotherapist to use her experience to help others.
Potential Solution	'Throw the text book out of the window' and speak to the whole family to assess best treatment and outcomes... 'use your imagination'.

Problem	There is a lack of communication between Pharmacies, GPs and Families. Under 16yrs can't collect prescriptions which can cause problems for YCs (especially when parents can't leave the house). Three-way communication problem.
Potential Solution	Better communication, training and awareness. Possibly devise a consent form to be signed by parent and GP to allow collection of prescriptions... maybe YC ID Cards? These ideas would need backing from Healthcare professionals / services.

Problem	When a family member goes into hospital then accommodation is provided for parents but not for other siblings.
Example	YC had to stay with relatives a long distance away. This left YC worried about sibling and unable to visit.
Potential Solution	Whole family approach.

Problem	Social workers not keeping information private, don't always explain confidentiality which compounds trust issues and leaves YCs unable to feel free to openly talk about problems and issues.
Potential Solution	Social workers need to be more open and honest about confidentiality.



Problem	YCs are sometimes asked to talk about sensitive issues in front of parents / carers. This can be daunting (particularly when approaching mental health issues). Sometimes YCs feel the need to censor what is being said so that they don't offend parents etc.
Potential Solution	Provide different ways to communicate - through forms, 1-1 sessions, phone - not just group sessions.

Filming & Consultation



During half-term week we spent a whole day with the group (19th February 2014) in which we did the majority of the filming necessary to make the final film. We carried out a series of workshops with the group that were designed to bring out the main points highlighted in the planning activity. This included an activity that highlighted the importance of feedback, an activity to highlight which services are most important to young carers and an activity that identified potential solutions to the issues they raised. We also filmed the group relaxing in the environment to show what their normal sessions are like

and we filmed the group working with Winnall Rock School so that we could document the fact that the music in the film was made by them. We also interviewed a small number of the group individually for use in the final film. The interview questions are shown below:

1. Could you tell us who you are and a bit about yourself?
2. Tell us about Winchester & District Young Carers Group... How long have you been attending? What is it like? What sort of thing do you do here?
3. What is a young carer? What does being a young carer mean to you?
4. This film will be focussing on feedback on health and social care services. Why do you think it is important to feedback on these kind of services?
5. Do you have any specific experiences (good or bad) of health and social care services that you would like to tell us about?
6. Do you think that healthcare professionals have an understanding and awareness of young carers? What has your experience been?
7. Today we have discussed how it might be possible to improve understanding and awareness of young carers. Talk me through how the following suggestions would help to improve services for young carers...
 - Information pack for professionals
 - ID Cards for young carers
 - Any other suggestions that have been discussed
8. This film will be seen by people who commission health and social care services. As a young carer do you have any messages you would like to give them?
9. Any other comments about anything we've discussed today?

Film Premiere

As part of Healthwatch Week we screened the film at an event held at King Alfred Youth Activity Centre. The event was part of a separate 'Carer's Coffee Morning' event that is held at the centre. This gave us the opportunity to invite carers, young carers and professionals to the final screening. Representatives from Healthwatch England, CCGs, Public Health, Parent Voice, Hampshire Fire Service and The Children's Society were among approx. 25 professionals that attended.





The 12 minute film was shown and a short discussion around the issues presented then took place. The film is now uploaded onto the Healthwatch Hampshire website and will be available long term on our YouTube Site.

To view the final film please visit:

www.healthwatchhampshire.co.uk or <http://youtu.be/hEHhduA1DeY>

Next Steps?

The film was well received by those who attended the premiere. The next stage is to ensure that the messages in the film are not lost and that Healthwatch Hampshire do their best to ensure that some steps are taken to improve services for Young Carers. Healthwatch England have agreed to disseminate the film through the entire Healthwatch Network and we have promoted the film through social media and sent a link of the film to everyone in attendance at the premiere so that they can spread the film to as many people as possible. Over the coming weeks Healthwatch Hampshire will be planning follow up work with Young Carers to ensure that their voices are not lost.

Key contacts

Winchester & District Young Carers
Anna Hutchings - Activities and Support Coordinator
Ben Hogbin - Manager
Kayac, Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD
01962 808339 / 07941 179240
activities@wycp.org.uk

Winnall Rock School
Jimmy Alford - Music Tutor
Kayac, Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD
07592 030292 winnallrockschool@hotmail.co.uk



**Compiled by
Steve Manley
Community Outreach & Engagement Officer
April 2014**