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|  **Meeting of the Working Carers Employers Forum 19th** **April 2018**Carers LeedsThe HeadrowLeeds | **Z:\Admin Carers Leeds\A OPERATIONAL\Working Carers Dementia Project 2016\SUPPORTING_WORKING_CARERS_LOGO.jpg** |

**Summary of Discussion**

Present

Helen Smith St Gemmas Hospice

Becky Smith NHS England

Ian Baldwin Clydesdale and Yorkshire Bank Group

Val Hewison Carers Leeds

Andrew Walsh Carers Leeds

Ian Brooke Mawson Leeds CC

Chris Walker British Gas

Mej Chaudhry Leeds CC

Sarah Sutherland University of Leeds

Eva Pearson Skills for Care

Maxine Broomhead HMRC

Valerie Banks Carers Leeds

Linda Eades Civil Service Charity

Becky Edmundson Hainsworths

Val confirmed the appointment of a new Working Carers Carer Support Worker. Madlen will start in May/June and will provide a direct support service for working carers.

Andrew had already circulated the new Carers Leeds Package for employers of working carers. It was generally felt to be a good offering for employers in a user friendly format. There was some discussion about the potential for Carers Leeds to be stretched if it were to provide all of the package to a large number of employers. It was agreed that initially the Package would be rolled out to Forum Members only, so that we could track progress.

The meeting discussed specific parts of the package.

Support for Employers:

Section 1 – it was agreed that the offer to address managers within the organisations was useful and would be taken up by the Forum members. This would be in a bespoke way, and could be both via presentations and also in an interactive format.

Section 2 – everyone agreed that they would complete the self assessment for their own organisations. Andrew would send the link to the most current version of the questionnaire.

Section 3 – it was agreed that the Digital Resource from Carers UK for all carers was now available to all carers in the Leeds area, free of charge. This would include working carers.

Andrew would send details of the log on process to the Forum members.

Section 4 – Andrew confirmed that the Employers Forum would remain at broadly its current size and scope. He would welcome some growth though and members were asked to come up with any relevant contacts.

Support for Working Carers

Section 1 - Carrie from Carers Leeds told the meeting how the one to one on site process works.

The meeting agreed that this process was a core part of the service and most said that they would want to take up the offer once the package was formally launched. Some of the larger organisations suggested that they would look to pilot this kind of support first.

The meeting then discussed a range of experiences with working carers around a number of themes:

**Identifying who our working carers are**

Methods identified included:

* Using engagement surveys to include a question on being a carer
* Using specific surveys to ask who is a carer
* Having a question in the induction process – are you a carer?
* Having a question on the application forms about caring responsibilities
* Using a template in appraisals and one to ones to ask about caring responsibilities
* General understanding by managers of their team members, including if they are a carer
* Analysing absence reasons and return to work interviews
* Including a question on working carers when sending round a regular personal information update request
* Having a specific tailored questionnaire for the workforce on working carers.

**What is our experience of using carer passports/individual carers’ support plans**

Linda from the Civil Service Charity outlined the passport process which they coordinate. More details are available on the CSC website. HMRC spoke about how they use the passport process to great effect.

Andrew explained that Carers Leeds have drawn up a template for an individual carers’ support plan, which is a more basic version of the passport principle. This template is available to Forum members via the Carers Leeds website.

**What sort of paid leave do we provide for working carers**

Forum members gave examples as follows

Carers Leeds – 5 days paid leave.
Leeds City Council – Special Leave Policy – no cap – manager’s discretion. Also, domestic and emergency leave – 5 days; bereavement 3 days; dependents leave 5 days and flexi-time.
British Gas – up to 22 hours. Special Leave Policy – 10 days at full pay – limited policy – emergencies only. Also, flexible working with the manager.
Yorkshire Bank – 3 unplanned and 2 planned life event days; flexible working and working from home.
University – Emergency paid leave and flexi hours.

**Supporting Carers Back Into Work**

NHS England has a corporate social development strategy to address UN sustainability goals. As part of this they told the Forum about plans to work with Carers Leeds to offer employability skills to carers, such as CV skills, confidence building , and IT skills. More details will come out in due course.

**Digital Resources**

Andrew confirmed that all working carers in the Leeds area are entitled to free access to a Carers UK digital resource which provides information and advice in a wide range of carers related issues. For more information on how they access this, employers should contact Carers Leeds.

**Leeds Commitment to Carers**

Employers who are part of the Forum were encouraged to sign up to this commitment which is citywide. More details are available on the Carers Leeds Website on the Home Page.