

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Acting Director of Social Work Services

Social Justice Committee: 8 November 2006

Subject: Macmillan Carers Service

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee regarding the development of the Macmillan Carers Service, and to inform Committee of the decision of Macmillan Cancer Support to extend the funding of the service for a further 2 years.

2. Background

2.1 A joint social work and health bid to Macmillan Cancer Relief (now Macmillan Cancer Support) for funding to provide a flexible and responsive support service for cancer patients and their carers was successful in 2002. This service was developed as complementary and adding value to existing services for cancer patients and their carers living in Lomond.

2.2 Building on the success of the service in Lomond, Macmillan Cancer Support provided additional funding for the Clydebank area. This has resulted in the delivery of a consistent service across the council area, with the provision of further funding to bring both areas in line in terms of timescales for funding.

3. Main Issues

3.1 The Macmillan Cancer Service is provided, supported and jointly managed by social work, health and Macmillan Cancer Support, with West Dunbartonshire Council as the host organisation providing a base and managing the budget.

3.2 The objectives of the service are

- To offer carers a range of support to enable them to continue to care for their relative or friend
- To recognise carers as partners in providing care, and offer them support to continue their task
- To relieve pressure on the carer / family caring for the client
- To reduce social isolation and promote social inclusion
- To enable the person living with cancer to stay at home longer than would have been possible

- To avoid unnecessary admission to hospital or residential care by providing a trained carer to take the place of the carer in times of need
- 3.3** The service has developed to provide palliative care, social and psychological support through highly trained staff in a sensitive and caring manner.
- 3.4** Provision of service is based on assessed needs, and packages of care are designed and tailored to meet individual needs, in conjunction with existing nursing and care services, as appropriate.
- 3.5** As a result of current funding there is equity of access to the service, and consistency in the volume of service available to those who receive carer support.
- 3.6** A Project Steering Group has been established, with full representation from all relevant organisations and agencies. The Steering Group has responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of the service, including an overview of relevant budgetary and statistical reports. Significant factors in the evaluation process also include:
- Client satisfaction
 - Response times from initial referral to commencement of service
 - Flexibility and speed of response to changes in circumstances
 - Consistency and continuity of service throughout the area

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** In order to achieve flexibility and responsiveness, some sessional staff have been employed to work as and when required, supporting the contracted staff who work regular hours. All staff receive full training and regular on-going support.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The additional funding of £165,000 from Macmillan Cancer Support will ensure that the service continues across West Dunbartonshire Council for 2 years – until 30 September 2008.
- 5.2** The total investment in the Macmillan Carers Service in West Dunbartonshire Council from Macmillan Cancer Support equates to £665,000.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** Funding provided by Macmillan Cancer Support ensures that the Macmillan Carers Service is provided equitably across the council area, and that the termination dates for funding are aligned for Clydebank and Lomond.

6.2 Future funding streams require to be identified and explored to ensure long term provision of the service.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Committee is asked to:

- (i) invite the Leader of the Council to write to the Chief Executive, Macmillan Cancer Support U.K., to record the Council's appreciation of Macmillan's Support and the unique Partnership arrangement with the council,
- (ii) invite Macmillan representatives and carers to give a presentation on the partnership to the Council.

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Wards Affected: All wards are affected