



Blackburn with Darwen
carers service

MA and Family

The Carers Service assessment identified:

- MA (aged 13) was referred to the Young Carers Project via the Transforming Lives Panel following on from school referring MA as they felt that MA was in a substantial caring role
- MA's dad had died quite suddenly leaving the family in a state of shock and mum was finding it difficult to come to terms with the loss of her husband and she was struggling at times to get out of bed. The family had no extended family to rely on for support and they appeared very isolated and vulnerable as a whole
- MA's older brother (aged 15) had moved back to the family home having been living with extended family previously. He was struggling with his guilt as he felt that he should have been around more for his dad. He had begun to get into trouble with the Police by becoming involved in fights, confrontations with pupils at his school, cyber bullying, etc since moving back to the area. His school attendance was very low too
- MA had two younger siblings (aged 4 and 2) who appeared confused about where their dad had gone and mum struggled to parent them or support them
- Mum wanted to move home due to issues with neighbours – children would not go outside to play
- Mum also struggled to transport all 4 children to school as they all went to separate schools.

Co-ordinated support offered:

With mum's consent, a CAF was initiated. The following people became involved with the family:

- Pastoral support from all 4 schools for all 4 children
- School Nurse
- Familywise Practitioner
- Stepping Stones Adviser
- Homestart key worker
- Jigsaw counselling
- GIFTS project (bereavement support)
- YOT worker
- Targeted Youth Support Worker
- ELCAS team

Outcomes for carer:

- Communication between mum and school improved
- Mum decided that sending the children to 4 separate schools so far away was not ideal, and this was a big ask for MA to undertake given that she ensured that her siblings were up, fed and ready for school/nursery. Mum therefore moved the 2 younger children to a school nearby that was walking distance
- Homestart are now supporting mum with morning routines
- Familywise provided parenting strategies with mum
- Mum and MA received bereavement counselling with Jigsaw

- MA was supported via the Young Carers Project – this enable her to have respite from her caring role, as well as have a representative to advocate on her behalf to express her wishes and feelings in the TAC meetings
- MA was referred to the GIFTS programme, where he received support from himself
- Stepping Stones became involved supporting mum with her benefits, debt issues and budgeting; they also helped mum to join the B-with-us scheme as mum had decided that she wanted to move house
- MA's brother became engaged with the YOT team; he also received support via ELCAS looking at his anger issues
- Foodbank scheme was introduced to mum
- Overall, after much intervention from various agencies, all 4 children's school/nursery attendance began to improve, the younger two children became more settled in their new school/nursery and the staff were able to carry out age appropriate therapeutic activities for the children as and when needed. Slowly, mum began to accept support and accessed the counselling. Although Mum still looked to MA for support, she felt that she was now confident enough to instil boundaries and bedtime routines herself. MA's caring role reduced in time too, to more age appropriate caring tasks.

What could the long term savings be because of this support:

- Mum is hoping to go back to College as she had had to give up her career in the Pharmacy industry once she married and started a family – reducing claims to benefits
- A reduction in social isolation for mum and children can prevent the potential of long term mental health problems
- A reduction in costs to the criminal system.

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