



Blackburn with Darwen
carers service

Cancer

The Carers Service assessment identified:

- Mrs L had approached the service as she was struggling to cope emotionally and practically due to her own Multiple Sclerosis diagnosis and her husband's cancer diagnosis. In addition to this the Carer has a caring role for her granddaughter who has health problems
- On meeting Mrs L she was extremely emotional and feeling very unsure about the way forward in their situation. Although they had had recent social care advice following her husband's hospital admission no services were put in place for at home.
- Mr L had been advised that further cancer treatment was no longer being offered but they were unsure where this left them in terms of prognosis, life expectancy etc
- Discussed benefits issues with the family and it was clear that some appropriate benefits were not in place
- Mrs L needed to take her granddaughter to hospital appointment out of area and felt she did not know to fund this to manage this as she didn't feel comfortable leaving her husband due to his health which felt overwhelming for her at this time in terms of transport, ensuring her husband's wellbeing, and meeting her granddaughter's needs.

Co-ordinated support offered:

- Mr L was referred to social services for an assessment, and a Carers Assessment for Mrs L was also requested
- Due to the health status of Mr L and other potential issues in terms of funding for Mr L going forward, with consent, I contacted his specialist nurse and updated her regarding his health and suggested that perhaps an application for Continuing Health Care may be appropriate. She welcomed the update and arranged to visit the family promptly
- Referred Mrs L to Carers Service Benefits adviser for assistance with benefits and a home visit was arranged due to the difficulties for the carer being able to leave her husband.
- Applied for assistance for costs through the Carers Service Travel and Respite grant for suitable transport for Mrs L and her Granddaughter to attend the appointment outside their local area. At the same time a referral was made to Crossroads due to some time limited funding available through the Carers Service for a support worker to stay with Mr L whilst Mrs L was out at the appointment. Utilising the same funding Crossroads support continued on a once weekly basis for several weeks to enable Mrs L to have a break from her caring role with the reassurance that her husband was cared for
- Due to Mr L's health status, continuing healthcare was put in place by the specialist nurse and this triggered excellent support for Mr L in terms of personal care, equipment, and emotional support for both Mr and Mrs L through the hospice team.

Outcomes for carer:

- Mrs L was able to attend the appointment with her granddaughter with transport funded by the Carers Service, whilst her husband was cared for by Crossroads at no cost to the family. The ongoing Crossroads support enabled Mrs L to have time with family and friends away from her very difficult caring role which she found helpful
- Sadly Mr L passed away. Prior to this the family felt that his care was handled with dignity and respect by professionals involved.
- After his death Mrs L had significant paperwork and benefit changes and I was able to visit and assist practically with paperwork and the Carers Service Benefit adviser was able to handle complex benefit issues for Mrs L who felt a great sense of relief to have this assistance. Financially this left her feeling more secure and less anxious
- I encouraged Mrs L to apply for a respite grant through the Carers Service to enable her to visit her closest friend who lived some distance who could offer her the emotional support she needed after the death of her husband
- Mrs L expressed her thanks to the service in a card and felt that the support had been invaluable at a very difficult time
- Mrs L has been invited to attend the Carers Service 'Life After Caring' course to enable her to start to consider her own needs for the future now that her husband has passed away. The Carers Service recognises that when a caring role ends, the impact on a carer can be great, and support is offered for six months following the death of a person for whom somebody cares for.

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

- Benefits advice led to potential savings in housing services
- Enabling transport to essential health appointment led to savings in NHS time and resources
- Emotional support for Mrs L and ensuring the appropriate services were put in place for her husband potentially led to saving in mental health services.

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