



A REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL CARERS' STRATEGY: RELEVANCE OF ITS ACTIONS

**EVALUATING THE NATIONAL CARERS' STRATEGY:
FUTURE DIRECTIONS
CARERENGAGE WORKSHOP 2**

TUESDAY 23 MARCH 2021

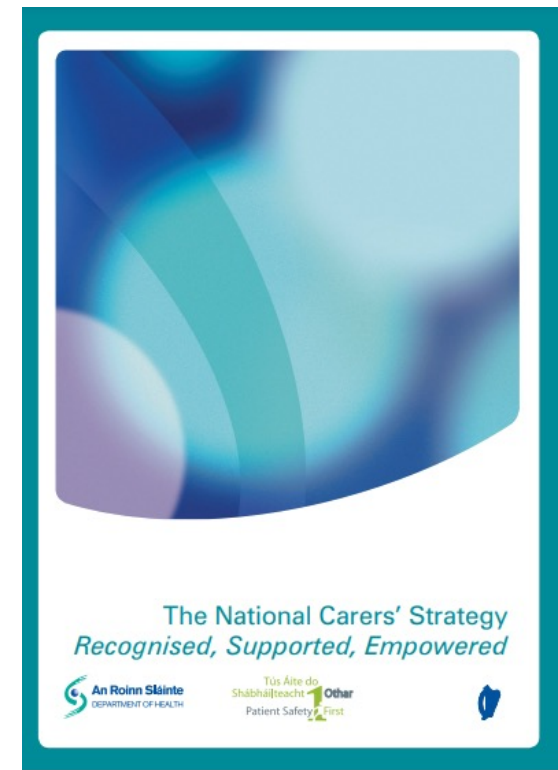
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Care Alliance Ireland and Institute of Social Science for the 21st Century, UCC
- Irish Research Council (New Foundations)
- People who responded to the survey



NATIONAL CARERS' STRATEGY

- Published in 2012
- Sets out government policy for those who provide care in an unpaid capacity
- Roadmap for Implementation
- 42 priority actions
- Cost-neutral





IMPETUS FOR THE SURVEY

Programme for Government: Our Shared Future (June 2020)

- Commitment to review and update the National Carers' Strategy (NCS)
- Department of Health leading the review and update

CarerEngage Project

- NCS update identified as significant
- Opportune time to review relevance of actions



AIM OF THE SURVEY

to assess the extent to which the 42 actions in the National Carers' Strategy continue to be relevant

from the perspectives of key stakeholders including family carers, policymakers, relevant service providers, and researchers

METHODOLOGY

- Survey of family carers / other stakeholders (18+)
- Online and anonymous
- Questionnaire developed with CAI and ISS21, UCC

Questionnaire – three parts

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Awareness, knowledge and use of NCS | 2. Relevance of 42 actions | 3. Three priority areas for next NCS |
|---|----------------------------------|---|

- Administered 14 Jan - 5 Feb 2021
- 734 questionnaires returned (93% family carers)

AWARENESS OF NCS



KNOWLEDGE OF NCS IS LOW

- No or low level of knowledge 50%
- Moderate level 38%
- High level 12%

Family carers had a lower level of knowledge

- Almost 80% indicated NCS personally and/or professional relevant
- Few use NCS to inform / influence service provision reform

RELEVANCE OF ACTIONS

Respondents asked to rate relevance of 42 actions

Four options from which to choose:

- ‘Action retained without change’
- ‘Action retained but updated / expressed differently’
- ‘Action removed’
- ‘Don’t know’

Option to add a comment



OVERALL

For most actions (40/42), over 90% wanted the action retained

With respect to each of the 42 actions:

% who wanted
action updated
or expressed
differently

>

% who wanted
action retained
without change

PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED

Family carers

| Priority Area | Ranked |
|--|--------|
| Income support | 1 |
| Supports and services, esp. home-based | 2 |
| Respite | 3 |

Other stakeholders

| Priority Area | Ranked |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Community-based supports | 1 |
| Income support | 2 |
| Respite | 3 |



GOAL 1

Recognise the value and contribution of carers and promote their inclusion in decisions relating to the persons that they are caring for

14 ACTIONS



RECOGNITION

- Many carers feel ‘invisible or forgotten’
- Term ‘vague’ and ‘nebulous’
- Recognition means:
 - Recompensing carers
 - Providing adequate supports
 - Involving carers in decision-making



INCLUSION IN DECISION-MAKING

- Involve carers in developing policy
- Enable voices of all carers to be heard
- Professionals to reach out to carers
- Co-production in care planning and decision-making
- Care planning, including discharge planning, takes time, good communication, and that adequate and appropriate supports are available



INCOME SUPPORTS

Actions in NCS focus largely on:

- improving information / advice on carer income supports
- reducing waiting times for processing applications / appeals

However, model of income support (e.g. means-tested) for family carers questioned by many respondents



GOAL 2

Support carers to manage their physical, mental and emotional health and well-being

|| ACTIONS



CARERS' HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Broad understanding of health and well-being
- Understanding of barriers that family carers face
- Better achieved with assessment, followed up with action, and ongoing monitoring
- Frustration at slow progress made:
 - Carers Needs Assessment
 - Statutory Home Support Scheme
 - Standards for Home Support



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CARING

- Real concern about children having to bear responsibility of caring
- Greater role for education providers
- Out-reach and engagement by service providers



GOAL 3

Support carers to care with confidence through the provision of adequate information, training, services and supports

9 ACTIONS



INFORMATION, ADVICE AND TRAINING FOR CARERS

- Online provision of information has led to significant improvements
- Room for further improvement – staff training, single point of contact, information to be followed up with action
- Challenges for some carers, e.g. with poor literacy skills
- Carer training – greater range of options
- Housing, Assistive technology, Transport



GOAL 4

Empower carers to participate as fully as possible in economic and social life

8 ACTIONS





RESPITE

- Carer's Support Grant (formerly Respite Care Grant) – need for greater awareness and access
- Development of person-centred, flexible approaches greatly welcomed
- Many gaps exist



PARTICIPATION IN LABOUR MARKET

- Not an option for many carers
- Challenges facing carers who are participating in labour market
- Transition points into or out of labour market are key
- Awareness of Carer's Leave Act remains low
- Participation in economic versus social life



TAKE HOME MESSAGES

- All 42 Actions relevant, but many need to be strengthened
- A greater focus on implementation is needed
- Family carers want to be recognised, listened to and involved
- Income support – the top priority for family carers
- Community-based supports critical for wellbeing of carer and person cared for
- Carers have diverse needs and circumstances
- Desire for joined-up integrated support and services
- Online supports to extend beyond Covid-19



THANK-YOU

