

Fragmentation & competition: voluntary organisations' experiences of support for family carers

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Voluntary Sector & Volunteering Research Conference 2013

Background

- Extensive literature describing outsourcing of social care from local councils
 - Mostly discussed in terms of cost containment
 - Additional advantage in terms of increased choice for consumers
 - Most usually described in terms of implementation of neoliberal policies
 - Less research on how it is experienced by providers and by people using services and family carers

Risk of market failure

- Recently can observe rise in concerns about market failure
 - Collapse of Southern Cross care home group
 - Sale of Castlebeck Care Homes (owned Winterbourne view)

Minister Norman Lamb warns of risk of home care scandal



13 June 2013 Last updated at 12:18



T e n s i o n s

Fiscal austerity

- Local councils reporting social care budgets increasingly stretched
 - 95% plan to use 'better procurement' but is it enough
 - Risk of 'Californification' to describe councils with reduced budgets that are unable to meet their statutory responsibilities

Changes in procurement

- Government wants expansion of mutuals, social enterprises, charities and co-operatives

Policies on carers

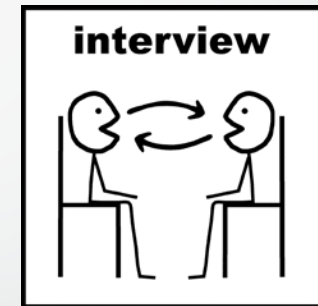
- Successive governments claim supporting carers is a priority
- UK one of first countries to recognise carers' rights
 - Through benefits system (1992)
 - Through rights to an assessment (1995) and services in their own right (2004)
 - Central government strategies (1999, 2008, 2010)
 - New rights to an assessment promised in Care Act

Concurrent mixed method design



Interviews

- Four areas
 - Varied in terms of geography, size, type, political control
 - 86 interviews
 - 38 carers workers
 - 8 commissioners
 - 24 family carers
 - 16 representatives of voluntary organisations



Paper concentrates on....

- Interviews with commissioners
- Interviews with voluntary organisations
 - For instance, carers' organisations, Alzheimer's Society, MS Society
- Managers of services supporting services for carers
 - For instance, carers' centres

“ We have a long history of carer support services happening in a very ad hoc way... The agreement from [work undertaken by strategy group] was that ourselves and the NHS would combine our various bits of investment and join together and commission one service. Now that is partly to stop duplication. But also because by combining our investment we could make it look a bit more substantial. ”

Commissioner1

Twin themes of integration and rationalisation

“ [But] the council has also decided that all services for carers will be tendered out.... So for us as an organisation, we’ve spent the last two years [of 25 year existence] thinking that our life as we know it is going to come to an end very soon It’s been pretty stressful. ”

Worker18

Stability becoming uncertainty

“ *...we've got to make sure that we've got the money coming in, and that the contracts we're asked to deliver we deliver them correctly because otherwise the money will dry up. We won't get the money if we don't deliver what we've been asked to deliver.*

”

Vol12

Compliance with outcomes based commissioning

“ We build capacity in communities, we build self-care capacity within families, and as much as that we’re also a voice and choice organisation trying to influence policy, carers’ issues ...it’s hard to force our [bid] into those straitjackets really ... ”

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Rejection of outcomes based commissioning

“ *TIMOTHY: Transition-wise, we have got a lot of very verbal ex-carers who want to say what was right for them ten years ago, which isn't useful for the strategy.*

MARCELLA: And that really isn't useful at all because people who have had experiences, ten fifteen, twenty years ago are very different, you know, the services were very, very different to the way that they actually are now.”

Commissioners 2 and 3

Out with the old

Effective or not?

- I think these pamper days are a waste of time... You don't get people that are trapped in their houses, the 91 year old looking after the 89 year old. They don't come out for a pamper day. And your pampering lasts how long? And you remember it for how long? What difference does it make to your life in the grand scheme of things at the end of the day? It makes the people who put it on feel good, and it makes the funders feel great (WORKER18)



Photo by Mark & Jenny

Outsourcing assessments

For

- ...we actually dared to propose that we should get rid of all care managers, that we should allow all people to self-assess their needs (Volog)

Against

- I think it's shirking responsibility ... [Carers organisations] would do the therapeutic tool bit much better but they might not make the connection [to financial need] (Worker24)

“ *It’s caused huge competition between the sector, a lot of ill feeling, because people have to be commercially sensitive. ... I had many partnership meetings with other [organisations] and they couldn’t even get past stage two because they wouldn’t talk about their budgets because they were commercially sensitive.* ”

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Competition

Discussion (1)

- Emergence of hybrid organisations (Billis, 2010)
 - Pressures on organisations to adopt commercial practices and compete with each other
- Distinctiveness of voluntary organisations (Macmillan, 2013)

Discussion (2)

- Is there a market in the voluntary sector?
- Dual market in social care
 - Care homes and home care almost all private providers
 - Carers support, befriending information and advice almost always voluntary sector
- Consequences of ending contracts needs more consideration
 - Shift to fewer, larger providers?

More on contracting out....

- SWSCmedia
- <http://swscmedia.com/2013/08/contracting-out-social-care-services-an-opinion-piece-by-jo-moriarty/>

Contracting out social care services – An opinion piece by: Jo Moriarty

August 27, 2013 - Feature, NHS, Service Integration, Social Care Debate - Tagged: Private vs Public Services
Privatization - no comments



At first glance, the contracting out of social care services to providers in the private and voluntary sector is nothing new. Since the late 1980s, local councils have moved so far away from providing services themselves that the [latest Skills for Care report](#) reveals that just nine per cent of adult social care workers are employed by their local council.

However, if we look more closely we can see a change in the pace and extent of these changes.

Among the best known of these is Barnet Council's [One Barnet](#) Programme. Like almost all councils, Barnet council faces rising demand for services along

Disclaimer

The preparation of this presentation was made possible by a grant from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) School for Social Care Research on social care practice with carers. The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NIHR School for Social Care Research or the Department of Health/NIHR

Thanks to....

- Everyone who was interviewed or who returned a survey
- Lizzy, Jenny, Mark, and Carolyn who helped with interviewing
- Lizzy for help with data entry and coding
- Virtual Outsourcing, Laptop Confidential and Voicescript who did the transcribing
- The Project Advisory Group and the Unit Service User and Carer Advisory Group
- To SSCR for funding
- To you for listening!

