

York Carers Centre Survey 2011

In January 2011 York Carers Centre sent out 650 surveys to adult carers registered on its database. These were sent to carers who had registered in the past 2 years. In total 183 surveys were returned giving a 28% response rate. A separate survey was conducted for young carers and their families earlier in the year.

1. Please tell us how you first heard about York Carers Centre (tick one only)

	Number	%
Social worker	44	24%
Care support worker	43	23%
GP surgery	24	13%
Other	22	12%
Family or friends	16	9%
Cant remember	16	9%
Carers organisation	14	8%
Voluntary agency	4	2%
Total	183	

The majority of carers heard about our service from a social worker or care support worker. This is a positive and demonstrates that the awareness raising and joint working that has been undertaken has had some impact.

2. Why did you contact York Carers Centre in the first place (tick all that apply)

Reason for 1st contact	Number	%
Information about services	105	57%
Newsletter	42	23%
Cec	78	42%
Benefits advice	37	20%
Emotional support	29	16%
Community care advice	29	16%
Discount card	22	12%
Social events	12	6%
Cant remember	10	6%
Employment, Education & Training	3	2%
Number of respondents	183	

Over half of all respondents told us that the reason for their initial contact was to find information about services. This is closely followed by carers wanting to register for the carers emergency card. Almost a quarter of carers wanted a newsletter and a fifth wanted specific benefit advice.

Although only 12% of carers initial contact was for the discount card, this is still significant as the card was only publicised in November 2010, only 3 months before the surveys were sent out.

3. How do you usually contact York Carers Centre (tick all that apply)

	Number	%
Phone	106	58%
I don't contact the Centre	50	27%
Home visit	35	19%
Office	15	8%
Website	11	6%
Email	9	5%
Events or classes	2	1%
Number of respondents	183	

Over half of respondents (58%) told us that they contacted the centre by telephone, with over a quarter (27%) advising that they didn't contact the centre at all. Later in the survey 95% of respondents agreed with the statement that "I don't use York Carers Centre services very much but I am reassured that they are there when I need them". Thus indicating that when carers do contact us the main method is by telephone and although 27% do not contact the centre, they do indicate that despite this the service is still valued.

A fifth of carers had received a home visit, with relatively low numbers making contact by visiting the office, email and the website.

4. Tell us how much you agree or disagree with the statements below. Please tick one box per statement and if you have not used this method of contact tick N/A

Telephone

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Calls are answered quickly	54	46%	58	49%	1	1%	1	1%	4	3%	118
My query was dealt with properly	58	51%	50	44%	2	2%	1	1%	3	3%	114
The person who dealt with my query was polite and understanding	76	64%	38	32%	0	0%	0	0%	4	3%	118
I was able to speak to someone at a time that was convenient for me	54	47%	54	47%	4	3%	0	0%	4	3%	116
The telephone opening hours of Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm are adequate and fit in with my caring role	47	40%	63	54%	2	2%	0	0%	5	4%	117

Overall satisfaction with the telephone service is extremely high with 95% of respondents saying that the calls were answered quickly; 96% thought the person who dealt with their enquiry was polite and understanding; 94% said they were able to speak to someone at a convenient time to them and that the opening hours were convenient.

There were 3 comments about the phone service, all of which indicate some demand for extended telephone hours.

“Would be useful to have out of hours service”

“Would also like Fridays funding permitted”

“Phone access in 4 days inadequate”.

Email

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't Know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
My email was responded to quickly	3	14%	14	1%	0	0%	0	0%	4	19%	21
The email reply I received was clear and easy to understand	2	11%	14	1%		0%		0%	3	16%	19

The number of respondents who said they use email was low. However, 95% of those who did use it said they were responded to quickly and 85% felt that the response was clear and easy to understand.

York Carers Centre website (www.yorkcarerscentre.co.uk)

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	3	%	
I have access to the internet and have visited the website	12	24%	31	63%	2	1%	1	2%	3	6%	49
The website is easy to use and I found what I was looking for	10	23%	30	68%	1	2%	0	0%	3	7%	44
I would like to be able to find out more about carer services on the website	9	21%	18	42%	7	1%	0	0%	9	21%	43

Almost a quarter of respondents said they had access to the internet. Of those 91% felt the website was easy to use and that they were able to find what they were looking for. Only a third of respondents said they would like to find out more about carer services on the website.

From the responses it is clear that although some carers do use the website it is not the preferred choice of contact by the majority of users at this time.

Office visit (to our Priory Street offices)

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No
I was greeted by someone and they were able to help	12	43%	8	29%	1	1%	0	0%	7	25%	28
My query was dealt with properly	12	46%	9	35%	0	1%	0	0%	5	19%	26
I felt comfortable and supported during my visit	16	57%	6	21%	0	1%	0	0%	6	21%	28

In relation to visiting the office the response was low, probably because the main method of contact is by telephone. In relation to those who had visited the office, 1 carer disagreed with the statement that “ they were greeted by someone and they were able to help”. There is no further information to ascertain the reason for this.

Visit at home - the person who visited

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Arrived on time	51	60%	26	31%	0	0%	4	5%	4	5%	85
Dealt with my query properly	48	61%	27	34%	0	0%	0	0%	4	5%	79
Acted professionally	52	64%	25	31%	0	0%	0	0%	4	5%	81
Was helpful and understanding	56	68%	22	27%	0	0%	0	0%	4	5%	82
Spent the right amount of time at my home	54	67%	23	28%	0	0%	0	0%	4	5%	81

Overall feedback with regard to home visits was very good in all areas, with 95% agreeing that their query was dealt with properly; the worker was professional; helpful; understanding and spent the right amount of time with the carer. In terms of time keeping 5% of respondents did not feel that the worker arrived on time, with the majority confirming they did.

5. Tell us what you think about our newsletter (York Carers Centre news)

The current newsletter is sent out by post 4 times a year. Carers were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements below?

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No
The information in it is useful and relevant to me	42	26%	101	62%	3	2%	0	0%	18	11%	164
It is sent out often enough	39	24%	101	63%	3	2%	0	0%	17	11%	160
It is clear and easy to read	50	31%	95	59%	0	0%	0	0%	16	10%	161
It helps me feel less isolated as a carer	46	29%	91	57%	3	2%	0	0%	20	13%	160

Overall, the feedback about the newsletter was positive with 88% agreeing that the information is useful and relevant to them. Similarly 87% thought that it was sent out often enough. 90% said that it is clear and easy to understand and 86% agreed that it helps them to feel less isolated as a carer. Some carers answered "don't know" to several of these questions. A small number told us they do not receive it. A small number gave a negative response with regard to its relevance, frequency and impact in terms of reducing isolation. Some carers felt it should be sent out more often.

6. Tell us what you think about the Carers' information pack?

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No
The leaflets in the pack were useful and relevant to me	55	36%	90	59%	5	3%	0	0%	2	1%	152
I read all the leaflets in the pack	59	38%	81	53%	10	6%	0	0%	4	3%	154
I have kept the pack for future reference	69	43%	83	52%	1	1%	0	0%	6	4%	159

Respondents gave positive feedback about the carers information pack with 95% agreeing that the leaflets in the pack were useful and relevant; 91% agreeing that they had read all the leaflets in the pack and 95% stating they had kept the pack for future reference.

When asked if there was anything else carers would like to see included in the pack in future the following suggestions were made:

- A list of all local disability charities e.g candi, lollipop
- More info about various Day Centres some NHS; some Social Services, some voluntary
- Packs for special carers e.g physical disability, dementia, young carers

The following comments were made about the carers information pack:

“Really good that all leaflets are kept together in the cardboard sleeve. I found them within 20 seconds of looking for them, which is a first for me! Usually all my leaflets get in a muddle in a big pile and it takes ages to find stuff”

“I think you all do a splendid job and seem to cover everything and we should all be very grateful for your service. There may be a day when I too will need your help and it is very comforting to know you are there for us.”

“The information pack is too lengthy I would prefer it to be brief”

“It was good to read”

“I cant remember if it included info on local associations such as stroke - if it didn't then it would be a good addition”

“I received these leaflets on 3 or more separate occasions via hospital, home visit, and yourselves so joint working practice in evidence”

“It covered all areas that were relevant to our need but this might be different for others”.

7. Tell us what you think about our specialist advice and support

Carers were asked to tell us answer to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements of they had received advice or support from one of our workers in the past 2 years.

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No
The advice I received was useful and made a difference to my life	41	34%	49	41%	1	1%	0	0%	28	24%	119
I received the support I needed when I needed it	45	38%	44	38%	1	1%	0	0%	27	23%	117
The worker understood my situation and helped me sort out my problems	45	39%	42	36%	1	1%	0	0%	28	24%	116
I would use the advice service again	44	38%	45	39%	0	0%	0	0%	26	23%	115
I would recommend the advice and support service to others	48	41%	43	37%	0	0%	0	0%	25	22%	116

Not all respondents had received a home visit, therefore almost a quarter answered that they “did not know” about this. Overall satisfaction levels were high in all areas with all but one person who had a visit being in agreement with the statements. All those who responded advised they would use the service again and that they would recommend the service to others.

The following comments were made about the advice service:

“Brilliant we always have someone to ask now”

“On the ball thank you”

“The benefit advice lady was excellent - has lots of knowledge and took time”

9. Carers Emergency Card

In the survey we took the opportunity to gather information from carers who had registered on the scheme, to find out about their experience, and carers who had not, to see why this may have been the case. In some cases carers answered both questions so the results may be affected by this. York Carers Centre also requests carers who register with the scheme to complete an outcomes based evaluation, so we do have additional user feedback for people registered on the scheme.

9a. If you have not registered on Carers Emergency Card scheme

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the statements below

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No
I do not know anything about the Carers emergency card scheme	13	22%	16	28%	14	24%	6	10%	9	16%	58
I have made my own arrangements should an emergency happen so I don't need a card	7	13%	22	39%	10	18%	10	18%	7	13%	56
I have had the application pack but not completed it	15	24%	16	25%	10	16%	10	16%	12	19%	63

For those carers not registered on the scheme half said they did not know about it, 52% said they had made their own arrangements and 49% had the pack but had not yet completed it. When asked why the application had not been completed (where sent out) there were a range of responses which mostly reflected having time to complete it; being able to identify appropriate emergency contacts; needing help completing the form; not having a need for it and it being too complicated. All responses are listed below:

“Too complicated, didn't seem relevant”

“Not had time yet”

"My daughter is going to do it for me"
 "Didn't feel it was relevant for my situation"
 "I must complete the pack but seem to have other things that need attention"
 "Misplaced"
 "Didn't know I had the card scheme"
 "Not got round to it!"
 "I would hope that as things stand at present family would help out"
 "I haven't had chance to get round to completing the contact details"
 "Emergency arrangements in place at moment are adequate and suitable for needs at present time"
 "Not yet received"
 "Eager to make own arrangements - less complicated"
 "Keep forgetting to do so"
 "Prefer to think all will be ok! I will complete it as I think it is a good idea"
 "Please could you send me a pack?"
 "Not yet set up additional support although sheet is ready to post back once this info is sorted out"
 "Only just received it"
 "Procrastination and lack of urgency at present"
 "This survey has prompted me to apply. Good idea"
 "Not sure who to ask"
 "I had no-one to support me"
 "Made my own arrangements"
 "I have filled in most of it but have had trouble finding someone who can cover for me"
 "This could be a good service in the future for us"
 "Haven't worked out a plan yet"

9 b. If you have registered on Carers Emergency Card scheme

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No
The Carers Centre explained how the scheme works, what it covers and when it can be used	48	47%	42	41%	2	2%	0	0%	11	11%	103
The Carers Centre dealt with my registration quickly	47	47%	42	42%	1	1%	0	0%	11	11%	101
The registration form was easy to complete	48	46%	46	44%	1	1%	0	0%	10	10%	105
The Carers Centre was professional and treated me with respect	51	49%	42	40%	0	0%	0	0%	12	11%	105

Those carers who had registered with the scheme were mostly positive, with satisfaction rates between 88% and 91% in all areas. A very small number of carers disagreed that the scheme had been explained to them – this is an area which can be addressed by promoting the card and explaining we have a worker who can go through it with them if required.

Comments from carers registered on the scheme include:

"I think it is a very good scheme .I feel very confident when I leave Ron on his own which isn't often"

"More than one card should be provided i.e one for wallet/ purse car glove box"

"A useful service - well done"

"My wife is confined to the house so I not taken a carers card"

"I always carry my card in case it's needed"

"Having a carers emergency card gives a feeling of comfort and support as you never know when you are going to need someone to help"

10.Tell us what you think about all support you receive from York Carers Centre

	Agree strongly		Agree		Disagree		Disagree strongly		Don't know		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
York Carers Centre helps me cope with the stresses of being a carer	32	26%	53	43%	2	2%	0	0%	35	29%	122
I always get the support, help and information I need from York Carers Centre	27	23%	51	44%	5	4%	0	0%	33	28%	116
I don't use York Carers Centre services very much but I am reassured that they are there when I need them	72	44%	82	51%	2	1%	0	0%	6	4%	162
Whenever I contact York Carers Centre I feel they understand what I need	37	30%	48	39%	4	3%	1	1%	34	27%	124
I find that York Carers Centre respond to my needs quickly and always do what they promise to do	37	31%	49	40%	2	2%	1	1%	32	26%	121

The aim of this section was to find out from carers their overall views about the service and how it impacts on them in their caring role. The response rate for those who felt they could answer this section was again very positive. Almost 4 fifths of respondents (79%) agreed that York Carers Centre helps them cope with the stresses of being a carer – only 2 carers disagreed with this statement and 35 (29%) said they did not know.

Three quarters of carers said "I always get the support, help and information I need from York Carers Centre", again a high percentage (28%) said they did not know and a few (4%) disagreed with this statement.

A very high proportion (95%) of carers agreed with the statement “ I don’t use York Carers Centre services very much but I am reassured that they are there when I need them” . Only 1% disagreed with this and 4% said they did not know.

To the statement “Whenever I contact York Carers Centre I feel they understand what I need”, more than two thirds (69%) agreed, 4% disagreed and 27% did not know, possibly because they had not experienced direct contact with the Centre.

In terms of responsiveness 71% of carers agreed with the statement “I find that York Carers Centre respond to my needs quickly and always do what they promise to do”. Only 3% disagreed with this statement and 26% said that they didn’t know.

11. Tell us what you would like to see in the future

Local Advice Surgery	Yes		No		Total
	No	%	No	%	
Would regular advice surgeries in your local area which provide confidential advice on your rights and entitlements as a carer and help with filling in forms (such as Carers Allowance) be helpful for you?	95	79%	25	21%	120

Feedback suggests that providing advice sessions locally would be welcomed by carers with almost four fifths agreeing that this would be helpful.

Telephone support	Yes		No		Total
	No	%	No	%	
Would you find it useful if there was a telephone helpline where you could have a chat to someone about how you were feeling and any problems/stress you are facing?	117	74%	41	26%	158
One available at a regular time with someone who knows your situation?	39	33%			
A helpline you can ring to talk to someone at the time you feel the need for help?	81	69%			

Almost three quarters of carers said that they would find it useful if there was a telephone helpline where you could have a chat to someone about how you were feeling and any problems/stress they are facing. Carers indicated that a helpline which is more widely available for them to ring as and when they need it, for emotional support would be preferred.

12. What type of events or activities would you be interested in attending? Tick all that interest you:

Activity/support	Number	%
Day trips	47	26%
Pampering/massage	39	21%
Meals out	37	20%
Theatre trips	35	19%
Coffee mornings	34	18%
Computer classes	27	15%
Arts and crafts	23	13%
Helping to fundraise for the Centre and attend events to promote the Centre and raise awareness about carers' issues?	20	11%
Having contact with other carers in York online via a York Carers Centre Facebook page	18	10%
Contributing towards the cost of running the Centre (one off donations, regular donation, or a small legacy from your will)?	14	8%
Becoming a volunteer at the Centre to use your skills and help others?	14	8%
Cookery classes	12	7%
Photography classes	12	7%
Other	3	2%

York Carers Centre wishes to support carers in ways that meet their needs. Activities and events are one way of doing this. It is clear and unsurprising that carers have a range of preferences, day trips, pampering sessions and meals out were the most requested type of activity. This was followed by theatre trips, coffee mornings and computer classes. Evidence here demonstrates the need to offer a wide range of activities, possibly for smaller numbers of carers so different needs can be accommodated.

12. Summary

Overall, satisfaction levels with all aspects of the service provided by York Carers Centre were high. This is extremely encouraging and supported by the high response rate. Carers have also indicated that more localised advice services and the availability of a telephone helpline to support them with emotional and support issues would be valued.

We also have a clear idea of the types of events and activities that carers are interested in which will help us shape and mould the service in future.

In general York Carers Centre needs to ensure that it continues to deliver its services to a high standard. It should also strive to maintain awareness and offer support for carers with specific projects such as the carers emergency card, so it continues to grow and be accessible for carers.