

## **Carer Friendly Worcestershire**



## **Summary of the All-Age Carers Strategy for Worcestershire 2021 – 2026**

## The Vision:

“All Carers (adult, young adult, young carers and parent Carers) will be recognised and valued by the wider community and statutory agencies in Worcestershire for the support and care they provide to vulnerable adults, children and young people”.

A carer is someone who provides unpaid support and care to a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental ill-health or substance misuse problems. They may provide emotional support, medical care, personal care, physical care and/or domestic tasks.

## The Mission:

To research, evidence, share and implement best practice to shape the All-Age Carers Strategy, the priorities, and outcomes. Everything key partners do is informed by Carers and people with experience of care and support.

## Key points from the strategy:

- Carers advised the 3 key outcomes for them are to feel recognised and valued, enabled to balance care with the rest of life and supported with their physical and mental health and wellbeing. The pandemic has made these even more important
- There is a legal responsibility to support Carers of all ages (i.e., Care Act 2014, NHS Long Term Plan 2019, Health and Social Care Act 2012, Children’s Act 2004 and the Children and Families Act 2014)
- Guidance on supporting adult carers has been issued by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Supporting Adult Carers (NG150; 2020)<sup>1</sup>. Guidance includes recommendations on identifying carers, assessing carers' needs, helping carers stay in, enter, or return to work and education, social and community support for carers, training to provide care and support, psychological and emotional support for carers, support during changes to the caring role, support for carers during end-of-life care and after the person dies
- Sets out what it is like for Carers in Worcestershire, what needs to happen to enable Carers to feel recognised, valued and supported and how key partners can make this happen
- Interdependencies with other strategies as Carers is cross cutting issue
- To deliver these key points requires cultural change across all partners and stakeholders. The cultural change will be delivered through the annual implementation plans which will be agreed and signed off through the governance process (see appendix 5)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng150>

### National and local numbers:

- Pre-COVID-19 there were up to 8.8 million unpaid carers across the UK
- The UK's unpaid Carers save the economy an estimated £132bn each year according to [this report](#) (this equates to approx. £1,500 per carer)
- Census figures show that there were **63,685** carers in Worcestershire in 2011. Of this figure 60,195 are adults and 3,490 are young carers and young adult carers
- The pandemic has resulted in millions of new carers – 4.5 million new to caring since the start of the pandemic, 2.8 million of whom are juggling work
- The number of people over the age of 70 are projected to increase from 2022 (106,621 people) to 2026 (114,473 people), a 7% increase which will increase the demand for caring. Other pressures include closure of care and nursing homes and the increased use of care at home

### Where is Worcestershire now - A summary of the Carer outcomes and what has been achieved

The three key outcomes for Carers are shown below:

Outcome	What partners have done
<b>Recognised and valued</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Worcestershire County Council contracted the Adult Carers Hub (the contracted carer support provider for Worcestershire) to carry out Carer Assessments using a strength-based approach. At the time, this was a new approach and has proved successful for Carers.</li><li>• Carers Support service for young carers and young adult carers.</li><li>• Carers have been involved through the Carers Partnership, consultations on specific projects, participation in Health and Wellbeing and Scrutiny Committee meetings and co-produced reports and useful information for carers</li><li>• Carers Awareness training in person and E-Learning module implemented by professionals. The E-Learning has been updated in line with emerging needs and publicised</li></ul>

<b>A life of my own</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide range of support available to carers through the Carers Hub</li> <li>• Training and information sessions run through Carers Hub including on financial matters Carer Awareness training made available to professionals; Carers Hub also ran training sessions for a wide range of professionals and other organisations</li> </ul>
<b>Supported to be mentally and physically well</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalised support provided to carers through the Carers Hub</li> <li>• Carers Hub provided a wide range of training including managing stress, caring with confidence, managing specific conditions, etc.</li> <li>• Local carer support groups in place across the county (virtual during COVID 19 pandemic)</li> <li>• Carers Hub provider worked with NHS through the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (and subsequently Integrated Care System) to promote needs of carers; System wide 'Commitment to Carers' agreed</li> <li>• Contract in place for delivery of an advocacy service for Carers</li> </ul>
<b>Staying Safe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carers are represented on Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board</li> <li>• Carers Safeguarding Reference Group in place</li> </ul>

## Understanding Carer's priorities

The needs and aspirations of the carers have been sought through engagement work with carers. Carers have therefore informed the priorities of the strategy through their feedback. A detailed description of the feedback from the engagement groups and the Carer survey is provided in Appendix 4 of the strategy.

## Outcomes for Carers – The outcomes Carers state are important

<b>Recognised and valued</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am recognised and respected in my role as a carer</li> <li>• I feel confident that there is support available</li> <li>• I feel able to care safely</li> <li>• The caring I do is appropriate to my age and capabilities</li> <li>• I understand how to access support</li> <li>• I am involved and can influence the assessment of my needs and aspirations</li> <li>• Any services I receive meet my needs and aspirations</li> <li>• I can have a say in how services are designed and delivered</li> </ul>
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<b>A life of my own</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I feel able to achieve balance between my caring role and my personal life</li> <li>• I feel part of my community</li> <li>• I know how to make the most of income available to me and am not forced into financial hardship because of my caring role</li> <li>• I feel able to fully participate in education or training and enter or re-enter the employment market when I wish</li> <li>• I can remain in (suitable) employment if I wish to</li> </ul>
<b>Supported to be mentally and physically well</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can maintain my physical health and emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• I can manage stress</li> <li>• I feel confident to fulfil my role as a carer</li> <li>• I can maintain a dignified relationship with the person I care for</li> <li>• I can maintain relationships that are important to me</li> <li>• We have effective plans in place to ensure staff, people who use services and their carers are aware of and understand the advocacy offer we are developing and how this meets our responsibilities under the Care Act.</li> </ul>
<b>Staying Safe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can care safely and maintain the safety of the</li> <li>• person I care for and receive support for</li> </ul>

### A strengths-based approach

Worcestershire County Council contract the Adult Carers Hub to carry out Carer Assessments (known locally as Conversations) on behalf of the council using this strength-based approach called the 'Three Conversations Model'. This approach starts from looking at carers own strengths and what is available in their community to plan how to meet needs. The carer is put at the centre of the process.

WCC and Worcestershire Children First (WCF) have contracted with community and voluntary sector organisations to deliver the statutory carers assessments and information and support:

1. One support provider for the Adult Carer's hub and
2. One support provider for young carer and young adult carer support.

For young Carers and young adult Carers, it is about reducing the caring role and ensuring these carers can be children and young people and so caring does not impinge on reaching their potential.

## Early Support and Prevention of Issues and Carer Breakdown

Prevention means intervening early to support carers. This means increased independence, self-care, reduced social isolation and loneliness, reduced carer breakdown and delayed and/or reduced need for care for the cared for. Prevention therefore needs to be joined up within a local system. All key partners need to 'make every contact count' i.e., all conversations professionals have with a carer result in Carers knowing they are a carer; they are not on their own and that there is support available.

## Priorities and Commitments to Carers – where Worcestershire needs to be....

The needs and aspirations of carers have been sought through the engagement work (via focus groups and survey) completed with carers and stakeholders. The priorities will be delivered by **Worcestershire's key partners** (e.g., Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire Children First, Clinical Commissioning Group, the Trust and contracted service providers. Accountability will be through the monitoring of the annual implementation plan for this strategy.

This information gathered from carers and stakeholders has been used to inform the priorities stated below:

1. Carer Awareness for the whole community to increase carer identification – 'making every contact count' including harder to reach groups
2. Recognition and value of Carers – everyone's responsibility
3. Collaboration – Carers seen as expert partners in the care of/patient and information and time given with Carers. Carers need to be automatically included in discussions about the Cared For, unless the Cared For does not want them to be or it is not considered to be appropriate or safe to do so.
4. Specific support for Carers including taking a break, caring safely, end of life carer support and greater use of technology to manage risk, support the cared for to be independent and peace of mind for carers
5. Registering as a Carer and the 'Carer offer' from all partners. Utilise the 'Tell Us Once Information Sharing Memorandum' between organisations so Carers identified by one organisation can receive the benefits of the Carers Offer from all organisations. There also needs to be the continued role out of carer passports across Worcestershire
6. Support network including support in the community to ensure 'A life of my own' (strengths/asset-based approach). This includes the ability to see friends and family, do things carers enjoy as well as be able to go shopping, visit GP and dentist etc
7. Support (for some rebuilding) emotional resilience (including management of stress), self-care (including getting enough sleep), wellbeing, and physical and mental health (e.g., long standing health conditions). Effective support for Carers may reduce unplanned admissions for Carers and the people for whom they care for and may in certain circumstances means cost avoidance). This priority has been impacted by Covid e.g., social distancing, shielding and lock downs – and management of future waves and learning to live with covid.
8. Maximising life chances: ability to work, be in education or volunteer, maximise income and deal with money matters

9. Contingency and future planning including the Carers emergency card (peace of mind in an emergency)
10. Making the vision and aspirational outcomes a reality with strong leadership and governance of this strategy
11. To be committed to ensuring key organisations are carer aware by completing the carer awareness E-Learning or similar training, to identify Carers at any contact point in the organisation from front desk to senior management
12. To be signed up to 'Working for Carers' (or similar scheme) to ensure the organisation and workplace are 'carer friendly' for example via policies and flexible working, and how the organisation interacts with potential carers and how it enables Carers to remain in work.
13. To commit to letting carers know they are not on their own. To commit to signposting everyone who may be a carer to the Carers Hub so they are aware of support available as and when they need it and so they can make an informed decision as to what they may wish to access.
14. To ensure meaningful engagement and co-production such as involving Carers in the design of services, policies, and procedures.
15. To signpost Carers to organisations and/or information to help Carers understand the cared for person's condition.

From the **Herefordshire and Worcestershire STP's 'Commitment to Carers'**, the following priorities have been identified as commitments for all organisations within the local system to deliver:

1. To proactively identify, register, support and inform Carers (needs lined to organisations core business and vision)
2. To co-produce services and policies with carers to ensure our services meet their needs
3. To be flexible to ensure they can continue to deliver their caring role
4. To actively involve Carers in decisions about their own health and wellbeing as well as the health and wellbeing of those they care for
5. To have a Carer lead in the organisation who promotes a 'carer aware' culture

As key partners, in our work, we will:

- Consider the potential opportunities for contact with those who may benefit from preventative support and carer identification, and where that first contact might be. This may come from an initial contact through the adult contact team, Social Care (in an assessment if the cared for), GP medical consultations), community nurse visits, housing officer discussions, school, or welfare and benefits advisor meetings) etc.
- The Carers Hub and the information and advice services to proactively share information about prevention and preventative services.

- Ensure a consistent focus on prevention and carer identification, particularly at trigger points such as bereavement, hospital admission and discharge, benefits applications, contact with/engagement in local support groups, contact with/use of private care and support, and a change in housing.
- Use of reablement approaches to domiciliary care and telecare and technology supports the carers needs and concerns
- Practitioners will, at every contact, consider which needs can be prevented; which could be reduced; which might be delayed; and which need support now by asking, 'What does a good life look like for you and how can we work together to achieve it?'

## How progress on implementing the strategy will be monitored and success measured

The strategy is approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board as this is a high-level board with members involvement. The board will receive an annual report on the progress made on delivery of the Carer Strategy and its implementation plan by all key partners. Feedback from carers and stakeholders will inform that delivery is achieved and measured the difference this action has made. Each director is responsible for ensuring implementation in their respective organisation.

A multi-agency working group will be lead on the implementation of the strategy, to include the development of an annual implementation plan, the completion of tasks to deliver the action and priority. The contracts with carer support provider(s) to whom we discharge statutory duties will be involved in the delivery of the strategy. Full governance arrangements are illustrated in Appendix 5 as well as Carer engagement opportunities.

## Successful implementation

Carers and partners will know we have been successful when:

- Carers say they feel 'recognised and valued', 'have a life of their own', and feel 'supported to maintain their physical and mental health and wellbeing' 'always' or 'most of the time' – measured via carers and stakeholder surveys
- The Carers Hub is the 'go to' place/provider for all thing's carer related and Carers would recommend the Carers Support Services to other Carers and are very satisfied or satisfied with the carer support services – increase in numbers of carers on the carers register, increase in numbers contacting the carers hub and increase in conversation 1's
- Worcestershire is felt to be more 'carer friendly' – increase in number of professionals completion the eLearning carer awareness training and other carer awareness training (and outputs as above), number of organisations accredited as carer friendly



- We have delivered against the annual implementation plan and key performance indicators agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board – actions completed
- Organisations have used the All-Age Carers Strategy for Worcestershire to inform their policy and procedures and the way they work with carers or potential carers to improve carers lives – stakeholder survey
- When people know what a carer is, the positives and negatives of being a carer, and know the support services that are available