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 University
Health & Social Care
North Lanarkshire

Carer Strategy

2024-2027 Summary



 **NORTH
LANARKSHIRE
COUNCIL**
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Welcome

This is a summary booklet of our Carer Strategy for North Lanarkshire 2024 to 2027, developed with carer-focused organisations and carers locally, that sets out how we intend to meet the needs of carers over the next three years.

It will direct our collaborative and partnership work to ensure that adult carers and young carers across North Lanarkshire can continue to care, so long as they are willing and able, and with the best possible health and wellbeing.

What is University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire?

We are a caring and empowering partnership, dedicated to working with our communities to enable people across North Lanarkshire to lead independent, fulfilling and healthier lives. To do this we have established partnership agreements with a range of organisations. By enhancing and extending our work through these agreements we aim to develop sustainable, innovative, and practical solutions to health and social care challenges that directly benefit our communities and our workforce.

What is the Carer Strategy

The University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire (UHSCNL) Carer Strategy 2024 -2027 explains our strategic intentions and the actions we intend to take over the next three years to:

- Improve the lives of carers and young carers.
- Deliver positive outcomes for carers and cared for people.
- Ensure carers are involved in individual plans.
- Ensure carers are involved in influencing and shaping policy and strategy.

Why do we need a new Carer Strategy?

- To continue to respond to the changing needs of carers and young carers.
- To ensure that strong partnership continues to underpin how we support carers across North Lanarkshire.
- To fulfil our statutory requirement to update or develop a new Carer Strategy every three years. (Our previous Carer Strategy ended in March 2024.)

Who is the Carer Strategy For?

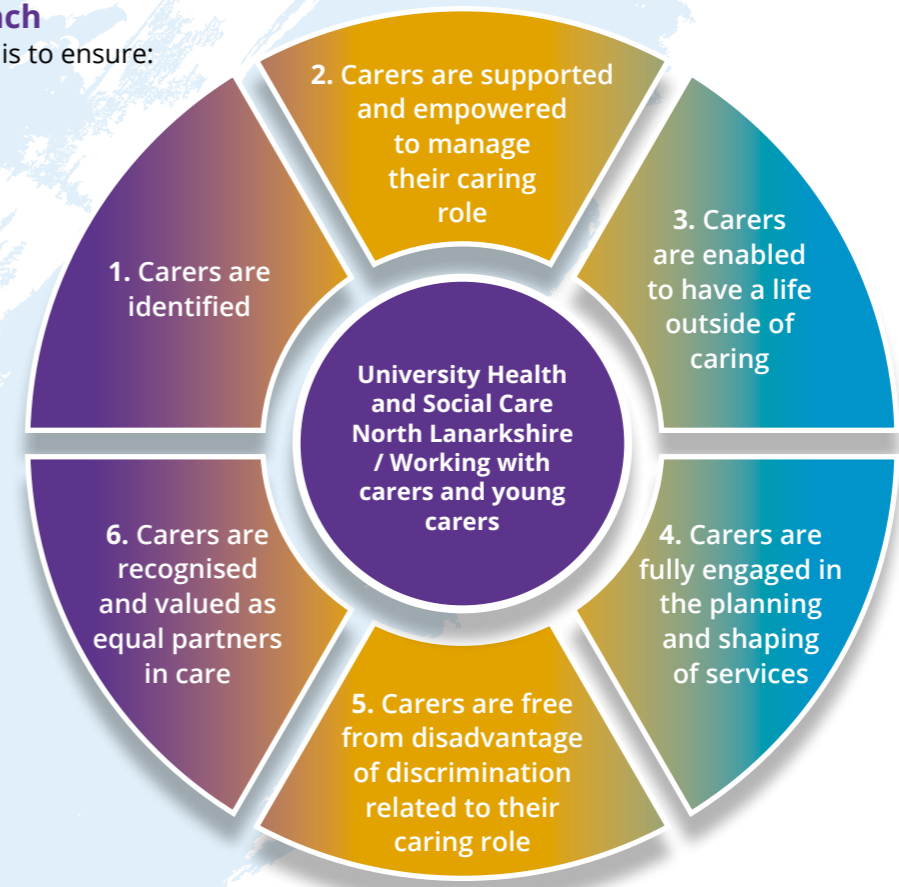
- Carers living in North Lanarkshire.
- Carers living in North Lanarkshire caring for people elsewhere.
- Carers who live elsewhere but who care for a person or people living in North Lanarkshire.

How did we create the Carer Strategy?

Through engagement with carers – facilitated by North Lanarkshire Carers Together, Lanarkshire Carers, Action For Children Young Carers – we sought information on areas for improvement and by using information from everyday engagement activity that is embedded within our support for carers across North Lanarkshire.

Our approach

Our approach is to ensure:



Who is a carer

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 defines a carer as an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual (the cared-for person).

- A young carer is a carer who is under 18 years old, or is 18 years and still a pupil at a school.
- An adult carer is a carer who is at least 18 years old but is not a young carer.

A carer can be a spouse, partner, parent, sibling, or other family member, or in the case of young carers, be a son, daughter, friend or any other relation.



To be recognised as an adult carer or young carer:

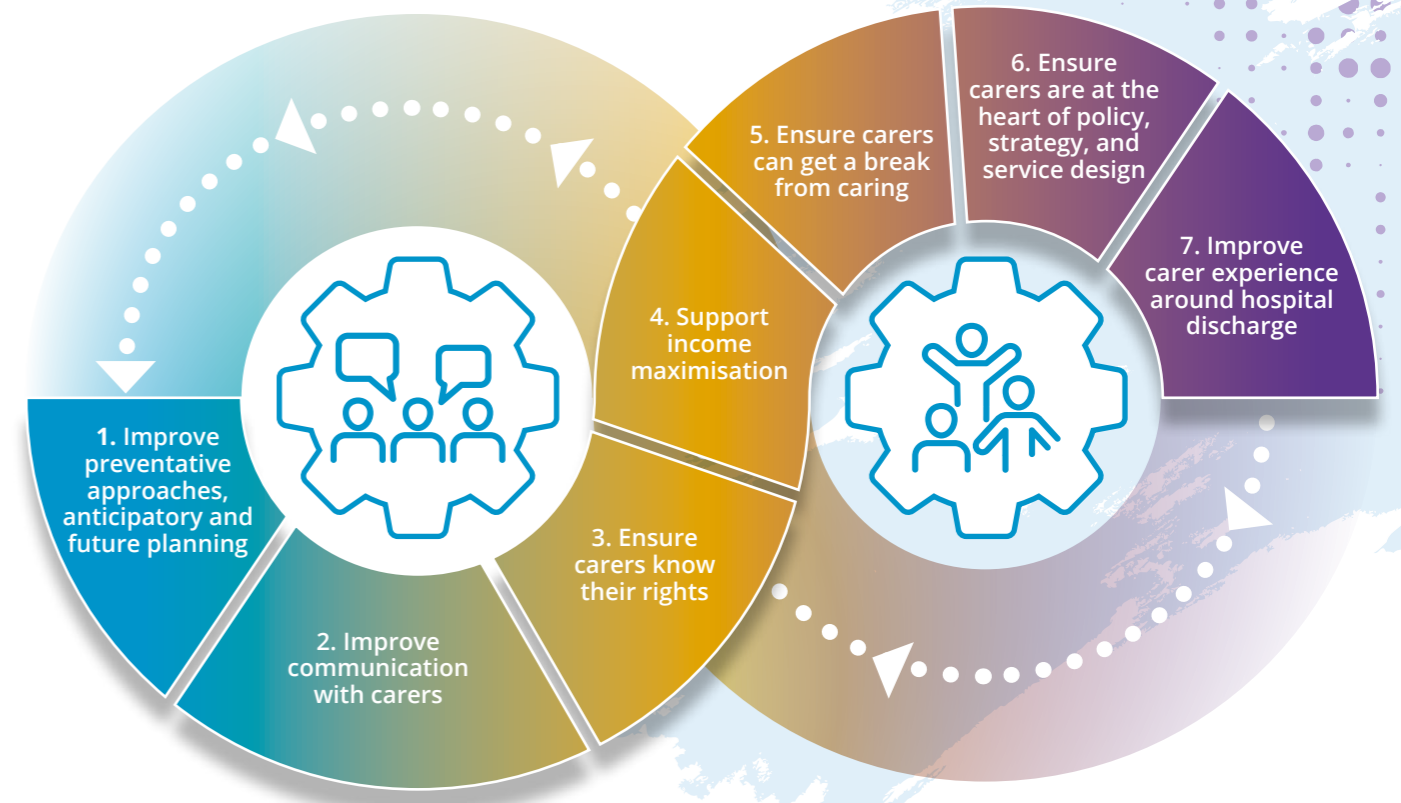
- You can be any age, gender, culture, race or religion, can become a carer at any time and might care for more than one person;
- You might be providing care to a parent, child, sibling, other relative, partner, friend or neighbour;
- The person you care for might have a long-term physical condition, learning disability, mental illness, frailty or issues with substance misuse;
- You do not need to live at the same address as the person you care for;
- You do not need to be claiming Carers Allowance;
- There is no threshold for the amount of time you provide care;
- You can be in employment or studying and still be a carer;
- The person you care for does not need to be receiving social care support.

Vision and strategic priorities

Our vision is that:

- Carers and Young Carers, as well as the people being cared for, feel valued, respected, listened to, and well supported.
- Carers and Young Carers feel as well as possible and have scope to access their interests and a life beyond any caring responsibilities.

Our strategic priorities 2024-2027 in support of this vision are to:



These priorities aim to ensure that all carers are valued, recognised and supported effectively.

Cutting across our priorities are guiding principles:

- 'Getting it right first time' from the outset, in a timely and efficient manner.
- Creating meaningful opportunities for carers voices to be heard, and ensuring these inform and influence decisions on services and support.

What carers told us is important

THE IMPACT OF CARING

Being a carer can often be rewarding and have positive impacts, but it can also result in a range of challenges. During engagement with carers to inform this strategy, the following issues and concerns were highlighted:

Impact on health and wellbeing. Carers reported:

- Poor physical and/or mental health.
- How the challenges facing NHS services (such as the unavailability of GPs and delays getting to see consultants and specialists) severely impacts their health and cared-for people's health.
- Feeling exhausted and experiencing feelings of guilt.
- Struggling with the expectations of the person they care for.
- High level of reliance and feeling intense pressure to keep going.

Impact on life balance. Carers reported:

- Balancing work, relationships, and other caring responsibilities with main caring responsibilities is challenging.
- Little scope to have a life outside of caring.
- Not having any 'down time' away from caring.

Impact on finance. Carers reported:

- Loss of income.
- Additional costs associated with caring.
- Struggling financially affects their health.

Impact on relationships. Carers reported:

- Social isolation.
- No scope to 'switch off' from caring responsibilities.
- Valuing opportunities to meet with other carers and accessing peer support.

Parent carers:

- Concerns that they are not listened to in the decisions being made for their children or that their child is not being listened to.
- Needing to bring in third parties before they are taken seriously.
- Needing their role as carers to be recognised within Education.

Recognition:

- To be recognised as carers.
- To be supported timeously.
- To have regular breaks from caring.
- To be treated with dignity and respect.
- To be listened to, first time, every time.
- To be recognised as a parent carer.
- To be properly involved in hospital discharge planning.

Support, information and advice:

- To have responsive, flexible support when needed.
- Needing a better understanding of what is available to carers from community support options.
- Consistency and better continuity when engaging with Social Work, and to not feel they have to fight for support.
- More financial support to look after carer health and wellbeing and greater recognition of the financial impacts of caring.
- Access to information and advice, particularly around income maximisation, is crucial.
- The importance of training and support, notably around caring for someone with Dementia, Autism or other neurological conditions.

LGBTQI+ carers:

- Recognition that their needs and those of the person they care for may require a specific approach, or specific support.
- LGBTQI+ is not a single homogenous group. Greater understanding is needed so that approaches are both appropriate and unique to individual circumstances.

Future planning:

- Wanting to be involved in shaping policy, strategy and services and recognition that to be able to participate in this may require replacement care.
- Needing to be properly involved in hospital discharge planning.
- Worrying about the future.

Minority Ethnic carers:

- Services and supports are not always culturally sensitive and can lack understanding of the needs of Minority Ethnic communities.
- 'Minority Ethnic' is not one homogenous group and approaches need to be tailored to individual circumstances.
- Many Minority Ethnic carers, particularly women, do not feel recognised, understood, and valued within communities and families; the caring role is considered a family duty.

Carers rights

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 outlines the rights of carers in Scotland. It explains the specific duties and powers that each local authority must follow in order to help improve the health and wellbeing of carers, so that they can continue to care, if they so wish, are able and willing to provide care, and have a life alongside caring.

Adult Carers Support Plan (ACSP)

We will work with you to prioritise your concerns and understand how best to support you. An Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) will be offered to any adult who requests one. The ACSP provides a framework for identification of adult carers' individual needs and any supports required to help achieve personal outcomes. In North Lanarkshire the responsibility to offer an ACSP sits with Lanarkshire Carers and Social Work. Health staff also have a responsibility to offer an ACSP to all carers they encounter.

Young Carers Statement (YCS)

Young carers identified by support agencies or who self-identify as young carers are offered a Young Carer Statement through Action For Children Young Carers (North Lanarkshire) which is the delegated support provider responsible for completion and review of YCSs. Each YCS identifies the caring role carried out and whether this role is manageable, safe, appropriate, and what additional support is required.

Eligibility criteria

We want to move away from 'eligibility' to an approach based on 'what would help?'. However, we must still carefully assess and identify levels of need. We do this using guidance issued by the Scottish Government which is based on the impact that caring has on the following aspects of the carer's life:

- Health and wellbeing
- Relationships
- Living environment
- Employment and training
- Finances
- Life balance

Waiving of charges

Support and/or services to meet needs identified as part of the Adult Carer Support Plan process will not be charged for.

Hospital discharge

We have made a commitment to involve carers in the discharge planning of the person they care for. Work is ongoing in partnership with local carer organisations to provide an information service and direct support for carers throughout this process.

Breaks from caring

Our approach to breaks from caring is set out within our Short Breaks Services Statement, which complements this strategy and is available on request.

Pathways to support

We look to identify any risks to your daily living, health and wellbeing, and use Adult Carers Support Plans/ Young Carers Statements to work out how best to support you. There are four levels of risk.

Low risk	Moderate risk	Significant risk	Critical risk
Carers may only have to change some parts of their life in order to begin or continue caring. They may need some low-level or preventative support.	Carers are unable to begin or continue caring without moderate changes to some aspects of their life. They are likely to need some support.	Carers are unable to begin or continue caring without experiencing some significant challenges in some parts of their life. They will need support very quickly.	Carers are unable to begin or continue caring, without experiencing major problems in their own life, and risk to their health or relationships. They will need support immediately.

In North Lanarkshire we have a wide range of organisations and community groups that can support you as a carer. Outlined below are the organisations that will provide support for the level of risk you face.

<p>North Lanarkshire Carers Together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Advocacy training • Carer Advocacy • Information & Advice • Family Support Service <p>.....</p> <p>North Lanarkshire Disability Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signposting/form filling <p>.....</p> <p>Lanarkshire Carers</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Other advocacy providers: Equals / North Lanarkshire Advocacy / Who Cares / Shelter</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Organisations which currently provide a range of condition-specific or age-related support to carers, directly or indirectly, and form part of the Carer Support Network in North Lanarkshire</p>	<p>North Lanarkshire Carers Together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Advocacy training • Carer Advocacy • Information & Advice • Family Support Service <p>.....</p> <p>North Lanarkshire Disability Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signposting/form filling <p>.....</p> <p>Lanarkshire Carers</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Other advocacy providers: Equals / North Lanarkshire Advocacy / Who Cares / Shelter</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Organisations which currently provide a range of condition-specific or age-related support to carers, directly or indirectly, and form part of the Carer Support Network in North Lanarkshire</p>	<p>Social Work services</p> <p>.....</p> <p>NHS Allied Health Professions (e.g. Community Mental Health team)</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Education and Family Services</p> <p>.....</p> <p>North Lanarkshire Carers Together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carer Advocacy • Information & Advice • Family Support Service <p>.....</p> <p>Lanarkshire Carers</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Other advocacy providers: Equals / North Lanarkshire Advocacy / Who Cares / Shelter</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Organisations which currently provide a range of condition-specific or age-related support to carers, directly or indirectly, and form part of the Carer Support Network in North Lanarkshire</p>	<p>Social Work services</p> <p>.....</p> <p>NHS Allied Health Professions (e.g. Community Mental Health team)</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Education and Family Services</p> <p>.....</p> <p>North Lanarkshire Carers Together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carer Advocacy • Information & Advice • Family Support Service <p>.....</p> <p>Lanarkshire Carers</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Other advocacy providers: Equals / North Lanarkshire Advocacy / Who Cares / Shelter</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Organisations which currently provide a range of condition-specific or age-related support to carers, directly or indirectly, and form part of the Carer Support Network in North Lanarkshire</p>
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Carer Support Network in North Lanarkshire:

Hope for Autism / REACH / Carer Breather services / Community Solutions / Pamis / Community Learning & Development / PALS / Action For Children Young Carers / North Lanarkshire Advice Network / Housing / Citizens Advice Bureau / Alzheimer's Scotland / Making Life Easier

Support for carers in North Lanarkshire

University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire currently commissions three carer organisations to ensure that carers and young carers are supported; that there is the provision of an information, advice and signposting service; and that carer interests are represented. These organisations are:

Lanarkshire Carers www.lanarkshirecarers.org.uk

Lanarkshire Carers provides information, advice and a range of direct support and services which can help carers maintain or improve their quality of life and continue to care.

North Lanarkshire Carers Together www.carerstogether.org

North Lanarkshire Carers Together provides a range of information, advice, and signposting services. Carers can access regular short breaks from caring.

Action For Children Young Carers (North Lanarkshire) www.actionforchildren.org

Action For Children Young Carers (North Lanarkshire) raises awareness of young carers; identifies and provides direct support to children and young people who look after or help to look after someone in their family.

Other groups or organisations currently providing support to carers

Forming part of the Carer Support Network, these organisations currently provide support to carers, directly or indirectly.

- PAMIS Family Support (www.pamis.org.uk)
- HOPE for Autism (www.hopeforautism.org.uk)
- Deafblind Scotland (www.dbscotland.org.uk)
- Alzheimer's Scotland (www.alzscot.org)
- North Lanarkshire Disability Forum (NLDF) (www.nldforum.org.uk)
- Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL) (www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org)
- Getting Better Together (GBT) (www.shottshealthyliving.com)
- Playpeace (www.playpeace.org.uk)

Making Life Easier (MLE)

An online service for people experiencing difficulties with everyday activities, including carers. It offers information and direct access to services and support and can assist people with equipment solutions.

Assistive Technology

Supplies a range of specialist equipment technology which can support carers by helping the person they care for live at home independently.

Care Opinion

Offers supported people and carers an online platform with which to provide anonymised feedback on their experiences of care and support.

Strategic intention and specific actions: overview

Our intention

Our approach is centred on **promoting independence, self-help, enablement, and empowerment** for carers in the community.

We strive to create a **supportive environment where carers are respected and valued**, and enabled to voice their needs, concerns, and aspirations, ultimately leading to positive outcomes for both them and the individuals they care for.

At the core of our approach is **the empowerment of carers** to advocate for themselves and their loved ones, and to actively participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

We aim to **support carers to maintain their autonomy**, enabling them to care for their loved ones while also prioritising their own wellbeing.

We are committed to **enabling carers to fulfil their caring responsibilities** effectively and efficiently. By providing resources, information, and guidance, we empower carers to access the support they need and navigate the caring journey with confidence.

We **recognise the strength and resilience of carers** and encourage self-care practices that enhance their physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing, and work to provide access to support networks where carers can learn from each other, share experiences, and build a sense of camaraderie.

During the plan period our specific actions will focus on:

1. Improving preventative approaches, anticipatory and future planning (and preventing crisis).
2. Improving communication with carers and their access to information and advice.
3. Ensuring carers know their rights (and that Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements are offered and progressed consistently).
4. Supporting carers health and wellbeing (including living with COVID-19).
5. Ensuring carers get a break from caring.
6. Ensuring carers, and people being cared for, have their income maximised.
7. Improving carer experience around hospital discharge.
8. Improving awareness of and access to Assistive Technology.
9. Policy and strategy is influenced and shaped by carers.

and additional actions for these specific groups of carers

10. Young Carers
11. Parent Carers
12. Minority Ethnic Carers
13. LGBTQI+ Carers

Our specific actions

1. Improving preventative, anticipatory and emergency planning

Why this is a priority:

Preventative, anticipatory and emergency planning is about taking a person-centred, thinking ahead approach. It gives carers opportunities to consider their options and 'plan for the future'. To be effective in this area we also need to identify carers before they present at a point of crisis. We estimate that only around one in four carers is currently known to services in North Lanarkshire.

We plan to:

1. Support the development of a comprehensive system to proactively identify and assess carers, including regular screenings, assessments, and follow-ups to ensure all carers' needs are captured effectively.
2. Build in a bespoke offer for training sessions, workshops, and resources to empower carers in developing and implementing their preventative, anticipatory, and emergency plans.
3. Collaborate to provide guidance and support in creating these plans, ensuring they align with the care needs of the cared-for individual and are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.
4. Utilise technology and digital platforms, and explore innovative ways to leverage technology, such as mobile apps or online platforms, to facilitate the development and sharing of preventative, anticipatory, and emergency plans among carers and care professionals.

2. Improving communication with carers and their access to information and support

Why this is a priority:

Effective communication is essential to ensuring carers receive high-quality support that is tailored to their unique needs. Access to the right information at the right time and in the right place, is crucial.

We plan to:

1. Continue to commission carer organisations to provide appropriate and effective information and support.

In addition to these commissioned services, University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire has invested in PAMIS, HOPE for Autism, Alzheimer's Scotland and North Lanarkshire Disability Forum to provide condition specific information and support to carers.

3. Ensuring carers know their rights

Why this is a priority:

Carer rights and entitlements matter to carers, not just because this helps them to feel valued and recognised for what they do, but because it is an important factor in ensuring carers receive the support they need. Understanding rights also raises awareness of choices around caring.

We plan to:

1. Continue to inform carers of their right to an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement.
2. Develop comprehensive resources, such as informational leaflets, online resources for staff and people, share workshops and training that specifically outline carers' rights, entitlements, and available support services.
3. Establish dedicated advocacy to assist carers in navigating their rights and entitlements, advocating on their behalf when needed, and supporting them in accessing relevant support services. This can include providing individualised guidance on how to assert rights effectively.
4. Continue to support platforms for carers to connect with each other, share experiences, and support one another in understanding and exercising their rights.
5. Build on partnerships with community organisations, and advocacy groups to enhance carers' knowledge and awareness of their rights.

4. Supporting carers health and wellbeing

Why this is a priority:

Supporting carers' health and wellbeing is essential to their ability to continue to provide care. The strain of caring can impact each carer differently and every carer has unique and specific needs with regard to maintaining their health and wellbeing. Many carers continue to live with the impact of COVID and require support to rebuild confidence and to feel safe to re-engage with wider communities and services.

We plan to:

1. Increase awareness and encourage engagement of carers who are not currently affiliated with carer organisations in North Lanarkshire.
2. Increase visibility of resources, accurate signposting, information, and advice, regardless of the carer's entry point to carer support.
3. Continue to support the provision of carer health checks and counselling/wellbeing services, on demand wellbeing library and health focused carer training.
4. Continue to meet carers, and carer organisations, regularly to hear current concerns regarding COVID and provide up-to-date information.
5. Support carers to rebuild confidence and feel safe to re-engage with wider communities and services.
6. Ensure that any carers who require PPE, continue to have access to it.

5. Ensuring carers get a break from caring

Why this is a priority:

Many carers may struggle to maintain their health and wellbeing without access to regular and substantial breaks from their caring responsibilities. Breaks from caring are important for sustaining caring relationships and ensuring that carers have time for themselves and their interests.

We plan to:

Our approach to breaks from caring is set out within our Short Breaks Services Statement, which complements this strategy.

1. Continue to support and develop individual choice and control regarding breaks, for both carer and cared for person.
2. Build responsiveness to 'here and now' situations which can arise at extremely short notice.
3. Ensure carers will have someone to talk to through being connected to services and support.

6. Ensuring carers, and people being cared for, have their income maximised

Why this is a priority:

For most carers there is a financial impact to caring. Income maximisation enables and empowers carers to self-fund costs, such as travel and activities, and to meet additional or 'hidden' costs associated with caring, such as increased utility bills or food costs.

We plan to:

1. Embed income maximisation as part of every new Community Care Assessment and making it a consistent approach.
2. Ensure every Adult Carer Support Plan, or Young Carer Statement considers what financial help and support may be available.
3. Deliver awareness raising and training to UHSCNL staff and wider staff teams to ensure that carers and people being cared for have their income maximised.
4. Ensure carer organisations continue to offer a wide range of other financial and non-financial supports to help alleviate hardship, as well as information, money advice and signposting.

7. Improving carer experience around hospital discharge

Why this is a priority:

Often a hospital admission can mark the beginning of a changing, increased, or new caring role. The right information, advice, and support can help to reduce the pressure and anxiety often faced by carers when this occurs, and lead to more successful and positive discharges from hospital.

We plan to:

1. Work towards better and earlier discharge planning that includes carers.
2. Increase partnership working from all organisations involved in discharge.
3. Increase capacity for organisations that actively support carers at discharge and in the community.
4. Reduce the number of instances of carers being informed of discharge at short notice.
5. Evaluate the carer hospital discharge payment scheme.
6. Implement the discharge passport.
7. Increase feedback and engagement from carers to inform discharge improvements.
8. Continue support of carers through support staff linked to the three acute hospital sites in Lanarkshire.

8. Improving awareness of and access to assistive technology

Why this is a priority:

Technology solutions enable and empower people to be as independent as possible, for as long as possible as well as reducing risk. Assistive technology can support a carer to safely leave the cared for person for short, or possibly longer periods of time. Creating greater independence can help to reduce levels of stress and strain on carers and assistive tech can play an important role in improving carers' health and wellbeing.

We plan to:

1. Continue to promote the support and services provided by University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire's Assistive Technology Team, for example through attendance at carer events and providing promotional material or merchandise.
2. Continue to promote the 'think technology first' message with our partner agencies.
3. Reduce barriers to accessing assistive technology support.
4. Continue to help carers and cared for people to use their own technology in ways that can support their independence and individual needs.

9. Young carers

Why additional specific actions are required for this group:

For young carers, the experience of providing care can be stressful and isolating. For many it can negatively impact their experience in education. It is particularly important to support young carers so they can still enjoy being young, have a better chance of succeeding in all parts of their lives, and be able to pursue their dreams outside of caring.

We plan to:

1. Continue to work with schools to improve the identification of young carers and ensure that they are aware of their entitlement to a Young Carer Statement.
2. Continue to review the support for young carers regarding the different routes to further and higher education and employment.
3. Continue to develop transitional support, building on the existing links with New College Lanarkshire, Skills Development Scotland, and Community Jobs Scotland.
4. Improve support of young carers with hospital discharge.
5. Increase partnership working, innovative thinking and development, to implement ways to better reach young carers from ethnic minorities.
6. Continue to deliver awareness training to UHSCNL staff, to improve recognition and support of young carers.
7. Continue to provide a range of supports, including group work programmes, one to one supports, short breaks, and in-school support, and respond in a flexible way to the issues that young carers identify.
8. Continue to ensure that the views of young carers are built into the planning and shaping of support and services and ensure links with the North Lanarkshire Engagement and Participation Strategy.

10. Parent carers

Why additional specific actions are required for this group:

Parent carers have to balance the role of a parent with meeting their child's needs as a carer. They are less likely to see themselves as a carer because looking after their child is something they would naturally do, regardless of the circumstances. It is important that they recognise, along with health and social care professionals, that they need and are entitled to additional support.

We plan to:

1. Implement a dedicated support framework that recognises and addresses the unique challenges and needs of parent carers.
2. Coordinate with carer organisations, awareness campaigns and training sessions to educate UHSCNL staff, as well as parent carers themselves, about the distinction between being a parent and a parent carer.
3. Support the parent carer working group comprised of parent carers to provide insights, feedback, and recommendations on how best to support this specific group. Collaborate with parent carers in decision-making processes and involve them in the development and evaluation of support initiatives.
4. Regularly review and assess the impact of support initiatives for parent carers, including the outcomes of the established working group. Ensure that findings and recommendations are incorporated into the carer strategy to continuously improve and tailor support for parent carers.

11. Minority Ethnic carers

Why additional specific actions are required for this group:

Carers from ethnic minorities tend to face additional barriers and challenges. Many carers from minority ethnic backgrounds do not recognise themselves as carers due to cultural expectations; the term 'carer' does not exist in some cultures. They are also more likely to report negative experiences of trying to access help and support.

We plan to:

1. Work with partners to identify, engage, and support carers from Minority Ethnic communities.
2. Deliver awareness raising and training for UHSCNL staff and wider staff teams, plus consider awareness raising through corporate communications.
3. Seek input from carers from Minority Ethnic communities regarding the barriers they face and the support they require.
4. Improve recognition of cultural differences and their implications.
5. Develop support tailored to their needs.

12. LGBTQI+ carers

Why additional specific actions are required for this group:

LGBTQI+ carers face unique challenges, both practical and emotional, in their caring role. They may experience additional stress and strain because of worries about others' reactions, or even discrimination, when seeking support and accessing services. LGBTQI+ carers can experience increased isolation, as well as losing aspects of their LGBTQI+ identity as a result of the demands of their caring role.

We plan to:

1. Develop training programmes for healthcare professionals, social workers, and service providers to increase awareness of LGBTQI+ issues in relation to caring and enhance their cultural competence in addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ carers.
2. Increase visibility of LGBTQI+ carers in awareness campaigns and information materials regarding caring.
3. Expand support services to reach diverse LGBTQI+ communities, considering factors such as age, ethnicity, and gender identity.
4. Implement strategies to address and reduce stigma and discrimination faced by LGBTQI+ carers.
5. Promote collaboration between LGBTQI+ organisations, carer support groups, and health and social care to create a comprehensive and integrated support network.

Funding our priorities

Given the widespread cost of living crisis and the financial pressures across Health and Social Care, the approaches described above may also require funding to be reviewed as needs and priorities change, to free up resources for reinvestment.

In the lead up to the Carer Strategy 2024 -2027 there has been further investment in:

- PAMIS: Family Support Service (expanded service commencing April 2024)
- North Lanarkshire Carers Together: Equalities post
- North Lanarkshire Carers Together: Carer Breather
- Lanarkshire Carers: Carer Outcomes Grant and Flexible Support Fund
- Lanarkshire Carers: CarerSpace
- Hospital Discharge Carer Support Scheme
- Alzheimer's Scotland: Post Diagnostic Support Service (Dementia)
- Autism related support through the Autism Network
- HOPE for Autism: extended contract

Investment in carer support around both Dementia and Autism is a direct consequence of these being identified in both the 2021 and 2023 National Carer Census as being amongst the highest caring related conditions.

Reviewing the carer strategy

We will ensure that our Carer Strategy is outcome focused but is flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances without going 'off-course'.

This flexibility must be informed by both top down and bottom-up perspectives:

- The top-down approach is about professional expertise and knowledge, analysis, data, and research.
- The bottom-up approach reflects carer experience, community knowledge, and the involvement of both carers and people being cared for.

Both must be used to help achieve impact, to assess that impact – the difference that we make – and to understand where that impact came from. Both approaches must also reflect the diversity of voices, backgrounds, and perspectives of carers.

Progress will be reviewed through:

- The governance structure and processes of the Integrated Joint Board.
- The Carers Oversight Group, which has a key role in monitoring impact.
- All stakeholders, including individual carers, and cared for people, carer organisations, and wider organisations with a direct, or indirect role in supporting carers, will have a say in determining how things are working well for them.

Alternative language and format options

This document is a summary of our Carer Strategy 2024-2027. It can be made available in a range of languages and formats on request including large print, braille, audio, electronic and accessible formats.

If you require a copy in an alternative language or format please email:
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'S urrainn dhuinn an sgrìobhaidh seo a chur ann an diofar chànanan agus chruthan, a' gabhail a-steach clò mòr, braille, cruth claisneachd agus cruthan dealanach agus ruigsinneach.

Gus iarrtas a dhèanamh, cuir fios gu Conaltradh
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