



# Carer Strategy

## Strategy 2024-2027

# University Health & Social Care

## North Lanarkshire



# FOREWORD

Our carers strategy outlines our commitment to supporting carers in North Lanarkshire. It is jointly developed with carer focused organisations and carers locally. Thanks to all who contributed - your involvement played a key role in developing this strategy. Hopefully, you will recognise your own contribution within!



Whenever there is a carer or young carer, there is also a cared for person or people. Our strategy outlines how we intend to meet their collective needs over the next three years.

It has been very clear through our engagement that carers and young carers wish to continue to be involved throughout the implementation of the strategy, so continued engagement and participation activity will be a key feature of our shared approach, and this will continue to adapt and change to meet changing needs.

It is vital that carers are well supported. Carers play an invaluable role in our communities, and it is important that we provide them with the support and resources they need.

Having a three-year strategy not only helps guide our actions, but it also recognises the importance of us all working to clear, shared, carer-led objectives, so that we can best meet changing circumstances and challenges. Health and social care delivery continues to evolve and one of our main priorities is that carers are supported to be able to continue to care, so long as they are able, while also experiencing the best possible health and well-being.

To ensure that we maintain this focus, University Health & Social Care North Lanarkshire and partner organisations will continue to ensure that carers and cared for people can influence and shape the delivery of support and services.

This strategy sets out our shared approach and action plan. We will use this to deliver on the aspirations of, and desired outcomes for, carers and young carers between 2024 -2027.

**Ross McGuffie**

**Chief Officer, University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire**

# NORTH LANARKSHIRE CARER STRATEGY 2024-2027

Welcome to our Carer Strategy for North Lanarkshire, 2024 to 2027, developed with carer-focused organisations and carers locally.

The role of carers in supporting loved ones is immense and without it, the wider impact on Health and Social Care Services would be immeasurable.

Key to our progress is the strong working relationship between carers, carer organisations, and University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire. It is crucial that we continue to build on this firm foundation.

Our strategy sets out:

1. Our shared aims - shared across carers, carer organisations, Community and Voluntary Sector and University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire.
2. Our shared approach - aimed at ensuring 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.
3. Our shared ambition – that policy and strategy not only takes account of caring related need, but that carers shape, influence and inform these, as well as the supports and services that assist, enable, and empower carers.
4. The strategy also sets out how we will use Carers Scotland Act 2016 Implementation Funding to support carers locally.

## **What is University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire (UHSCNL)?**

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.

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.

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# 1. 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 support plans.
- Ensure carers are involved in influencing and shaping policy and strategy.

## Why do we need a new Carer Strategy?

- To measure the success of the priorities set out in previous Carer Strategies
- 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?

- Using knowledge on current practice, impact, and success measures in North Lanarkshire
- Through engagement sessions with carers – facilitated by North Lanarkshire Carers Together, Lanarkshire Carers & Action for Children Young Carers Project – we sought information on areas for improvement.
- Using information from everyday engagement activity that is embedded within our support of carers across North Lanarkshire.

## 2. VISION & STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### Our shared vision is that:

- Across North Lanarkshire, 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:

1. Improve preventative approaches, anticipatory and future planning.
2. Improve communication with carers.
3. Ensure carers know their rights.
4. Promote Income maximisation and social inclusion.
5. Ensure carers can get a break from caring.
6. Ensure that carers are at the heart of policy, strategy, and service design.
7. Improve carer experience around hospital discharge.

**These priorities aim to ensure that all carers are valued, recognised, and supported effectively. They seek to provide carers with support to continue their caring role to improve well-being and quality of life.**

### Cutting across our priorities are guiding principles of:

- ‘Getting it right first time’ from the outset, in a timely and efficient manner, to ensure that carers can continue caring for their loved ones without undue burden.
- Engagement and Participation – Creating meaningful opportunities for carers to shape and influence local plans, policies, strategies, support, and services.
- Our approach is intended to promote carer inclusion, offer support to get involved in planning and working together, assessing what methods work, effective communication, and evaluating impact. This is to inform and influence decisions on services and support.
- The new NHSL health care strategy, **Our Health Together – Living Our Best Lives in Lanarkshire**, is an exciting opportunity to explore new ways that can deliver health care in Lanarkshire. Some people in Lanarkshire may already have taken part in discussions about services. Feedback will inform the design, planning and delivery of services and supports in Lanarkshire.

The information received will be used to shape the new healthcare strategy [Our Health Together](#)

### 3. THE CONTEXT FOR OUR STRATEGY

#### National Carers Strategy

The National Carer Strategy, (Scottish Government, December 2022) looks to progress long-term changes to improve the lives of unpaid carers across Scotland. It was created after extensive engagement with carer organisations, carer centres, local government, and unpaid carers themselves. It sets out the action the Government will take across a range of policy areas to ensure its resources for carers are directed to where they will be most effective. Across Scotland, the intention is that all local authorities and carer-focused organisations will ensure their local strategies fit with this wider strategy.

As well as meeting the aspirations of carers locally, our Carer Strategy also needs to align with the aims of the National Carers Strategy and its five pillars, which are:

1. Living with COVID-19
2. Valuing, Recognising and Supporting Carers
3. Health and Social Care Support
4. Social and Financial Inclusion
5. Young Carers

There is a national guidance comment that accompanies the Carers Scotland Act 2016, and this informs local work with carers (National Guidance Updated July 2021)

#### North Lanarkshire priorities

Our Carer Strategy must also align with the ambitions of The Plan for North Lanarkshire that outlines the long-term vision for our area. A number of Ambition Statements within The Plan have a direct connection with our Carer Strategy. These are:

Statement 13.	Improve preventative approaches including self-management and giving people information and choice over supports and services.
Statement 15.	Encourage the health and wellbeing of people through a range of social, cultural, and leisure activities.
Statement 18.	Ensure our digital transformation is responsive to all people's needs and enables access to the services they need.
Statement 19.	Improve engagement with communities and develop their capacity to help themselves.
Statement 20.	Improve the involvement of communities in the decisions, and development of services and supports that affect them.
Statement 24.	Review and design services around people, communities, and shared resources.
Statement 25.	Ensure intelligent use of data and information to support fully evidence-based decision making and future planning.

#### Connecting our work to wider initiatives

Local Carer strategies must also meet a range of statutory requirements as set out in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, and link with other national or local strategies and policies, such as: Condition specific or age-related policies or strategies; Children's Plan; Self-Directed Support (SDS); Getting It Right for Everyone (GIRFE); and Trauma Informed Practice (TIP).

Our priorities to make our vision a reality	Focus of strategic action during plan period	National Carer Strategy pillars links	Link to Plan for NL (North Lanarkshire)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve preventative approaches, anticipatory planning, and future planning.</li> <li>2. Improve communication with carers.</li> <li>3. Ensure carers know their rights.</li> <li>4. Income maximisation.</li> <li>5. Ensure carers can get a break from caring.</li> <li>6. Continue to ensure carers are at the heart of policy, strategy, and service design.</li> <li>7. Improve carer experience around hospital discharge.</li> </ol> <p><b>These priorities aim to ensure that all carers are valued, recognised, and supported effectively.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improving preventative approaches, anticipatory and future planning (and preventing crisis).</li> <li>2. Improving communication with carers and their access to information and advice.</li> <li>3. Ensuring carers know their rights (and that Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements are offered and progressed consistently).</li> <li>4. Supporting carers health and wellbeing (including Living with COVID-19).</li> <li>5. Ensuring carers get a break from caring.</li> <li>6. Ensuring carers, and people being cared for, have their income maximised.</li> <li>7. Improving carer experience around hospital discharge.</li> <li>8. Improving awareness of and access to Assistive Technology.</li> </ol> <p><b>Additional actions for specific groups of carers</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Young Carers</li> <li>10. Parent Carers</li> <li>11. Minority Carers</li> <li>12. LGBTQI+ Carers</li> </ol>	<p><b>Pillar 2</b></p> <p><b>Pillar 2 / 3 / 4</b></p> <p><b>Pillar 2</b></p> <p><b>Pillar 1 / 3</b></p> <p><b>Pillar 3</b></p> <p><b>Pillar 2 / 4</b></p> <p><b>Pillar 1 / 2</b></p> <p><b>Pillar 2 / 3 / 4</b></p>	<p><b>Statement 13 / 25</b></p> <p><b>Statement 13 / 19</b></p> <p><b>Statement 13 / 19</b></p> <p><b>Statement 15 / 24</b></p> <p><b>Statement 13 / 15</b></p> <p><b>Statement 15 / 19</b></p> <p><b>Statement 13 / 19 / 20 / 24</b></p> <p><b>Statement 13 / 18 / 24</b></p>
<p><b>Cutting across our priorities are guiding principles of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Getting it right first time.'</li> <li>• Engagement and participation</li> </ul>		<p><b>Pillar 2 / 3 / 4</b></p>	<p><b>Statement 19 / 20 / 24</b></p>



## 4. 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, sensory impairment, 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 amount of time if you provide care & you are a carer.
- 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.

We know that many carers, particularly in the early part of their caring journey, may not self-identify as carers. Often, this is because they see themselves primarily as a spouse or family member, for example.

### Who is not a Carer?

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 also explains that:

- Parents of dependent children are not usually considered carers. However, parents of dependent children with additional care and support needs can still be considered carers.
- Paid care workers and foster carers do not fall within the definition of 'Carers' under the Act.

### Why it is important to identify carers?

The early identification of unpaid carers is a key part of our approach. This allows us to:

1. Introduce preventative approaches at the right time.
2. Develop anticipatory approaches and early planning.
3. Support future planning.
4. Minimise the chances of crisis occurring.
5. Target responses and resources appropriately.

Local carer strategies must set out plans for identifying carers, such as outreach and awareness raising activity, communication and information dissemination, and events for and about carers.

## **Carers in North Lanarkshire**

Not every carer identifies as a carer. The national Carer Census is not intended to report on every carer. This makes it difficult to state with any certainty how many carers we have within our area or the demography around who is caring for who. North Lanarkshire's population is currently around 341,000 people, and around 13,000 carers in our area are known to carer organisations and/or to University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire.

However, we believe that there may be as many as 50,000 to 60,000 people delivering some form of unpaid care locally at present. This figure would be in keeping with wider research on unpaid caring, which suggests that two out of three people will be a carer at some point in their lives.

## 5. 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 (difficulties some carers reported in relation to access 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 who does not want to accept other support; reliance on carers and feeling intense pressure to keep going.

#### **Impact on finance. Carers reported:**

- Loss of income.
- Additional costs associated with caring.
- Struggling financially affects their health.
- The need for more financial support to look after their health and wellbeing and greater recognition of the financial impacts of caring.
- Access to information and advice, particularly around income maximisation, is crucial.

#### **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.

#### **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.

### RECOGNITION AND SERVICE RESPONSIVENESS

Through engagement, carers shared how they would wish to be recognised and how services and support could be more responsive.

#### **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.

### **Employment and Training**

- The importance of training and support, notably around caring for someone with Dementia, Autism, or other neurological conditions.

### **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.

### **Information, advice, and support.**

- Needing better understanding of what is available to carers from community support options.
- To have responsive, flexible support when needed.
- Getting support when it is needed.
- Consistency when engaging with Social Work; better continuity, and to not feel they must fight for the support they require.

### **Parent carers reported:**

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

Engagement Sessions with carers from Minority Ethnic communities and LGBTQI+ Carers highlighted commonality with all the areas noted above but included some specific concerns.

### **For Minority Ethnic carers:**

- Services and support 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.
- Lack of culturally appropriate support for older adults in the community adds to caring responsibilities.
- Many Ethnic Minority carers, particularly women, do not feel recognised, understood, and valued within communities and families; the caring role is taken for granted and considered a family duty.
- Anxiety around COVID continues, with many older adults struggling to participate in activities and gatherings because of this.

**For LGBTQI+ carers:**

- Recognition that carer 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 that approaches are appropriate and unique to individual circumstances.

**Working Carers**

- The Carers Leave Act 2023 came into force April 2024, providing all carers in employment with a statutory right to 5 days unpaid leave each year to help meet their caring responsibilities.
- We also know that many carers need to stop work to care, drop out of further and higher education, struggle to get flexible appointments to accompany the person they care for, are absent from work because of the impact caring has on their physical and mental health. There is a need to improve employers understanding and increase flexibility.

## 6. 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.

The key aspects of the Act for Local Authorities, NHS and Health and Social Care Partnerships are:

- To prepare an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) or Young Carer Statement (YCS) for any carer/young carer who requests one, and to offer one to anyone who appears to be a carer.
- To provide support to carers based on need which meets our eligibility criteria.
- To help carers put arrangements in place for the provision of care to the cared-for person in emergencies.
- To establish and maintain an information and advice service for carers.
- To consider whether any support should include or take the form of a break from caring.
- To produce a Short Break Services Statement.
- To involve carers in the planning of discharge from hospital of the cared-for person
- To adhere to timescales for the preparation of ACSPs/YCSs for carers of people who are terminally ill.
- To prepare a local carers strategy.

Our strategy sets out how we are responding to these requirements and how we will continue to support carers through a range of services and supports.

### **Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP)**

University Health and Social Care will offer an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) to any adult carer we identify as a carer or any adult who requests one, in line with the statutory duty to do so. 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 North Lanarkshire Young Carers which is the delegated support provider responsible for 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 have prepared our eligibility criteria for carers using guidance issued by the Scottish Government. This 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

In North Lanarkshire eligibility is based on Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements and the identified level of need.

We are increasingly moving towards a “what would help” approach as opposed to “eligibility.”

### Waiving of charges

Support and/or services to meet caring related needs identified within an Adult Carer Support Plan cannot be charged for. Any charges must be waived.

### Hospital Discharge

NHS Lanarkshire has made a commitment to involve carers in the discharge planning of the person they care for, in line with this requirement as stipulated in the Carers (Scotland) ACT 2016. Work is ongoing in partnership with local carer organisations to provide an information service and direct support for carers throughout the hospital discharge process.

### Breaks from caring

The Scottish Government has intimated an intention to pass legislation ensuring that carers will have a legal right to a break from caring.

The UK Government has progressed a Bill enabling carers in paid employment to have five days unpaid from caring.

Our approach to breaks from caring is set out within our Short Breaks Services Statement, which complements this strategy. A summary of this can be viewed here [here](#).

Situation	Suggested Response
Cared for person can cope independently enough that the Carer can take a break without the need for support from services or that a family break without the need for any additional support is possible	Self-help (no service responses are required around Carer breaks)  Also consider whether preventative or anticipatory planning is required?  Is a Future Plan in place?
Cared for person requires support so that the Carer can have a break. Wider family and friends can assist with this or a family break without the need for any further support is possible	Self -help (no service responses are required around Carer breaks)  Also consider whether preventative or anticipatory planning is required?  Is a Future Plan in place?

## **7: SUPPORT FOR CARERS IN NORTH LANARKSHIRE**

### **University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire**

As highlighted on Page 1, 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. The Scottish Government has set out nine national health and wellbeing outcomes that we, along with every other health and social care partnership in Scotland, is working towards.

### **Commissioned Carer Organisations**

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
- North Lanarkshire Carers Together
- Action For Children Young Carers Project

All three of these organisations have carer representation on their management board or committee and feed into the Carer Support Network and North Lanarkshire's Integrated Joint Board. This helps ensure that carer voices are heard, and can influence and shape policy, strategy, and service development.

#### **Lanarkshire Carers**

[www.lanarkshirecarers.org.uk](http://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. Its services are open to all carers aged 18 years and older living in Lanarkshire. Its Short Breaks Bureau helps carers to take breaks from caring, while its Carer Training Programme can help carers to manage the caring role, understand specific conditions, and look after their own health and wellbeing.

#### **North Lanarkshire Carers Together**

[www.carerstogether.org](http://www.carerstogether.org)

North Lanarkshire Carers Together provides a range of information, advice, and signposting services. Its Carer Breather helps carers to access regular short breaks from caring. A dedicated Equalities post focuses on ensuring that under-represented groups or communities have a voice. Its carer advocacy work helps carers to access advocacy support (distinct from any advocacy provision for supported people).

#### **Action For Children North Lanarkshire Young Carers**

[www.actionforchildren.org](http://www.actionforchildren.org)

Action For Children North Lanarkshire Young Carers raises awareness, identifies, and provides direct support to children and young people who look after or help to look after someone in their family who is unwell or disabled, including children caring for parents who have mental health or substance misuse problems.



## **OTHER GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING SUPPORT TO CARERS**

There is a range of Community and Voluntary Sector organisations which provide a range of support, including condition-specific and age-related support to carers, whether directly or indirectly. These organisations form part of the Carer Support Network.

The list of organisations includes, but is not limited to:

### **PAMIS Family Support**

[PAMIS | Promoting a more inclusive society](#)

Provides support to families caring for someone with profound and multiple disabilities.

### **HOPE for Autism**

[Hope for Autism – Providing support across Lanarkshire](#)

Provides support to people with Autism as well as to family members and carers.

### **Deafblind Scotland**

[www.dbscotland.org.uk](http://www.dbscotland.org.uk)

Provides sign guide interpreters for people with dual sensory impairment, as well as support to family members and carers.

### **Alzheimer's Scotland**

[We are Scotland's dementia charity \(alzscot.org\)](http://www.alzscot.org)

Provides a post diagnostic support service and support to family members and carers.

### **North Lanarkshire Disability Forum (NLDF)**

[www.nldforum.org.uk](http://www.nldforum.org.uk)

The lead agency locally facilitating the Engagement and Participation of supported people (including carers).

### **Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL)**

[www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org](http://www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org)

The lead agency for the Community Solutions programme, whereby people, including carers and cared for people can be supported by a diverse range of community or voluntary sector organisations.

### **Getting Better Together (GBT)**

[www.shottshealthyliving.com](http://www.shottshealthyliving.com)

Offers a post hospital discharge support service, and wider carer support options to support family members and carers.

### **Playpeace**

[www.playpeace.org.uk](http://www.playpeace.org.uk)

Offers parental peer support and activities for children with additional support needs.

## **OTHER SUPPORTS FOR CARERS**

### **Making Life Easier (MLE)**

This is an online service for people experiencing difficulties with everyday activities, including carers. It offers information, advice and direct access to services and support, and can assist people with equipment solutions, many of which can be ordered online direct from its equipment service.

### **Assistive Technology**

A range of specialist equipment technology can support carers by helping the person they care for live at home independently or alert the carer if help is needed. The range of technology available from Health and Social Care includes falls sensors, bed monitors, fire safety sensors and GPS locators.

### **Care Opinion**

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

## 8. OUR APPROACH

Our approach is based on the principles of promoting independence, self-help, enablement, and empowerment for carers in the community.

We aim to support carers to maintain their autonomy and decision-making capabilities, enabling them to care for their loved ones while also prioritising their own well-being. By providing resources, information, and guidance, we seek to 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 physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Through this and peer support networks, carers can learn from each other, share experiences, and build a sense of camaraderie.

We are committed to enabling carers to fulfil their caring responsibilities effectively and efficiently. By offering training, skill development opportunities, and practical assistance, to augment carers' existing experience and expertise, carers are equipped with the tools and knowledge they need to navigate complex care situations and engage with health and social care services with confidence.

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

### **Engagement and Participation of carers**

Engagement and participation underpin our approach and all our strategic priorities and actions. We aspire to improve the ways we consult with, and involve, carers on matters which affect them.

We have identified five levels where outcomes need to be considered across the engagement and participation activity that takes place. These are:

1. **Individual Level** - Where carers and people being cared for can use lived experience, self-appraisal, and engagement through options such as feedback, surveys, and focus groups, to self-identify where support for them as an individual carer and/or to the cared for person is needed, how it is provided and in what way provision is making a positive difference.
2. **Carer Support Service and/or Project Level** - Where carer organisations can use engagement processes such as carer feedback, case studies, performance management and performance reporting information to discern and measure the impact and efficacy of carer support approaches.
3. **Organisational Level** - The organisational aim of University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire is that people remain as independent as possible, for as long as possible, are more socially included/connected and appropriately supported where necessary.

The One Plan for North Lanarkshire through several of its Ambition Statements, Local Outcome Improvement Plans, and Carer strategies, as well as the Self-Directed Support

(Scotland) Act 2013 and Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, all set out desired organisational outcomes that we work to.

4. **Partnership Level** - This is a shared outcome working towards people being able to maintain independent living for longer. Carers play a key role in this, in terms of supporting people at home, in their local community and in ensuring that those they care for remain as independent as possible. Carers can also lead on or inform preventative approaches and anticipatory planning.
5. **National Level** - Each Integration Authority, including University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire is required to publish an annual performance report which sets out how the national health and wellbeing outcomes are being improved.

## 9: STRATEGIC INTENTION OVERVIEW

The focus of our strategic actions across the three years of the Carers Strategy 2024 -2027 are as follows and detail of how we will progress these are provided in the next section 'Specific Actions'.

These priority area actions will help to ensure that all carers are valued, recognised, and supported effectively.

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.
4. Supporting carers health and wellbeing
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. Influencing and shaping policy and strategy.

Additional actions for specific groups of carers:

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

All these actions will be tackled through a shared approach across University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire and carer organisations.

## 10: 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.'

Improving this area is about ensuring that the right conversations take place with health and social care professionals and that carer preferences are explored and responded to. It is also about trying to prevent carers from having to repeat conversations with different organisations about their circumstances.

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.

#### Specific actions:

1. Support the development of a comprehensive system to proactively identify carers, including regular screenings, assessment, and follow-up to ensure 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. This can include practical information and tools tailored to the specific needs of carers and ensuring that carers are aware of the local arrangements regarding Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements.
3. Continue with our collaborative approach 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 utilise 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. This can improve accessibility and communication, making the planning process more efficient and effective.

#### What success will look like.

- More carers will have Preventative, Anticipatory and Emergency Plans in place through reviews, adequate information on supports and services, identification, and assessment, which can help in better preparation for any unexpected situations and improve overall well-being and quality of care provided.
- There will be a reduction in the numbers of carers self-reporting as being in crisis.
- Carers report that support has enabled them to continue to care with improved health and well-being and quality of life.
- An increasing number of carers, and cared for people, will be aware of, and using, assistive technology (digital solutions) as an integral part of caring and support arrangements.

## **2. IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITH CARERS AND THEIR ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SUPPORT**

### **Why this is a priority:**

Effective communication is essential in 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.

### **Specific actions:**

1. University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire will continue to commission carer organisations to provide information and support:
2. In addition to 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.

### **What success will look like.**

- Carers will be able to access the right information and advice for their situation at the right time and place.

### **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 a key factor in ensuring carers receive the support they need. Understanding rights also raises awareness of choices around caring. The Carers Charter provides context and guidance of our work with carers – what we do, and why we do it.

#### **Specific actions:**

1. Continuing to inform carers of their right to an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement and the local arrangements for accessing these.
2. Expand the range of 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. Continue to support dedicated carer advocacy to assist carers in navigating their rights and entitlements, advocating on their behalf when needed, and supporting carers in accessing relevant support services. This can include providing individualised guidance on how to assert rights effectively.
4. Continue to support celebratory platforms for carers to connect with each other, share experiences, and support one another in understanding and exercising their rights.
5. Build on existing partnerships with community organisations, and advocacy groups to enhance carers' knowledge and awareness of their rights.

#### **What success will look like.**

- Carers understand what they are entitled to.
- Carers are enabled to manage their caring role and are able and willing to continue with their caring role.
- Carers feel valued and respected by services, and are listened to, understood, and involved in individual planning, support, and services with the person that they care for as well as for themselves.



## **4. SUPPORTING CARERS HEALTH AND WELLBEING (including Living with COVID)**

### **Why this is a priority:**

Supporting carers' health and wellbeing is a key focus for statutory services, commissioned services, and others, as it is essential to the ability to continue to provide care. It is important to both carers and to the people they care for. The strain of caring can impact each carer differently; recognising that every carer has unique and specific needs with regard to maintaining their health and wellbeing is important.

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.

### **Specific actions:**

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

### **What success will look like.**

- Carers feel healthy and well enough to manage their caring role, have support as needed and can access opportunities alongside or out with caring.
- Carers are able and willing to continue with their caring role.
- Carers feel confident and supported to protect themselves from COVID, to re-engage with their communities, and to are supported to recover from the negative impacts of COVID.

## **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.

### **Specific actions:**

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. Carers can be connected to services and supports

### **What success will look like.**

- Carers will be able to have breaks from caring, whether through community support networks, short break options or through individual budgets, where appropriate.
- Individual carers conversations lead to personalised break from caring.
- Widening the understanding of what a carer break can look like: 'regular time for me,' 'small pockets of respite.'
- The range of supports and services that UHSCNL provide to cared for people also helps meet the needs of the carer.

## **6. ENSURING CARERS, AND PEOPLE BEING CARED FOR, HAVE THEIR INCOME MAXIMISED**

### **Why this is a priority:**

For most carers there is a monetary 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.

### **Specific actions:**

1. Embedding income maximisation as part of every new Community Care Assessment and making it a consistent approach.
2. Every Adult Carer Support Plan, or Young Carer Statement to consider what financial help and support may be available.
3. Delivering 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. 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.

### **What success will look like.**

- Carers will be aware of the range of the financial support or assistance available to them.
- All carers locally will be aware that support put in place to meet caring related needs as identified in an Adult Carer Support Plan, cannot be charged for.
- Carers will experience better financial inclusion and less hardship.
- Through income maximisation, carers can enjoy greater social inclusion.

## **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.

### **Specific actions:**

1. Better and earlier discharge planning that includes carers.
2. Increased partnership working from all organisations involved in discharge.
3. Increased capacity for organisations that actively support carers at discharge and in the community.
4. A reduction in instances of carers being informed of discharge at short notice.
5. Evaluation of carer hospital discharge payment scheme
6. Implementation of discharge passport.
7. Increased feedback and engagement from carers to inform discharge improvements.
8. Continued support of hospital linked carer support workstream and its carer support staff linked to the three acute hospital sites in Lanarkshire.

### **What success will look like.**

- Carers and cared for receive the right support at the right time.
- Reduction in complaints.
- Reductions in failed discharge
- Quicker access to support

## **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. For example, assistive technology could support a carer to safely leave the cared for person for periods of time, secure in the knowledge that support could be summonsed, if required.

Creating greater independence can help to reduce levels of stress and strain on carers and assistive technology can play a key role in improving carers' health and wellbeing.

### **Specific actions:**

1. Continue to help carers and cared for people to use their own technology in ways that can support their independence and individual needs.
2. 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.
3. Continue to promote the 'think technology first' message with partner agencies and stakeholders.
4. Reduce barriers to accessing assistive technology support.

### **What success will look like.**

- Carers and cared for people will be aware of the range of technology options aimed at supporting independence and/or minimising risk.
- A significant increase in the number of people using technology as part of their support arrangements.
- Carers will be able to access Assistive Technology, following an ACSP or assessment when required. Carer services, carers and cared for people will be able to request this directly.
- Wait times for equipment will be reduced, so reducing the number of delayed discharges.

## 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.

### **Specific actions:**

1. Continue to work within 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. (Young carers tend to be unseen regarding the discharge of cared for individuals.)
5. Through increased partnership working, innovative thinking and development, 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.

### **What success will look like.**

- As far as possible, young carers will enjoy a childhood like other young people and children.
- Young carers will be well supported, able to understand and cope with their caring responsibilities and have access to the right support, at the right time and place, should circumstances change.
- Positive destinations become more achievable through educational support.

## 10. PARENT CARERS

### Why additional specific actions are required for this group:

Parent carers must 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.

Making the distinction between being a parent or a parent carer is important, so that there is recognition of any need for additional support.

### Specific actions:

1. Implement a dedicated support framework that recognises and addresses the unique challenges and needs of parent carers. This framework should provide targeted information, resources, and services that cater to the dual role of being a parent and a carer.
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. The emphasis should be on the importance of identifying parent carers and ensuring that parent carers are aware of additional support options.
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 support involvement 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 any changes in circumstance, learning and recommendations can feed into the Carer Strategy to keep it "current," as well as to continuously improve and tailor support for parent carers.

### What success will look like.

- Parent carers feel valued and respected by services.
- Parent carers are identified as carers, should that be their choice, have a voice, are listened to, understood, and involved in individual planning, support, and services with the person that they care for as well as for themselves.

## **11. MINORITY ETHNIC CARERS**

### **Why additional specific actions are required for this group:**

Carers from ethnic minorities can experience 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. People in these circumstances are also more likely to report negative experiences of trying to access help and support.

Minority ethnic does not describe a single homogenous group, and person or situation specific support should be tailored to individual needs.

### **Specific actions:**

1. Working with partners to identify, engage, and support carers from Minority Ethnic communities.
2. Awareness raising and training for UHSCNL staff, wider staff teams and consideration of awareness raising through corporate communications.
3. Seek input from carers from Minority Ethnic communities regarding the barriers faced and the support required to overcome these.
4. Greater recognition of cultural differences and their implications.
5. Support tailored to individual needs.

### **What success will look like.**

- Carers from Minority Ethnic communities will be able to access the range of carer support options available to other carers, with reasonable adjustment to reflect any specific needs. This could include, and is not limited to, translation services, interpreters, recognition of English as a second language, culturally sensitive support, and other considerations identified as barriers by carers from Minority Ethnic communities.



## 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 because of the demands of their caring role.

### Specific actions:

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

### What success will look like.

- Increased awareness and understanding of the unique challenges faced by LGBTQI+ carers among healthcare professionals, service providers, and the broader community.
- Better availability of accessible and inclusive support services tailored to the specific needs of LGBTQI+ carers.
- Improved mental health outcomes for LGBTQI+ carers, including reduced stress and increased well-being.
- An empowered and engaged LGBTQI+ carer community that actively participates in decision-making processes.
- Positive changes in policies and legal frameworks that protect the rights and well-being of LGBTQI+ carers.

## 13. INVESTMENT AND REINVESTMENT

Given the widespread cost of living crisis and the financial pressures across Health and Social Care, the approaches described above may also require elements of disinvestment, 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 Payment 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 Carer Census as being amongst the highest caring related conditions.

A third priority caring area is around Frailty. North Lanarkshire is a pathfinder area in a national programme; Getting it Right for Everybody (GIRFE), with findings from this work, directly influenced by people with lived experience, expected to help influence and shape our future approaches.

There has also been significant investment into generic carer focussed support and other related services.

Engagement and Participation activity, monitoring and evaluations activity, individual feedback and mid-point review of the strategy will all play a part in informing evident based decisions on investment. This will also ensure that we are achieving best value and positive outcomes for carers within all the resources that we have available.

## 11. REVIEWING THE CARER STRATEGY

Our Carers Strategy has an outcome focused approach. We need to ensure that in setting out a 3-year approach to supporting carers and cared for people, that our strategy can still be flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances without going off-course due to such changes.

We need flexibility that is informed by two interconnected strands:

1. Professional expertise and knowledge, analysis, data, and research.
2. Carer experience, community knowledge, and the involvement of both carers and people being cared for.

Both strands must be used to achieve impact, then assess that impact - the difference that we make; and help us understand where that impact came from.

Both approaches must also reflect the diversity of voices, backgrounds, and perspectives.

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.
- Introducing a carer led group to support the work of the Carers Oversight Group

The strategy should also be formally reviewed at the midway point.

- All stakeholders, including individual carers, and cared for people, carer organisations, and wider organisations with a direct, or indirect role in supporting carers, can have a say in determining how things are working for them. #
- The review will also be within the context of the Carers Scotland Act 2016 Implementation Funding.
- The mid-point review offers an ideal opportunity to consider any updates or changes arising from the implementation of a National Care Service.

# APPENDIX 1: Supporting carers in North Lanarkshire

## Commissioned Carer Organisations

University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire currently commissions three carer organisations

- Lanarkshire Carers
- North Lanarkshire Carers Together
- Action For Children Young Carers Project

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.

## Lanarkshire Carers

[www.lanarkshirecarers.org.uk](http://www.lanarkshirecarers.org.uk)

Lanarkshire Carers provide information, advice and a range of direct support options and services which can help carers maintain or improve their quality of life and to continue to care. Services are open to all carers aged 18 years and older living in Lanarkshire.

- Delivers practical and emotional support to individuals and groups, building trusted relationships with carers that help them to identify and address their support needs and make sure they know their rights.
- Offers outreach and locality support and works in partnership with a range of organisations and services that also help carers.
- Carer Support Workers are co-located in social work localities and health settings and the staff team works from Lanarkshire Carers in Airdrie and Hamilton.
- Support is also provided to carers from Minority Ethnic communities, Young Adult Carers aged 18–25 years old and other groups of carers who are under-represented. Lanarkshire Carers Equality and Diversity Carer Support Service provides support to carers from Minority Ethnic Communities.
- Its Short Breaks Bureau provides a range of information and support for carers to take a short break from caring, including identifying short break opportunities that meet their needs and circumstances, direct carer grant funding which may assist carers to take a short break from caring or access other things that can help reduce isolation and exclusion, information and guidance with arranging a short break and other useful resources for carers.
- Accesses funding and other initiatives to support carers in financial hardship due to having a reduced or limited income, particularly with rising cost-of-living pressures.  
[Lanarkshire Carers is the local delivery partner through Shared Care Scotland for funding provided by the Scottish Government.]
- Works with an independent partner to provide carers access to counselling sessions and wellbeing support.
- An extensive Carer Training Programme provides in-person, online and some hybrid options to suit carer circumstances, which enables carers to meet, share experiences, develop

connections/friendships and access self-managed peer support, often out with the particular carer training activity. This includes care training to specific groups of carers and in different languages.

### **North Lanarkshire Carers Together**

[www.carerstogether.org](http://www.carerstogether.org)

North Lanarkshire Carers Together provide a range of carer information, advice, signposting services as well as a campaigning remit.

- Carer Breather is an innovative approach to ensure that carers can access regular short breaks from caring.
- A dedicated Equalities post aims at ensuring that under-represented groups or communities have “a voice.”
- A Carer Advocacy worker ensures that carers can access advocacy support that is distinct from any advocacy provision for supported people.
- A Recognition to Rights Development Programme for carers equips participants with knowledge, skills, and tools to help shape and influence policy and strategy related to caring.
- A whole-family support service which is community or school based, responsive, timely, and flexible whilst providing the opportunity for families to be listened to. The support can be emotional or practical, help to understand a child/young person’s diagnosis and/or needs, signposting to further services, and support that may benefit the family within the local community. The support is whole-family-centred to meet the needs of each individual family, and this is aligned with the Ten Principles of Intensive Family Support within The Promise as well as the child/young person’s Wellbeing Plan and is underpinned by Children’s Rights.
- North Lanarkshire Carer Forum, which is a group of carers who represent the collective views of carers. The Forum scrutinises local and national policy development, providing an engagement and participation board to offer views on the impact on carers.
- Carer Aware, delivery of information sessions to carers and partners, including front-line social workers, informing them of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, of carer rights, and where and how to access support and services for carers locally.

### **Action For Children North Lanarkshire Young Carers Project**

[www.actionforchildren.org](http://www.actionforchildren.org)

Action For Children North Lanarkshire Young Carers Project offer a support service, including short breaks for young carers across North Lanarkshire.

### **Carers Oversight Group**

University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire facilitates a group meeting with the three commissioned carer organisations to discuss and agree approaches to supporting carers, whether through direct carer support carer information, advice and signposting services, and carer advocacy.

### **Carer Support Network**

Comprises a broader range of carer organisations and other organisations involved in the provision of direct carer support or indirect carer support, ensuring that the carer 'voice' is represented and that any planning/actions taken are in line with identified carer outcomes.

### **Integrated Joint Board (IJB)**

Carer representation is a key facet of the Integrated Joint Board.

### **Carer Support Groups**

All three commissioned carer organisations host a range of carer groups and act as a conduit to ensure that caring related issues can be fed into the Carer Oversight Group, Carer Support Network or to University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire.

A wide range of other groups or organisations also support or work on behalf of carers providing a range of condition specific or age-related support to Carers, whether directly, or indirectly. These organisations form part of the Carer Support Network. The list of organisations includes, but is not limited to:

#### **PAMIS Family Support**

[www.pamis.org.uk](http://www.pamis.org.uk)

Provides support to families caring for someone with profound and multiple disabilities.

#### **HOPE for Autism**

[www.hopeforautism.org.uk](http://www.hopeforautism.org.uk)

Provides support to people with Autism as well as to family members and carers. Parkinson's self-help Group provides support to people with Parkinson's Disease and associated Neurological conditions, as well as an information/outreach service to family members and carers. This is augmented by The Autism Network, which provides bespoke additional Autism-specific input.

#### **Deafblind Scotland**

[www.dbscotland.org.uk](http://www.dbscotland.org.uk)

Serves the Deafblind community, sustaining deafblind people's personal and professional support networks and influencing statutory services and policy. Raises awareness of deaf blindness, and highlights the everyday challenges faced by deafblind people. Also provides sign guide interpreters for people with dual sensory impairment, as well as support to family members and carers.

#### **Alzheimer's Scotland**

[www.alzscot.org](http://www.alzscot.org)

Alzheimer's Scotland provide a post diagnostic support service and support family members and Carers.

**North Lanarkshire Disability Forum (NLDF)**

[www.nldforum.org.uk](http://www.nldforum.org.uk)

North Lanarkshire Disability Forum is the lead agency for the Engagement and Participation of supported people (including carers). It holds a fund that curated organisations (those organisations with skill, knowledge, experience, or expertise) can access to facilitate engagement and participation from specific sectors of the community.

**Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL)**

[www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org](http://www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org)

Interfaces with third sector organisations locally and acts as the lead agency for the Community Solutions programme, whereby people, including carers and cared for people can be supported by a diverse range of community or voluntary sector organisations. VANL also support the Carer Breather programme, facilitated by North Lanarkshire Carers Together, where carers can access regular breaks from caring.

**Getting Better Together (GBT)**

[www.shottshealthyliving.com](http://www.shottshealthyliving.com)

GBT offer a post hospital discharge support service, and wider carer support options to support family members and Carers.

**Playpeace**

[www.playpeace.org.uk](http://www.playpeace.org.uk)

Offers parental peer support and activities for children with additional support needs.

All these organisations have carer representation on their management board or committee and act as a conduit to feed into the Carer Support Network and Integrated Joint Board. This helps ensure that carers voices are not only heard, but influence and shape policy, strategy, and service development.

## **APPENDIX 2: Achievements and Progress 2019 - 2024**

Introducing a new strategy is an opportunity to look forward, but we are also keen to capture the range of successes and progress over the past five years and reflect on this too.

Since 2019, our partnership of UHSCNL, Lanarkshire Carers, NLCT and Action for Children - Young Carers, as well as a wide range of Community and Voluntary Sector organisations, and most importantly, carers, has made considerable progress.

The key message from North Lanarkshire's 2019 -2024 carers strategy was that "people do not have the care alone that they can access information, advice, and support to help meeting their needs. This will enable them to lead healthy and fulfilled lives balance their caring role and life outside of caring". The 2024 -2027 strategy builds on this progress

Collectively, we have made considerable progress regarding carer information, advice, and communication. Carers have reported that they feel recognised, supported individually, and are more involved in wider policy and strategy development. We intend to build on this progress over the next 3 years.

A considerable number of ACSPs (Adult Carer Support Plans) and YCPs have been progressed resulting in a range of improved outcomes for carers. We do, however, recognise that this has not been a consistent experience for every carer. This is why this remains a key focus within our new strategy.

Support for young carers has been embedded in all secondary schools across NL for the past 20 years - ensuring that young carers are aware of how to access support. This will continue to be a focus in the new strategy.

Our partnership has ensured that carers are aware of all four Self-Directed Support options. We are also aware that this has not been everyone's consistent experience. We want to tackle this



inconsistency, hence our enhanced focus in the new strategy and links to the SDS Transformation agenda.

We have had success in promoting and supporting carer identification. However, as can be seen from the strategy, more work is needed to improve in this area. Identification of carers at the earliest possible stage helps us all. Support can be introduced at an early stage, assistive technology can be considered, and it is always easier to plan interventions when things are settled than it would be in time of crisis.

The uptake of assistive technology has increased significantly. We are keen to build on this to help minimise risk and maximise independence for carers. We have an expanded Assistive Technology team to support this, and the team has already provided extremely helpful and informative input at locality events, carer organisation AGM's as but two examples.

Disability Information Officers have been in post for some time. They provide support, advice and signposting to local support groups, charitable organisations and University Health and Social Care services. They also assist with MLE assessments and recommendations including equipment.

Lanarkshire Carers, North Lanarkshire Carers Together, and Action for Children Young Carers Project have provided an invaluable range of information, advice, signposting, and support to carers. Carers have reported that the range of support on offer has proven invaluable to them in their caring role. These supports are too numerous to mention but further details are available on each of the organisation's websites found in this strategy.

University Health and Social Care North Lanarkshire would like to express our thanks to all three organisations, individual carers, and staff across both the statutory and voluntary sectors who have all made such a positive contribution to carer support in North Lanarkshire over the last 4 years.

We trust that our combined efforts over the next 3 years will further develop and enhance carer support and positive outcomes across North Lanarkshire.

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