

Cheshire East Council

All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025



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Developing the Cheshire East All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025



Shaping the Cheshire East All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

Caring for a family member or friend, unpaid, is a vital, valuable and important contribution to the delivery of adult social care and health services. Carers are the experts in caring for those they look after, so we we have developed this strategy together with carers in Cheshire East. This strategy aims to:

- adapt local services to identify and support carers in their caring role
- help adult carers live a life outside of caring
- support young carers to access meaningful respite that reduces the negative impact of their caring role.
- review our cared for services in conjunction with their carers.

It is important that decisions about how to improve support for unpaid carers across Cheshire East are shaped by and for carers. We really value the contributions carers have made in developing this strategy.

It has been jointly written by carers in Cheshire East, Cheshire East Borough Council and Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Foreword

Welcome to the All-Age Carers Strategy 2021 – 2025 for Cheshire East. This strategy has been written for and has the support of carers, partners and other key stakeholders across the partnership who want our aims and ambitions to be clear and succinct and offer all carers which include those who are adults, parents, working or young carers an opportunity to live, work, stay connected and be a vital part of their local communities.

The COVID -19 pandemic continues to have a monumental impact on unpaid carers' lives – not only because of the increased amount of care that many are having to provide, but because of the far-reaching effect that providing this level of care is having on many aspects of their lives: their relationships, their mental and physical health, their paid work and finances, and their emotional wellbeing.

Over the last 2 years we have tried to ensure that all carers are seen as a priority and that their needs are paramount. Within Cheshire East we know that there are over 40,000 carers but so many do not identify themselves as carers and therefore do not come forward for information and support.

At some point in our lives, we are more than likely to become a carer for somebody that we know and love. At the time we may not realise or recognise the role as such, but we want all carers to know that we as a local authority we have this strategy in place that will recognise you as a carer and will provide the vital support and information at the right time and in the right place.

We recognise that carer support needs to be localised where possible, within strong, inclusive communities, delivered in a way that helps carers to be happy and healthy. By working together with carers and key

organisations, we can ensure we are taking a 'whole systems approach' to supporting carers in Cheshire East. We will achieve this by strengthening the current pathway and reviewing our commissioned arrangements to ensure they are fit and appropriate for the future.

We will also increase efforts to identify carers who do not currently know what is available to support them, enabling them to access support and reducing their risk of carer breakdown. Carers make a tremendous contribution to their families, communities, workplace and society. It is important that we continue to recognise and value this contribution, and that we work "all together for carers" in the future.

Taking on a caring role should not mean that people have to give up work, and having to do so might lead to financial hardship and/or social exclusion. Carers should be supported in the workplace to maintain their employment status.

Where organisations have moved toward 'Carer friendly' employment practice they have been able to demonstrate strong business benefits such as significant savings made in unplanned absences and improved employee retention.

We as an organisation and our colleagues from health are committed to support our working carers.



Adults and Health
Committee Chair



Children and Families
Committee Chair

Introduction

Unpaid carers are our unsung heroes, and the COVID -19 pandemic amplified the importance this role has on society and public services. Most of us will become an unpaid carer at some point in our lives and it is essential that advice, information, guidance and support that is available is accessible, appropriate and timely for carers.

The Care Act 2014 defines a carer as:

'A "carer" is an adult who provides or intends to provide care for another adult (an "adult needing care")'
'A "young carer" is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person.'

Carers play an integral role within their community by providing care which can have an impact in terms of their own health; education; ability to remain employed; relationships and social life. Legislation such as the Care Act 2014 and Children's and Families Act 2014 provides an opportunity to enhance our support to Carers as, for the first time, it places them on an equal footing with those they care for and recognises the importance of their own 'wellbeing'.

Research tells us that the number of family and unpaid carers who provide care and regular support to another individual will increase substantially over the next ten to fifteen years because people are living longer, including the cared for. This means that there will be an increase in the number of people who are carers. Therefore, they will be undertaking caring roles for longer periods of time. The physical and mental health conditions associated with the ageing process means that family and unpaid Carers will need a range of support to enable them to feel valued and manage their caring responsibilities alongside enjoying their own lives.

It is estimated that there are over 40,000 hidden carers residing in Cheshire East (this number is approximate for the size of Cheshire East's population. The statistics are difficult to estimate, as we know, but this is ranged between 1 in 8 adults and 1 in 6 adults.

Cheshire East Council recognise the diversity of the caring role and aim to offer the right support at the right time through a whole system approach through all its policies and strategies.

The All Age Carers Strategy has been co-produced by carers, statutory partners and voluntary and community sector partners who provide services or have an interest in carers.

It demonstrates our commitment to carers and seeks to respond to local issues, outlining how everyone across the system is working together to improve the lives of our carers and those that they care for.

This Strategy gives the context and background of national and local policy, using these to inform and shape Cheshire East priorities. We want to demonstrate how our priorities in Cheshire East have been created through the review of the data produced from the Carers Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the review of our current provision which will be produced and aligned with this strategy. We also aim to draw on and reflect the lived experiences of Carers across Cheshire East and use these to help shape our priorities.

This strategy covers the general principles that apply to all adult carers. We want carers supported across the whole system, and for carers to be seen as everybody's business. In order to achieve this, the Carers Strategy seeks to take account of and link to other strategies. Equally, the expectation is that carers are reflected in all other system strategies, for example the Cheshire Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy; Dementia Strategy; Live Well for Longer Strategy; Learning Disabilities Strategy; and Physical Disabilities Strategy.

There is a significant number of young carers in Cheshire East—children and young people who provide support and/or care. We are committed to providing them with the support they need and to protect them from caring responsibilities that are inappropriate.

A recent consultation and engagement event, concluding with a report with our young carers and professionals considers the specific experience of young carers and the needs they present. We will commit to ensuring the support available to them is appropriate, tailored and readily accessible. With this document we want to create a truly all age approach.

National Legislation



The Care Act 2014

The Care Act replaces previous legislation regarding Carers and people being cared for and has the following provisions:

- All Carers have the right to an assessment when they appear to have needs
- All Carers have the right to support if they meet the eligibility criteria
- Local authorities have a duty to provide information to Carers
- Local authorities may arrange for other organisations such as charities or private companies to carry out assessments of need
- Local authorities have a duty to promote an 'individual's wellbeing' which includes protection from abuse and neglect.
- Local authorities must support carers to achieve the outcomes they want in day-to-day life
- Local authorities must have regard to whether the carer works or wishes to do so
- Local authorities must have regard to Carer participation in education, training, and recreation

The Care Act ensures that Carers have as many rights for support as those they care for. Duty for advocacy starts from initial contact and carers have advocacy e.g. during carers assessments, if they have substantial difficulty and no appropriate support.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

The Children and Families Act 2014

The Care Act replaces previous legislation regarding Carers and people being cared for and has the following provisions:

The Children and Families Act 2014 gives young carers the entitlement to the same help and support as adult carers. The legislation means that all young carers under the age of 18 are entitled to an assessment of their support needs. The Local Authority has to consider what services it can provide to meet these needs. Specific duties for Local Authorities under this legislation are:

- Taking reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are young carers in their area with needs for support and, if so, what those support needs are
- Carry out an assessment for young carers upon request

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

The Children Act 1989

A Local authority in England must assess whether a parent carer within their area has needs for support and, if so, what those needs are. A local authority in England must take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are parent carers within their area who have needs for support.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

National Legislation

Young Carers

The Care Act 2014, and Children's and Families Act 2014, make specific provision for Young Carers in the transition from children to adult's services. A young carer is someone aged under 18 who helps look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem. Young Adult Carers are young people aged between 16 and 25 who are caring for another child or young person, or an adult.

In relation to Young Carers, the Care Act requires that:

- Where it appears to a local authority that a Young Carer is likely to have needs for support after becoming 18, the authority must assess:
 - Whether the Young Carer has needs for support and if so, what those needs are
 - Whether the Young Carer has needs for support after becoming 18, and if so, what those needs are likely to be

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>



Assessments for Young Carers

The Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to consider the needs of Young Carers if, during the assessment of an adult with care needs, or of an adult carer, it appears that a child is providing, or intends to provide care. In these circumstances the local authority must consider whether the care being provided by the child is excessive or inappropriate; and how the child's caring responsibilities affects their wellbeing, education, and development.

Local authorities should ensure that adults' and children's services work together to offer Young Carers and their families an effective service, are able to respond to the needs of a young carer, the person cared for, and others in the family. This avoids the need for multiple assessments where children and adults find they are expected to give the same answers to professionals from different services, coming into their home at different times.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

National Policy

The Government's Carers Action Plan 2018 – 2020 'Supporting Carers Today'

This remains the current national policy for supporting Carers. The plan sets out the cross-government programme of work to support Carers until 2020. It is structured around the following themes:

- Services and systems that work for Carers
- Employment and financial wellbeing
- Supporting Young Carers
- Recognising and supporting Carers in the wider community and society
- Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/carers-action-plan-2018-to-2020>

National Legislation

The Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia 2020

The Prime Minister's challenge on dementia 2020 sets out a vision to create a society where those with dementia, their Carers and families, receive high quality compassionate care from diagnosis to end of life across all settings: at home, hospital or care home. Carers of people with dementia provide a vital role and we know that the availability of appropriate care and support and the quality of services has a significant bearing on whether Carers feel able to take a break from their caring responsibilities. Providing Carers with better information, training and coping strategies, including emotional and psychological support, improves their quality of life.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prime-ministers-challenge-on-dementia-2020>



NHS England's Commitment to Carers 2014

This identifies eight priority areas for the development of increased support to Carers in Primary Care. These are:

1. Raising the profile of Carers
2. Education, training, and information
3. Service development
4. Person-centred, well-coordinated care
5. Primary care
6. Commissioning support
7. Partnership links
8. NHS England as an employer

NHS Strategic Aims for Carers

- To secure better outcomes of care for patients, and for the millions of people who care, unpaid.
- To build a carer-friendly NHS to a greater extent than ever before.
- To start to build an NHS where no carer feels left alone, and that the NHS is there to support them in their caring journey
- To change things so that carers are better able to look after their own health and wellbeing, manage the care of the person being cared for and are less likely to go into crisis.
- To increase recognition of carers as a vulnerable community and caring as a social determinant of health

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/commitment-to-carers-may14.pdf>

NHS Long Term Plan Commitment to Carers – Deliverables 2020-2024

- Identifying and supporting carers, particularly those from vulnerable communities
- Introducing best practice quality markers for primary care
- Adoption of best practice carer passport schemes and development/ introduction of quality markers in hospital settings
- Ability to share caring status with healthcare professionals wherever they present via electronic health record
- Carers understand the out-of-hours options that are available to them and have appropriate back-up support in place for when they need it
- Young Carer “top tips” for general practice to include preventative health approaches, social prescribing, and timely referral to local support service.

This plan outlines a revised health model in which patients get more options, better support, and properly joined-up care at the right time in the optimal care setting. Supporting Carers is recognised as an important strand to this model, and in particular the following priorities are identified:

- Greater recognition and support for Carers in both primary and secondary care (including the implementation of Quality Markers for GP practices developed by CQC)
- Focus on supporting Carers in vulnerable communities
- A more proactive approach to identifying and supporting Young Carers
- Develop digitally enabled support
- Include Carers themselves in the development of Carer services

<https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/>



NHS Long Term Plan Commitment to Carers – Deliverables 2020-2024

NHS Care Quality Markers 2019

The NHS has introduced Care Quality markers that have been created through working in partnership with Carers Trust, Carers UK, and The Children's Society, and have been endorsed by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The markers consist of six questions that can be used by care services to demonstrate how effective they are in recognising and supporting Carers.

The questions have been based on what Carers, and their representatives, have told us matter most to them, and require the care service to show how they go about supporting Carers for each of the six themes identified. Each question is supported by a number of practical ideas that care services can put into place to help them develop the support they give to Carers. The care service completes an annual declaration as evidence of how it is supporting Carers and this evidence can be used for CQC inspections.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/supporting-carers-in-general-practice-a-framework-of-quality-markers/>

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and Carers UK

Guidance was issued in June 2019 on providing and commissioning Carers' breaks, plus advice and information for Carers on how to get a break. Research by Carers UK shows 46 per cent of unpaid Carers were unable to get a break in the last five years, even though they wanted one. Evidence indicates that there needs to be a wider choice of breaks available, and to ensure they are accessible, personalised, and enjoyable for both the carer – and the person they care for.

<https://www.scie.org.uk/carers/breaks/adults/commissioning>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/news/mediareleases/carers-respite-press-release>

Integration of Health and Social Care

There is a drive throughout England for healthcare, social care, district and borough councils and the voluntary, community and faith sectors to develop integrated approaches to designing and delivering services. Cheshire East is driving hard on this agenda along with other partners to have an Integrated Care System (ICS). This will focus on the delivery of services in a local footprint. Promoting closer partnership working, these arrangements harness the potential of organisations that can link together to support carers and undertake their own action plans to align with the priorities in the strategy. There is a robust track record of health and social care working in partnership to envelop the support available to carers. However, we recognise that there is more to do, particularly to strengthen the governance that supports partnership work

Local Context & Demographics

From the 2011 Census, we know that 12,453 people in Cheshire East identified themselves as caring for 20 hours per week or more, with a further 27,481 caring between 1 and 19 hours per week. Altogether that is almost 11% of the population of Cheshire East. Caring for 50 hours or over has increased by nearly a third since 2001 to 8,014, with over 42% of them aged 65 or over Carers caring for 50 hours or more per week.

The 2021 Census is currently being evaluated.



All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

1 The Purpose of the Strategy

The All Age Carers Strategy for 2021-25 will support the shift in social care and health transformation, providing key messages for specific markets and carers. It will start with asking the following questions:

- Who are our carers – demographics
- What support and services are in place at the moment, and what is not available and should be?
- What carers tell us, including the accessibility and quality of services for carers and what they tell us is needed?
- What support and services the council think people will need in the future?

2 Our Vision

Health and social care work effectively in partnership with other providers of services to support carers of all ages in Cheshire East ensuring that their voice is centre stage and that their wellbeing and identified priorities

are at the heart of all decisions. To make this real for carers, all the partners work as a team to support them and their families, involving them in service and product design, delivery and evaluation.

3 Our Mission

We will ensure that carers within our community are recognised, valued and provided with timely and

appropriate support. We will listen, understand, and engage with carers and together design robust support for all.

4 Our Priorities

Carers have told us about the values they believe should underpin all action and we have put them at the heart of the strategy. They have also been shaped by contributions from our partnership of NHS and social care, children's services, and our education, voluntary, and community and faith sector, comprising many local charities and groups.

These values are important to enable carers to continue caring. They help carers to achieve a balance between caring and a life outside of their caring role, to maintain their wellbeing and determine how they manage their caring role. The values will protect young carers from undertaking inappropriate levels of care.

Cheshire East Carers Forum will continue to work together to support carers to achieve the outcomes that make a difference to them. Carers will be involved in all aspects of designing services and measuring how these services perform, and deliver.



All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

Carers have told us that our priorities should be



Health & Wellbeing

- We will work across the place to ensure a diverse offer is available for our carers of all ages to stay healthy, well, active and to have fun
- We will ensure carers are supported to have a life outside the caring role, including employment, training, volunteering, keeping in touch with family and friends, relaxation and leisure activities.



Early Support for Carers

- We will work together to ensure access to co-ordinated services that provide the right support at the right time, across all sectors social care, health and communities



Prevention – Carer breaks/Respite

- We will work with our providers and carers to look at how we can offer regular respite in different environments that are suitable to the carer and the cared for
- We will explore the range of community breaks available and offer emergency respite when required either in the carers own home or a place of their choice.



Information/Access/Processes

- We will ensure that carers have access to good quality advice and support when they need it: a range of options are available to access information and advice to help build connections.



Employment, Education and Training

- We will offer support for working carers through carer friendly employment, promoted in collaboration with the national Employers for Carers Network
- We will ensure that the right specialist resource is available to support social care staff to identify carers and to undertake carer's assessments as per their statutory duty
- We will ensure that staff who carry out assessments for an individual with care and support needs are fully supported and trained to recognise the needs and aspirations of the carer
- We will ensure that practitioners who carry out or contribute to carers' assessments have training and skills in that role and access to specialist advice
- We will ensure all staff are aware of the benefits of a carer receiving a statutory carer's assessment.



Young Carers

- We will ensure that young carers are identified at the earliest possible opportunity, so they are able to learn, develop and thrive and to experience a positive childhood
- We will offer a life course approach for those who go on to become Adult carers.



The **Carers Voice** is the golden thread in all that we do

All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

5 Our Aims

Will be to ensure that all carers:

- Are valued and respected by relevant stakeholders.
- Are feeling safe for the carer and cared for.
- Are identified and recognised by health, social care, employers, education settings and wider partners.
- Are supported to have a life outside the caring role, including employment, training, volunteering, keeping in touch with family and friends, relaxation and leisure activities.
- Have access to good quality commissioned services.
- Are confident that they know who they can contact when they need information and advice.
- Have the time to take care of their own health and wellbeing needs
- Have a voice and are listened to.
- Have the right to be supported if they decide to stop caring or the caring role ends



All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

6 How the Strategy was developed

The co-production and consultation followed the principles of the council's **Together** guidance.

We consulted with carers, organisations, and stakeholders on the development of this strategy. We first engaged with carers to develop a draft strategy, and then consulted with carers on the draft strategy.

The consultation and engagement events revealed the positives learnt from the pandemic, and explored how we can build on these.

We consulted with carers, providers (including staff) and customers around what support can be offered to carers and how can they be identified and supported to relevant services to continue their caring responsibilities in a positive way.

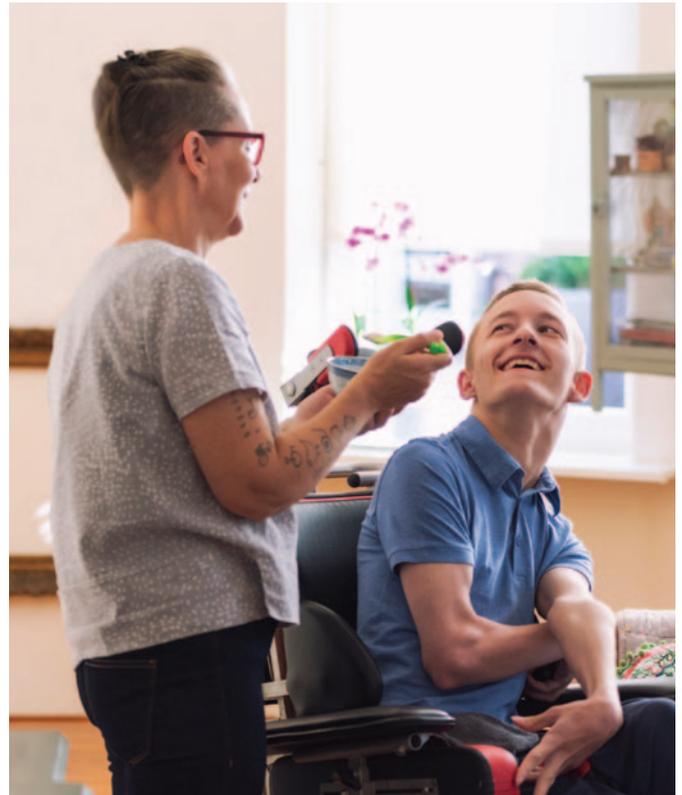
A consultation document was shared with our providers onto the CHEST (this is an electronic portal that offers opportunities for partners and customers to seek further information and ideas around what is the local offer to support our carers and what ways can they as a provider support this).

A key part of consultation around the all age carers strategy was operational staff undertaking reviews and reassessment of individual needs, aspirations and outcomes, at the request of other strategies taking place including Cheshire East Connected Communities Strategy (what will be the offer for our carers from the VCFS).

We have consulted with the above stakeholders to develop and review services that support our carers.

To avoid engagement overload, we 'piggy backed' on the engagement activities of other services so we could ensure that carers are at the forefront of everything we do. We need to ensure that carers were fully engaged and assist in the co-production of services that support the carer and the cared for.

We also consulted with our colleagues and other stakeholders in other areas of the council to ensure that the All Age Carers Strategy works in conjunction and aligns with other strategies and ensures carers play an active role in the development of those services which in turn aligns to the All Age Carers service.



Work is progressing regionally and nationally, CEC commissioners are engaged in all national and regional developments some of which will inform the All Age Strategy for example:

- Carers Passport
- G.P. registration for carers
- Employment for carers
- Care Ambassadors in our schools
- NICE Guidelines.

All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

7 Our Journey So Far - 2014 to 2021

In 2014, Cheshire East health and social care came together as partners through the local Health and Wellbeing Board. One of the roles of the board is to look at our population and agree strategic plans that would support our citizens not just for carers but also the wider issues around social care and health.

Two transformation programmes were set up within Cheshire:

- South Cheshire 'Connecting Care'
- East Cheshire 'Caring Together'

Both programmes had a priority to identify carers and provide support.

This was the start of the consultation and engagement with carers, partners, and professionals in Cheshire East. During these consultation and engagement events carers told the council that they needed a single point of access, 24/7 helpline and help much earlier to prevent carers breakdown. The Children and Families Department identified the need to provide an individual young carers assessment. These comments and concerns were fed into the Cheshire East Carers Strategy 2016/18. Subsequently, the council in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Groups tendered for an organisation that would provide the Cheshire East Integrated All Age Carers Hub.

The All Age Carers Hub Model

The integration of carers service through an 'Hub and Spoke' model refers to a distribution method in which everything is centralised, it will either originate in the hub or the hub will distribute to our customers. The Hub would coordinate early help and support for adult, parent, and young carers, and has provided a single point of access at any stage of a carers journey. **It also provided other many benefits, below is a snapshot of some of the All Age Carers Hub key activities:**

- Single point of access
- 24/7 Carers Helpline
- Peer Support, networking
- Access to early help services e.g. Living Well Fund and Take a Break, crisis support

- Community based support
- Online assessments via Live Well
- Reduce hospital admissions

The Integrated All Age Carers Hub to date (June 2021) has 5061 carers registered with the service and has been key in developing a single point of access and assessment for carers.

Re-design of Carers Respite services

Bed based Carer Respite and Community Respite

Carer Respite support was recommissioned in December 2018. At the time, it was recognised that despite people being allocated a number of "nights" in a residential care home environment in order to provide a much needed break for carers, some customers and their carers were not making use of the support they were allocated. Consultation with them resulted in the service being re-designed. Market engagement with service providers took place and in response to feedback from customers, carers and key stakeholders, the model of support was extended to include community respite support.

It was apparent that the bed based support offered a lifeline for many, however, some customers and carers were telling us that they didn't want to go into a residential care home, even if only for a few days. However, carers still needed a break. Community respite was designed to enable the cared for person to access support in their own home and to look at other options.



All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

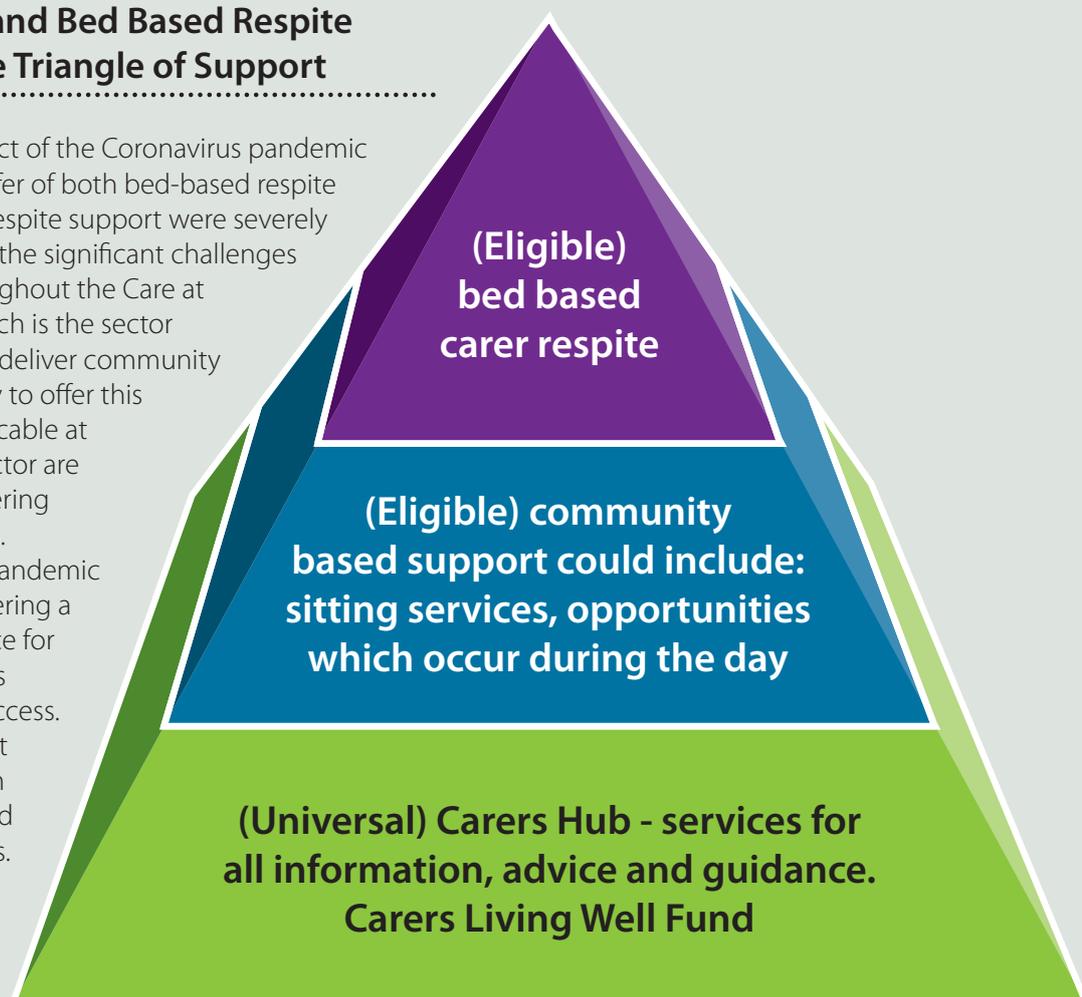
Carer Respite Scenario - Mrs Jones (the carer), has become socially isolated as she is the sole carer for her husband Mr Jones (the cared for person). Mrs Jones' emotional and physical wellbeing is deteriorating, Mr Jones is aware of this and it is exacerbating his condition as a result of the stress he is feeling. Both Mr and Mrs Jones are adamant that Mr Jones will not access bed-based respite support in a care home.

The community respite service could provide 6 hours of support every 4 weeks, to enable Mrs Jones to take a break and see her friends who she used to go walking with (improving both her emotional and physical wellbeing). Mrs Jones knows that Mr Jones is cared for in his own home and Mr Jones can receive the support he needs in an environment where he is comfortable.

The new model of carer respite support, incorporating both a community and bed-based offer of support was implemented between December 2018 and April 2019. The community respite provision is a less intrusive model of support, however, the take up of the Community Respite offer was fairly limited, possibly because it was a new way of facilitating support for carers. **The diagram below illustrates the model of support:**

Community and Bed Based Respite Support - The Triangle of Support

By 2020, the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic meant that the offer of both bed-based respite and community respite support were severely impacted. Due to the significant challenges being faced throughout the Care at Home sector (which is the sector commissioned to deliver community respite), the ability to offer this service isn't practicable at present, as the sector are focusing on delivering essential care calls. Throughout the pandemic we have been offering a take a break service for our carers. This has proved a huge success. We want to look at this in more depth with our carers and other stakeholders.



All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

Development of the Carers Forum 2021

The Cheshire East Carers Forum will facilitate two-way communication between carers and services used by all carers and their families in Cheshire East. The forum will work to provide feedback on services, offer constructive challenge to current services and input into decision making and planning for future service provision.

By working co-operatively and collaboratively with local service providers carers can contribute to improvements in the services delivered for carers:

- The carers forum will be a key group in terms of co-production and implementation of the delivery plan for the strategy in terms of holding us to account.
- Ensuring a diverse forum membership and representation of diverse views from carers from all backgrounds and sectors of the community.
- Promoting a reputation and image of the Cheshire East Carers Forum which reflects its aims and values.
- By establishing the Cheshire East Carers Forum, it will help facilitate health and social care commissioners to work in partnership with Carers to develop and evaluate innovative new ways in supporting Carers and their cared for.
- Coproduction is key, the carers forum will work together as equal partners to improve, develop, and deliver services towards a common goal for all our children, young people, families, and adults.
- Using the Together guide that has been coproduced together with children, young people, families and adults living in Cheshire East.



Engagement and Co-production

Commissioners continually engage and consult residents on our services and strategies. Some recent consultation and engagement activities include:

- Carers and their response to Day Opportunities Strategy
- Carers and their response to Assistive Technology charging policy
- Carers and their response to Dementia strategy
- Making Carers Visible CEC, NHS CCG and My CWA webinar – Carers supporting people living with dementia and Domestic Abuse
- Carers response to the autism strategy
- Transition Strategy
- Mental Health Strategy
- The End-of-Life Strategy
- Young Carers and professional engagement
- Engagement with a cohort of all age carers to review the digital offer for carers that will sit on all social platforms including GP practices, health, and social care. Including shared experiences of the pandemic and how they can share their message around protection of their cared for
- We are working with our Procurement and Consultation teams to share all relevant consultation and engagement materials related to carers to ensure we reach out to our providers that offer support to carers and the cared for.

Carers are the continuous link in all that we do - they are part of all the delivery plans with the above strategies and will continue to co-produce and consult with carers of all ages.

For everything we commission, recommission or decommission for the future there is a section within all our service specifications requesting information on 'what is their offer for carers, how do you identify a carer'?

All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

8 Where are we now?

Cheshire East are in a position where services need to continue to be aligned, not only to address the current financial climate and population growth, but also to ensure that services are streamlined to work closely together to provide the most effective service in a timely manner. This will benefit the carer and their families as the most appropriate service(s) will be offered.

The strategy will address the following elements, and these will be incorporated into the strategic intentions:

- Health and social care needs
- Value of carers
- Population growth
- Financial challenges
- Whole system approach (including recent strategies).
- Employment and carers
- Young Carers within schools / education

The carer remains at the focal point of this strategy and future commissioned services that will support this.

Figure 1: Elements of caring that need to be addressed



All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025



Carers play such an important role in all that we do. The diagram above (Figure 1) shows that with every health and social intervention there is a carer involved. If we ensure that there are clear pathways for carers in all of the highlighted circles it will allow us to deliver the right support at the right time. For example, Young carers need to be identified as early as possible, so they receive the right support; e.g. a carer identified within their GP practice to ensure they receive the right support at the right time.

Carers are not a homogenous group; their circumstances are wide ranging in terms of the type of care they provide and the amount of their time they spend caring. Some may care for a few hours a week, yet others may care for over fifty hours per week.

Covid-19 has impacted on carers dramatically and we can see this by the high increase on carer referrals to the Cheshire East Carers Hub (over 500 new referrals in the last 9 months).

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a monumental impact on unpaid carers' lives – not only because of the increased amount of care that many are having to provide, but because of the far-reaching effect that providing this care is having on many aspects of life:

- Relationships
- Mental and physical health
- Work
- Emotional wellbeing
- Finances
- Education
- Loneliness and isolation
- Work life balance

There have been positive innovations in technology-based support for carers; though a vast majority of carers have found life significantly more difficult. A decrease in support and sometimes complete closure of local services alongside the increase in needs of individuals being cared for has led to most carers having to provide much more care.

<https://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/caring-behind-closed-doors-six-months-on>

National Context & Demographics

- **1 in 8 adults** (around 6.5 million people) are carers
- Every day another **6,000 people** take on a caring responsibility – that equals over 2 million people each year.
- **58%** of carers are women and **42%** are men.
- **1.3 million people** provide over **50 hours** of care per week.
- **Over 1 million people** care for more than one person
- As of 2020, Carers UK estimates there are around **13.6 million people** caring through the pandemic.
- Carers save the economy **£132 billion** per year, an average of £19,336 per carer.
- **5 million people** in the UK are juggling caring responsibilities with work – that's 1 in 7 of the workforce.
- However, the significant demands of caring mean that **600 people** give up work every day to care for an older or disabled relative.
- Carer's Allowance is the main carer's benefit and is **£67.25** for a minimum of 35 hours, the lowest benefit of its kind.
- People providing high levels of care are **twice as likely** to be permanently sick or disabled.
- **72% of carers** responding to Carers UK's State of Caring 2018 Survey said they had suffered mental ill health as a result of caring.
- **61%** said they had suffered physical ill health as a result of caring.
- **8 in 10** people caring for loved ones say they have felt lonely or socially isolated.

Key statistics

- 4 in 5 unpaid carers (81%) are currently providing **more** care than before lockdown.
- More than three quarters (78%) of carers reported that the needs of the person they care for have **increased** recently.
- There were up to **9.1 million** unpaid carers across the UK before the COVID-19 pandemic, providing everything from a few hours of support a week to intensive and complex round the clock care.
- The pandemic has resulted in millions of new carers - **4.5 million** new to caring since the start of the pandemic, 2.8 million of whom are juggling work and care.
- Most carers (64%) have **not been able to take any breaks at all** in the last six months.
- **More than half** (58%) of carers have seen their physical health impacted by caring through the pandemic, while 64% said their mental health has worsened.
- **11%** of carers reported that they had reduced their hours to manage their caring responsibilities, and 9% had given up work because of caring.



National Context & Demographics

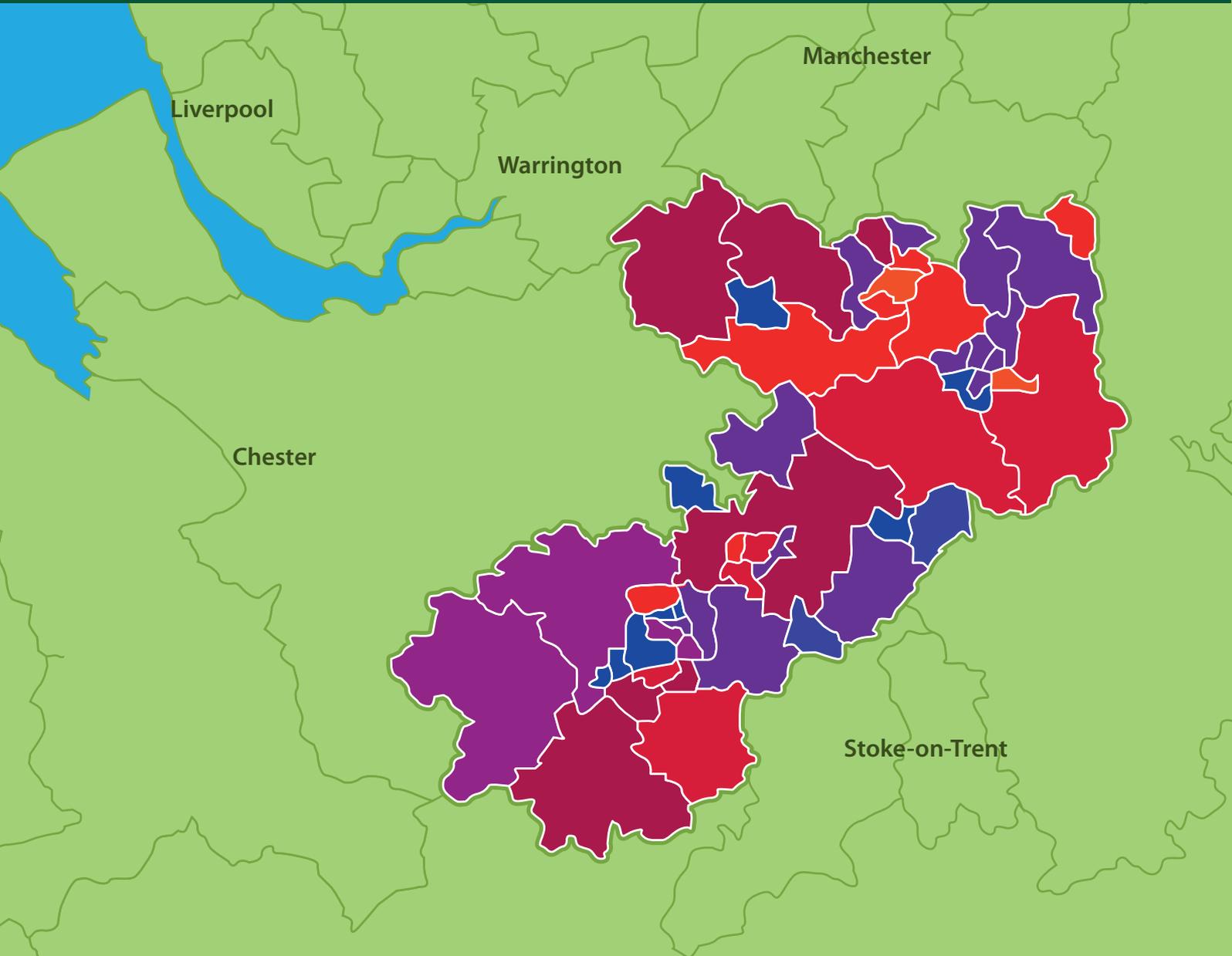
Young Carers

- Young Carers **aged 5-17 years** care for an adult or family member in the UK
- The 2011 Census indicated that almost **178,000 under 18s** nationally have caring responsibilities
- The majority provide under **20 hours** of care a week, however thousands provide even higher levels of care
- This is a wide spectrum which means caring will affect these young people in different ways
- Broader definitions put the figure of young carers higher, as close to **three million** children live in households with a disabled family member but not all of these will have caring responsibilities
- Their caring responsibilities are likely to impact on their education and they are more likely to be not in education, employment or training
- A **third of Young Carers** reported having a mental health problem
- To meet the needs of young carers in school, it is vital that all school staff understand why young carers need support to enjoy and achieve at school, and the simple things they can do to raise the attendance, attainment and wellbeing of these pupils as part of their wider roles within the school.
- Building staff understanding about young carer issues does not mean creating additional functionality within staff's existing roles. Rather, by being aware of how to identify and support young carers, staff will be better equipped to fulfil their existing roles within the school, and schools will identify and support young carers more effectively.

Through the recent engagement events with our Young Carers and professionals we can see there has been a massive impact on them due to the pandemic. Their caring duties have increased and their schooling / education has been affected. As a priority we will be working with our stakeholders and education to review the current offer for young carers. Below is the illustration developed by our young carers of how they wish to be supported to enable them to flourish.



Carers caring for 50 hours or more per week by Cheshire East Ward



Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week (2011)



Health and Wellbeing

In Cheshire East there is a single point of access for carers to receive information, advice, and support through the Cheshire East Carers Hub. This is an all age service and supports young, adult and parent carers. At the end of March 2021 there were 5,061 carers registered with the Hub. 1,160 new adult carers and 124 new young carers accessed the service in 2020/21.

The Cheshire East Carers Hub also carries out statutory carers assessments on behalf of the council. Between April 2020 and March 2021, the Hub completed 589 adult carers assessments and 99 young carers assessments.

Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership Plan

The Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership Plan has committed to actions that need to be taken across Health and Social Care and considers a more joined up approach to supporting all age Carers.

Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group Commissioning and Contracting Intentions 2020/21

The Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group recognises the importance of Carers within their Cheshire Commissioning & Contracting Intentions 2020/21. Priority one is the development of a new service model to deliver person centred care for individuals and their Carer's.

The CCG wants to see:

- Increased number of people accessing support via social prescribers
- Increased focus on personalised care and people feeling empowered to self-care using digital options to make informed choices
- Reduced demand for appointments – GP, Hospital and Community Services
- Improved staff awareness of personal health budgets (PHB)
- Support Carers to maintain their caring role
- More people to access support to maintain their caring role
- Increased support to Young Carers
- Consistent offer for Carers across Cheshire



Health and Wellbeing

They plan to implement this by:

- Supporting the implementation of social prescribing link workers
- Continuing to expand on the personal health budgets offer and expanding this to children and young people and section 117 aftercare
- Community contracts to support staff development and training around person and patient centred care.
- Continue to build on programmes such as One You, Healthy You, and the NHS Long-term Plan
- To develop digital options for people to manage their own wellbeing
- Further developing an all age model to support Carers across Cheshire

<https://www.cheshireccg.nhs.uk/media/1782/cheshire-commissioning-and-contracting-intentions-2020-21.pdf>

This strategy aligns with these priorities.





Key Delivery Actions

To enable us to successfully deliver the All Age Carers Strategy for Cheshire East, several key delivery actions have been identified.

We will develop an outcomes-based approach to carers and their cared for. Where services are provided for a carer they will also achieve a set of results for the cared for.

We will deliver outcomes through working with the joint commission of the Carers Hub Service and by the development and co-production of the All Age carers Strategy:

- Identifying the outcomes that are expected to be achieved prior to making any referrals to services
- Contracting for services based on outcomes and then monitoring based on those outcomes e.g. joint commissioned carers service
- Work collaboratively with our health partners to ensure seamless pathways to support our carers

Delivery of the strategy will be overseen by the Cheshire East Carers Forum. The group is an effective mechanism to ensure that the support available to carers in Cheshire East is shaped by all partners – statutory agencies, voluntary and community sector organisations.

Useful Information



Local Need and Strengths (Assets)

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/jsna/carers-jsna-june-2018-final-v2.pdf>

Healthwatch data

<https://healthwatchcheshireeast.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Experiences-of-Unpaid-Carers-Registering-with-their-GP-Practice-in-Cheshire-Report-1.pdf>

Co-production together guide

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/livewell/together/together-our-coproduction-guide-and-definition.pdf>

Corporate Plan

https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/consultations/corporate-plan-consultation.aspx

Social Value

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/business/procurement/cheshire-east-social-value-policy-nov-20.pdf>

Shorter version of The All Age Carers Strategy

<https://livewellservices.cheshireeast.gov.uk/Documents/Download/770/Carers-Strategy-Sh>

Cheshire Young Carers Co-production and Engagement Recommendation Report

[CEC Young Carers Findings_Recommendations Report](#)

All Age Carers Survey 2021

<https://livewellservices.cheshireeast.gov.uk/Documents/Download/769/All-Age-Carers-Survey>

Insights Report Exploring Young Carers Experience throughout the Coronavirus Pandemic

<https://livewellservices.cheshireeast.gov.uk/Documents/Download/774/Young-Carers-and-COV>

Story of the challenges carers face and their covid-safe message

<https://youtu.be/8SrKTmCenJs>

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