

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD AND ICB SUB-COMMITTEE

12 September 2023

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| Title: | Carers Charter and Action Plan Update 2022/23 | | |
| Report of the Strategic Director, Children and Adults | | | |
| Open Report | For Decision | | |
| Wards Affected: All | Key Decision: No | | |
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| Summary: Carers provide valuable care and support to vulnerable residents in the borough with health and care needs. Carers are increasingly supporting individuals with greater and more complex needs alongside fulfilling other daily responsibilities. By delivering on the Carers Charter the Council and its Partners better support carers in their caring role. This provides a focus on prevention and early intervention as well as specialist support facilitating longer-term cost avoidance within health and social care through prevention, resilience, financial independence and reducing health inequalities. This report presents the first annual update on the delivery and ongoing development of the Action Plan linked to the Carers Charter 2022-2025. The Carers Charter (Appendix 1) is delivered through objectives detailed in the Action Plan (Appendix 2). The Action Plan acts as a framework for the delivery and development of services, working practices, identification and support of unpaid or informal carers in the borough, through a partnership approach. The key deliverables outlined in the Action Plan will be refreshed annually. | | | |
| Recommendation(s) The Health and Wellbeing Board and ICS Sub-Committee are recommended to: (i) Note the update of the delivery of the Carers Charter Action Plan, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report; and (ii) Endorse the sharing of relevant data by partners to support the delivery of the Action Plan. | | | |
| Reason(s) The delivery of the Carers Charter supports the Council in meeting the priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan, by ensuring that residents are safe, protected, and supported at their most vulnerable and enabling residents to live healthier, happier, independent lives for longer. The Carers Charter facilitates the empowerment of carers through partnership | | | |

working to take care of themselves and their loved ones and become more resilient. Through accessing timely support and developing a carer friendly community, carers can be identified early and provided with the support they need to thrive alongside their caring role.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Carers also known as informal or unpaid carers provide a valuable support in maintaining the health and independence of vulnerable residents in the Borough, alongside providing a valuable contribution to health and social care. The Care Act 2014 brought carers to the forefront of service delivery in health and social care, by putting them on an equal footing to the cared for. The Health and Care Act 2022 introduced Integrated Care Systems aimed at integrating care across different organisations and settings, to improve population health and health inequalities focusing on places and the local population to deliver positive outcomes.
- 1.2 The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy aims are aligned with the Carers Charter and Action Plan. Through early diagnosis and intervention both the cared for and the carer can be supported through timely diagnosis and intervention. Carers and the cared for can both have health and wellbeing support needs, which when addressed early on can decrease or slow down the need for further support from health and social care.
- 1.3 The NHS Long Term Plan launched in January 2019 echoes the commitment to carers including better recognition and support of carers, especially from vulnerable communities, and improve outcomes. Carers need to be supported through emergencies and should not have to manage on their own. They should have access to out of hours options, contingency planning and specific support for young carers. In the Long-Term Plan there is also an increased focus on social prescribing in primary care and a co-ordinated, proactive approach to the delivery of the service to enable a more differentiated support offer, as such carers should benefit from this offer.
- 1.4 Becoming a carer can often happen overnight and have far reaching multifaceted impacts on the lives of the carer, especially when a person does not identify themselves as a carer or equally are not given the information to come to that conclusion, thereby, they are unable to access the right support. Building resilience and improving health and wellbeing outcomes using trauma-informed intervention models will enable carers to practice self-care as well as enable carers of all ages to participate in opportunities such as employment, education, and training.

Carers Charter

- 1.5 The Carers Charter was endorsed at the Health and Wellbeing Board (12/01/22) Minute 40 and covers four key areas:
- Working together for Carers
 - Carers wellbeing and employment
 - Supporting young carers
 - Carers in the wider community

- 1.6 Alongside the Carers Charter an Action Plan was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board outlining the delivery of the Carers Charter and the key partners involved. This report provides an update to the Board and the Integrated Care System Sub-Committee on the work done in the first year of the delivery of the Carers Charter Action Plan. Progress on this work has been supported by the valuable partnership working of the Carers Strategy Group and wider partners to deliver positive outcomes for carers and support carers in their caring role.
- 1.7 The delivery of the action plan is staggered and as this report discusses progress in the first year, the data will reflect the progress made on individual work streams. There is still some work that is at the development stage or has recently been initiated. These areas will be reported in next year's update report.
- 1.8 The Survey for Adult Carers in England (SACE) is a biennial survey run by Councils with Adult Social Services Responsibilities and is sent to carers that have had support from social care within the last 12 months. The last SACE was carried out in 2021-22 and along with detailing information of the carers that responded such as median age of carers, it showed that 52% have a long term health condition. 87% of respondents further reported that their health has been affected by their caring role.
- 1.9 Since the pandemic, residents are presenting with increasingly greater and complex needs which is naturally increasing the ask of carers locally to support their cared for. Taking account of the increase needs of the cared for the partnership through the delivery of the Carers Charter Action Plan are working towards supporting carers in their caring role, increasing resilience through information and advice, thereby empowering carers to advocate for themselves and the cared for. The partnership is also working collaboratively to support carers become financially more stable through the cost-of-living crisis, reduce opportunity losses for carers through education and employment and support working towards increasing positive outcomes including in health for carers and the cared for.

Census data

- 1.10 On 19 January 2023 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) released data on unpaid care from the 2021 Census. Key highlights for Barking and Dagenham include:
- Approximately 1 in 14 (7%) of people over the age of 5 provide unpaid care.
 - Lower proportion of residents provided unpaid care compared to the previous census (2011) – this is mirrored in London and on a national level.
 - Eastbrook and Rush Green (8%) had the highest proportion of residents providing unpaid care with Abbey (4%) with the lowest proportion of residents providing unpaid care.
 - Residents providing 50 or more hours of unpaid care a week had the lowest employment rates and the highest rates of economic inactivity.
 - The highest proportion of residents who considered themselves to be in bad or very bad health, were those providing 50 hours or more unpaid care a week.

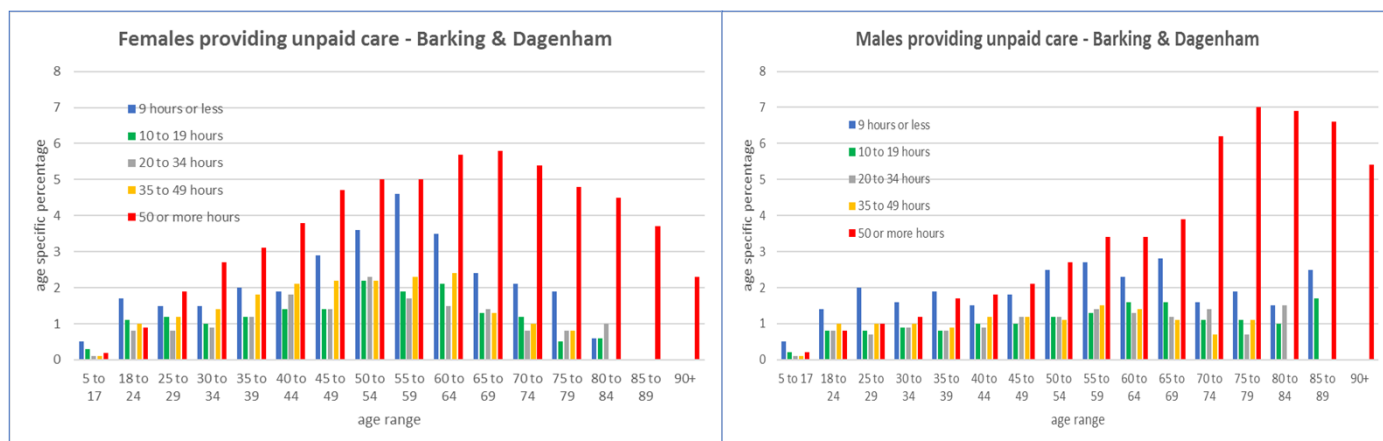
Table1: Number of people and hours of care provided in Barking and Dagenham

| Unpaid care (5 categories) | Percentage of population | Number |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|
| Provides 9 hours or less unpaid care a week | 1.8 | 3533 |
| Provides 10 to 19 hours unpaid care a week | 1.0 | 1983 |
| Provides 20 to 34 hours unpaid care a week | 0.9 | 1827 |
| Provides 35 to 49 hours unpaid care a week | 1.1 | 2162 |
| Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week | 2.3 | 4719 |
| Total | | 14,224 |

Unpaid Care Provision and Age

- 1.11 Within the census from age 25 years and over, a higher proportion of Barking and Dagenham females who provided unpaid care were providing 50 or more hours of unpaid care per week, shown in Chart 1.
- 1.12 This was the same for Barking and Dagenham males from age 40 years and over.
- 1.13 From the age of 70 the data shows that males started to provide more unpaid care than females.

Chart 1: Unpaid Care Provision and Age



2. Carers Charter Delivery Update

- 2.1 Feedback and data collated through the Carers Strategy Group alongside collaborative projects with wider partners on the different objectives in the Action Plan will be discussed within the body of this report for the period of 2022-2023. There is a phased implementation as projects were developed and mobilised so some data records are not for a complete 12 month period whilst others are in the process of being implemented or developed.

'Hidden Carers' Identification and Referral Training

- 2.2 Carers often become carers overnight with little information or support for them in their new role or to help them to identify themselves as informal carers. Carers often see the role that they carry out as something that they would just do. Timely

access to information and advice as well as access to the appropriate support is important so that carers can successfully maintain their caring role and thrive.

- 2.3 A key element in supporting carers is for professionals to identify carers, enabling them to have a conversation about their caring role and the information, advice and support opportunities available to them. It is known that there are 14,224 residents in Barking and Dagenham providing unpaid care, the number of carers known to services is 4,500. From this data there are just under 10,000 carers that are 'hidden carers' or carers that are not known to services. This is a pattern that is reflected nationally where a large proportion of carers are not known to services. Hidden carers can continue their caring role with no support and often present to services much later and are frequently at, or approaching, crisis.
- 2.4 The Council in partnership with Carers of Barking and Dagenham and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) have developed a training offer to identify hidden carers and refer them to Carers of Barking and Dagenham. This is being funded by the Ageing Well programme. This training is open to frontline staff within the Council, Health and the Community and Voluntary Sector. The training will be rolled out over several months and named individuals from our partners will support the publicising of this free training offer, including the ICB, BHR CEPN, BHRUT and the Community and Voluntary sector. At the time of writing this report 12 workshops have been advertised in the first tranche from August to December 2023, with 2024 dates to follow. Following the recent launch, there are 19 people registered on the training sessions.

Carers Hospital Discharge Pathway and Access to Support

- 2.5 An objective of the action plan was to look at developing a discharge pathway so that carers can be identified at the earliest opportunity within hospitals and provided with information and advice.
- 2.6 To support this a Task and Finish Group led by LBBD Commissioning and included representatives from specialist areas within BHRUT, including Therapies, Patient Advocacy and Customer Experience, (PACE), Red2Green Team, Integrated Discharge Hub (IDH) as well as Adult's and Children's Care and Support, ICB, North East London Foundation Trust, (NELFT), Social Care, Healthwatch, Carers of Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge Carers Support Service, Havering Carers Hub as well as Carers Leads for Havering and Redbridge Councils was created to support this objective.
- 2.7 An internal audit of discharge information carried out by the Red2Green team in BHRUT found that very little information was available on carers and the support available within the discharge information.
- 2.8 Two workstreams were run by the group to help improve carer identification through discharge information.
- i. A section for carers in the upcoming BHRUT Hospital Discharge Leaflet including details of what a carer is, including Adult carers and Young Carers, outlining support available and where further information could be found. Carers Assessment are also discussed within this and where these can be accessed. To support digital inclusion, it also includes QR codes so that

individuals can access the relevant information about the local social care offer and the local carers commissioned services across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge. The timing of this work has meant that this information will be included in the BHRUT Discharge Booklet which is currently being developed and will include all relevant information for patients at discharge. This leaflet aims to streamline the process for frontline staff, by including all relevant carer information through a standardised process across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.

- ii. A short co-produced questionnaire was developed to understand the carers experience at hospital discharge and what can be done to support them when returning home. The responses will also inform potential future improvements for others, for example being included in the discharge process, having the medications explained to them, having an explanation of adaptations and all that this entails.

2.9 This piece of work was presented at the Discharge Improvement Working Group (DWIG) on the 9 August 2023 and was positively received. At the time of writing this report, the questionnaire was expected to be circulated and open for six weeks between 31 July and 8 September after which the results will be collated by the PACE teams with findings and recommendations brought forward to the Task and Finish Group in late September.

2.10 During the development of this work the Carers and Hospital Discharge Toolkit (London) was launched and informed the development of our local response as part of the Hospital Discharge Leaflet.

Carers in the development of the care plan

2.11 The development of the care plans led by social work colleagues involves carers in the decisions made in the care provision for the cared for. Alongside input from the cared for and the social work practitioner, the carer as an expert by experience informs and guides the development of the care plan, ensuring needs are met whilst expectations are managed. The inclusion of the carer as a practice is seen across social care and links in with the carers charter 'I am recognised as an expert and equal partner of care with my views and opinions valued and respected'.

Targeted outreach for uptake of vaccinations for carers

2.12 Following the launch of the Carers Charter, work was done with Public Health to support uptake of the COVID booster and flu vaccinations. This built upon the relationships developed during the height of the pandemic and the initial tranches of vaccination. Through the Carers Strategy Group Carers were supported to access boosters and flu vaccinations. There were 924 carers vaccinated in the Seasonal Flu Vaccination Programme in 2022-23 which has surpassed the minimum target of 875. The data for COVID booster vaccinations does not currently capture carers.

Carers assessments

- 2.13 The number of carers assessments completed in 2022/23 was 246 which is slightly lower than the previous year 2021/22 at 312. Although there has been consistent work done by social care practitioners and partners to promote the uptake of carers assessment this hasn't been reflected in the uptake of the offer. This may be because people that are recently approaching social care have greater and more complex needs that there has been a higher need for residential care and as such carers are declining assessments. In addition to this there are also carers who decline carers assessments in general. Moving forward, a Task and Finish Group with members of the Carers Strategy Group, including social care practitioners, will be set up to monitor the number of carers assessments following the Hidden Carers training roll out, as well as quarterly reviews to look at the number of carers assessments completed.

Number of Carers Registered with GP Practices in the Borough

- 2.14 GP practice data in Barking and Dagenham shows that in 2021/22 there were 367 new carers identified and recorded at the GP practices in Barking and Dagenham. During 2022/23 following the launch of the Carers Charter, this number increased to 579 new carers identified and recorded at GP practices in Barking and Dagenham. This is a reflection of the positive work that the partnership as a whole is doing to support the identification of carers including the GP Practices, the Clinical Lead for Carers within the ICB, ICB colleagues and the satellite services delivered at GP practices by Carers of Barking and Dagenham. In total there are 4193 carers identified by GP practices in Barking and Dagenham out of a population of 247,046 people registered with a GP Practice in the Borough.

GP TV Information Advert

- 2.15 As part of the delivery of the Carers Charter through the Carers Strategy Group, an information advert was developed to be broadcast on the GP waiting room TV screens to increase awareness of carers, and signpost carers to additional help and support. This work was led by ICB colleagues with representation from Clinical Lead for Carers, Commissioning representatives for Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge, NELFT, Carers of Barking and Dagenham, Havering Carers Hub and the Redbridge Carers Centre. Following development, this piece of work was rolled out across all three Boroughs and is continuously promoted.

EHCP Project

- 2.16 In March 2023 Healthwatch began working on the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) project which asks carers of children with special needs or disability about the EHCP process, the effectiveness of the plans, what is working well and what isn't working well. The project will continue in 2023 and culminate in a report completed in Autumn 2023. Recommendations will then be taken forward following the report. During 2022-23 Healthwatch engaged with 80 self-identifying carers on general health and care issues.

Social Prescribing

- 2.17 The Social Prescribing Team in Community Solutions have been working closely with the Primary Care Networks to support the positive outcomes for local residents, including carers. The service has recently implemented a new social prescribing system - Joy. There will be a new template rolled out on both EMIS and JOY across NEL and this will enable us to identify the number of carers referred for support and the type of support offered.

Department for Work and Pensions

- 2.18 Through strengthened partnership working representatives from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) are active contributors to the Carers Strategy Group and support carers' wellbeing and employment, as part of the Carers Charter. The DWP committed to maximising carers' income and identifying hidden carers. They have put in place the mechanisms below to support the objectives of the Carers Charter:

- Work Coaches are upskilled with all new changes within the Carers agenda by communication shared with offices by a named officer who is part of the East London Partnership Team.
- Work Coaches are upskilled to make sure they ask probing questions to ensure they are able to identify hidden carers. This is so that the work coach can advise on benefits that they could be entitled to for example Carers Allowance if DLA and PIP in payment at Middle or Higher rate.
- Work Coaches are also advised to put easements on customer claims who have caring responsibilities so that they can put things in place for when they start work.

- 2.19 Within Barking and Dagenham, the Community Hubs at Barking Learning Centre and Dagenham Library are growing and now have established a good working network of providers, this is allowing easy access to all customers into services from one place. Including advice and support with money matters, housing issues, grants from the Council and job search support via Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and the Job Shop.

- 2.20 The Disability Employment Advisors (DEA) team will be running Changing Mindset Workshops that will build customer confidence and motivate them towards engagement in work or training. Currently this workshop has been offered to all customers attending the JCP office. However, after the summer leave period this team will begin to provide sessions for those who fall under the Carers remit, to support the Carers Charter.

- 2.21 The Front of House (FOH) team who are the first point of contact for customers attending Barking & Dagenham Jobcentre are fully aware of the benefits that customers may be entitled to and always discuss the customers' personal circumstance before advising them on what benefits they should claim.

Homes and Money Hub

- 2.22 The cost-of-living crisis has added additional pressure to carers who are known to be not as financially resilient as other groups. The Homes and Money Hub (HAM

Hub) has also committed to support maximising carers' income and identifying hidden carers to promote carers' wellbeing and employment. The Ham Hub team has agreed to support carers below the referral thresholds for support so that targeted intervention can be put in place earlier for this group and support carers in their caring role. As part of the targeted work in supporting carers during the cost-of-living crisis, and building resilience within the community, the team has delivered the following:

- Added carers to the new online form to enable carers to be identified and monitored and given the targeted support early, below the referral threshold.
- Identified 82 carers they are working with/have worked with since December 2022.
- Engaged with and closed 32 (39%) carer cases and for these carers and have:
 - Maximised income by £41,805.95 (this is based on one-month increased income only plus back payments as this is income that has been received)
 - Reduced Council Tax arrears for carers by £6,820.36
 - Reduced rent arrears for carers by £2,395.73
- Only 8% (7) have not engaged.
- There are currently 43 (52%) ongoing cases.
- Received training from the Carer's Hub as part of their targeted outreach work to help staff identify carers.

Carers of Barking and Dagenham

- 2.23 Carers of Barking and Dagenham actively contribute to the delivery of all sections of the Action Plan, working to promote the identification of hidden carers, advise professionals in supporting carers and accessing additional information advice and support. For 2022-2023, 406 new adult carers and 82 new young carers have been identified. Carers Peer Support Groups and Wellbeing events are also held for carers.
- 2.24 Another key objective in the action plan supported by Carers of Barking and Dagenham is to maximise income for carers through signposting and income/employment support. 154 carers have been supported in engaging with welfare benefits and there has been a 15% increase in uptake of Carers Allowance. Income to the borough through benefits and income maximisation support for carers amounts to £561,706.
- 2.25 With regard to employment support, 35 carers have attended carers training and 7280 volunteer hours were completed by carers, which equates to 4 full time staff. 7 carers have moved into employment. 996 signposting referrals were made to other organisations.

Supporting Young Carers

- 2.26 An objective from the Carer's Action Plan looks at enabling young carers to be able to access and attend support groups where they can meet with peers. Carers of Barking and Dagenham have supported 351 young carers to access services in 2022-23. For the final quarter there were a total of 833 young carers on the database.

- 2.27 The Action Plan also looks at increasing awareness and referral pathways for young carers, which has been achieved through various partners referring into services such as a disability service, early help services, youth services and social care.
- 2.28 In terms of enabling young carers to access mental health support, this objective is still being reviewed as the Local Authority does not hold information for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Positively, young carers are also being signposted to Young Minds for support.
- 2.29 Carers of Barking and Dagenham raise awareness of young carers through ad-hoc focused sessions as required in schools and delivering assemblies, during 2022/23 there were 4 assemblies delivered at schools. Nine schools have made referrals for young carers over the period, however this does not reflect where a young person may not consent to a referral or may have been signposted to the service.
- 2.30 To support young carers to continue in education, training and employment, the delivery of homework clubs has continued allowing young carers a space to complete the homework away from caring responsibilities. They continue to offer support in relation to careers and offering the opportunity for young carers to access career guidance and employability via signposting to college, universities, Prince's Trust and apprenticeships.

Drug and Alcohol Services – Carers Support Group

- 2.31 As part of the Carers Charter Action an action was to set up a Carers Group for those supporting people with substance misuse issues. The provider Change, Grow, Live (CGL) have led this group which has supported family members who initially came to seek support for their loved ones and has also had a positive impact on them.
- 2.32 For the period of 2022/2023, there have been up to 15 face to face sessions held at the service based at St Lukes. There has also been 1 online session specifically requested by partners in Childrens Social Care to support access to the group. The group also supports carers whose loved ones are not in treatment.
- 2.33 Following implementation of the group, the members have reported the following:
- Although most members that attend the groups have come mainly to seek support for their loved one's addiction, attending the sessions has however impacted positively on them.
 - It provides them with a better clarity and understanding of loved ones struggles with addiction and to an extent reassure members that they are not to blame for their loved one's addiction.
 - Some of the topics covered at the meetings include:
 - Understanding addiction
 - Blame, shame, and fear
 - Enabling, and Manipulation
 - Communication, Resentment, and anxiety
 - Keeping safe and caring for yourself
 - Support in the community.

2.34 Moving forward the team will be working to increase awareness and discuss the group in more detail with partner agencies both statutory and non-statutory, particularly at the All-MASH Partners Team meeting.

3. Consultation

3.1 The report has been presented at the Barking and Dagenham Adults Delivery Group on 9 August 2023 and at the PRMG BAU meeting on 10 August 2023. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration was consulted on the report on 15 August and the report was presented at the Adults Improvement Board on 16 August. The report was received positively at each stage.

4. Summary

4.1 The Carers Charter continues to get positive feedback from external boroughs and partners. Through the strong partnership working and commitment from all the stakeholders we have jointly made a significant amount of progress in the delivery of the action plan and thereby supporting carers locally. Some of the work has meant that we have been able to implement standardised practice across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.

4.2 To support carers during the cost-of-living crisis, during 2022-23 cumulative work in delivering the Carers Charter Action Plan has resulted in £612,728.04 additional income directly to carers of which £9,216.09 is attributed to a reduction in Council Tax and rent arrears.

4.3 The Carers Strategy Group enables a strong focus and concerted effort in the delivery of the Action Plan. There is still a lot yet to do and the partners will be building on the foundations of this year. Data recording and accessing data can often be challenging and this is something that we will be focusing on moving forward with partners as well as working towards a wider Carer friendly community in the borough. Health inequalities and supporting carers with this will also be an area of focus moving forward.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Carers Charter 2022-25 and Action Plan [10a HWBB Report Carers Charter and Action Plan Final.pdf \(lbbd.gov.uk\)](#)

List of Appendices:

- **Appendix 1** - The Carers Charter 2022-25
- **Appendix 2** - Carers Charter Action Plan