

Evidence of National Plans to Support Carers:

Scrutiny Inquiry Carer Friendly Southampton 5th November 2020

The Government's 'Carers Action Plan 2018-20' and 'NHS England's Commitment to Carers'

In 2016, to build on the [National Carers Strategy 2008](#) and its refresh [Recognised Valued and Supported:-next steps for the carers' strategy 2010](#), the government asked *How can we improve support for carers?* and commissioned a [Call for Evidence](#) to inform the publication of the [Carers Action Plan 2018-2020](#). It is a cross-government plan which sets out 64 actions across 5 priorities and aims to improve the health and wellbeing of carers and to support a better experience for them. The government will seek to understand the extent to which the action plan helps to:

- increase the number of employers who are aware of caring and the impact this has on their workforce;
- support health and social care professionals to be better at identifying, valuing and working with carers;
- improve access to appropriate support for carers, including respite care and carers breaks;
- improve the evidence base on carers to inform future policy and decisions; and
- ensure that the needs of carers are recognised in relevant government strategies such as [Improving Lives: the future of work, health and disability](#).

NHS England has a number of responsibilities towards carers that have been outlined in the [Department of Health's Mandate to NHS England](#); the [NHS Outcomes Framework 2014/15](#) (NHSOF) and within [Putting Patients First: The NHS England business plan for 2013-16](#). One notable objective in the mandate and business plan is *'to ensure that the NHS becomes dramatically better at involving patients and their carers, and empowering them to manage and make decisions about their own care and treatment*. In addition, the NHSOF incorporates an indicator that seeks to measure the health related quality of life for carers. In reply to these responsibilities, [NHS England's Commitment to Carers 2014](#) was published: there are 37 commitments across 8 priorities. The Enhanced Commitment to Carers due in April 2019 has been delayed with no new date given.

Tables 2 and 3 below show the actions / commitments that are relevant to the Scrutiny inquiry meeting on 5th November.

Table 1 - Carers Friendly Southampton Scrutiny Inquiry Dates and Topics

<p>5th Nov 4</p> <p>1 Carers health, wellbeing and safety</p> <p>1.1 Time for yourself and isolation</p> <p>1.2 Health & wellbeing, including mental health needs</p> <p>1.3 Relationships support (family dynamics) and experience of loss</p>	<p>26th Nov 1</p> <p>2 Carers identification rights and recognition</p> <p>2.1 Role of professionals to identify</p> <p>2.2 Self-identity</p> <p>2.3 Planning for emergencies</p> <p>2.4 Access and quality of respite or replacement care: planned and unplanned breaks</p> <p>2.5 Assessments</p>	<p>7th Jan 2</p> <p>3 Access to information, advice and guidance</p> <p>3.1 Financial support and the DWP</p> <p>3.2 Access to practical support and help from the community</p> <p>3.3 Housing and adaptations issues</p>
<p>28 January 2021 3</p> <p>4 Support to carers</p> <p>4.1 Access to health and social care services in the caring role</p> <p>4.2 Information advice and guidance for the caring role</p> <p>4.3 Support and training for a carer</p> <p>4.4 Experience and response to Covid-19</p>	<p>25 February 2021</p> <p>5 Support in education and work</p> <p>5.1 Young carers protected and supported to learn and thrive</p> <p>5.2 Opportunities and challenges in work and education</p> <p>5.3 Access and availability for transport to support the caring role</p>	

Table 2 National Carers Action Plan

N°	Action	Lead	Delivery (national?)
	<p>Chapter 1 Services and systems that work for carers</p> <p>The actions below are designed to improve awareness and understanding among health professionals and social workers, and work with local government to ensure carers are able to access the support they are entitled to, including a specific action on respite care.</p>		

N°	Action	Lead	Delivery (national?)
	<p>Raising awareness of and promoting best practice amongst health professionals</p> <p>These actions seek to improve health professionals' awareness and identification of carers so that carers feel that they are listened to and their views are appropriately taken into account when the person they care for is in a healthcare setting. In addition, the Department of Health and Social Care has committed to reviewing the implementation of the Care Act in 2019.</p>		
1.2	Work with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on the development of quality standards for carer-friendly GP practices.	NHSE	Spring 2019
1.3	Identify exemplar bereavement care pathways focusing on improving the identification of and support for carers in relation to end of life care and bereavement.	NHSE	March 2019
1.2	<p>Dementia 2020 Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure GPs are playing a leading role in ensuring coordination and continuity of care for people with dementia and their carers. The next phase will be to establish a nationally agreed set of codes for the dementia care plan in 2018. • Insure that people with dementia and their carers are supported by health and care staff that have undertaken appropriate levels of dementia awareness and training. • Increase the numbers of hospitals who have signed up to the Dementia Friendly Hospitals Charter and to explore options for increasing the number of volunteers in hospitals to support people with dementia. 	<p>NHSE</p> <p>SfC, HEE, AS, ADASS DHSC</p>	<p>2020 Review 2018</p> <p>2020 Review 2018 2020</p>
1.2	Develop a 'productive healthy ageing' action plan, with a focus on reducing health inequalities. This action plan will promote productive healthy ageing and dementia risk reduction messages, including those that impact on carers.	PHE	2018/19
1.2 4.3	Work with unpaid carers and their representative organisations to consider healthcare education and training needs for unpaid carers, to empower and equip them with the knowledge and skills they need.	HEE & DHSC	Autumn 2018
	<p>Chapter 4 Recognising and supporting carers in the wider community and society</p> <p>The actions set out in this chapter aim to raise awareness of caring to build carer-friendly communities that recognise carers, and better support them, including in employment and in combating loneliness.</p>		
	<p>Loneliness</p> <p>This action seeks to better understand how loneliness affects carers and find ways to combat it</p>		

N°	Action	Lead	Delivery (national?)
1.3	Carers are particularly susceptible to experiencing loneliness and as such they will be considered in the development of the cross-government loneliness strategy.	DCMS	2018/19
	<p style="text-align: center;">Chapter 5 Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for carer</p> <p>The following actions seek to strengthen the information on unpaid carers to make sure that future policies are informed by a strong evidence base and are able to take into account the wide range of caring roles provided by unpaid carers</p>		
All	Fund research to improve the information available on carers	DHSC	2018/19 & 2019/20
All	Carry out insight work exploring attitudes to informal care and factors influencing propensity to care.	DHSC	2018/19 & 2019/20
All	Commission survey data on carers experiences.	DHSC	2019/20
All	Improve existing data sources on carers, including the bi-annual carers survey and GP patient survey.	DHSC	2018/19 & 2019/20
All	Digital discovery work to understand the extent to which carers' needs are currently met by the information available online: particular focus on combining caring and working.	DHSC, GEO, BEIS & DWP	2018/19 & 2019/20
All	Maintain the international Carer-Related Research and Evidence Exchange Network: international and national knowledge exchange around carer research evidence, practice, policy and innovation. www.open.ac.uk/caren	Open University / DHSC	Ongoing

Glossary

Alzheimer's Society (AS)
Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)
Civil Service Employee Policy (CSEP)
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP),
Government Equalities Office (GEO)
Health Education England (HEE)
Learning and Work Institute (LWI)
Ministry of Defence (MOD)

National Health service England (NHSE)
Social Care and Research in Practice for Adults (RiPFA)
Skills for Care (SfC)

Table 3

NHS England's Commitment to Carers.

Nº.	Commitment	Delivery
Priority 1 Raising the Profile of Carers		
1.2 5.1	NHSE in partnership with NHS IQ to hold a national NHS Young Carers event to support how young carers can be better supported and the wellbeing of young carers promoted by the NHS.	Oct 2014
1.2 5.1	NHSE to support a Carers Champions Network bringing together the healthcare and carers groups.	Ongoing
Priority 2 Education, Training and Information		
1.2	NHSE to contribute to increasing the awareness within the NHS of the duties and functions of local authorities with regards to carers.	April 2015
Priority 3 Service Development		
1.3	NHSE's new ambitions for End of Life Care, to be published in June 2014, will include the intentions for support for carers and bereaved relatives.	June 2014
1.2 4.2	NHSE to support timely dementia diagnosis and the best available treatment for everyone who needs it, including support for their carers. For example, the revised Dementia Enhanced Service will include an offer of a health check for carers and signposting for information and support.	March 2015
1.2	Develop a programme of work to support the health and wellbeing of carers through the community nursing strategy.	April 2015

Nº.	Commitment	Delivery
	NHSE to undertake a piece of work to understand the impact of current commissioning incentives and system drivers in supporting carers. For example, through the GP contract, revisions to enhanced services for unplanned admissions and dementia.	Oct 2014
1.3	NHSE to review current national processes in place to gather bereaved carers' views on the quality of care in the last three months of life in order to address gaps in evidence.	March 2015
	Where commissioners identify the need for support, co-produce practical tools and a support programme of implementation with NHS IQ.	March 2015