

LINCOLNSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Open Report on behalf of Cllr Elizabeth Sneath, Chair of the Carers Delivery Group

Report to	Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board
Date:	26 September 2023
Subject:	Unpaid Carers

Summary:

The Lincolnshire Health & Wellbeing Board identified key priority areas, one of these being Carers, to fulfil the Boards ambition for carers a subgroup was formed (Carers Delivery Group) to bring together key strategic partners to work collaboratively to effect change.

The Carers Delivery Group was paused during the Covid-19 pandemic to enable practical support to carers along with response activity. The Group re-formed in January 2023 with a new Chair and for the first time, representatives of every part of the local NHS system.

The strategy was reviewed and whilst comprehensive, was felt to be too broad. The Group are now developing a revised Strategy, summarised in a "Plan on a Page", drawing on the JSNA, the needs of carers and the expectations set out in the NHSE&I Commitment to Carers, for which a quarterly return is submitted.

Actions Required:

Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) is asked to:

- Note the report and progress made to date.
- Agree the Plan on a Page, as the first stage towards a revised Carers Strategy.
- Discuss the opportunity for the Carers Delivery Group to co-produce the revised strategy
- Promote and endorse the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), demonstrating system led leadership to identify and support carers.

1. Background

There are an estimated 79,262 unpaid carers in Lincolnshire and given the county's ageing population, this number is predicted to increase. There is a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of a person in a caring role. Carers are twice as likely to suffer poor health compared to the general population, primarily due to a lack of information and support, financial concerns, stress, and social isolation. Evidence shows that two thirds of carers are female, with carers an average of 50 hours care per week. The risk of carer breakdown represents a potentially significant pressure on health and care services, making support and early intervention an essential element of this work.

Many carers reported that the Covid-19 pandemic had a considerable impact on their health and wellbeing and increased the burden of caring. This is further exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis which is placing additional pressure on many carers.

Lincolnshire continues to progress the carers agenda whilst making substantial progress both strategically and operationally with a shared vision to consider the needs of carers across a range of areas. This commitment is demonstrated and captured by the following activities captured in the report.

Carers Delivery Group:

This group paused during the Covid-19 pandemic whilst the workforce diverted effort to supporting carers in the community who were experiencing additional pressures.

In January 2023, the group relaunched with a new service lead and Cllr Elizabeth Sneath was appointed Chair of the Group. Time was invested in reinvigorating the membership, refreshing the Terms of Reference, and setting the foundations for the future. Following consultation, the group agreed that the Carers Strategy was no longer fit for purpose and a more succinct plan on a page was created, focusing on three key priority areas. This focused approach supports achievable outcomes as a mechanism to deliver change. See Appendix A.

The key priorities for the Carer's Priority Group were identified as:

- Workforce and Employment
- Whole Family Approaches
- Digital opportunities

The newly formed group also wished to set clear expectations of partners and to underline this commitment, created a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which is at Appendix B.

The Carers Delivery Group co-ordinates and completes the NHS England annual Survey of Carers. Working collaboratively to complete this brings a clearer picture of carers in Lincolnshire and has been shared across the region as best practice.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA):

The carers delivery group worked collaboratively to develop and produce the new carers topic, this was co-ordinated by the carers service lead but with support from wider participants to ensure the carers topic was fit for purpose with the system.

Work with the NHS:

Following the last report to the Board, NHS representation on the Carers Delivery Group has increased and relationships strengthened.

Local charity Every-One made a successful bid to NHS Charities Together on behalf of the wider system to fund a part-time project worker. United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust (ULHT) contributed funding and host the post. The officer started in an 18-month position in March 23.

Project priorities are to:

- Provide all partners across the NHS Trusts with a carer definition and support to identify working carers.
- Provide working carers in the NHS Trusts (staff & volunteers) with a digital platform of support (a closed Facebook group).
- Provide training for leaders in the NHS Trust, including management training, provided by Carers First Employment team.

Carer's Passports:

Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust (LPFT) have formally rolled out a new carer's passport, supporting staff who are carers to discuss their needs with their manager. As a mature and established member of the group LPFT are keen to share best practice across the system. The Carers Delivery Group ambition is to roll out carer's passports more widely across Lincolnshire, this supports the NHS National Commitment to Carers objective of a national roll out.

Highlights of progress to date:

- Re-launched, re-branded and updated Care Partners Badges and resource boxes to all wards.
- Launched new Staff Carers Network in the NHS.
- Care Partners Policy approved and published.
- Continuing engagement with national work on development of NHS Care Partners Policy.
- Advert published for Carers to join a Care Partners Expert Reference Group.

Carers Week:

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities. It also helps people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support. The carers delivery group co-ordinated and shared information on all activities available throughout Lincolnshire, this approach saved duplication and benefited partners to reach a wider cohort.

Commissioned Lincolnshire Carers Service:

In October 2022 Lincolnshire County Council commissioned a new Lincolnshire Carers service, this was a new model of service with a single front door. The mobilisation of this service has seen adoption of a streamlined carers journey, with enhanced universal offer of support. Early indications show that most carers want timely, good quality information and advice, for others a carers assessment may be needed the new carers conversation at the front door will help to identify the level of need at the earliest possible opportunity.

A positive celebration for the new Lincolnshire Carers Service is that all staff have now completed training in Strength based approaches (SBA), this ensures that staff are working in a proactive manner to support carers, rather than the old deficit model of support. The new approach encourages carers to be empowered and remain as independent as possible with choice and control. In addition to SBA training, all staff have received Care Act training from a highly sought after trainer, this gives reassurance that competent well-trained assessors assess carers. The service maintains a robust programme of Quality Assurance, both internally and externally to the service.

Care Quality Commission (CQC):

Lincolnshire County Council was the first local authority in the country to be inspected as part of a new CQC Local Authority Assessment pilot. The Lincolnshire Carers Service contributed to the key lines of enquiry and helped to shape evidence submitted in preparation for the visit. Formal carers, assessor’s and county council staff participated in inspections in a united manner to demonstrate how Lincolnshire support its carers in the county. Formal feedback is awaited.

Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE):

The Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE) provides outcome-focused intelligence information on carers and the services they receive. It measures the extent to which services improve carers’ ability to care and live a life outside the caring role. The need to assess the impact on carers of the provision and quality of services provided to service users is also important.

The 2021/2022 Lincolnshire survey stated that 54% of carers report that they can look after themselves in terms of eating well and getting enough sleep. However, a high proportion of carers reported that their caring role had impacted their health. 80.9% felt tired and 67.0% experienced disturbed sleep. 62.8% reported a general feeling of stress. A third of carers said they had experienced physical strain, e.g., back pain.

Where carers have sought out information and advice surrounding their caring role, 57.2% found it either very or fairly easy to find and 86.3% found the information very or quite helpful.

In autumn 2023/24 the next survey is due; a working group will be formed to review the content and action accordingly.

What we said we would do in 2022/23:

The carers delivery group agreed to take actions to ensure that the group could establish, for ease please see the table below and an update on progress.

What we said we would do in 2022/23	Outcome
Re-launch the Delivery Group, with a new Chair and revised membership	Achieved
Develop and agree a Carers Memorandum of Understanding for Lincolnshire	Achieved
Update the Carers JSNA topic to provide a robust evidence base to inform action	Achieved
Work together to achieve the NHS Commitment to Carers	On going
Maximise support for carers working in partner agencies as exemplars for other organisations	On going
Ensure that support for Carers is integrated across the Integrated Care System (ICS)	On going
Embed strengths-based approaches and tools in all carer’s services and processes	Achieved

2. Conclusion

This report provides the HWB with assurance of the progress being made during 2022/23. The continued inclusion of Carer's as a priority in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy reaffirms the commitment that this topic is one of the most important health and wellbeing issues facing the county.

3. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Local Health & Wellbeing Strategy

The Council, NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board and the Lincolnshire Integrated Care Partnership must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS).

A new Carers JSNA has been co-produced by the carers delivery group and is live.
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4. Consultation

Not applicable.

5. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Plan on a page
Appendix B	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

6. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Lisa Loy, Programme Manager, who can be contacted on Lisa.loy@lincolnshire.gov.uk

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