

Carers Strategy for Swindon

April 2018 – March 2021



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Welcome

This strategy has been produced collaboratively by:

Susanna Jones	Swindon Carers Centre
Fiona Prinzi	Swindon Carers Centre
Claire Smith	Swindon Borough Council

Carers

Thank you to all carers and their families who have contributed to this strategy.

Carer feedback for this strategy was sourced from Carers Rights Day 2017; carers registered with Swindon Carers Centre over the summer/autumn of 2018; Swindon Carers Centre's Groups and Activities; Swindon Borough Council's Carers Group; and the Carers Group at Nationwide Building Society. The draft strategy was also published online and shared via social media by Swindon Carers Centre, Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group and Healthwatch Swindon.

Vision

Creating a community where carers are recognised, valued and supported.

Introduction

A carer is 'anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support'¹.

Every carer's circumstances will be different and individual. A carer's needs and resulting support required will be affected by many factors including their age, who they care for, at what level, whether there are others supporting the cared for and their personal circumstances for example their employment, finances, health, quality of life, additional dependents and social relationships).

Carers are a socially and demographically diverse group and as the demand for care is projected to grow, people are increasingly likely to become providers of care at some point in their lives.

3 in 5 people in the UK will become carers. This invaluable contribution ensures the sustainability of the health and social care system. To enable carers to continue their caring roles, they need – and deserve - our support.

This is a strategy for all carers over the age of 5 years; including young carers, young adult carers, parent carers, adult carers and older carers. The word **carer** in this strategy is, therefore, inclusive of all. The strategy has been produced with carer feedback prevalent throughout, and in conjunction with statutory, voluntary sector and private sector partners.

National context

Carers are the largest providers of care and support in each area of the UK. The economic value and contribution they make is £119bn per year, more than the entire NHS budget and equivalent to £18,473 per year for every carer in the UK. Without support carers can face poverty, isolation, ill health and depression. Studies indicate a positive return on investment in supporting carers.

Across the whole country we are seeing changes in:

- Our economy
- Access to welfare benefits and rights
- Funding and resources for and access to health and social care
- Increased recognition and rights for carers via the 2014 Care Act and the 2014 Children & Families Act
- The increasing numbers and complexity of carers needing support

The Care Act 2014 has reformed the law relating to care and support for adults and the law relating to support for carers. It also makes provision about safeguarding adults from abuse or neglect. The 2014 Children & Families Act, amongst other things, makes provision about children, families, and people with special educational needs or disabilities including making the provision about the right to request flexible working. Carers who are over 18 are now entitled to an assessment of their support needs.

¹ Carers Trust: <http://www.carers.org/role-carer>

The National Carers Action Plan was published in June 2018. It sets out a cross government programme of work which will seek to build carer friendly communities and support carers to provide care in a way that protects their own health and wellbeing, employment and life chances. There are 5 key themes to the action plan:

- 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 evidence and research to support outcomes for carers

Carers come from all walks of life. We will work together to ensure no carer is disadvantaged due to age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation in line with the **Equality Act 2010**.

For carers, this act is important because, if they are caring for someone who is elderly or disabled, the law will now protect them against direct discrimination or harassment because of their caring responsibilities. This is because they are counted as being 'associated' with someone who is protected by the law because of their age or disability.

It is clear the next 3-5 years will prove to be a significant time both nationally and locally for carers. The environment and culture within which we exist is rapidly changing and there is a substantial shift in people's thinking and approaches to care and support for those who need it in our society. The number of carers and the complexity of need will be ever increasing and Swindon must be in a position to provide information, advice and support that carers will need in the short, medium and long term.

Local Context:

Local authorities and clinical commissioning groups are required to have local carers' strategies and plans, and budgets for supporting carers. Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are committed to supporting carers who provide services looking after people in different circumstances. SBC has a statutory duty to offer everyone who defines themselves as being a carer an assessment.

Swindon Carers Centre (SCC) is a charitable organisation, which is part of the Carers Trust Network, and was established to provide help and support to the 21,000 carers in Swindon. It is currently commissioned by Swindon Borough Council and Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group to provide the Carer Support Services contract in Swindon. SCC works in partnership with other organisations, including local NHS services, Swindon Borough Council's Adult Social Care and Children's Services and other local voluntary organisations with the aim of identifying as many carers as possible and to provide the most relevant support for an individuals' caring situation. They also work with the people accessing their services to raise the profile of carers so carers themselves can have a collective voice in influencing policy makers and service planners. Swindon Carers Centre runs an emergency card scheme for carers which enables plans to be put into place in case of unforeseen circumstances.

No one data source provides a definitive picture of the number of carers in Swindon or their personal circumstances. Self-reported Census data from 2011 provides the most comprehensive picture. At the 2011 Census, 19,140 people in Swindon (9.4%) reported they were providing some level of unpaid care. This is a similar percentage of the population to the national average of 10.4%. An additional 3,724 people reported that they provide unpaid care in Swindon in 2011 compared with 2001 (an increase of 23.7%); the increase in numbers of carers is greater than the general population growth (16.4%). In general, it appears more people are providing unpaid care in the rural areas but this could be linked to a more elderly population in these areas.

The increase in carers in Swindon of 33.6% since 2001 is the largest percentage increase in the number of carers in the South West, and well above the national average of 17.7%.

Carers UK has produced a series of research reports, which estimates the latest number of carers in the UK. It estimates there were **21,006 carers in Swindon in 2015, saving the public purse £395 million per year (up £36 million since 2011).**

Since 2001, the value of care has almost doubled – a 93% increase. 70% of this is attributable to increases in the cost of care and 30% to additional hours of care provided.

A Carers Strategy Group was set up in June 2017 by Swindon Borough Council and Swindon Carers Centre and includes representation from partner organisations, including Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group, Great Western Hospital, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, Swindon Advocacy Movement, Prospect Hospice and Healthwatch Swindon. This group has benchmarked progress made by each organisation against NHS England's principles in the Carer Memorandum of Understanding. (See Appendix 1).

Swindon Borough Council, in its Vision for Swindon, 2016 – 2020 has four priorities with Carers very clearly emphasised within priority four, 'Help people to help themselves while always protecting our most vulnerable children and adults'. The priority highlights the following pledge 'Ensure people and their carers are supported to live as independently as possible,' it goes on to say that SBC will 'provide high quality support and assessment for carers, recognising their invaluable contribution.

The Swindon Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017 – 2022 very clearly highlights the importance of carers within its priorities, and recognises 'the need to improve the wellbeing of people with caring responsibilities in and around Swindon, creating a community where carers are recognised, valued and supported. It also acknowledges that when people are at the end of their lives they and their carers are supported in making choices about where they would like to die.'

The Swindon Carers Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) includes recommendations on further investment in Young Adult Carers services; working with partner organisations to map out trigger points for carers and ensure interventions are targeted towards these; ensuring every carer over the age of 65 is offered an Emergency Card; further development of the Swindon Employers Care Award; further promotion of the Carers Support Fund; and to raise awareness of the specific needs of carers who are 80+.

Population Projections:

The population of Swindon is one of the highest aging populations in the country with all of the health and social care needs this brings. Swindon Borough Council projections estimate Swindon's population could increase to 240,000 people by 2021, and 265,400 by 2031, equivalent to growth of

approximately 14% from 2011 to 2021, and a further 10% from 2021 to 2031. The largest increase will be in the 65 to 74 age group, projected to be 12,900 more by 2031. However, the 85+ age group will have the largest growth rate at approximately 136%. By 2031 the population aged over 65 is projected to grow by 25,900 people to reach a total of 55,000 by 2031, accounting for 46% of total population growth.

The total number of carers is projected to rise to 23,504 in 2021 and to 26,222 by 2031, a 33% rise overall. Because the over 65 population is projected to increase the most, the number of carers in this age group is also projected to increase the most, up from 3,960 in 2011 to 7,500 in 2031 (up 89%).

The number of carers and the complexity of need will be ever increasing and this Strategy is focused on ensuring relevant support for carers in Swindon further develops in the short, medium and long term.

To this end, this strategy sets out the key considerations for the next 3/5 years whilst acknowledging the need for regular review due to the potential for further national and local change.

Current and Future Priorities for Carers in Swindon

Support for carers in Swindon is influenced by national and local directives. There are many frameworks and strategies which set out the desired objectives and outcomes across health, social care and education (see appendices 1- 5 for full details);

- **NHS England Memorandum of Understanding for Carers – appendix 1**

This is a document that sets out NHS commitments to carers, completed following consultation with carers in 2016. We support the integrated approach to identifying and assessing carers and their wellbeing needs. Within the Swindon Carers Strategy group, we benchmark against the 7 principles outlined in the MoU:

- Principle 1 – We will support the identification, recognition and registration of Carers in primary care.
- Principle 2 - Carers will have their support needs assessed and will receive an integrated package of support in order to maintain and/or improve their physical and mental health.
- Principle 3 - Carers will be empowered to make choices about their caring role and access appropriate services and support for them and the person they look after.
- Principle 4 – The staff of partners to this agreement will be aware of the needs of Carers and of their value to our communities.
- Principle 5 - Carers will be supported by information sharing between health, social care, Carer support organisations and other partners to this agreement.
- Principle 6 - Carers will be respected and listened to as expert care partners, and will be actively involved in care planning, shared decision making and reviewing services.
- Principle 7 - The support needs of Carers who are more vulnerable or at key transition points will be identified early.

This work has led to the development of 5 key outcomes for carers in Swindon which this Strategy will benchmark against:

Outcome 1	Carers have improved physical health, mental health and wellbeing
Outcome 2	Carers influence services
Outcome 3	Carers can make choices about their caring role and access appropriate inclusive support and services for themselves and the people they care for
Outcome 4	Carers' needs, and the value of carers, are better understood across health, social care, education and employment in Swindon
Outcome 5	Carers can access advice and support to ensure their financial situation is the best it can be, meaning they are less worried about money

Year Forecast of key achievements

Strategic Aim	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Carers have improved physical health, mental health and wellbeing	<p>Develop new creative ways for carers to access support at the first possible opportunity following registration</p> <p>There is local support close to where carers live; opportunities to have breaks; support when facing a crisis; and opportunities to socialise.</p> <p>Ensure that caring responsibilities affecting the mental health of carers is supported before it reaches crisis point.</p> <p>GP practices, schools, colleges and employers identify and refer carers.</p>	<p>Staff are upskilled and confident in ensuring carers from protected groups (e.g. LGBT) have equal and fair access to our services</p> <p>Carers' assessments and reviews evidence that carers feel safer, less lonely or isolated, more likely to consider their own health needs, less likely to have trouble sleeping or to feel low, tense, tearful, stressed or anxious, more able to do the things they like to do and more in control of their life</p> <p>Case studies from providers evidence positive changes in carers' physical health, mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Ensure IT systems are developing to support increasing demand on services</p>	<p>The number of carers registered is increasing year on year as more carers are identified</p> <p>The number of carers whose needs have been met through an early intervention/prevention approach which has reduced, prevented or delayed their needs for support has increased</p> <p>The number of carers from key priority areas registered organisation have increased including older carers and male carers</p> <p>The number of carers accessing breaks has increased</p> <p>Peer support opportunities, and the number of carers accessing them, have increased</p> <p>Carers registered with GP's as a carer have increased</p>

			Joint working to support a holistic and whole family approach has increased.
Carers influence services	<p>Ensure carer voice is prevalent in developing the Carers Strategy for Swindon</p> <p>Carers contribute to the development of services (both for themselves and for the person they care for), and assessing the quality of these services.</p> <p>Carer involvement takes place through a variety of different opportunities including regular formal meetings such as the Swindon Carer Strategy Group and a range of consultations such as the one for this strategy.</p> <p>Collaborating with other organisations to reach socially isolated carers.</p>	<p>Clear planning cycle for carers to increase their influence in our service design and delivery.</p> <p>We promote our services widely and ensure positive engagement experiences support identification of 'hidden' carers.</p> <p>Ensure engagement opportunities for older carer support are robust (e.g. through GP surgeries, GWH, community services).</p> <p>Case studies evidence feedback from carers has contributed to improving and developing services.</p> <p>Carers reporting they feel involved and influential.</p>	<p>Ensuring hard to reach carers (e.g. older, male carers and carers from protected groups) influence service development.</p> <p>Both statutory and voluntary agencies report input from carers has influenced decisions.</p>
Carers can make choices about their caring role and access appropriate inclusive support and services for themselves and the people they care for	<p>Ensure information is easy to access both by using technological devices and by those without internet access.</p> <p>Develop new creative ways for carers to access support at the first possible opportunity following registration</p>	<p>Carers' assessments and reviews tell us carers know where to get information they need, feel more in control, feel more able to continue in their caring role (if they wish to do so), are more likely to have opportunity to take a break from their caring role and</p>	<p>Use feedback from carers/staff/volunteers/partners/commissioners to inform developments in personalised support</p> <p>Sharing best practice with colleagues, partner organisations and funders to ensure further development of high quality services</p>

	<p>Develop an Annual Equality Action Plan</p> <p>Inclusive practice is embedded in organisational culture.</p> <p>Collectively we will continue to develop inclusive practice, keep learning, engaging and sharing best practice with other organisations.</p> <p>Raise awareness and understanding of personal budgets for carers</p>	<p>feel more positive about their future</p> <p>Case studies from providers evidence that carers have been supported to make positive decisions about their future, particularly at times of transition.</p> <p>Staff/Volunteers are welcoming, skilled, diverse and knowledgeable and promote equality of access for all</p>	<p>The number and range of breaks and training carers accessed has increased and met their needs</p> <p>More carers in employment or education have been identified and supported</p> <p>Carers have been enabled to access technological solutions should they wish to</p>
<p>Carers' needs, and the value of carers, are better understood across health, social care, education and employment in Swindon</p>	<p>Utilise the Carers Strategy Group to ensure a robust network of colleagues across Swindon raise awareness of carers and their needs</p> <p>Use social media to share useful information for carers</p> <p>Raise the profile of the Employers Award across Swindon</p> <p>Secure continuation funding for Schools Award (SCC)</p> <p>Carer awareness training for health and social care professionals and employers takes place regularly with many staff members accessing training.</p> <p>Outreach and development work</p>	<p>Increased partnerships and collaborations ensure high profile and carer awareness</p> <p>All partner organisations are ambassadors for the Carers Strategy</p> <p>Utilise the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership footprint to maximise opportunities for awareness and understanding of carers needs.</p> <p>Carers' assessments and reviews tell us carers feel more able to voice their opinions and concerns about the person they care for.</p> <p>Case studies evidence carers, including</p>	<p>Ensure high attendance and participation in carer and community events and activities</p> <p>The range and number of professionals and voluntary sector staff accessing carer awareness training remains consistent or has increased</p> <p>The number of employed carers accessing carer support services has increased</p>

	<p>with a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations takes place.</p>	<p>young carers, have been involved as expert partners in the care when decisions have been made about those they care for.</p>	
<p>Carers can access advice and support to ensure their financial situation is the best it can be meaning they are less worried about money</p>	<p>Welfare, debt and money management advice is available and regularly accessed with successful outcomes.</p> <p>Carers can access assistance to apply for grants and can access money mentoring, budget training courses and understand Personal Budgets.</p> <p>Carers' assessments can lead to funded services and/or personal budgets whilst there are also free workshops on lasting power of attorney/wills/probate.</p> <p>Volunteering and young adult carer support offer opportunities for carers to build skills and confidence and facilitate the transition to study or training.</p> <p>The Employers Care award pilot reports employers providing support to carers to enable them to remain or return to employment.</p>	<p>The Employers Care award encourages employers to provide support to carers to enable them to remain or return to employment.</p> <p>Carers' assessments and reviews tell us carers feel more in control and less worried about money.</p> <p>Case studies evidence positive changes support provided has made to carers' financial position.</p>	<p>All carers who need specialist advice and case management relating to benefits, debt and money management have been able to access this.</p>

Action Plan

The Swindon Carers Leads Strategy Group will develop annual action plans throughout the duration of the strategy to benchmark progress on the 5 outcomes and planned key achievements against the outcomes.

Strategic Delivery partners

Key participants responsible for delivering against the strategy:

- Swindon Borough Council
- NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group
- Swindon Carers Centre
- Swindon Carers Leads Strategy Group
- Others to be discussed and confirmed

Strategic Delivery and development

The Swindon Carers Leads Strategy Group is responsible for the strategic development and implementation of the strategy's action plan and is accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Funding

A pooled budget is managed by Swindon Borough Council on behalf of the council and NHS Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group. This funds the majority of the commissioned carers' services in Swindon with the exception of some young carer support (funded by Friends of Young Carers Swindon, FOYCS; and St James Place Foundation) Schools Award delivery (funded by The Big Lottery) and Welfare Benefits Advice (funded by TE Connectivity and Wiltshire Community Foundation). The intention is that this strategy will be delivered within current levels of investment and the challenge to commissioners and partners will be to ensure that the needs of carers are met within this level of investment; or relevant additional funding is applied for and accessed to meet specific new identified need.

Monitoring and evaluation

Progress against the strategy will be monitored by the Carers Strategy Group. It will be a key focus at specific carer events throughout the year, including Carers Week and Carers Rights Day. Carer feedback and input from organisations delivering carer support will be key to evaluating progress against the strategy.

Appendices ([available here](#))

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Out to consultation with carers July 2018-October 2018.

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