

Meeting: [Health and Wellbeing Board](#) **Date:** [26 September 2024](#)

Went to Torbay Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee 13 March, 2024
Torbay Council Cabinet 19 March, 2024

Wards affected: [All Wards](#)

Report Title: [Torbay Interagency Carers' Strategy 2024-27](#)

When does the decision need to be implemented? Implemented 1 April 2024

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Torbay Carers' Strategy with outline action plan (Appendix 2) has been through Torbay Council and Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust approval routes. It is being brought to the Health and Wellbeing Board for information. A more accessible version of the Strategy has been developed with Carers and partner organisations. (Appendix 1). It includes a detailed action plan for 2024-25.
- 1.2 This Strategy brings together the work that Health and Care organisations in Torbay plan to undertake with Carers during 2024-2027. It will ensure that organisations meet their legal obligations to Carers, work towards best practice / quality standards and that their work is joined up. It ensures that Carers are at the heart of their work, that Carers are aware of services and that these services meet Carers' needs.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits to our residents

- 2.1 This Strategy will help us to deliver the vision of a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay by supporting the 65% of residents who will be a Carer at some stage of their life.
- 2.2 Carers provide huge benefit to the person that they care for but also to health and care services. Carers UK estimates that the value of the unpaid care that Carers provide is £162 billion - greater than the budget for NHS spending¹.
- 2.3 Although it is generally accepted that the 2021 Census under-identified Carers, Torbay clearly has a much higher than average number of Carers providing over 20 hours of care. We are 6th highest in England for Carers undertaking 50+ hours of care.

Provision of unpaid care, Torbay 2021	Number	%	England 2021
Provides no unpaid care	118,359	88.8%	91.2%
Provides 19 hours or less unpaid care a week	6,514	4.9%	4.3%
Provides 20 to 49 hours unpaid care a week	3,207	2.4%	1.8%
Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week	5,185	3.9%	2.6%
Total: All usual residents aged 5 and over	133,265		

- 2.4 This comes at a cost to the Carer. The National Carers' Survey shows that Carers' quality of life is deteriorating year on year. This is mirrored in Torbay². Healthwatch's Devon-wide Survey of Carers also noted the negative impact of caring on Carers' wellbeing.³
- 2.5 Caring is a social determinant of health⁴ with impact on Carers' health and wellbeing.
- 2.6 Carers UK State of Caring Report 2023⁵ makes stark reading. Some of the particular issues affecting Carers are highlighted here:
- More than three quarters of all Carers (79%) feel stressed or anxious, half (49%) feel depressed, and half (50%) feel lonely.
 - 72% of those on Carers' Allowance worry about the impact of caring responsibilities (e.g. petrol for hospital visits, heating, specific dietary

¹ Unpaid carers providing care worth £162 billion, the budget for NHS spending in England in 2020/21 was £156 billion. Carers UK. Valuing Carers 2021.

² Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England - NHS Digital

³ The impact of providing unpaid care at home (Phase 2) - Healthwatch Devon

⁴ Caring as a social determinant of health (publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁵ State of Caring survey | Carers UK

requirements) on their finances and 46% are cutting back on essentials, including food and heating.

- 27% of unpaid Carers have bad or very bad mental health. Despite feeling they are at breaking point, nearly three quarters (73%) of Carers with bad or very bad mental health are continuing to provide care.
- 40% had given up work due to caring responsibilities.

2.7 This Carers' Strategy promotes the importance of early identification and support of Carers to mitigate the negative impacts of caring and help them to thrive. For young Carers especially, early identification and support is essential. Otherwise the impact of caring can affect school attendance, attainment and future prospects.

2.8 It is essential that support for Carers is easy to access, and preventative in nature. Supporting Carers not only benefits the Carer, but also the person / people for whom they care, thus improving both parties' health and wellbeing whilst reducing inequalities.

2.9 Given the evident impact of caring on health, wellbeing, finances and employment, support in this Strategy is directed at addressing this wherever possible.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

3.1 Recommendation to note Torbay's Interagency Carers' Strategy and outline action plan (Appendix 2) and the priorities for Carers as expressed in their 'I statements'.

3.2 Recommendation to note the 2024-25 action plan in the accessible Strategy (Appendix 1).

3.3 Note that two major recurrent concerns for Torbay's Carers are the lack of suitable replacement ('respite') care and mental health services. In Healthwatch's Devon-wide Survey, although very few Torbay Carers responded, none felt that replacement care was meeting their needs.⁶ As both issues relate to support to the person being cared for, Carers' Services

⁶ [The impact of providing unpaid care at home \(Phase 2\) - Healthwatch Devon](#)

are working closely with Social Care Services and with Devon Partnership Trust to address these.

Appendices

Appx.1: pp 5-12 Accessible Torbay Carers Strategy with detailed action plan 2024-5

Appx.2: pp13-27 Torbay Carers' Strategy 2024-27 with outline action plan

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The 2024-27 Strategy builds on evidence and learning from Torbay's 2021-24 Carers' Strategy and national good practice. Services work very closely with partners across Devon Integrated Care System.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 There are no other options under consideration. This Strategy is a means of coordinating and prioritising partnership working to the benefit of Carers.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 There is no additional financial implication within this Strategy. The actions to achieve the priorities within this Strategy will be within current budgets.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 This Strategy meets the legal obligations of Health and Social Care organisations under:

- Care Act 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Care Act 2022

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 There has been extensive consultation with the Carers of Torbay. This has been managed by Engaging Communities South West in order to maintain independence.
- 5.2 Carers have also been involved in shaping the strategy and producing 'I statements' about their priorities. We continue to work with them in the design, delivery and evaluation of Carers' Services.
- 5.3 Carers' Representatives sit on the Strategy Steering Group and all working parties.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

- 6.1 Any services procured or provided by the public sector organisations under this Strategy will meet Social Value Act (2012) requirements.
- 6.2 The Carers' Enabling, Assessment and Advocacy contract and Carers of Adults with a Learning Disability contract have both been procured under this framework.

7. Tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 This Strategy does not alter ways of working that will impact on Climate Change. However on-line meetings, courses and support, with the associated benefit for Climate Change will continue to be developed.
- 7.2 There are Carers' Centres in each town which will reduce unnecessary travel. These are all accessible by nearby public transport.

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 If the Strategy were not implemented, this would have significant negative impact on Torbay's Carers, their health, wellbeing and feeling of value. This would impact on the health and wellbeing of people they care for, and by increasing the risk of Carer breakdown, increase admissions to hospital / residential care and strain on Torbay's Health and Social Care.

9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups'

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
Older or younger people	Young Carers and older mutual Carers		
People with caring Responsibilities	Yes		
People with a disability	Yes - indirectly		

Women or men	(Targeting male Carers as underrepresented)		No differential
People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)	Yes – explicitly targeting these groups to have positive impact		
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)			No differential
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	(promoting support to LGBTQ+ Carers)		No differential
People who are transgendered	(as above)		No differential
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership			No differential
Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave			No differential
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	Addressing support with Carers' finances and in areas of deprivation		
Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	Positive impact on Carers' Health and Wellbeing and those who they care for.		

10. Cumulative Council Impact

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

11.1 None

Appendix 1:

‘Working together for Torbay’s Carers’

Torbay’s Plan for Carers 2024 -27 **An Inter-agency Strategy for All Carers**

Who is a Carer?

Anyone who cares for a relative, friend or neighbour who cannot manage alone without them. (Unless its 'usual' parenting, their paid or voluntary job.)

Two thirds of us will be a Carer within our lifetime. Carers can be:

- as young as four or five years old.
- older couples caring for each other.
- a parent caring for a child with a disability such as autism
- 'mutual Carers' – caring for each other. An example is a person with a learning disability whose parent has physical health needs.
- someone who 'keeps an eye' on a neighbour with dementia. They may collect shopping or prescriptions for them.
- someone supporting a friend with drug, alcohol or mental health needs. They may provide emotional support.

There are many other examples.

Why support Carers?

Carers are very important. Without them, health and care services would not be able to provide enough support for people who need help.

There are laws and guidance about how Carers should be supported. Many local organisations have plans to support Carers or the people that they care for. They have agreed to work together to support Carers and signed a Commitment to Carers. (Sub-Appendix 1). It is based on the 'Triangle of Care'. This is equal partnership between professionals, Carers and the people that they care for. We try to make sure that work is 'joined up' -that we are all working towards the same goals.

What do Torbay's Carers want?

Every three years, Torbay Carers' Service works with Carers to make a survey about what they want. Healthwatch manages the survey, so it is independent. The results are published on-line ⁷ and help us agree the priorities for the next three years.

We also publish how we have performed against the previous plans. ⁸

This plan includes Young Carers under 25. Once it is agreed, they will develop their own more detailed plan. ⁹

⁷ [Torbay Carers Strategy Consultation 2024 – Engaging Communities South West](#)

⁸ [Strategy, policy and quality - Torbay Carers Service \(torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk\)](#)

⁹ [Strategy, policy and quality - Torbay Carers Service \(torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk\)](#)

Carers' Priorities for 2024-27

- 1. As soon as I start my caring role, I want to be identified, recognised and valued as a Carer.**
- 2. I want to be able to easily find information, advice and support to meet my needs as a Carer.**
- 3. I want to know that every Carer involved in a person's care can have a Carer's assessment when they need one.**
- 4. I want to be confident that Carers guide all things that affect them.**
- 5. I want the care and support to the person that I care for to also meet my needs as their Carer.**

Within these priorities, there are other issues to be addressed:

- a. Information to Carers to include support to the person they care for
- b. Carers and employment
- c. Carers' own mental health. Support to people with Mental Health issues and their Carers
- d. Partnership working / information sharing across organisations
- e. Carers' finance / cost-of living challenges
- f. Improving support at transitions
- g. Improving use of technology and digital support

What happens next?

An outline action plan has been agreed for the three years of the Strategy ([link](#)). The detailed actions for 2024-5 are on the next page. For each of the five main priorities, organisations have agreed the first actions to focus on. These are written in bold.

How will Carers know what has been achieved?

Actions will be measured and reported quarterly to the Carers' Strategy Steering Group. This is a group of Carers and staff from health and care organisations. They make sure that the plans are on track.

We will publish progress on-line every 3 months. ¹⁰ We will also report achievements in the Signposts magazine. Every year in April, we will update the action plan.

¹⁰ [Strategy, policy and quality - Torbay Carers Service \(torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk\)](#)

1. 'As soon as I start my caring role, I want to be identified, recognised and valued as a Carer.'

	Target / Service Standard. <i>Priority for 2024- 25 in bold.</i>	Organisations
1.1	Have or develop basic Carer Awareness Training at induction and role-specific as required. To cover identifying, involving and valuing Carers, including staff Carers. Ideally to be designed and delivered / co-delivered with Carers	Devon Partnership Trust, Torbay + S Devon Trust, Torbay Council, GP practices
1.2	Have mechanisms to identify staff Carers joining the organisation and at annual review	Devon Partnership Trust, Torbay + S Devon Trust, Torbay Council, GP practices
1.3	Work towards identifying Carers at the earliest contact with their service.	All organisations above. Community Helpline
1.4	GP practices to increase numbers of people coded as Carers	GP practices
1.5	Embed Triangle of Care in Acute and Community Hospitals	Torbay +S Devon NHS Foundation Trust
1.6	Embed Triangle of Care across inpatient and community Mental Health Services	Devon Partnership Trust
1.7	Evaluation about Parent Carers feeling valued by Children with Disability Team. To include transitions (links with 3.2 and 4.3)	Torbay Council with parent Carers and Carers Services

2. 'I want to be able to easily find information, advice and support to meet my needs as a Carer.'

	Target / Service Standard. <i>Priority for 2024- 25 in bold.</i>	Organisations
2.1	To refer Carers to Signposts Information and Advice Service. To encourage Carers to join Torbay Carers to access support.	Devon Partnership Trust, Torbay + S Devon Trust, Torbay Council, Community Helpline
2.2	Work with Carers to produce on-line and paper Carer information. To promote information for Carers Week, Carers Rights Day, Young Carers Action Day.	Devon Partnership Trust, Torbay + S Devon Trust, Torbay Council, GP practices
2.3	To maintain Carer support to Carers of all ages as per Sub-Appendix 2.	Torbay + S Devon Trust, Torbay Council, Carers Services, Young Carers' Services with Carers
2.4	To maintain a range of Carer information both on-line and in paper.	Torbay Carers' Service with Carers
2.5	To quickly produce a brief booklet about Carer support. Then co-produce a fuller version with Carers	Torbay Carers' Service with Carers
2.6	To work together to ensure needs of Mental Health Carers are being met	Devon Partnership Trust, Torbay + S Devon Trust, Carers Services, Young Carers Service, Carers
2.7	Work with partners to develop volunteer-delivered sitting service	Torbay Carers' Service with partners

3. 'I want to know that every Carer involved in a person's care can have a Carer's assessment when they need one.'

	Target / Service Standard. <i>Priority for 2024- 25 in bold.</i>	Organisations
3.1	All organisations that undertake Carer assessments to meet targets.	Torbay Young Carers Service, Children with Disabilities Team. Adult Social Care. Torbay Carers and commissioned Carers' services
3.2	Evaluation of quality of assessments including waiting times (See 1.7, 4.3)	Children with Disability team
3.3	At every opportunity especially at transitions to ensure processes identify, involve and support <u>all</u> Carers. Young Carers Service to report referrals from: Adult Social Care Mental Health Services Substance Misuse Services	Torbay + S Devon Trust's Adult Social Care and Community Services. Children's Social Care, Devon Partnership Trust

4. 'I want to be confident that Carers guide all things that affect them.'

	Target / Service Standard. <i>Priority for 2024- 25 in bold.</i>	Organisations
4.1	To involve Carers in service development / commissioning / policies / procedures / services that directly affect them. To include: Consultation, Engagement, Co-design and Co-production Carers to decide how to measure how well these are done.	Young Carers' Service. Children with Disabilities Team. Devon Partnership Trust. Torbay Carers including Commissioned Carers Services, Adult Social Care.
4.2	Evaluation of quality of Parent Carer Needs Assessments and plans. (See 1.7 and 3.2). To be co-produced with parent Carers	Children with Disabilities team. Torbay Carers' Service Carer Evaluators
4.3	Regular / sample audits of separate and combined Carers Assessments re involvement.	Torbay Carers' and Young Carers' Services, Adult Social Care, Children with Disability Team
4.4	To develop means for receiving timely feedback from Carers. Then respond in a timely fashion	Torbay Carers' Service

5. I want the care and support to the person that I care for to also meet my needs as their Carer.

	Target / Service Standard. <i>Priority for 2024- 25 in bold.</i>	Organisations
5.1	To involve Carers in service development / commissioning / policies / procedures / services that affect the person that they care for. To include: Consultation, Engagement, Co-design and Co-production Carers to decide how to measure how well these are done.	Torbay + S Devon NHS F Trust, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care Devon Partnership Trust (DPT)
5.2	Regular sample audit of Assessments. Children with Disability Team, transitions. Adult Social Care, Mental Health and Older People's Mental Health	Children with Disability Team, Adult Social Care, Devon Partnership Trust
5.3	To improve access to and range of replacement care (respite) services.	Adult Social Care Children's Social Care
5.4	Triangle of Care rolled out across acute and community hospital wards. Regular audit of nursing records	Torbay + S Devon NHS F Trust
5.5	Adult Social Care to investigate getting timely feedback from Carers and the person that they care for. Then to respond to concerns	Adult Social Care

Sub-Appendix One: National and Local guidance and Plans for Carers

Law and Guidance About Carers

2014 Care Act. [Your guide to the Care Act \(England\) | Carers UK](#)

2014 Children and Families Act. [The Children & Families Act 2014 | Carers Trust](#)

2019 NHS Long-Term Plan had the following priorities for Carers. [NHS Long Term Plan » Our long term commitment to carers](#)

2020 NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence). Carers of Adults NG 150. [Overview | Supporting adult carers | Guidance | NICE](#)

2021 NICE. Quality Standard QS 200. [Overview | Supporting adult carers | Quality standards | NICE](#)

2022 Health and Care Act 2022. [health-and-care-act-2022-carers-rights-2.pdf \(carersuk.org\)](#) Carers to be involved in hospital discharge planning. NHS to consult with Carers.

Other Plans that Include Carers in Torbay

- Torbay's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026. [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026 - Torbay Council](#)
- Torbay Adult Social Care Strategy. [Adult social care - Torbay Council](#)
- Torbay's Learning Disability Big Plan. [Big Plan - Torbay Council](#)
- Torbay SEND Strategy. [Torbay SEND strategy 2023 - Torbay Council](#)
- Devon Partnership Trust's Carers' Strategy. [Introducing the Carers Strategy 2024 - 2027 | DPT](#)

Devon-wide Commitment to Carers. [Commitment to Carers \(cloud.microsoft\)](#) The seven principles are:

- 1: Identifying Carers and supporting them
- 2: Effective Support for Carers
- 3: Enabling Carers to make informed choices about their caring role
- 4: Staff awareness
- 5: Information-sharing
- 6: Respecting Carers as expert partners in care
- 7: Supporting Carers whose roles are changing or who are more vulnerable

Torbay Commitment to Carers partners are:

- Torbay And South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
- Torbay Council
- Devon Partnership Trust
- Compass House Medical Centres. (All GP practices do Carers' Quality Markers)
- Rowcroft
- Citizens' Advice Torbay

Sub-Appendix Two: Torbay's Carers' Services

- Signposts for Carers Information Service including Hospital Advice Point
- Access to Carers UK digital and Employers for Carers Support
- Carers' Centres in each town, linked with voluntary sector partners
- Torbay Carers' Register and associated Carer Passport support
- Carer Education Courses
- Carers Emotional Support Scheme for eligible Carers of people aged 16 or over
- Carers Direct Payments for eligible Carers of Adults
- Carer Support Workers in GP practices
- 'Floating' Carer Support available across Bay
- Carers' Assessment, Support and Enabling Service (Carers' Aid Torbay)
- Bay Benefits and Carers' Choices Cost of living Support (provided by Carers' Aid Torbay)
- Specialist Carer Support –
 - Young Carer Service (under 18)
 - Young Adult Carer Service (16-25)
 - Hospital-based Carer Support incl. Support Workers and Family / Carer Supporters
 - Carers who are Veterans or Carers of Veteran
 - Carers of adult with
 - Mental Health Issues under 65
 - Mental Health Issues over 65
 - a learning Disability (provided by Devon Link-Up)
 - with autism (provided by Dimensions for Autism)
- Work related support. To enable Carers to continue to work or return to work
- Digital inclusion. To ensure Carers who wish to can increase their skills and confidence on-line
- Targeted support to Carers who are under-represented or find it hard to access services. This includes Carers from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. It also includes male Carers, LGTBQ+ Carers, Carers with a learning Disability or who are Sign Language users.

Torbay Carers' Strategy

2024 - 2027

**An Inter-agency Commitment to meet
the needs of Torbay's Carers,
including Young Carers.**

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1. Introduction

Who is a Carer?

A Carer is anyone, including a child, who provides care to another person. This excludes people who do it as paid work, voluntary work, or ordinary parenting. It includes caring for a partner, relative, friend or neighbour, if they have a physical, sensory, or learning disability, mental health or drug/alcohol issues, frailty, illness, long-term health condition and/or vulnerability which means that they cannot manage alone in the community.

Sometimes people are 'mutual carers' - they support each other. Often everything works well until one person's health deteriorates or their situation changes.

Two out of three of us (65%) will be a Carer at some time in our life. Many people do not realise that they are considered to be a Carer, or that there is a wide range of support available to them. Torbay Carers' Strategy helps us to address this issue.

Why have a Carers' Strategy?

Torbay has had an inter-agency strategy (plan) for Carers since 2000 and it is updated every three years. Torbay's Carers are consulted to find out what their priorities are, and these are worked into the Carers' Strategy alongside national and regional priorities. The main agencies who come into contact with Carers then work together to create an action plan to achieve these priorities.

Having an inter-agency Strategy and Action Plan helps partners work together in a joined-up way, to achieve what Carers really need. Representatives of Carers and of the various agencies meet quarterly to ensure that the Strategy Action Plan remains on track. The updates are published on-line.¹¹

2. National Context

In the 24 years since our first Strategy was published, awareness about Carers, especially Young Carers has increased significantly. In 2014, the Care Act and Children and Families Act made the health and wellbeing of Carers a priority by law.

In 2019, the NHS published a Long-Term Plan with the following priorities for Carers.

1. GP Quality Markers for Carers
2. Identify and Support for Carers from Vulnerable Communities
3. Adoption of Carers' Passports
4. Information sharing
5. Contingency Planning
6. Supporting Young Carers

NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) published guidelines for support to Carers of Adults in 2020 and launched Quality Standards in March 2021¹². These will be built into the Strategy action plan.

¹¹ <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/carers-service/strategy-policy-and-quality/>.

¹² [Overview | Supporting adult carers | Quality standards | NICE](#)

The Health and Care Act 2022 introduced an obligation for Carers to be involved in hospital discharge planning and for the NHS to consult with Carers. Carers UK undertakes annual surveys of Carers. Their 2023 survey shows that Carers' health and wellbeing is deteriorating, their employment is significantly affected by caring, and the cost of living is also having an adverse effect. *'It highlights how people caring round the clock for older, disabled or seriously ill relatives do not have adequate support from statutory services that are in place to help them – leaving many steeped in thoughts of hopelessness, fear, and dread, and urgently in need of support'* ¹³ .

3. Local Context

In the 2021 Census, approximately 15,000 people in Torbay identified themselves as Carers. However, we know that many people do not see themselves as Carers, or do not identify their children as having a caring role in the family. Actual numbers are likely to be much higher and this is backed up by the 2023 GP survey¹⁴. Torbay has a very high level of Carers providing more than 50 hrs care per week – 6th highest Local Authority out of 317 in England according to the 2021 census.

In 2018, Carers' Leads and Carers developed a Devon-wide Commitment to Carers. It was based on NHSE's 2014 Commitment to Carers and the Triangle of Care (treating Carers as expert partners in care). The seven principles are:

- 1: Identifying Carers and supporting them
- 2: Effective Support for Carers
- 3: Enabling Carers to make informed choices about their caring role
- 4: Staff awareness
- 5: Information-sharing
- 6: Respecting Carers as expert partners in care
- 7: Supporting Carers whose roles are changing or who are more vulnerable

Devon's main health and care organisations signed up to these principles in October 2019. Many have subsequently undertaken self-assessments and action plans to help them to achieve these priorities.¹⁵ Every year, their top three priority actions are added to the Action Plan for the Carers' Strategy and reported quarterly.

Carers is a cross-cutting Area in Torbay's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026.¹⁶

In 2023-24, other strategies were launched that impact upon Torbay's Carers:

¹³ [State of Caring survey | Carers UK](#)

¹⁴ [National GP patient survey 2023](#)

¹⁵ [Carers - One Devon](#)

¹⁶ [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026 - Torbay Council](#)

- Torbay Adult Social Care Strategy,¹⁷
- Torbay's Learning Disability Big Plan¹⁸
- Torbay SEND Strategy¹⁹
- Devon Partnership Trust's Carers' Strategy²⁰.

The Carers' Strategy Action Plan will include actions relating to all the above.

4. Review of Torbay Carers Strategy 2021-2024²¹

Despite Covid impacting Carer Support in 2021-22, almost all the **169** targets within the 2021-24 strategy were achieved. That huge success is testament to the dedication and hard work of all parties but particularly Torbay Carers Services in keeping actions on track. The main summary is below, and final progress will be published on-line in May 2024²².

Identification of Carers – (29 targets, 28 met)

- All Torbay's main health and care organisations other than SW Ambulance Service signed a Commitment to Carers (C2C), and most report quarterly on their priorities. Citizens Advice Torbay also signed a C2C whilst Samaritans and Fire Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding.
- All Torbay's GP practices completed their Carers' Quality Markers, and achieved their Carer identification target, some reaching the stretch target of 7% of patient list. However, Carers still report that doctor's surgeries are the main place where they could have been identified sooner.
- Torbay Hospital is re-promoting the Triangle of Care, improving identification and involvement of Carers. This started in the Emergency Department and is being rolled out across the Hospital.
- Work has been undertaken to improve identification of Carers from minority ethnic backgrounds, and a community link worker is being piloted to further improve this.
- Awareness campaigns have been undertaken with a wide range of organisations.
- Torbay Carers Services now runs an annual event for Carers Rights Day with Paignton Library's Christmas Fayre in order to raise public awareness. It provides information, advice, and support for Carers with a huge range of partners.

Information, Advice and Support (59 targets, 51 met, Carers' Information Booklet delayed, 6 partially achieved, 1 not achieved – Performance in Top Quartile – Carers find information easily)

¹⁷ [Adult social care - Torbay Council](#)

¹⁸ [Big Plan - Torbay Council](#)

¹⁹ [Torbay SEND strategy 2023 - Torbay Council](#)

²⁰ [Introducing the Carers Strategy 2024 - 2027 | DPT](#)

²¹ <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/uploads/torbay-carers-strategy-2021-2024.pdf>

²² <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/carers-service/strategy-policy-and-quality/>.

- We have maintained most existing Carers' Information and Support Services, and those that have been used have been generally well-rated by Carers. Signposts information Service and Signposts Newsletter were the most positively reviewed.²³
- The Community Mental Health Team reduced their Carer Support Worker hours. Whilst their Assessments are on track, 81% of Mental Health Carers felt not at all or not very supported.²⁴
- Torbay Carers Service suffered significant IT issues. Changes in the Council IT server necessitated a 17-month Carers' Register rebuild, significantly delaying planned developments and the launch of the Carers' Passport. The 'Torbay Carers Together' website changed hosting platforms and is not live at present.
- Despite the Register issues, the 10% increase target was achieved year on year and at end March 2024 there are 5392 registered Carers. Processes are seen nationally as good practice in terms of asking consent to share with partner organisations, and of having Carer Contingency Plans and discounts as standard.
- Hospital support was fully reinstated after Covid. Funding was obtained to appoint a worker to improve Hospital communication with Carers and evaluation shows that this was very successful²⁵. Developments also included supporting Carers with Virtual Wards and technology to support Carers with discharge.
- Torbay Young Carers Service moved to the Youth Trust in 2021 and back to the Council in 2023. Young Carers were not adversely affected by the changes as the service worked hard to maintain direct support. There has been a significant increase in identification of primary school age Young Carers during this time.
- The interagency Young Carers Under 25 Strategy 2022-25 was launched and its work demonstrates good partnership working to achieve early identification of and support to Young Carers under 25.
- On-line support to Parent Carers has improved with several on-line workshops, awareness, training sessions provided throughout the year, particularly at school transition times.
- With regard to staff Carers, Torbay and S Devon NHS Foundation Trust achieved Employers for Carers, Carer Confident Level 2 'Accomplished' Award – only the second NHS Trust to achieve this. It also launched an award for managers who support staff Carers which is now being adopted by Torbay Council.
- Partnership work including the voluntary sector continues. A network of Carers allies meets regularly and there are close links with Paignton's Community Hub.
- Targeted work has been undertaken to support veterans and Carers of veterans, with much positive feedback from these Carers.
- Carers Aid Torbay has group activities targeting men as they are not well-represented at many Carers groups or activities. Their Bay Benefits Service for Carers now includes Carers' Choices cost-of-living support.
- Work has continued to improve support Carers from ethnic minority, refugee, and asylum seeker backgrounds, although Carers Services has not yet achieved the target of parity between population and Register. A Community-link worker role is being piloted to continue this work and also target Carers in areas of deprivation

²³[Torbay Carers Strategy Consultation 2024 – Engaging Communities South West](#)

²⁴[Torbay Carers Strategy Consultation 2024 – Engaging Communities South West](#)

²⁵[Evaluation of the impact of the Ward Family / Carer Liaison Worker on George Earle Ward \(torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk\)](#)

or who are vulnerable.

Carers' assessment including whole family approach (39 targets, 34 achieved)

- GP Carer Support Workers exceeded their annual target of 500 Health and Wellbeing Checks (HWBCs) in two out of the three years. (602 in 2023-24)
- Carers' Aid Torbay continued to provide independent enabling and advocacy, and they met all annual targets.
- This contributed to Adult Social Care meeting their Assessment target of 36% each year and achieved 46% against their stretch target of 40%.
- Children's Services met their target for Parent Carers Needs Assessments in 21-22, increased the target for 22-23 which was not achieved, but are on track to achieve it for 23-24*.
- Referrals to Young Carers Service from Adult Social Care, Mental Health and Substance Misuse are consistently low and not achieving target.

Involvement of Carers in service delivery, evaluation and commissioning (23 targets, all achieved to some extent)

- Carers Services used Healthwatch's 2021-24 Strategy Report and National Carers' feedback to shape the Strategy and action plan.
- Staff Carer support has been shaped with staff Carers, and this will continue.
- Carers are represented in all levels and functions of Torbay Carers Service and the Young Adult Carers Operational Group demonstrates good levels of involvement with Young Adult Carers (16-25).
- SEND Family Voice Torbay has been set up during this time which enables engagement with Parent Carers of children.
- There has also been a much-improved level of engagement and co-production with Carers within the Strategies mentioned in Section 3.
- Peer support improved with some new groups, eg Carers of Adults with Autism and 'Your Time' Carers' group. The Carers' Volunteer Phonenumber suffered a hiatus with the retirement of some key members but re-launched in January 2024.
- The Autism Partnership Board which was set up during this strategy period has two Carer Ambassadors representing Carers' Voice, in the same way as the Learning Disability Partnership.
- Many service evaluations have been undertaken by Carer Evaluators and the feedback built into developing services. Use of Carers' Direct Payments, Carers Technology Enabled Care Pilot, Carers of Adults with Learning Disability Service, Hospital Carer Liaison Pilot, Volunteer phonenumber and Carers Assessments. Evaluations are published on-line.²⁶

Enhancement of Support to the person being cared for (19 targets, 3 not fully achieved yet, 16 achieved)

²⁶ [Strategy, policy and quality - Torbay Carers Service \(torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk\)](https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk)

- Replacement Care is still the biggest area of concern for Carers of Adults, and it is on the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan. Torbay's share of 2024-26 Accelerated Reform Funding will be targeting this enabling us to improve Shared Lives provision and accelerate achievement of two of the targets not yet fully achieved - the volunteer-run sitting service and increasing Carers' access to the Arranging Support Team.
- Although availability and provision of Short Breaks for adults needs to be improved, the processes within the Short Break Vouchers Scheme for adults with a learning disability are being significantly improved based on feedback from Carers who use it.
- Children's Services reviewed their Short Breaks offer and have an ongoing recruitment campaign to recruit additional foster Carers offering specialist support and breaks to Carers.
- Torbay Carers Service has continued to work with local hospitality providers to provide discounted stays for Carers and signed up to Carefree Breaks which offers occasional free breaks to Carers. Both have a significant impact on Carers' health and wellbeing.
- Torbay Carers Service Technology Enabled Care pilot was very successful and therefore ongoing funding has now been allocated within baseline budget.
- Planning ahead is of critical importance to prevent Carer breakdown. It has been built into the contract for Carers of Adults with Learning Disability to work with Adult Social Care to achieve this more rigorously. Carers Services have improved their website information about planning ahead, and the recent Carers' Rights event had a room dedicated to planning ahead which included solicitors, Rowcroft, Age UK Torbay and other partners.

5. Formulation of Priorities for 2024-2027

The development of potential priorities for 2024-27 was based on Carer Consultation while taking account of national and local priorities, and evidence of what works well.

Engaging Communities South West carried out a Carers' engagement exercise in late 2023, with 377 Carers responding.²⁷ Despite sending paper surveys to all, this was a lower return rate than previously, but still significantly higher than most Carers Surveys. We think this was due to 'consultation fatigue' as Carers had engaged in the three strategies mentioned in Section 3, plus Healthwatch's own Survey into Carer Breakdown²⁸ and the biennial Personal Social Services National Carers Survey.

The detailed feedback from Carers will be used to shape the action plans linked with this Strategy and the Young Carers under 25 Strategy 2025-28. The higher level actions for Young Carers under 25 will be outlined within this Strategy and monitored in both Strategy Steering Groups.

²⁷ [Torbay Carers Strategy Consultation 2024 – Engaging Communities South West](#)

²⁸ [The impact of providing unpaid care at home \(Phase 2\) - Healthwatch Devon](#)

6. Carers' Priorities for 2024-27

Carers have agreed that the priorities from the previous strategy will remain the same. They have developed 'I statements' showing what they want.

1. 'As soon as I start my caring role, I want to be identified, recognised and valued as a Carer.'
2. 'I want to be able to easily find information, advice and support to meet my needs as a Carer.'
3. 'I want to know that every Carer involved in a person's care can have a Carer's assessment when they need one.'
4. 'I want to be confident that Carers guide all things that affect them.'
5. 'I want the care and support to the person that I care for to also meet my needs as their Carer.'

Within these priorities, there are other issues to be addressed:

- h. Information to Carers to include support to the person they care for
- i. Carers and employment
- j. Carers' own mental health and support to people with Mental Health issues and their Carers
- k. Partnership working / information sharing across organisations
- l. Carers finance / cost-of living challenges
- m. Improving support at transitions
- n. Improving use of technology and digital support

7. Commitment to Carers – Partners in Torbay

Torbay Council (Council)
Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (Trust)
Devon Partnership Trust (DPT)
One Devon – Integrated Care Board (ICB)
Rowcroft Hospice
Citizens Advice Torbay
Compass House Medical Centres
Plus all Torbay GP practices (under GP Carers' Quality Markers)

Where 'partners' are referred to in the action plan, this will include all partners above, 'Health and Care partners' excludes Citizen's Advice Torbay.

Torbay Carers' Strategy 2024 – 2027. Outline Action Plan

2. 'As soon as I start my caring role, I want to be identified, recognised and valued as a Carer.'

Service Standards for Identifying, recording and valuing Carers: Commitment to Carers Principles 1 & 7, NICE Quality Standard 1, Torbay SEND Strategy Priority 2; DPT Carers' Strategy – Priority 1; GP Quality Marker - Identification and registration.

1.1	Partners to work towards identifying Carers at every opportunity when the public link with their services.
1.2	Torbay Council, Trust and DPT to prioritise early identification of Carers within Education, Health and Social Care using the whole family approach. This means identifying <u>any</u> Carer eg Education actively identifying Young Carers and Parent Carers, but also supporting identification parents who may have caring responsibilities for adults.
1.3	SEND services to proactively identify parent Carers and sibling Carers at the earliest opportunity.
1.4	Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care to ensure early identification is prioritised at people's first contact including through family or community hubs.
1.5	To promote Carer self-identification, all partners' communications team to produce or disseminate communications to support public awareness of Carers such as during Carers Week / Carers Rights Day / Young Carers Action Day. (Carers Services will support this). Also to promote self-identification of staff who are Carers.
1.6	All partners to develop systems to identify staff Carers at appointment and at annual reviews.

Enablers – sharing information – Service standards: Commitment to Carers Principle 5; DPT Carers' Strategy Priority 3

1.7	All organisations, whenever a Carer is identified, to have systems in place to record this (GPs to SnoMed code correctly), to record consent to share this information with appropriate partners, such as Torbay Carers, and then do so.
1.8	Within services supporting Carers, to encourage Carers to allow sharing of their information so that support is sensitive, tailored, joined-up and effective.
1.9	Health and Social Care organisations to have appropriate policies and protocols about confidentiality and information sharing. Practice should encourage people with care and support needs to share information about their needs with their Carer(s) to enable their full participation in care and support planning.

Enablers – Awareness / training – Service standards: Commitment to Carers Principle 4; DPT Carers' Strategy Priority 2; GP Quality Marker - Awareness and Culture;

1.10	Partners to work towards staff having Carer Awareness training at a level appropriate to their role. This should be undertaken at induction and as part of workforce development plans. This should include Managers' awareness of staff Carers and how to support them. For education (SEND), health and social care staff this should include valuing Carers as equal partners in someone's education, care and support.
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2. 'I want to be able to easily find information, advice and support to meet my needs as a Carer.'

Service standards for Information provision – Care Act 2014, Children and Families Act 2014, NICE Guidance for Carers of Adults (NG150); DPT Carers' Strategy Priority 5; GP Quality Marker - Information, involvement, and communication.

2.1 Health and Care partners to meet the legal requirements and guidance above. Information should be developed with Carers, be easy to find, easy to understand and accessible. Information must enable Carers to find support for themselves and the person that they care for.

2.2 Council and Trust to maintain funding for Carer Information Services to enable access to Carer information above. This includes Signposts Carers Information Service including electronic and paper resources as required.

Service standards for Effective Support for Carers – Care Act 2014, Children and Families Act 2014, Commitment to Carers Principles 2+3 DPT Carers' Strategy Priorities 4 + 6; GP Quality Markers - holistic support; in practice support; appointments and access.

2.3 All partners to meet the legal requirements and guidance above. Support to Carers must mitigate the negative impacts of caring – mental / physical / educational / financial / employment

2.4 Health and Care partners must enable Carers to make informed choices about their lives, including choosing not to provide care or to limit their caring role. Services must plan ahead with the Carer and the person that they care for in order to meet both person's needs to include:

- a. contingency, short term and long-term plans including for end-of-life care and life after caring
- b. transitions between schools / to adulthood / to adult services
- c. transitions between services
- d. transitions to increased independence

2.5 Torbay Council to maintain funding of Torbay Young Carers Service to support Carers younger than age 18. Service to include school-based support, activity-based support and 1-1 support of those young Carers most in need. Service to mitigate the impact of caring on Young Carers' educational attendance and attainment, their future employment and life choices.

2.6 Council / Trust to maintain funding of Torbay Carers' Service for:

- Torbay Carers' Register and associated support
- Carer Education Courses
- Carers Emotional Support Scheme for eligible Carers of people aged 16 or over
- Carers Direct Payments for eligible Carers of Adults
- Carer Support Workers in GP practices
- 'Floating' Carer Support available across Bay
- Carers Centres in each town, linked with voluntary sector partners

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers' Assessment, Support and Enabling Service (Carers' Aid Torbay) • Bay Benefits and Carers Choices Cost of living Support (provided by Carers' Aid Torbay) • Hospital-based Carer Support including Advice Point, Carer Support Workers and Family / Carer Supporters • Older People's Mental Health Support Worker • Young Adult Carer Service (16-25) • Support to Carers of Adults with a learning Disability (provided by Devon Link-Up) • Support to Carers of Adults with autism (provided by Dimensions for Autism) • Access to Carers UK digital and Employers for Carers Support
2.7	<p>Carer Support will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work related support – to enable Carers to continue to work or return to work • Digital inclusion – to ensure Carers who wish to are enabled to increase their skills and confidence on-line • Targeted support to Carers who are under-represented or find it hard to access services such as those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, LGTBQ+ Carers, Carers with a learning Disability or who are Sign Language users. • Development of a 'checking in' type of support to Carers who are most in need.
2.8	Torbay Council Children's Services to maintain funding for parent Carer support.
2.9	Given Carer feedback particular focus needs to be given to supporting Carers of people with mental health issues.
Service standard for Support to Staff Carers - NICE Quality Standard 5.	
2.10	All partners to offer supportive working arrangements to staff who are also Carers.

3. 'I want to know that every Carer involved in a person's care can have a Carer's assessment when they need one.'

Service standards for Carers' Assessments – Care Act 2014, Children and Families Act 2014, NICE Quality Standards 3 + 4.

3.1	<p>Council, Trust and DPT to meet the legal obligations and Quality Standards above. Assessments must be person-centred, strengths-based, and focusing on what matters to the Carer. NB Targets will be set and evaluations carried out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Carer's Assessments • Parent Carer Needs Assessments • Carer's Assessments (separate or combined)
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3.2	Health and Care partners to ensure that the Whole Family Approach is fully embedded in all services so that <u>every</u> Carer involved in a person's care is identified, whatever their age and regardless of the number of Carers involved. They should each be offered their own Carer's Assessment.
3.3	Health and Care partners to ensure that Carers' assessments identify Carers at highest risk of breakdown. Once 'high risk' Carers identified, agree support required and contingency plans. Develop over-arching plans to target those most at risk.
3.4	Health and Care partners to ensure that Carers are regularly given the opportunity to discuss the value of having a break from caring and the options available to them. This links with Section 5 about support to the person being cared for, where 'replacement care' (often known as 'respite' care) is essential to enable Carers to have a break.

4. 'I want to be confident that Carers guide all things that affect them.'

Service standards for respecting Carers as expert partners in care – Commitment to Carers Principle 6, NICE Quality Standard 2, Health and Care Act 2022.

At an individual level

4.1	Health and Care partners will respect Carers as expert partners in care and involve them holistically in care planning, decision making and reviews both for them and the person that they care for.
4.2	Health and Care partners' staff will support and empower Carers to fulfil the above role.
4.3	Health partners will involve Carers in an inpatient's care and discharge planning at the earliest opportunity.

At a more strategic level such as planning or commissioning services which affect them.

4.4	Council, Trust and DPT will involve Carers in guiding, monitoring and reviewing services that affect them and the person that they care for so that they can demonstrate successes and where improvements are required. This should include engagement with service development, service delivery, evaluation, and commissioning.
4.5	Council, Trust and DPT to ensure that Carers are involved at all levels in shaping Carers' services, aiming for true co-production. This includes service development, service delivery, evaluation and commissioning for Torbay Carers Service, Torbay Young Carers Service and services to parent Carers.
4.6	The Integrated Care Board will consult with Carers on changes to health services, either new services or ways of delivering health services.
4.7	Health and Care partners to identify unmet Carers' needs and where appropriate build into future commissioning plans.
4.8	Whenever Carers are involved or consulted, all partners will be clear about timescales for action and feedback. This is so that Carers are aware of their impact in shaping services which affect them, but also clear when this is not possible, and the reasons why not.

5. 'I want the care and support to the person that I care for to also meet my needs as their Carer.'

Service Standard for Services meeting needs of both the Carers/s and the person that they care for Care Act 2014, Children and Families Act 2014; Health and Care Act 2022; Commitment to Carers Principle 2; GP Quality Marker - Information, involvement and communication.

5.1	Health and Care partners' staff to ensure that a Carer's needs are taken into consideration when planning care and support for the person being cared for. This includes their need to have regular breaks from caring. Carers are to be treated as valued partners in the care and support of the person that they care for.
5.2	Given Carer Feedback, the above needs to be a particular target for Mental Health Services, including within the Community Mental Health Framework.
5.3	Council and Trust commissioners to improve access to and the range of replacement care to enable Carers to take regular or sporadic breaks from caring. This must include breaks at both long and short notice. The care delivered must be appropriate to the care needs of the person being cared for and offered either at home or in another establishment. Work will involve data collection about unmet need which will help with the development of both short-term and longer-term commissioned solutions.
5.4	The Council, Trust and DPT should ensure that planning ahead happens in a timely fashion with transition, emergency, contingency and long-term plans being developed with the Carer and the person that they care for. This is especially important where the person being cared for is likely to need time to adapt to change such as a person with learning disability, autism, mental health issue or dementia.
5.5	Council and Trust to give consideration to the eligibility criteria for provision of equipment / technology to the person being cared for, if it also gives a Carer peace of mind, supporting their caring role. Continuation of Carers Services funding for short-term technology enabled care.
5.7	All Health and Care partners to involve Carers in service development, evaluation and commissioning of services to the person being cared for that also affect /benefit them. Where there are unmet Carers' needs, these should be noted and where appropriate built into future commissioning plans.

Background Documents

[Carers UK. Valuing Carers 2021.](#)

[Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England - NHS Digital](#)

[Caring as a social determinant of health \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[National GP patient survey 2023](#)

[State of Caring survey | Carers UK](#)

[Torbay Carers Strategy Consultation 2024 – Engaging Communities South West
Devonwide survey re impact of providing care at home - phase 2](#)

[Strategy, policy and quality - Torbay Carers Service \(torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk\)](#)

Law and Guidance About Carers

2014 Care Act. [Your guide to the Care Act \(England\) | Carers UK](#)

2014 Children and Families Act. [The Children & Families Act 2014 | Carers Trust](#)

2019 NHS Long-Term Plan had the following priorities for Carers. [NHS Long Term Plan » Our long term commitment to carers](#)

2020 NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence). Carers of Adults NG 150. [Overview | Supporting adult carers | Guidance | NICE](#)

2021 NICE. Quality Standard QS 200. [Overview | Supporting adult carers | Quality standards | NICE](#)

2022 Health and Care Act 2022. [health-and-care-act-2022-carers-rights-2.pdf \(carersuk.org\)](#)

Carers to be involved in hospital discharge planning. NHS to consult with Carers.

Other Plans that Include Carers in Torbay

- Torbay's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026. [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026 - Torbay Council](#)
- Torbay Adult Social Care Strategy. [Adult social care - Torbay Council](#)
- Torbay's Learning Disability Big Plan. [Big Plan - Torbay Council](#)
- Torbay SEND Strategy. [Torbay SEND strategy 2023 - Torbay Council](#)
- Devon Partnership Trust's Carers' Strategy. [Introducing the Carers Strategy 2024 - 2027 | DPT](#)

Devon-wide Commitment to Carers. [Commitment to Carers \(cloud.microsoft\)](#)