

SOUTH TEES CARERS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2025-26

This document defines priorities and actions agreed by members of the South Tees Carers Forum to be achieved during the final year of the South Tees Carers Strategy and beyond. Progress against actions will be monitored quarterly via the South Tees Commissioning Group and Forum. Where required working groups will be established to focus on specific actions.

1. Services and systems that work for carers

Priorities

- Ensure carers have access to quality, timely and appropriate support services
- Ensure that unpaid carers are supported to understand and access services offered within their Local Authority
- Prioritising mental health and wellbeing of the unpaid carer as a primary focus
- Improve identification and recognition of carers within health and social care systems
- Enhance collaboration between services to provide seamless and integrated support for carers

Action	Lead(s)	Progress
Further develop and promote clear pathways for carers to access information, advice and support across providers, LA's and Health.	MBC / RCBC We Care You Care	
Continue to work with GPs, hospitals and social care to ensure they proactively identify carers and refer them to appropriate services.	All – through BAU	
Embed training to highlight the needs of carers in various formats for social care practitioners across South Tees (during induction and annual refresh).	MBC/RCBC ST Providers	
Target and identify unpaid carers who are not currently known to services.	All	
Drive up quality of carers services.	South Tees Carers Forum	

2. Employment and financial wellbeing
<p>Priorities</p> <p>Increase awareness of support for carers to balance employment and caring responsibilities if it is their choice to do so.</p> <p>Encourage employers to identify carers and to develop carer-friendly policies and procedures that are consistent across the workforce.</p> <p>Ensure that the financial impact of unpaid caring is seen as a primary focus.</p> <p>Promote financial wellbeing of carers and ensure transparency about the available support and benefits for unpaid carers.</p>

Action	Lead(s)	Progress
Continue to raise the profile of carers employment rights (Carers Leave Regulations 2024) and support employers to become carer confident by introducing carer-friendly policies and procedures and carers passports.	All	
Signpost carers to existing tools and resources to understand their employment rights.	All	
Prioritise the financial impact of unpaid caring and ensure transparency about the available support and benefits for unpaid carers.	All	

3. Supporting young carers

Improve identification of young carers to offer a tailored service that meets their needs
 Minimise the negative impact of caring responsibilities on young carers' education, wellbeing and future opportunities.
 Continue to support schools, colleges and universities to provide appropriate support for young carers.
 Continue to support young carers through transition into adulthood.

Action	Lead(s)	Progress
Embed Young Carer training for social care practitioners across South Tees.	MBC / RCBC ST Providers	
Conduct targeted campaigns to reach young carers via appropriate social media platforms.	We Care You Care / Mobilise 16+	
Continue to empower young people to have a voice to shape services and policy.	All	
Target services that are not currently identifying and referring young carers for support.	All	
Explore how Local Authorities capture young carers data across systems.	MBC / RCBC	

Appendix 3

<p>4. Recognising and supporting carers in the wider community</p>
<p>Priorities</p> <p>Increase public awareness of unpaid carers and their contributions</p> <p>Focus on addressing social isolation of unpaid carers</p> <p>Ensure that carers' voices are central to decision-making</p> <p>Recognise changes in caring roles over time</p> <p>Identify under-represented groups of carers</p>

Action	Lead(s)	Progress
Continue to run regular targeted unpaid carers campaigns.	We Care You Care / Mobilise	
Ensure the voices of carers influence decisions; seek feedback via multiple sources including lived experience groups, surveys, practitioners, online platforms.	All	
Talk to carers, gather Mobilise insights, and feedback from peer support groups to understand how to manage isolation and loneliness.	All	
Research and learn from other local authorities around best practice in recognising carers from diverse backgrounds	All	
Talk to carers with adult children to understand how to support the carer through the transition pathway and when roles are reversed.	All	

5. Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for carers
<p>Priorities</p> <p>Expand on existing knowledge and use evidence-based approaches to improve policies and support services for carers</p> <p>Ensure that research findings are translated into practical support and policy changes</p> <p>Use evidence to offer innovative solutions to support carers</p>

Action	Lead(s)	Progress
Develop project with HDRC to research carers from ethnic minority communities across South Tees.	We Care You Care	
Continue project via HDRC to research identified young carers across South Tees who do not access services.	RCBC Children's Commissioning	
Seek best practice examples and link with other local authorities to understand how we can tailor our approach to supporting unpaid carers across South Tees.	All	
Ensure carers voices, CQC reports, data, best practice, providers and the South Tees Carers Forum informs and shapes future commissioning intentions.	All	