



## SOUTH TEES CARERS STRATEGY 2021-2026 Updated March 2025

This strategy sets out the priorities across the South Tees region for the identification and support of unpaid carers of all ages. The strategy is produced jointly between Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council and the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) Tees Valley in conjunction with the South Tees Carers Forum. As we move into the final year of this strategy, we will continue to listen to carers to ensure that their lived experience shapes our future direction.

*'A **Carer** is anyone, including **children and adults**, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is **unpaid**.'*<sup>1</sup>

[Appendix 1: types of unpaid carers](#)

**Our vision is to improve services, support, recognition and outcomes for unpaid carers of all ages and backgrounds in South Tees.**

### Background

Unpaid Carers of all ages across the UK provide vital care and support to their loved ones with a disability, chronic illness, mental health condition or age-related condition. The value of the support provided by unpaid carers should not be underestimated by health and social care services, who would otherwise struggle to meet the increasing demand associated with care. This strategy outlines the commitment of South Tees to recognise, support and empower all unpaid carers to prioritise their health and wellbeing.

### The current landscape

It is a challenge to understand the true landscape of unpaid carers, due to the varying methods of data collection and lack of self-recognition across people providing care.

According to 2021 census data, approximately 5.8 million residents aged 5 years and over in the U.K provide unpaid care (5 million are usual residents of England and Wales). This figure reflects around 9% of the population, which is a decrease from 11.4% in the 2011 census ( 6.5 million people in 2011<sup>2</sup> and 5.8 million in 2021<sup>3 4</sup>). **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Polling commissioned by Carers UK and conducted by YouGov for Carers Week 2024 found that 13% of adults (aged 18+) are currently caring<sup>5</sup>. The GP Patient Survey 2024 estimated that around 18.2% of the UK population are currently caring<sup>6</sup>. Based on ONS population data, this would equate to significantly more adults than indicated in the census currently caring across the U.K.

Caution should be taken when comparing data from 2011 and 2021 as the wording of the question relating to carers in the census (England & Wales) changed, which may have had an impact on the likelihood of self-identification as an unpaid carer<sup>7</sup>. It should also be noted that the Census took place during the Covid 19 pandemic, which may have influenced people's ability to provide unpaid care. In Scotland, there was a rise of 27.5% in the number of unpaid carers since the previous census in 2011; this could be due to the census being delayed until 2022 which may have contributed to the numbers of people *able* to provide care<sup>8</sup> and the question being more specific.

A Carers UK report published in 2021 highlighted the economic value of unpaid care hours across England and Wales. The unit cost for care is taken as £25/hour in 2021. Based on this figure, the value of unpaid carers' support across England and Wales is worth £162 billion per year, which has increased by 29% since 2011<sup>7</sup>.

Despite the importance of unpaid carers to the social care system, results from the 2023-24 Personal Services Survey of Adult Carers in England showed that outcomes for unpaid carers appear to be worsening rather than improving. 46.7% of unpaid carers felt they could look after themselves in 2023-24, compared with 49.2% in 2021-22<sup>9</sup>. 36.6% of unpaid carers felt that their caring responsibilities had caused financial difficulties to some extent, compared with 34.1% in 2021-23<sup>9</sup>. Additionally, a survey conducted and published by the Carers Trust highlighted that 55% of respondents reported not receiving the support they needed to be an unpaid carer<sup>10</sup>.

### Young Carers

Estimating the exact number of young unpaid carers across the UK is challenging due to variations in data collection and self-identification.

The 2021 census showed that there were 120,000 young unpaid carers in England and 8,200 in Wales between the age of 5-17 providing support to a parent or sibling with an illness or disability. The 2022 census in Scotland suggested that there were 44,310 carers identified in Scotland with young carers making up 15% of all unpaid carers (6,647)<sup>3</sup>. However, following the publication of the census, an update was released in April 2022 to suggest that there were around 30,000 young carers in Scotland<sup>11</sup>. Figures in Northern Ireland suggest that there are 2,600 young carers, although this only considers carers up to the age of 15<sup>4</sup>.

It is likely that figures are underestimated as a 2018 BBC survey suggests that there could be as many as 800,000 young carers 11 to 16 in the UK<sup>12</sup>. The School Census in 2023 however, reports that that only 54,000 pupils were identified as being young carers in England, so the exact number is unclear<sup>13</sup>.

38% of young carers surveyed in schools reported they regularly or sometimes missed school because of their caring responsibilities. 31% of carers said they were often late for school because of their caring responsibilities<sup>14</sup>.

It is also important to consider the support that young carers need when transitioning to adulthood. The Carers Trust report that there are at least 376,000 young adult carers (16-25) nationally<sup>15</sup>, yet according to Children's Society research only 13% of these young carers had received a Young Carers Transition Assessment<sup>16</sup>. 29% of young carers drop out of college/ university due to their caring role. This is four times greater than the national average reported for degree courses<sup>15</sup>. Early identification and support of young carers is vitally important to ensure that caring is not detrimental to the education and life opportunities of young people.

### South Tees Demographic & Geographic Comparisons

Both Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland have similar population sizes and comparable numbers of unpaid carers estimated to be living within their boundaries, 14,102 (10.5%)<sup>17</sup> and 14,332 (9.8%)<sup>18</sup> respectively. However, there are some notable differences in the geographical make-up of the two local authorities with Middlesbrough being a more densely populated urban area compared to Redcar & Cleveland which has more sparsely populated rural towns particularly in the east of the locality, meaning transport and access to services can be more of a challenge for many Redcar & Cleveland residents.

The 2021 census showed that Middlesbrough was more ethnically diverse than Redcar & Cleveland with 82.4% of Middlesbrough residents identifying as White, 17.6% identified as Black, Asian, mixed or multiple ethnic groups or other ethnic groups<sup>17</sup>, compared with 97.7% of Redcar and Cleveland residents identifying as White, 2.3% identified as Black, Asian, mixed or multiple ethnic groups or other ethnic groups<sup>18</sup>.

Middlesbrough ranks much more poorly than Redcar & Cleveland on the English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (IoD2019). Middlesbrough is ranked the 1<sup>st</sup> most deprived local authority and Redcar & Cleveland the 29<sup>th</sup>, meaning that there are significant health and wellbeing and socio-economic-related challenges affecting the population of both boroughs<sup>19</sup>.

## National Agenda Informing Local Action

There has not been a dedicated cross-Government approach to supporting carers since the Carers Action Plan 2018 - 20<sup>20</sup> ended in 2020, however, there are several statutory duties to support carers detailed under the following legislation:

**The Health and Care Act 2022** contains four key provisions in relation to carers:

- Section 10: Places a duty on NHS England to consult carers and other representatives regarding commissioning or policy decisions which affect service provision and delivery.
- Section 25: Places a duty on Integrated Care Boards to promote the involvement of unpaid carers, where appropriate, in relation to decisions about prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care.
- Section 25: Places a duty on Integrated Care Boards to consult carers in commissioning or policy decisions affecting services.
- Section 91: Places a duty on NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts to involve carers, where appropriate, in planning for hospital discharge as soon as is feasible

The **Care Act 2014** requires local councils to assess unpaid carers, provide support to meet their needs, and promote carer-wellbeing. Duties also include providing information, advice, and support to prevent carers from developing further support needs. Local councils also have a duty to involve unpaid carers in the design of services that affect them. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) conduct Local Authority Assessments to look at how they meet their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act.

Middlesbrough Council Adult Social Care was assessed by the CQC in October 2024. The Local Authority was rated as 'Requires Improvement.' CQC identified many positives within their feedback, however, we recognise that there is more work to do to better support carers. Middlesbrough Council values the important contribution that carers provide and will continue to work to ensure that carers are aware of the support available to them locally and consult with carers to develop services that are meaningful and beneficial to their continued wellbeing.

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council were assessed by the CQC in November 2024. The Local Authority rating is not yet published.

The **Children and Families Act 2014** protects children, as well as offering specific protection to young carers and parent-carers of disabled children (including those with a long-term condition). It specifies that local authorities must meet their duties to identify, assess and support young carers, young adult carers and their families.

The **Carer's Leave Act 2023** makes provision for employees who balance work with unpaid caring responsibilities to take up to one week of unpaid carer's leave per year, if providing or arranging care for someone with a long-term care need. There are other workplace rights which support carers in employment.

The **Equality Act 2010** protects unpaid carers against discrimination or harassment as they are considered to be associated with someone with a protected characteristic (disability).

Under Article 8 of the **Human Rights Act 1998**, individuals, including carers, are granted the right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence. Carers also have the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment under Article 3.

The National Institute for Health and Care guideline, Supporting adult carers' (NG150), also includes information and guidance for health and social care practitioners on identifying and supporting adults over the age of 18 who provide care for people aged 16 or over with health and care needs.

## Our Vision

Through a joint commissioning approach, an equitable and efficient offer is provided for unpaid carers across South Tees, ensuring that local authority boundaries do not represent boundaries to services. At the same time a collaborative approach to services aligns with the priorities of the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board and the strategic vision for joining up health and social care.

We are committed to ensuring unpaid carers are supported across South Tees in a range of ways. As part of a joined-up and inclusive approach we will:

- Proactively identify and recognise carers
- Offer carers timely and relevant information
- Connect carers to local or relevant support services
- Support carers to access a carer's assessment
- Provide support following the outcomes of a carer's assessment
- Involve carers in decisions about health and social care services
- Involve carers in strategic planning or delivery of services<sup>21</sup>

### Strategic Aims

The South Tees priorities are shaped by the five key themes outlined in the National Carers Action Plan 2018-20 and developed by the South Tees Carers Forum. The forum is attended by unpaid carers; organisations supporting carers across South Tees; Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, NENC ICB; including children's and adult social care services; public health; voluntary and community sector organisations and networks; primary and acute care providers; education; employment and skills; business and housing.

### Key Themes:

1. Services and systems that work for carers.
2. Employment and financial wellbeing.
3. Supporting young carers.
4. Recognising and supporting carers in the wider community and society.
5. Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for carers.

The strategy recognises and is informed by:

- Unpaid carers' experiences, needs and views
- The breadth of expertise and existing services and support for unpaid carers from:
  - organisations with statutory responsibilities – local authorities and NHS services
  - commissioned services designed to provide specialist support to carers.
  - the wider infrastructure of services and support from the public, private and voluntary and community sector which provides support to people in South Tees, some of whom are carers.
  - partners' commitment to collaborate and maximise their combined expertise, reach and resources to address challenges and gaps and to improve integrated working, referral and support for carers.
  - the need to reflect strategy objectives and outcomes across wider policy, planning and services.

The strategy was approved by the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board following recommendation for adoption by all forum partners. The governance and review arrangements are outlined at the end of the strategy.

As we enter the final year of this strategy it is important to recognise that many of the original strategic aims (as outlined in [Appendix 2](#)) were met via the procurement of the South Tees All Age Carers Support Service in 2022 and via Task and Finish Groups established to lead on Action Plans completed in Year 1 of the contract.

This year's priorities are outlined in the South Tees Carers Forum Action Plan 2025-26 and continue to be aligned to the five themes; based on what carers tell us is important to them and what is realistic and achievable.

### Adoption, Governance and Review

The South Tees Carers Strategy is formally approved by Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, NENC ICB and by the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board. It is recommended that statutory, voluntary and community and private sector partners also adopt the strategy through their boards and make a top-level commitment to support its vision, aims, objectives and outcomes and, where appropriate, the delivery of the action plan which supports the strategy. It is anticipated this will achieve transformation on a bigger scale and enable

provision that is built on people's needs rather than organisational boundaries.

### **Governance**

The Care Act (2014) and Children and Families Act (2014) place a legal requirement on local authorities and all agencies involved in public care to adopt integration, co-operation and partnership approaches to delivering services. This is in line with the strategic vision of the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board for joining up health and social care across South Tees.

The South Tees Joint Commissioning Group, involving commissioners from Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Middlesbrough Borough Council and NENC ICB are responsible for producing, monitoring and reporting on the South Tees Carers Strategy, the action plan that supports it and the commissioning of services to help meet the vision, aims and objectives of the strategy. To ensure accountability and transparency, the group reports to, and is responsible to, the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board.

The South Tees Carers' Forum was established in December 2019 and reports directly to the South Tees Commissioning Group. Its main objective is to function as an advisory body to help develop the South Tees Carers' Strategy and Action Plan, based on local and national priorities.

The Forum brings together a broad constituency of partners and stakeholders. It enables the voice and views of carers to be fed into and influence the Strategy and Action Plan, as well as raising awareness of carers' needs, issues and challenges. The Forum promotes collaboration and integrated working between members in order to improve outcomes for carers and may set up task groups on specific themes or issues.

We recognise that not all carers identify as such or engage with services and there is a need to engage carers in a wide variety of ways and settings, which are relevant to them and their needs. Work conducted by the forum will be shared across South Tees through public information campaigns. This will help identify and reach carers and publicise services and support. It will raise awareness of the South Tees vision and partnership approach to services and support and gather views and information to inform the development of the South Tees Carers' Strategy.

### **Review**

The Strategy will be reviewed and refreshed annually by the South Tees Joint Commissioning Group, in consultation with the South Tees Carers Forum recognizing that carers' views, voices and experiences are vitally important to inform the development and delivery of the strategy.

The associated action plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the South Tees Joint Commissioning Group and South Tees Carers Forum. Updates will be provided as required to Local Authority Senior Management Teams; NENC ICB; and the South Tees Health & Wellbeing Board.

## Appendix 1: Types of unpaid carers

### Young Carers

A young carer is someone under 18, who supports someone who needs help e.g. brother, sister, parent/ guardian  
A young person that helps someone in their family home who may have a mental health issue, illness or disability (physical or learning) or misuse drugs or alcohol.

A child who gives up personal time to help support their family member.

### Young Adult Carer

Young adult carers are young people aged 16–25 who care, unpaid, for a family member or friend with an illness or disability, mental health condition or an addiction.

Young Adult Carers aged 18 and over do not require parental consent for a referral to support services.

### Kinship Carer

Kinship carers are relatives (grandparents, siblings, Aunts, Uncles or other relatives) or even sometimes just friends of the family, who provide full-time (either temporary or permanent) caring support for a child or children of parents who are unable to provide care and support. These children and young people are known as kinship kids. Almost half of kinship kids have a disability or emotional difficulty.

### Parent Carers

Parent carers provide support to their children, including grown-up children who cannot manage without their help. The child/adult may be ill, disabled, have mental health or substance misuse problems.

## Appendix 2: Strategic Aims and Objectives 2021-2025

### 1. Services and systems that work for unpaid carers

Unpaid carers often have extensive contact with the health and social care system, so it is important that services value and involve them. Services and systems should bear consideration to the diversity of unpaid carers and their circumstances, from an elderly neighbour to a young adult carer and including someone serving in the armed forces. They also need to be responsive and flexible, recognising and supporting carers at different stages in the caring journey. The actions below target the way health and care systems support carers. They are designed to improve awareness and understanding among health professionals and social workers, and work with local government to ensure carers are more easily able to access the support and services they are entitled to and thereby reduce the drivers that lead to carers experiencing poor mental health.

#### Overarching Objectives

- To improve awareness about carers with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to increase the identification of carers and relevant responses to their needs.
- To ensure carers can access health and social care services in a way appropriate and personal to them.
- To take carers' views into account and facilitate representation across services and systems.
- To commission services based on evidence which are responsive to the identified needs of carers.
- To improve the collective knowledge, connections and communication between services in South Tees

We need to address gaps between health and social care services that impact significantly on carers. Often there is health support available for the cared-for person but not to the carer, and they may not be included in discussions, planning and decision making.

We need to improve the flexibility and support around personalisation in line with Care Act 2014 and Children & Family Act 2014 duties to ensure carers are provided with the resources they need to enable them to care for as long as they wish to do so.

The population across South Tees is ageing. We need to identify and support older carers and carers of people with dementia.

We need to reach carers in the community that are not known to services, especially those supporting people with mental health, substance misuse or domestic violence issues by building community capacity and developing support networks.

Carers need identifying and informing early in the carer journey not just at point of crisis. We will work alongside carers to provide information in different formats, particularly the use of social media, and in different venues.

The system tends to operate on a 9-5 basis, which means that people can only access services at that time and there are gaps at weekends and evenings. We will work together to make sure we commission services for carers that are flexible and accessible to all.

In times when budgets are tight, we need to explore funding options and share resources to support carers.

GPs are often the first people to come into contact with carers. We will encourage and provide support to the newly formed Primary Care Networks to adopt the NHS England 'Quality Standards for Carer Friendly GP

Practices' 2019 to provide support to help build carers resilience and avoid crisis situations.

### **Primary Outcomes**

- Training will be available to health & social care professionals; knowledge gaps will be identified and new ideas developed.
- A marketing campaign will be launched to provide carers in the community with information in a range of formats in different venues across South Tees to provide community-based information.
- Carer services across health & social care will have been mapped to identify gaps.
- Carers in the community, particularly those not known to services, are identified and community capacity and support developed.
- Commissioned services will be developed based on local intelligence.
- Regularly collect, collate and analyse carers' views and feedback to inform services and support and promote.
- Partners collaborate collectively with the We Care You Care brand and have a clear communications and engagement plan across South Tees to increase knowledge and awareness of services and support, improve the identification engagement of Carers and ensure effective referrals and signposting.

## **2. Employment and financial wellbeing**

Carers told us about the difficulties they face balancing work and performing a caring role. At the same time many are struggling to make ends meet, leading to financial hardship which in turn puts further pressure on the caring role. Where an employer is made aware of an employee with caring responsibilities, they can take simple but effective action to enable carers to balance their caring and employment responsibilities. It makes good business sense to consider what flexible working practices might help both the employer and employee.

### **Overarching Objectives**

- To raise the profile of carers and encourage employers to improve their working practices to enable carers to continue to work alongside their caring role.
- To provide support and training to carers to help them to return to work, and at a level that is commensurate with their skills and experience.
- To assist carers who want to work to do so.

Many employers support carers well in the workplace. We will endeavor to encourage others to develop carer-friendly work practices and help them to become 'Carer Confident' employers and become part of nationally recognised the national carers benchmarking Schemes.

We recognise that small employers cannot offer the same support as large employers. Smaller employers probably know their staff very well and their personal circumstances, but they will not necessarily have the capacity to absorb demand. This is a challenge that we will endeavor to address alongside these organisations.

Some working carers are losing their jobs, and some are losing their homes or getting into financial crises because of their caring roles. We will explore how we can help prevent financial crisis for carers.

We need to challenge the instinct to give up work immediately by providing support and advice on staying at work or support carers to change to more appropriate jobs that may be more flexible, should they not want to give up working. We will promote flexible working and its benefits to increase opportunities for carers to return to work or continue to work alongside their caring role.

We recognise that returning to work is very individual and is different to being forced back into work. care

should be right for those who want to return.

### **Primary Outcomes**

- Carer friendly work practices across South Tees will be developed, adopting any nationally recognised scheme. South Tees Carer Strategy partners will take a 'lead-by-example' role in policy development.
- DWP and Welfare Rights will support carers to access the benefits they are entitled to and the support to stay at work or education.
- Young Carers have a smooth, supported transition to adulthood and coordinated services helping them to engage in education, training or employment if they wish to, or are able to do so, alongside caring roles.
- Better integration, awareness and referrals across services to ensure carers who want to work have better access to training and employment, with relevant support in place for the cared for and their skills valued.

### **3. Supporting Young Carers**

Young Carers can suffer with poorer health and wellbeing, often missing education and training opportunities. Improved identification of Young Carers, to enable assessments that identify support needs alongside flexible educational opportunities is vital to providing support. This can ensure that Young Carers are able to access opportunities and have the same life chances as other young people that do not have caring responsibilities.

There are a substantial number of young carers in the UK aged under 18. Estimates vary widely from 195,000 (2011 census) to as many as 700,000 ([Barnardo's 2017](#)). The wide variation in the estimates of numbers of young carers emphasises the challenges of identifying them. We know that more needs to be done to support young Carers; 67% of young Carers who responded to the Call for Evidence told us they have not received any support. There is evidence that caring responsibilities can have a detrimental impact on the young person's personal, social and educational development and their health and wellbeing ([Local Government Association](#)).

#### **Overarching Objectives**

- To address the impact of caring on young people and on their education and life chances.
- To develop training for social workers and other professionals around identifying young carers and assessing their needs.
- To improve young carers' access to support services to make sure they are properly supported at an early stage and that interventions are put in place promptly where necessary.
- To improve support for young adult carers to enable them to make positive transitions between the ages of 16-24.

We will build on the learning from local and national young carers services to empower young people and give them a voice, enabling them to take positive steps and actions for themselves and their communities. Many young people use social media platforms to reach and enable young carers to communicate with each other. We will utilise these mechanisms to provide support.

Awareness of the needs of young carers in schools and colleges is vital. We will develop mechanisms to encourage educational establishments to support those in their care and help them reach their full potential.

We will work with Adult and Children's Social Services to identify young carers; conduct needs assessments and provide family support, particularly those in transition.

We will listen to the voice of young carers and value their input in developing services to meet their needs, particularly those from disadvantaged and seldom heard groups.

## Primary Outcomes

- There will be positive working practices within health and social care services to identify and assess the needs of young carers and their families.
- Social media platforms are developed to engage young carers in the community.
- Robust transition pathway plans will be developed and maintained between adult and young carer services and social care across South Tees
- Integrated working across Education, Early Help, Health, Children's and Adult Social Services, alongside commissioned young carers' services will ensure a joined-up approach and consistent support for young carers and their families, reflected in policies, strategies and operational delivery across South Tees
- Schools across South Tees are aware of and supported to engage with the Young Carers in School Award and identify Young Carers Champions to improve awareness of and positive outcomes for young carers
- Transition of young carers to young adult carers is coordinated across children's and adult services, as well as across all Strategy themes and Action Plans and wider services and support.

## 4. Recognising and supporting carers in the wider community and society

Many carers have little contact with services to meet their needs and are not receiving formal support in their caring role. It is, therefore, vital that we collaborate with partners beyond government to raise awareness of caring among the wider population to build carer-friendly communities.

Beyond the health and care services, carers need to be supported by the wider community. Businesses and services are often inflexible, and carers struggle to access services within a standard working day. Carers also tell us that recognition of their role in society is important to them and support in community settings can provide a valuable lifeline for them.

## Overarching Objectives

- To increase recognition of carers in society and their local communities and to improve their everyday experiences.
- To seek to better understand how loneliness affects carers and find ways to combat it.
- To work in partnership with carers and agencies that support them to develop services to meet their needs.
- Improve opportunities for carers to have a life alongside caring, to be active citizens, less isolated, and more connected to family, friends, work, volunteering, education, training, learning and leisure.

Using technology can connect carers particularly those who are isolated because of their caring role. We will work in partnership with organisations across South Tees to provide information in a variety of formats to cater for carers of all ages and abilities.

It is important to deliver support to carers where they live. We will endeavor to deliver services and support in community settings across South Tees and link developments to the NHS Long Term Plan and Social Prescribing.

We will encourage the adoption of 'Making Every Contact Count' initiatives to provide timely information and support.

We will work alongside Primary Care Networks to provide support and improve early intervention to avoid crisis.

We will endeavor to build links into communities that may otherwise not engage with carers.

We will support the national agenda for introducing the Carers Passport Scheme on a local South Tees level.

### **Primary Outcomes**

- Information will be available to Carers in a range of formats and through multiple services, not just those traditionally seen as Carer support services, including specialist MH services.
- We will have developed varied and innovative approaches to enable Carers to take a break from their caring role.
- Technology will be in place to connect Carers, particularly those isolated because of their caring role.
- We will have developed services at a community level which are Carer and dementia friendly and help Carers engage in social activities.
- There is a Carer passport scheme established across South Tees

## **5. Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers**

The original national Call for Evidence provided rich and informative evidence based on the experience of carers across the country and the changes they would like to see. The process also revealed gaps in our knowledge, and we recognise that there is more we can do to develop the evidence base. We know that as our population continues to age and more people live longer, the numbers of people providing unpaid care will also increase and their role may become more complex. Therefore, it is increasingly important to do full justice to the role carers play so that future policies to ensure they are supported are underpinned by a strong evidence base.

### **Overarching Objectives**

- To build and expand on existing knowledge so that we can ensure we continue to develop policies and interventions that target support for carers appropriately.
- To conduct research to improve the evidence base of information and data on carers to inform future strategies to support them.
- To use evidence to offer innovative solutions to support carers.

We will /apply as well as conduct research to provide us with an evidence base to help us understand carers' experiences and what works in terms of services and support. This will be shared with decision makers to ensure carers services are prioritised appropriately.

We will make sure commissioned services and projects are regularly assessed, with carer input, to determine whether they are working and if not, why?

We will endeavor to engage more diverse groups in research and offer a range of ways to share lived experience to enter into dialog with more carers.

We will track carer-defined outcomes and statistical data across services across South Tees to make sure we understand their needs.

### **Primary Outcomes**

- Commissioned carer support services are regularly and rigorously monitored.
- Relevant and robust outcomes data is gathered by carer services and used to inform future service design and delivery.

- New approaches will be developed to engage carers not already in receipt of commissioned support, in order to gain their views on the barriers and gaps in service.
- Learning and recommendations from national research will be adopted where necessary.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> [NHS: Who is considered a carer?](#)
- <sup>2</sup> [2011 Census analysis: Unpaid care in England and Wales, 2011 and comparison with 2001](#)
- <sup>3</sup> [Carers Census, Scotland, 2023-24](#)
- <sup>4</sup> [Carers in Northern Ireland: Some key statistics](#)
- <sup>5</sup> [No choice but to care](#)
- <sup>6</sup> [Carer' experience of their GP practice](#)
- <sup>7</sup> [Valuing Carers 2021- England and Wales](#)
- <sup>8</sup> [Facts about carers- Carers UK](#)
- <sup>9</sup> [Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England, 2023-24](#)
- <sup>10</sup> ["Unpaid Carers are not unsung heroes. We are forgotten, neglected and burnt out"](#)
- <sup>11</sup> [Scotland's Carers Update Release March 2024](#)
- <sup>12</sup> [What do we know about being a young carer?](#)
- <sup>13</sup> [Schools, pupils and their characteristics](#)
- <sup>14</sup> [Young Carers in Schools](#)
- <sup>15</sup> [About young adult carers](#)
- <sup>16</sup> [Shaping our future](#)
- <sup>17</sup> [How life has changed in Middlesbrough: Census 2021](#)
- <sup>18</sup> [How life has changed in Redcar and Cleveland: Census 2021](#)
- <sup>19</sup> [The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 \(IoD2019\)](#)
- <sup>20</sup> [Carers Action Plan 2018-2020](#)
- <sup>21</sup> [Identifying and supporting unpaid carers in England to improve integrated system working](#)