

**PWYLLGOR DIWYLLIANT, POBL A DATBLYGU SEFYDLIADOL
PEOPLE, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE COMMITTEE**

DYDDIAD Y CYFARFOD: DATE OF MEETING:	13 June 2024
TEITL YR ADRODDIAD: TITLE OF REPORT:	Improving outcomes for unpaid carers – end of year report 2023/24
CYFARWYDDWR ARWEINIOL: LEAD DIRECTOR:	Lisa Gostling, Director of Workforce and Organisational Development
SWYDDOG ADRODD: REPORTING OFFICER:	Anna Bird – Assistant Director of Strategic Partnerships, Diversity and Inclusion Pennie Muir – Regional Project Support Manager (Carers)

**Pwrpas yr Adroddiad (dewiswch fel yn addas)
Purpose of the Report (select as appropriate)**

Er Sicrwydd/For Assurance

**ADRODDIAD SCAA
SBAR REPORT**

Sefyllfa / Situation

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places a duty on the Health Board to provide information, advice and assistance to unpaid Carers.

The attached report is presented to update the People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee (PODCC) on the ongoing work that supports unpaid carers, including staff who work for Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB) and have unpaid caring responsibilities in their home lives. The report provides assurance that a broad range of activities are on-going to improve outcomes for unpaid carers of all ages.

Cefndir / Background

The West Wales Carers Development Group (WWCDG) is a formal sub-group of the West Wales Regional Partnership Board (RPB), and includes representatives of HDdUHB, the three Local Authorities of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, as well as representatives from the voluntary sector, service users and carers in West Wales.

In November 2020, the West Wales Regional Partnership Board published the 'West Wales Carers Strategy 2020-2025: Improving lives for Carers'. The strategy sets out four priority areas based on the principal of equality and fair access for all and has a clear synergy with the National Carers Strategy.

The four regional priorities are:

- Improve the early identification and self-identification of carers, including young carers and young adult carers;
- Ensure a range of services are available to support the well-being of carers of all ages, in their life alongside caring;
- Support carers to access and maintain education, training and employment opportunities; and
- Support carers to become digitally included.

A 'Strategy for Unpaid Carers' was published by Welsh Government (WG) in March 2021 and sets out a refreshed set of national priorities to improve the recognition of and support for unpaid carers. They have clear synergy with the regional strategy and together are used to inform the commissioning of services for unpaid carers in HDdUHB.

HDdUHB has a small carer-specific core budget delegated to the Strategic Partnerships, Diversity and Inclusion Team to commission support services for unpaid carers. Over 95% of this budget is used to commission services delivered through third-sector partners. In addition to the specifically commissioned carers support services, there is also considerable work being undertaken by Health Board teams to raise awareness of, and support the early identification of unpaid carers as part of the Health Board's core business and delivery of health and care services to our patients. This recognises the important role that unpaid carers play within our health and care system, in particular, supporting the provision of carers in communities.

The Strategic Partnerships, Diversity and Inclusion team co-ordinates a Health Board Carers Strategy group which includes representation from Corporate and Operational teams across HDdUHB and there has been a high level of commitment to the work to improve outcomes for unpaid carers. The Group has established an action plan and individual teams and directorates have committed to take forward a range of actions. In order to make effective use of time the group meets digitally via MS TEAMS and this has proven to be successful at maximising both attendance and contributions.

Asesiad / Assessment

The attached Annual Report provides a summary of the breadth of work being delivered during 2023/24 to meet the needs of unpaid carers who are patients, family members, Health Board staff and the wider community. The report is shaped around the four priority areas in the regional strategy, highlighting some of the contributions of teams across HDdUHB as well as actions led by the Strategic Partnerships, Diversity and Inclusion Team.

Included in the report are some quotes and feedback from unpaid carers to illustrate the difference and impact that carer specific services make to individuals who have an unpaid caring role. Collecting qualitative feedback and the experiences of unpaid carers is an on-going priority and such illustrations can bring services to life as well as play an important role in understanding "what matters" to unpaid carers. The Strategic Partnerships, Diversity and Inclusion Team have led a Multi-Disciplinary Team through the Enabling Quality Improvement in Practice programme and have worked collaboratively to establish Unpaid Carer Experience Measure linked to the discharge process which will add to a body of qualitative and quantitative evidence of impact to inform how support is provided to carers in the future.

The Health Board currently holds the Employers for Carers Level 2 Carer Accomplished Award in recognition of the support which is offered to staff with unpaid caring responsibilities in their home lives. The number of carers known to the Health Board continues to increase as initiatives to encourage the self-reporting of caring roles through the Electronic Staff Record are promoted. The recently refreshed Carers Policy also takes account of the new Carers Leave Act 2023, and the entitlement of staff to request up to one-weeks unpaid leave to support them balancing their work and caring responsibilities e.g. for attendance at planned appointments with the person they care for. This entitlement is additional to the all-Wales Special Leave policy and paid time off for emergency situations.

Argymhelliad / Recommendation

The People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee are asked to:

- **NOTE** the update report
- **TAKE ASSURANCE** from the work being undertaken to demonstrate that the Health Board is proactively addressing the priorities of the regional Carers Strategy.

Amcanion: (rhaid cwblhau) Objectives: (must be completed)	
Committee ToR Reference: Cyfeirnod Cylch Gorchwyl y Pwyllgor:	To provide assurance to the Board on compliance with legislation, guidance and best practice around the Workforce and OD agenda.
Cyfeirnod Cofrestr Risg Datix a Sgôr Cyfredol: Datix Risk Register Reference and Score:	N/A
Parthau Ansawdd: Domains of Quality Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)	7. All apply
Galluogwyr Ansawdd: Enablers of Quality: Quality and Engagement Act (sharepoint.com)	6. All Apply
Amcanion Strategol y BIP: UHB Strategic Objectives:	4. The best health and wellbeing for our individuals, families and communities
Amcanion Cynllunio Planning Objectives	Not Applicable
Amcanion Llesiant BIP: UHB Well-being Objectives: Hyperlink to HDdUHB Well-being Objectives Annual Report 2021-2022	4. Improve Population Health through prevention and early intervention, supporting people to live happy and healthy lives 5. Offer a diverse range of employment opportunities which support people to fulfill their potential

Gwybodaeth Ychwanegol: Further Information:	
Ar sail tystiolaeth: Evidence Base:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 • West Wales Care Partnership Regional Carers Strategy 2020-2025: Improving the lives of Carers. • Strategy for Unpaid Carers¹ published by Welsh Government. • Carers Leave Act 2023
Rhestr Termau: Glossary of Terms:	Included within the body of the report
Partïon / Pwyllgorau â ymgynhorwyd ymlaen llaw y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Pobl a Datblygu Sefydliadol: Parties / Committees consulted prior to People, Organisational Development & Culture Committee:	Carers Strategy Group

Effaith: (rhaid cwblhau) Impact: (must be completed)	
Ariannol / Gwerth am Arian: Financial / Service:	Not applicable.
Ansawdd / Gofal Claf: Quality / Patient Care:	The effective early identification of unpaid carers, and signposting to support to meet their own health and wellbeing needs will impact on the quality of patient care and experience.
Gweithlu: Workforce:	All staff have a role to play in the early identification of unpaid carers of all ages, including patients, family members and colleagues.
Risg: Risk:	Not applicable.
Cyfreithiol: Legal:	Not applicable.
Enw Da: Reputational:	Implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and the provision of support for unpaid carers is reviewed by Welsh Government through the Regional Partnership Board. The Health Board also works in partnership with the local authorities, third sector providers and community champions who informally hold the Health Board to account for our progress and work to improve outcomes for unpaid carers within our community.
Gyfrinachedd: Privacy:	Not applicable.
Cydraddoldeb: Equality:	An Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken as this is an update report.

**April 2023 –
March 2024**



Improving lives for unpaid Carers

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Introduction

This report has been written by the Strategic Partnerships, Diversity and Inclusion Team in collaboration with members of the Health Board Carers Strategy Group. The group includes representation from corporate and operational teams across the Health Board and there has been a high level of commitment from members to work together to improve outcomes for unpaid carers.

The Health Board works collaboratively with statutory and third sector organisations through the partnership arrangements of the West Wales Regional Partnership Board (RPB). The RPB published its regional Carers Strategy in November 2020, and this sets out 4 priority areas and a clear vision for how agencies would work together to plan, develop and deliver services that will improve outcomes for carers and their families. The priorities are based on the principle of equality and fair access for all and have a clear synergy with the national Carers Strategy. The four regional priorities are:

- Improve the early identification and self-identification of carers including Young Carers and Young Adult Carers.
- Ensure a range of services is available to support the well-being of carers of all ages, in their life alongside caring.
- Support carers to access and maintain education, training, and employment opportunities.
- Support carers to become digitally included and confident.

Welsh Government published its Strategy for Unpaid Carers March 2021 which set out a refreshed set of national priorities to improve the recognition of and support of unpaid carers. These priorities are consistent with our regional strategy and are used to inform the commissioning of services for carers across the Health Board.

The Health Board's Assistant Director - Strategic Partnerships, Diversity and Inclusion is a member of the Ministerial Advisory Group for carers, and also chairs the West Wales Carers Development Group (WWCDG) which is a formal population sub-group of the West Wales Regional Partnership Board. This offers opportunities to ensure clear synergy between national, regional, and local priorities.

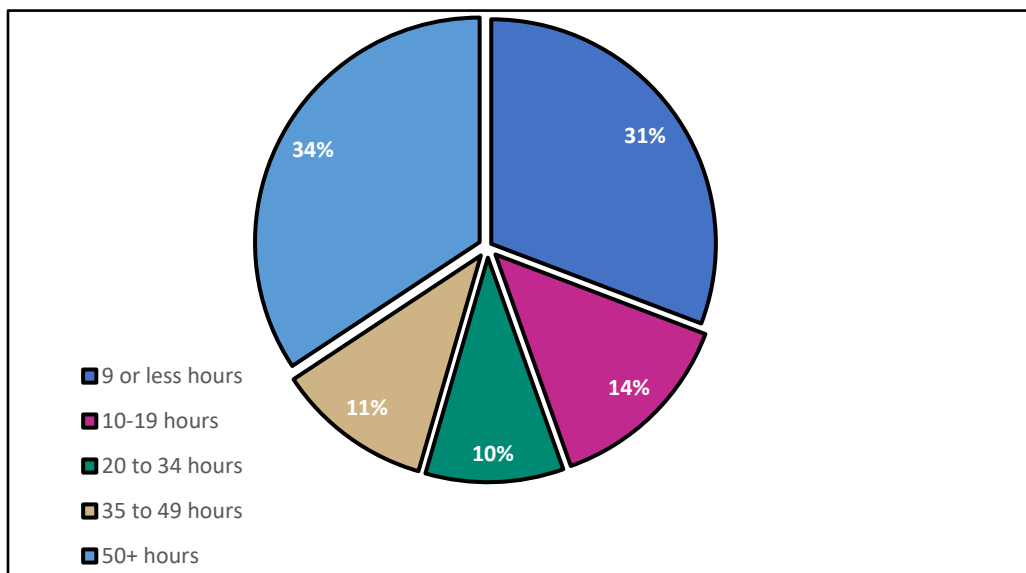
This report provides an overview of the work which has been carried out by the Health Board and aims to illustrate the impact and outcomes experienced by unpaid carers of all ages. The report provides evidence of progress against each of the regional priorities outlined above and offers assurance of the Health Board's commitment to unpaid carers.

Unpaid carers living in the Hywel Dda area

The most recent national Census in 2021 gathered information about unpaid carers in West Wales and reported that:

- 40,535 people identified themselves as carers
- 1/3rd of carers of all ages provide over 50 hours of care per week
- 51% of the over-65 population provide over 50 hours of care per week.

Just under a fifth of people in Wales (18%) said they are currently providing unpaid care or support. This is lower than the proportion of people providing care in the UK. 28% said they are not currently providing care but have done so in the past.



Carers UK research conducted in 2023 reported the following findings as being the most significant negative impacts from people who have provided care:

- 35% said their health and wellbeing had suffered.
- 21% said unpaid caring had affected their job/ability to work.
- 18% relationships with family and friends had suffered.
- 14% said it had affected savings.
- 7% had got into debt.
- 5% said it had affected their pension

Source: [carers-week-report-2023.pdf](#)

Priority 1 - Improve the early identification and self-identification of carers of all ages

The Health Board implements a broad range of actions to support the early identification and self-identification of unpaid carers of all ages which are illustrated below.

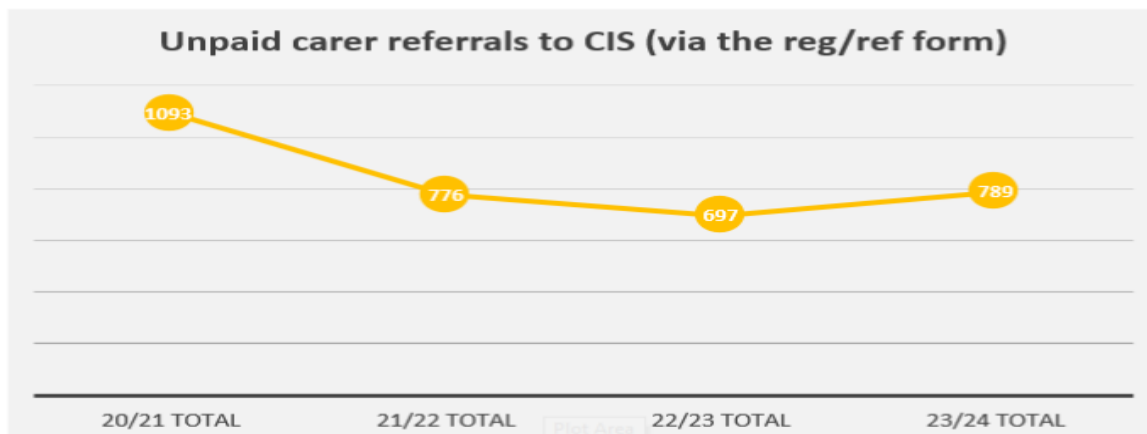
Investors in Carers Scheme

On behalf of the West Wales Carers Development Group, the Health Board leads the regional Investors in Carers (IiC) scheme and has been coordinating delivery in partnership with Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales. IiC provides the foundation for work with health professionals in primary, community and acute hospital settings to raise awareness of the needs of unpaid carers, which is a national, regional and local priority. The IiC scheme has been designed to be utilised by a wide range of settings extending beyond health, including schools, libraries, local authority teams, Job Centre Plus and third sector organisations. Evidence of participation in the scheme is also being written into a number of commissioned third sector provider contracts and acting as a further catalyst to facilitate the early identification of unpaid carers in health and social care settings.

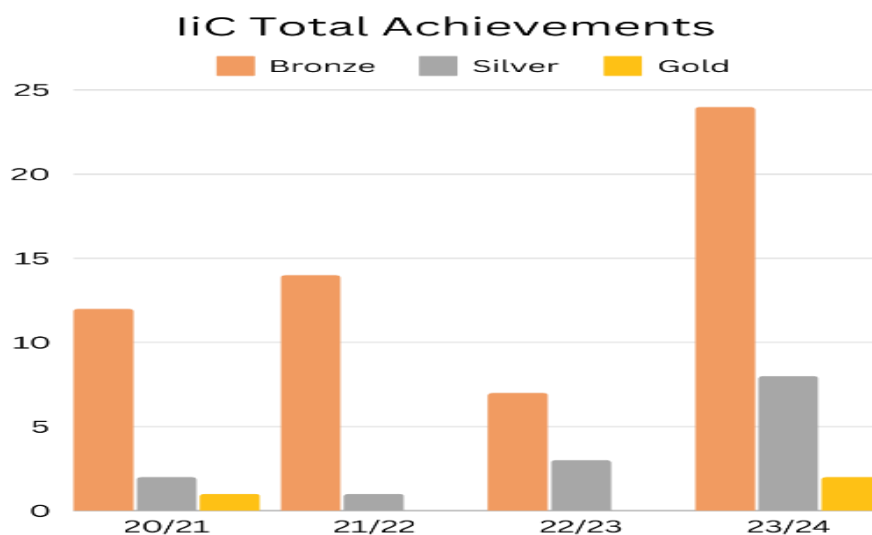
The aims of the Investors in Carers scheme are:

- To deliver direct outcomes for unpaid carers of all ages in line with the national wellbeing outcomes.
- To promote the early identification and referral of unpaid carers to access support to ensure their own health and wellbeing needs are addressed.
- Provide a foundation for health, social care and community settings to have increased carer awareness and methods to identify, signpost and support unpaid carers of all ages.
- Establish a quality assurance scheme which has themed standards, an audit and certification process and rewards, which also recognises best practice.
- To provide a scheme that can be used by health, social care, 3rd and public sector teams, services, workplaces or organisations in the Hywel Dda region.

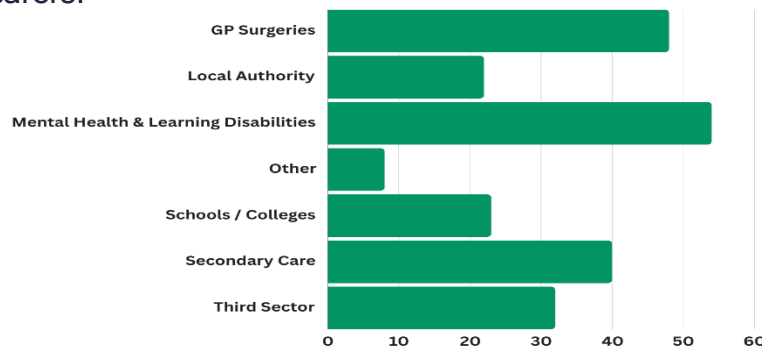
The liC scheme enables settings to progress through three levels; bronze, silver and gold and continues to encourage an electronic submission process for the provision of liC evidence. A core element of the liC scheme is a simple system that enables individuals to register as an unpaid carer with their GP surgery, which in turn can instigate a referral to the local Carers Information Service who are commissioned to provide information and support. The infographic below shows the number of carer referrals over the past four years. The number of referrals increased in 2020/21 due to the pandemic, and whilst they have dropped slightly in subsequent years, the numbers of carers being referred via this method remains at a consistent annual level.



The bar graph shows the number of awards achieved across a four-year time period, at bronze, silver and gold levels.

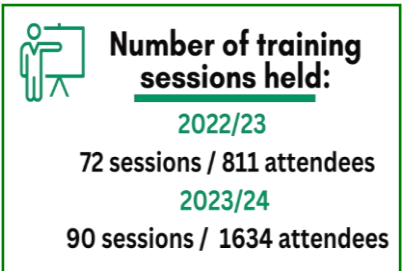


The bar graph below provides an overview of the type of services and sectors that are currently engaged with the Investors in Carers scheme. In addition to a range of health settings, the local authority, schools, colleges, third sector organisations and other settings e.g. libraries are participating and helping to make a difference in the early identification and offer of support to carers.



Training

The Investors in Carers team deliver training either as a bespoke IiC carer awareness sessions for a particular setting or via open access monthly drop-in sessions. These will include the carer lead from the setting but can include the wider staff members.



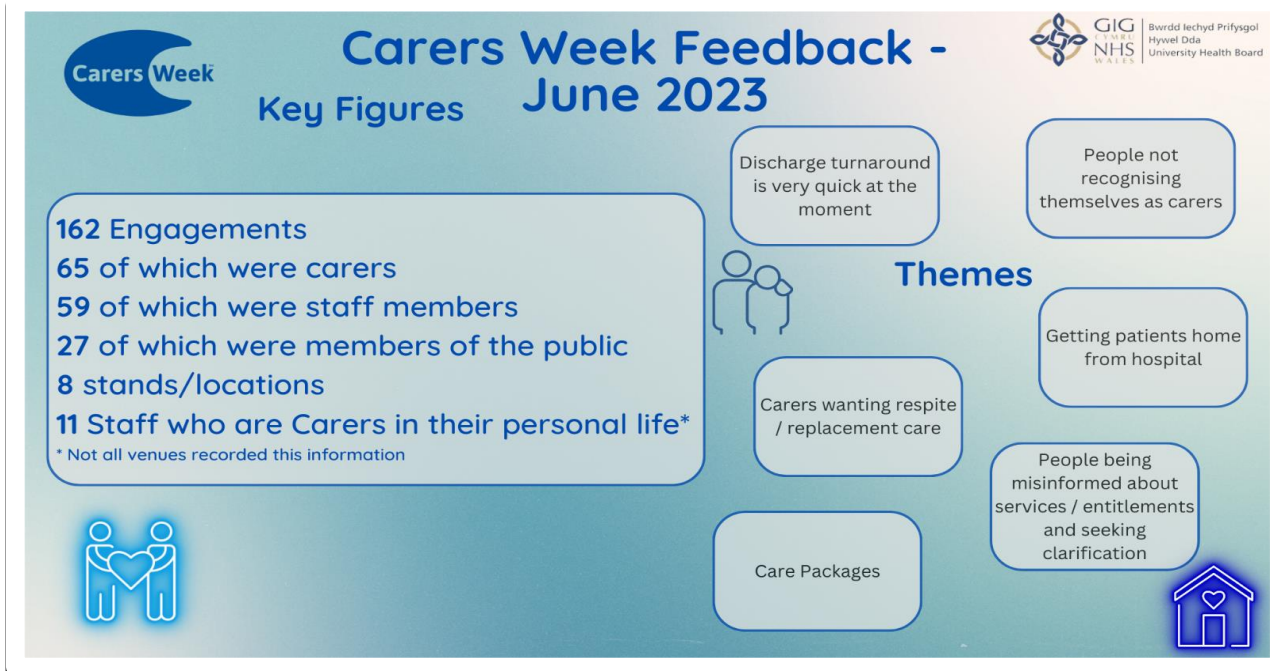
The infographic opposite shows the number of sessions delivered, and the number of attendees continues to grow. During Carers Week and Carers Rights Day week 2023 sessions were delivered that included third sector organisations who promoted services and the support they provide for unpaid carers. This helps carer leads keep up to date about services available to support carers. Some feedback from those attending included:

“This training was very useful, and I now feel confident in identifying and supporting unpaid carers.”

“The training session was informative. Eye opener of the responsibility we have towards identifying and helping our community who are struggling in silent, to put into practice what I have learned for a betterment of Carer's health and wellbeing. Diolch yn fawr!”

Carers Week 2023 – Feedback

During Carers week in 2023 a number of information stands were organised by the Carers Officers who work in the Carers Hospital Discharge Support service. These stands were in the acute and community hospitals and were supported by Admiral Nurses, Workforce Advisors and other third sector organisations.



Illustrated below is some of the feedback received during Carers Week:

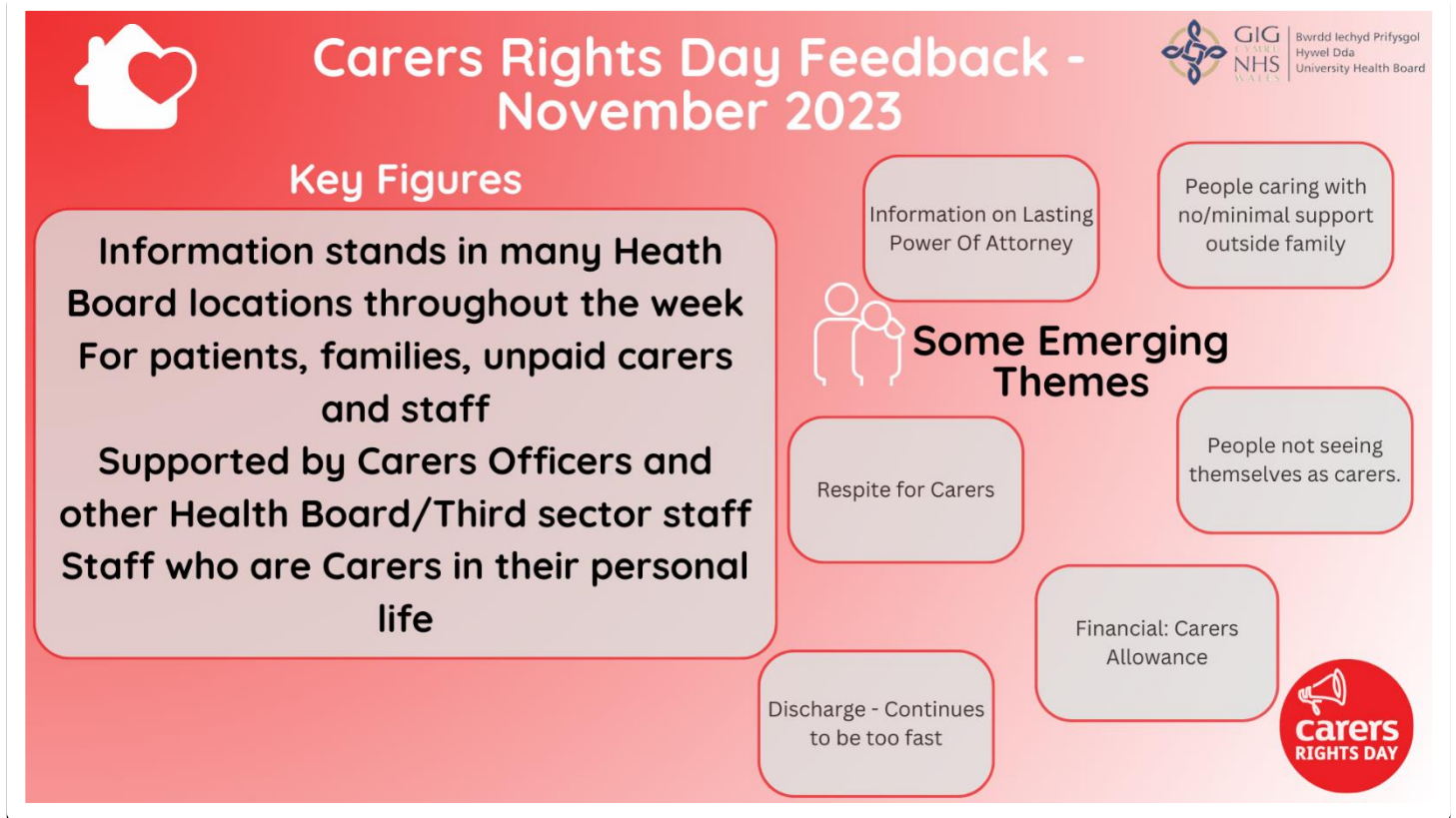
"One gentleman was very effusive in his praise of the carer support services in the county and thanked us for everything that we were doing (he was a cared-for and his wife his carer)."

I was able to make a difference to one gentleman who was caring for his wife who has cancer. He was daunted by the prospect of having to take her to Swansea for treatment. He felt reassured when he was provided information on Carer Support Services in that area.

A carer described his role looking after his mother and how isolated he felt over the last 6 years. He was also concerned about caring and returning to work. I suggested that he made contact with the local authority for a carer needs assessment, with a view of getting support through a combination of grants and replacement care

Carers Rights Day 2023 – Feedback

Similar to the approach taken during Carers Week, a number of information stands were organised by the Carers Officers (who work in the Carers Hospital Discharge Support Service) during the week of 20th November, leading up to Carers Rights Day.



The quotes below illustrates that Carers don't always identify with the "label" and see themselves as spouses, partners, relatives or friends, and therefore may not access the support available to them.

“
My husband would object to the fact I am being described as a “carer”
”

“
Carers we met reported having a carer officer was a good idea, and were disappointed that they had not been told about the service on the wards.
”

The Carers Team offer bespoke training/information sessions to raise awareness. Between April 2023 and March 2024 the team provided 8 bespoke training sessions to 72 Health Board staff and provided training at 2 Care Coordination sessions in Pembrokeshire attended by Health Board, Local Authority and 3rd Sector staff. The team also attended five professional nurses' forums giving updates and promoting the Carers Discharge Support services.

During November 2023 the Health Board celebrated Sensory Loss Awareness month and Carers Rights Day. To help promote these a short video was produced called Seren's story which illustrated the needs of a young carer who cares for her dad who is registered blind. This was played at the Health Board Public Executive Board meeting on the 23rd of November, Carers Rights Day and was widely shared with colleagues and partners.

The links to Seren's video are below:

English video link - [Seren's Video English](#)

Welsh video link - [Seren's Video Welsh](#)

Whilst these are examples of specific awareness raising activities, the Health Board Carers Team proactively share information and opportunities for unpaid carers throughout the year using Global emails and social media channels as appropriate.



If you provide unpaid help and support to a relative, friend, or neighbour who could not manage on their own due to illness, disability, frailty, mental ill health, or substance misuse then you are an unpaid Carer.

Please follow the link below to complete our short staff survey. A summary of feedback we receive will be discussed by the Health Board's Carers Strategy group who are committed to developing a positive work place culture for staff who are Carers.

Welsh:

<https://forms.office.com/e/j1Xx7Z8zv6>

English:

<https://forms.office.com/e/V8CMtmNmzR>

Thank you.



Priority 2 - Ensure a range of services is available to support the well-being of Carers of all ages, in their life alongside caring

The Health Board has a small, core budget to support the commissioning of specific support for unpaid carers in line with the statutory duties set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. In Hywel Dda, support for unpaid carers is primarily provided by third-sector partners and the Health Board acknowledges the additional social value that working collaboratively with charitable organisations can bring.

Carers Information Services have continued to take referrals and provide one-to-one support for unpaid carers of all ages across Hywel Dda. The commissioned services are provided by:

- Adferiad - provide the Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire Carers Information and Support Services for Adult Carers
- Credu/Gofalwyr Ceredigion Carers - provide information and support services for carers of all ages
- Action for Children - deliver the Pembrokeshire Young Carers Service
- Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales - deliver the Carmarthenshire Young Carers Service

Illustrated below is an overview of the activity from the Health Board's commissioned services based on contract monitoring data for the financial year 2023/24.

Key performance indicators	2023/2024
Number of new adult carers who made contact with services for the first time	1189
Number of adult carers who were supported by services	2218
Number of new young carers who made contact with services for the first time	261
Number of young carers who were supported by services	1586

Feedback received from unpaid carers receiving support from the Carer's Information Services are illustrated below and show the impact that services are having on the lives of unpaid carers:

““
I found the information pack very well laid out and it is a massive relief there is someone I can call upon if I need to
””
- A carer.

““
When Credu - Connecting Carers reached out to us they instantly took away the weight off of our shoulders.
””
- Parent of Young Carer

““
I am so grateful for the advice and support offered. The opportunity to talk about our situation and learn how to access the services has really helped.
””
- A carer

““
“My child has grown so much since coming to Young Carers, he is so much more confident and sees potential with his future”
””
- Parent of a Young Carer

Carers Hospital Discharge Support Service (CHDSS)

The Health Board has taken a whole system approach to support and the engagement of unpaid carers in the discharge planning of patients and ensure active provision of Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) (in line with the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014).

The Health Board commissions the third sector to provide Carer Officers who have a specific role in supporting hospital and community staff in the early identification of carers, with the aim of increasing carer involvement in the discharge planning process, as well as actively providing carer specific information and support.

The Carers Discharge Support Service is part of a wider continuum of support for unpaid carers and plays a key role to aid the timely discharge of patients from hospital by supporting and involving the unpaid carer in the discharge process for the person they care for. Part of this service includes the delivery of staff training to enable staff to recognise and identify unpaid carers at the earliest opportunity and ensure that they know how to make referrals to the Carers Officers in each acute and community hospitals. Delivering this training at ward level in 2023/24 has proved a challenge, so the Carer Officers decided to increase the number of information/drop in stands in hospital settings. The table below illustrates how carers are being supported and includes a comparison to the previous year.

The Carers Discharge Support Service

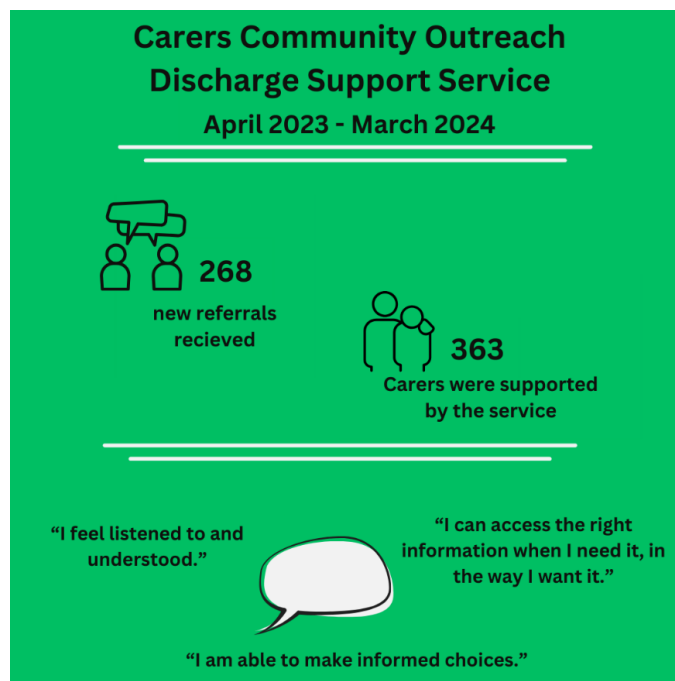


	2022/2023	2023/2024
Numbers of unpaid carers being supported	364	718
Number of staff training sessions	59	38
Number of staff attending training	212	197
Number of drop in sessions	24	224
Number attending the drop in sessions	Not recorded	1130
Number of new referrals	446	488
Number of information packs given	755	1185

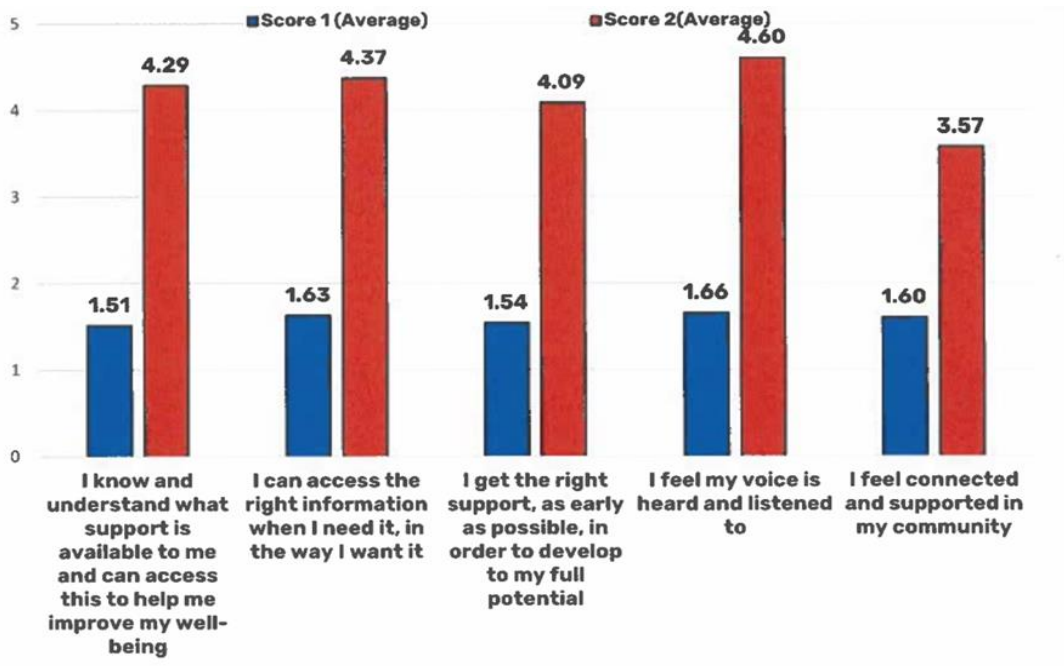


Community Outreach Discharge Support Service (CODSS)

The Carers Community Outreach Discharge Support Service works as part of a wider continuum of support for unpaid carers and plays a key role to aid the admission to and timely discharge of patients from hospital by supporting and involving the unpaid carer to ensure that their needs are met. The service works collaboratively alongside the Carers Hospital Discharge Support Services. The Carers Community Outreach Discharge Support service ensures that when unpaid carers are identified in a hospital setting there is a link back into support within the community to ensure that on-going holistic needs can be addressed that enable the carer to continue with their unpaid caring role.



Part of the monitoring of this service includes recording the outcomes and impact for unpaid carers. During their ‘what matters to me’ conversation unpaid carers are asked to ‘score’ themselves against a wellbeing score which includes four key domains. Illustrated below is a snapshot of the outcomes based on a sample 35 unpaid carers during October/November and December 2023. This helps to illustrate the ‘distance travelled’ as a result of the advice and support received from the Carer’s Officers.



Case studies are used to gain a more detailed insight into the challenges and issues faced by unpaid carers, and also to illustrate the impact that receiving support from Carers Officers have as shown below.



Overview of Carers situation

Lynn cares for her husband, Roger who is suspected to have Lewy Body Parkinson's which also causes confusion and dementia and was waiting confirmation of the diagnosis. Without an official diagnosis he could not access the Parkinson's specialist nurse or any medication to help relieve the symptoms. He had rapidly deteriorated and become incontinent. In the evenings he was very restless and agitated which caused Lynn further stress and anxiety. She was physically and mentally exhausted, finding it harder to cope with her caring role. She has also been supporting her husband with his personal care, but she is now struggling to help him with this.

What mattered to the Carer?

Lynn was looking for any help and support as she was exhausted and totally overwhelmed with the situation. An official diagnosis was important so that medication could be prescribed which would hopefully improve life for them both. Lynn is unable to leave the house as Roger cannot be left alone as he is liable to fall, and Lynn does not feel confident in leaving him with a family member. Lynn was desperate for some time for herself.

Outcome for Carer, patient and family following receipt of support.

The Carers Officer made a referral for a Carers Needs Assessment for Lynn. Lynn was referred for some short-term respite care which provided her with three hours a week. She was also signposted to her local County Council to access the Community Alarm system. Roger was referred to an Occupational Therapist for bathing/showering equipment and adaptations were put in place and a referral was made for a Needs Assessment for a care package which will relieve some of the stress for Lynn with Roger's personal care. Lynn also was referred to the District Nurse to arrange an incontinence assessment for Roger. Lynn was also referred to Age Cymru Dyfed for benefits check and the local Parkinson's Association, one of the volunteers spoke with Lynn who provided her with help and support.

*Names have been anonymised.

Enabling Quality Improvement in Practice (EQliP) Cohort 3





A multi-professional project team was established in November 2022 to drive forward a quality improvement project to look at how the unpaid carer's involvement and experience can be improved whilst the person they care for is in hospital. The project team included staff from two wards in Wthybush Hospital, a discharge liaison specialist, patient experience and value-based care team. Data has been gathered at two points; when unpaid carers are first identified and subsequently following their contact with the staff who communicate with them. Information of who is the patient's carer is logged on to the Welsh Nursing Carer Record (WNCR). A summary of data collected on a sample of 88 patients shows that:

- 52% of unpaid carers were recorded on the day of admission.
- 28% of unpaid carers were recorded on the next day.



An Unpaid Carers Experience Measure (UCEM) questionnaire was developed by the project team to ask unpaid carers for their feedback and experiences whilst the person they care for was in hospital. 32 carers over a three-week period completed the questionnaire:

An Unpaid Carers Experience Measure (UCEM) - outcomes of carer feedback

When were Carers acknowledged?

-  43% on admission
-  21% sometime during cared for stay
-  9% at discharge
-  3% not all

Other outcomes:

-  37% said they felt involved with discussions about the person they care for and at their discharge.
-  68% had been signposted for further information and 34% said this was somewhat useful.

An Unpaid Carer Staff Interaction Survey (UCSIS) was also developed and staff said:

- 75% of staff reported that they speak with unpaid carers daily or 18% weekly.
- They speak to unpaid carers in MDT's, on the ward and over the phone.
- A wide range of staff speak with the unpaid carers.

The EQliP project team continues to meet regularly and are looking at how the UCEM can be embedded into other clinical pathways across the other sites. Three members of the team also attended the national Spread and Scale Academy to look at how this work can be spread across the Health Board area and how best practice and the findings could potentially be

shared more broadly across Wales. The three team members also presented their findings to the Senior Nurse Management team meeting in December 2023 and gained significant support in promoting this work alongside the Carer Hospital Discharge Support Service. This included attending professional nurses' forums, linking in with the discharge audit process and recommending small changes to some terminology on the WNCR. The UCEM is now being embedded into the eight mental health wards across the region and the Frailty team in Bronglais General Hospital is exploring how to implement this within their wards.

A number of Keeping Well road shows have been implemented by the Pembrokeshire proactive and planned team with the intention of improving people's wellbeing. These were run once a month January - March 2024 in different locations and venues and including areas like fall prevention, smoking cessation, blood pressure, diet advice, and carers information. Whilst these road shows were for the general public a number of carers attended and were referred to the Pembrokeshire Carers Information and Support service. A total of nine were identified across the three events and this is a good illustration of making every contact count and partnership working.

Priority 3 - Support Carers to access and maintain education, training and employment opportunities

The Health Board have delivered a range of actions to identify and support our staff who also have a caring role in their personal lives.



Employers for Carers

The Health Board is a member of the Carers Wales Employers for Carer scheme and holds the Level 2 Carer Accomplished award. Work has continued to raise awareness and offer support to staff, and to line managers who have staff with a caring role. The Carers Policy was reviewed in December 2023 and included the fundamentals of the new Carers Leave Act 2023. The legislation enables staff with a caring role to have up to one-week unpaid leave for planned events for example attending appointments with the person they care for. This in addition to the six days of paid leave under the All-Wales Special Leave policy which is for emergencies.

In November 2023 the annual staff survey was launched, and 140 responses were received. The survey identified the range of support staff had utilised:

- 28.3% staff identified that they had agreed flexible working arrangements,
- 26.7% had attended carer awareness training,
- 17.5% said the Carers Policy,
- 16.7% said the carers SharePoint page to access external sources of information and support,
- 10.8% said they had used the Carers Passport which was an increase on last year when only 7.8% had ticked this option (and compares positively to the 2021 results when only 4 had ticked this option).

Health Board employees can record a supplementary role in ESR to self-identify their role as an unpaid carer. On the 14th July 2023 when baseline data was collected, 57 staff members had identified themselves as unpaid carers. In September 2023 the Health Board launched a Guidance document on how to record supplementary roles and as of March 2024 the numbers of self-reported staff carers are 158. As this is self-reported and not mandatory it is

acknowledged that this may not be truly representative of the number of staff with unpaid caring responsibilities.

Through the Health Board's purchase leave applications our Staff Benefits and Rewards team reported that 35 staff members bought extra leave and cited the sole reason of 'caring responsibilities'.

Staff Carers peer support group

The carers peer support group for Health Board staff who have a caring role continues to be run monthly over MS Teams and is facilitated by the Health Board's Carers Team. Between April 2023 and March 2024, 11 peer support groups took place attended by 124 Health Board staff (some attended more than one session). There are currently 108 staff members on our distribution list who receive regular relevant updates and invites to the Peer Support group meetings.

Carer Aware e-learning

With effect from May 2023 the carer aware e-learning course has been included as mandatory for all staff and recognises the important contribution that unpaid carers make to the health and care system. To raise awareness of this and to support the wider roll-out to all staff the Carers Team facilitated 4 Carer Aware E-Learning Webinars. At 31st March 2024 80% of Health Board staff have achieved the Carer Aware e-learning award.

Eight out of the 31 directorates have achieved a compliance rate of 85% or more and the Community Nursing team in Carmarthenshire have achieved 100% completion rates. However when looking at achievement rates by professional group, medical and dental colleagues are significantly below this level which reflect the organisational challenges in releasing staff for training.

Lunch and learn sessions for line managers

Between April 2023 and March 2024, the Carers Team delivered 10 Lunch and Learn sessions for line managers as part of the continual awareness raising work and these were attended by 52 managers. These sessions covered:

- Do you know most unpaid carers do not recognise themselves as an unpaid carer and why how we ask them if they look after someone is important?
- Do you know where you can refer an unpaid carer for support?
- Are you aware of what is available to unpaid carers but also if you yourself or one of your colleagues are caring for someone what support can be put in place?
- Have you heard about Investors in Carers?

“Thank you - very informative and helpful, I will definitely be implementing the passport.
- Manager who attended the Lunch & Learn”

Other Carer awareness training

The Admiral Nurses team delivered the START (Strategies for relatives) programme which is an 8-week evidence-based intervention developed by University College London to educate and build resilience and coping strategies for carers of people living with dementia.

The objective of the course is to help carers to develop coping strategies and outcomes are measured looking at levels of anxiety and depression on the Hospital Anxiety and Depression scale, an improvement in the Scales measuring the Impact of Dementia on Carers (SIDE CAR) and some feedback. Over the past 12 months carers have attended a total of 85 session, not all carers attended for the full 8 weeks.

This was a quote from the latest group: *“The START programme made me feel very supported and cared about. The Admiral Nurses were kind and very helpful. They treated us with compassion and understanding. I cannot rate them and the START course highly enough. Meeting other carers was really helpful too. We got along really well and supported one another. It's so important not to feel you are the only one caring for someone with dementia. It's good to feel you are not alone and that is what the START programme did for me. Thank you”*

Priority 4 - Support Carers to become digitally included and confident

The Health Board provides services to many communities in rural areas which can provide challenges when unpaid carers are trying to access services and stay connected with family and friends. Digital connectivity has been an important theme throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and we are continuing to find opportunities to support unpaid carers to become digitally included and confident.

The Gwasanaeth Bydd Iach / Be Well Service (previously known as the Education Programme for Patients team) offer a course especially for unpaid carers called “Introduction to looking after me” (I2LAM). These used to be delivered face to face prior to the pandemic however have now been offered via MS Teams to encourage participation when carers find travelling to external venues difficult. In 2023 two courses were delivered with a total of 13 unpaid carers attending.



In order to encourage greater participation in this course the Be Well Service are working with the Carmarthenshire Carers Forum to review the content of the course and adapt this for piloting early in 2024.

Carers Support West Wales website

As well as the Health Board SharePoint page, the Health Board promote the Carers Support West Wales (CSWW) website which is a regional resource developed as a “one-stop shop” for carers to access information about services and support which is available across the region. The link to the platform is here: [Carers Support West Wales | Cymorth Gofalwyr Gorllewin Cymru](#)

Looking Ahead

The Health Board is committed to supporting unpaid carers within our community, and those within our workforce who have an unpaid caring role in their family life. A collaborative approach to progressing key areas for improvement and specific actions and initiatives to promote positive outcomes for unpaid carers will continue to be driven forward through the Health Board Carers Strategy Group, and through the West Wales Carers Development Group of the Regional Partnership Board.

Our local actions will continue to respond to the regional strategy themes, but will include:

- Embedding the Investors in Carers scheme within the Health Board in order to secure the longer term sustainability of this important early identification initiative;
- Reducing disadvantage for staff who are unpaid carers through our work as a caring employer and our implementation of the Employers for Carers scheme. We also aim to collate evidence to submit for the Level 3 award by the end of March 2025;
- Continued partnership working with local carers forums and regional groups in order to promote the availability of carers specific support and short breaks which enable carers to maintain their own health and wellbeing; and
- Supporting the refresh of the regional Carers Strategy, ensuring that the voices of carers inform future actions.