

CARERS VOICES

To find out more, call: 0300 500 1895

The Carers Voices project is continuing to expand across Essex spreading the word and raising awareness of unpaid Carers and the invaluable role they play in society.

We currently have two live surveys, and would like to share some feedback so far:

Isolation & Loneliness- common themes emerging are carers worrying about burdening others about their role, having to ask for help with lifts to appointments and/or sitting with the cared for whilst they attend.

'I can't leave my husband and I don't drive so the only time I go out is once a week for shopping with my daughter. Friends have virtually deserted us and I have only one child living nearby.'

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There has also been requests for training in their caring role and dealing with difficult situations.

'I accessed extremely good moving and handling training but had to pay for it as courses weren't currently being run for family carers in this area. More free courses on things like Moving and handling, pressure care, nutrition, dementia (though I did an excellent course with Dementia Adventure) would be invaluable.'

Young Carers Survey-common themes are mental health struggles and anxiety issues around the future, not knowing what's going to happen. The positives are being supported by local carers organisations.

'I sometimes feel sad that my sister is ill, and she doesn't talk to me. I don't like having to go to school and she doesn't, but I understand.'

'She is my best friend It's a struggle to make people understand so you just hide it and don't feel like you have anything in common with other kids.'

'As a positive I can express my feelings with intervention at school and come to Kool Carers where I can meet people who also are young carers. It's nice to know I'm not alone.'

The survey results/common themes are being shared with E.C.C. to help them understand what difficulties carers are facing and to influence future support and guidance available.

We have released a podcast with one of our Experts by Experience members who gave an impactful account of living with ARFID and Perthes disease, the conditions that her children have. Thanks to Michelle for her valuable input.



[Listen here](#)

The Carers Voices team have been out and about all over Essex engaging with carers and raising awareness with members of the public who didn't realise they are carers.

In June the Carers Voices team co-hosted a webinar with Essex Partnership University Trust [EPUT] for the staff during Carers Week.

It was to raise awareness of being a carer and the support and guidance available to carers along with the opportunity to be involved with the Carers Voices project.

We were very fortunate to have two of our Experts by Experience panel members join us to share their lived experiences of their caring role.

Their personal account was delivered from the heart and certainly made an impact. We would like to thank Charlotte and Jeff for their valuable input.

Some of the places we've been recently, Young Carers Wellbeing Event in Rayleigh, St Margarets Hospital Atrium Epping, Learning Disability Festival in Harlow, Flex Youth in Basildon, The Outhouse in Colchester, Bangladeshi Women's Group, Community Connect trailer in Shenfield.

This is just a snippet, alongside this we attend carer forums, meetings, have telephone calls with carers as well as face-to-face meetings to accommodate everyone's needs and preferences.

Loneliness and isolation survey -

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/FY8YBF/>

Young Carer Voices survey -

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/XX74HH/>

Our next three focus groups are happening in July:

- Monday 15th July at the MegaCentre , 7 Brook Rd Rayleigh SS6 7UT 1-3pm, free parking on site, refreshments provided.
- Wednesday 17th July W71, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Fire Station, 67 High Street, Chipping Ongar CM5 9DT 11.30 am- 1.30pm, free parking on site, refreshments provided.
- Friday 19th July The One Colchester Hub, Community 360, 4-6 Long Wyre Street, Colchester CO1 1LH from 9.30 am-12.15pm. Carparks available locally, charges apply, refreshments are provided.

Feel free to join us at any or all of these venues.

A conversation with carers: Access and support from Modern General Practice

Your local NHS (Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board) is working with Healthwatch Essex, Action for Family Carers and Essex County Council to make it easier for unpaid carers to get the right help, according to their needs, from their local GP practice.

We would like to invite those who are unpaid carers, who live in West Essex, to join one of our carers' conversation events in West Essex this August.

These events will:

- Give carers the opportunity to share their experiences of accessing support from their GP practice to help identify areas for improvement and to share good practices.
- Update carers on the changes that general practices have been making to better meet their needs.
- Provide information about the wider team of health and care professionals now supporting patients in GP practices. These include roles such as physiotherapists, paramedics and social prescribers who could be better placed to help carers quickly
 - talk about the range of conditions and illnesses that community pharmacies can now diagnose and treat, enabling carers and the people they care for to get help and treatment quickly without needing to see their GP.



Details of the events are below:

In-person event:

- When: Wednesday 7 August 2024, 9.30 am to 11.30 am
- Where: Latton Hall, Latton Bush Centre, Southern Way, Harlow, CM18 7BL

Online event:

- a. When: Thursday 8 August 2024, 7 pm to 8.30 pm
- b. Where: Online meeting via MS Teams – a link will be shared with attendees closer to the time

We do hope you can join us to be part of this important conversation and we look forward to welcoming you to one of the events.

To register, please contact Heather Aylward (heather.aylward@nhs.net) Public Engagement Manager at NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board by the end of the day Wednesday 31 July stating your name and which date you would like to attend.

We will provide tea, coffee and biscuits at our 'in person' event: please let us know about any allergies or dietary requirements.

Finally, I wanted to share with you some quotes from carers, some are from the survey and others from our engagement events.

'I'm worn out, tired all the time, who's going to help me the carer?'

'Kool Carers is a positive for me because I've found people that get it. My mum has also got a job that is very good. I really struggled with primary school and things were difficult.'

'I can still go out and enjoy myself whenever I'm able too but if I make plans sometimes, they do have to be cancelled because things at home come first before anything.'

'More respite breaks needed for carers away from the person they care for.'

'Sometimes I just want to be heard, thank you for listening.'