

# CARERS VOICES

To find out more, call: 0300 500 1895

The Carers Voices Team have continued to extend our reach across Essex, working with ECC to help shape, influence and improve services for unpaid carers. We have continued to engage at every opportunity and have linked with carers, connecting with them at groups, fairs, hospitals, community events and on the high street. We have targeted Young Carers and those in hard-to-reach communities, the length and breadth of the county. Our impact has been considerable; we have reached over **6000** unpaid carers to-date.



Carers face many challenges including; Isolation, loneliness, difficulty finding employment and understanding what support is available and where to find it. Each carer finds themselves in a unique and dynamic situation, one that changes constantly and where templated support services don't often suit their needs. We have been able to engage with carers and offer advice and guidance to bridge the gap and enable and empower them to take control and build their own appropriate support.

## Our next engagement events:

- Proactive Patient Health and Wellbeing Event, The Baptist Church, Pier Avenue, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 1NJ Wednesday 20th May 10am-1pm
- Princess Alexandra Hospital, Hamstel Rd, Harlow, England, CM20 1QX Wednesday 20th May 10am-2pm
- Living Well with Dementia Chipping Hill, Halstead, CO9 2BY Friday 22nd May 10am -3pm
- Basildon University Hospital, Nethermayne, Basildon, Essex, SS16 5NL Wednesday 27th May 10 am -2pm
- Braintree Dog Day & Community Safety Day Weavers Park, Braintree Saturday 30th May 10am -2pm

**Please do come along and see us at any of these events.**

**Let us know**, what do you think of this Newsletter  
Email: [carersvoices@healthwatchessex.org.uk](mailto:carersvoices@healthwatchessex.org.uk)



“

“I miss being a person and doing things for me”.

”

“

“You are not alone on this journey; never think you can't ask for help.”

”

“

“I feel really disempowered as a carer especially in hospital when staff don't listen to me and I've vital information to share with them about mum.”

”

“

“I recently went three nights without sleep looking after Dad, it's hard when you are a lone carer, there is no one to turn to”.

”

“

“Communication needs improving between agencies and the carer – as mum's carer I shouldn't be excluded from important information that I need to know.”

”

To find out more, call: 0300 500 1895

The Essex County Council, discharge from hospital booklet was co-produced with the Experts by Experience. With valuable feedback from carers and patients it provides comprehensive information on the hospital discharge process, one that many carers find challenging.

It includes details of what to expect when going into the hospital, what happens during the stay and the steps to prepare for discharge.

The booklet also covers the importance of discharge planning, involving patients and their families in the process, and the importance of a care and support system in place to ensure a smooth transition from hospital to home.

It is a valuable resource for anyone needing information on hospital discharge and support after leaving.



## Carers Identified Themes

The Carers Voices Team constantly speak to Carers; several identified themes continue to arise in conversation, and a few are highlighted below:

**Inconsistent GP services across Essex** – Highlighting the inconsistencies in support, for example: opening hours, differences in extended hours or weekend services, which may not accommodate carers' schedules. Lack of awareness of carers' needs and pressures, i.e., the emotional and physical toll of being a carer. Frequent GP changes resulting in carers repeatedly explaining their situations.

**Mental Health** – The negative impact for both the carer and cared for. Lack of support for the carer when the cared-for has a range of mental health disorders.

**Carers Rights** – There is a lack of awareness due to several barriers: Information barriers, insufficient communication, complexity of systems, cultural or personal barriers

**Lack of recognition of Carers** – not recognising individuals as carers or involving them in decision-making about the cared-for person's health.

## Experts by Experience:

We are currently polling the Experts by Experience Ambassador group to find out whether they would be interested in a regular forum, where they can meet, share ideas, learn from each other and from external speakers. The Carers Voices team is currently collating their responses to understand the varied preferences.

The Carers Voices Team always values the lived experience, and insight carers tell us about. Whether you are a carer or know of other carers who do not know about us, please do pass on our contact details and encourage them to get in touch with us.

The Carers Voices Team would also love the opportunity to visit your support group or meeting to listen to, and learn from, the lived experiences of unpaid carers. If you are part of a support group in any part of Essex, please let us know when and where you meet and we will be happy to come along. [carersvoices@healthwatchessex.org.uk](mailto:carersvoices@healthwatchessex.org.uk)