




East Lothian Carers Strategy Review of 2023-24 Action Plan

The East Lothian Carers Strategy was developed with the intention of supporting carers to manage their caring responsibilities with confidence and in good health, and that they are able to have a life of their own.

While the strategy outlines our vision for carers and the seven outcomes we want to achieve, the Action Plan outlines the practicalities of how these will be delivered. Implementation of the actions within the plan will be led by the Carers Change Board, with support and feedback from the Carers Reference Group.

Work on these actions will take place over this year and will only be achieved by continuing to build on the joint working that is already taking place, not just with our local carers organisations but with departments across the council, the NHS, community and third sector groups.

Outcome 1: Carers are identified and can access support	
We said we would.....	We did.....
Pilot our new Adult Carer Support Plan with carers and review based on feedback following first six months.	Review and update the local ACSP to make it more Outcome focused and promote good conversations. Use was delayed until March 2024 in line with review of adult social work assessment forms, review and audit due September 2024
Implement audit process for completed ACSP's including feedback mechanism for information on where Carers Outcomes cannot be met	
Improve ELHSCP web content and make carers information more visible and easily accessible	Make improvements to HSCP online information for carers found here Carers East Lothian Council
Gather data on population profile and investment, look at resource allocation with aim of ensuring this reflects the communities we serve	Review this data, identifying potential need more support to carers of people with physical disabilities and parent carers.
Review workforce plan to raise workforce awareness of carers and carers issues to maximise opportunities for identification and referral to support services	Promote new educational resources from NHS NES "Equal Partners in Care"
Develop a communications plan to publicise key messages	Publicise key messages on significant dates including carers week, carers rights day and national POA day
Improve identification of carers in our community hospitals to identify carers, increase recognition of carers value throughout the persons stay and to support successful discharge planning	Get a commitment for all East Lothian Community Hospital staff to attend Think Carer sessions

Outcome 1: Carers are identified and can access support	
We said we would....	We did....
Work within communities to raise awareness of carers, referral pathways and their need for support	Make links between community organisations and Carer support services wherever possible
Work with our community partners to increase carer identification, including Day centres, sheltered housing, large employers and schools	Continue to work with connected communities, childrens services and third sector orgs to raise awareness. Focus on schools in 2023 with a Young Carers worker now in each school cluster delivering awareness raising sessions  ELCYC Youth Worker summary .pdf
Our Young Carers service will develop their work in school 'clusters' and continue to identify Young Carers	Additional 110 Young Carers identified between March and Sept 2023 plus 143 between Oct 2023 -March 2024 Developed work to include new Rosehill campus
Maximise use of social media/websites/Access to a Better Life East Lothian to raise awareness of carers support services and referral pathways	Communications and content staff promoting these resources.
Develop Young Carer ID cards to help with identification and having views heard.	Explored this with ELC smart card team, viable but cost of £4 per card means decision will need to be taken by YC on whether this is a priority for them.
Consider barriers to different groups identifying and accessing support, including men, different ethnic groups, LGBT people and those with other protected characteristics	Focus in 2023 on ethnic minorities, ELHSCP has increased links with organisations supporting people from different groups including, Feniks, MILAN, MECOPP and health in Mind. CoEL team training and follow up action plan from MECOPP

Outcome 2: Carers are well informed and have access to tailored and age appropriate information and advice throughout their caring role	
We said we would.....	We did....
Continue to commission services to enable all carers in East Lothian to have access to advice and support throughout their carers journey on wide range of issues	Commit additional funding to East Lothians Young Carers Service to minimise the impact of a reduction from another partner.
Review these contracts to ensure delivery of quality services to carers	Continue quarterly link officer meetings with providers and receive 6 monthly formal project reporting
Actively engage with current providers, potential providers and community representatives in assessment of needs and identification of gaps in service provision	Consult with the public, including unpaid carers, on relevant topics like planning for an ageing population
Review numbers of Carers accessing advice and information services	Monitor through contract reporting
Monitor numbers of ACSP's and YCS being completed	
Re-introduce post diagnostic group sessions for people with a recent diagnosis of dementia in East Lothian, offered in community spaces and include people with dementia and their carers in delivery.	Include this as commitment within the Post Diagnostic Support providers contract
Develop clear pathways for carers to access both direct support and help developing an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) or Young Carers Statement (YCS)	Establish CoEL as lead organisations for Carer Support Plans YCS through website, QR codes on posters, staff visible in schools
Develop range and availability of materials available to Carers	Improve ELHSCP digital content and develop and distribute East Lothians Short Breaks Services Statements. CoEL developed an online information pack for all newly registered carers
Update East Lothian Health and Social Care partnership website to reflect current support and services	Updates to web content more generally by new communication and content team
Continue to provide advice, information and support to maximise incomes for carers (and the people they care for)	Figures for this year not complete at this point but in 2021/22 CoEL supported carers to access more than 1 million pounds in benefits
Allow Carers direct access, through CoEL and social work services, to funding from SG aimed at reducing hardship associated with the cost of living increases	£10,000 allocated to Carers of East Lothian for distribution

Outcome 2: Carers are well informed and have access to tailored and age appropriate information and advice throughout their caring role	
We said we would.....	We did....
Continue to strengthen our support in line with the principles of Self Directed Support (SDS) and direct Carers to advice on SDS and managing personal budgets through Lothian centre for Inclusive Living and our financial management service	Incorporated actions related to carers use of SDS into wider SDS improvement plan
Refresh our audit with MECCOP and implement findings and cultural competency training for partnership staff and partner agencies as a result	MECOPP delivered two cultural competency sessions to staff. Organisational audit not completed as information provided now significantly out of date.

Outcome 3: Carers are supported to maintain their own physical, emotional and mental wellbeing	
We said we would....	We did.....
Improved promotion of ACSP's and YCS's, aim to make this the basis for the 'good conversation'	Carer Support Plans or statements offered to all carers registering with support services. CoEL streamlines and adapted database to better support completion and recording stage ACSP is at.
Support carers to promote their own health through ACSPs or YCSs and regular reviews	Add review arrangements to updated ACSP
Work with individuals to ensure that the level and nature of care provided by young carers remains appropriate for their age	Monitoring of YCS, referral on to other services and following educational child protection guidelines ensures caring roles remain age appropriate
Promote and review East Lothian Rehabilitation Service's new direct referral pathway for Carers to access an Occupational Therapy assessment in their own home	Pathway has established referral routes and criteria for support
Monitor demand for CoEL counselling services	CoEL allocated additional resource to this service to meet demand in this year

Outcome 3: Carers are supported to maintain their own physical, emotional and mental wellbeing	
We said we would...	We did.....
Promote carers issues within Local Employability Partnership	Strategy officer joined adult learning and reskilling subgroup of Lothian Employability Partnership (LEP). LEP structure currently under review
Continue to develop materials to support Young Carers in school	Staff work with schools, mental health team and Circle on sharing relevant materials with YC
Help young carers secure the use of their own rights under additional support for learning legislation via the service My Rights, My Say.	Staff make YC aware of their rights, remind school staff of these rights, promote My Rights, MY Say on YC website.
Support Young Carers who could be eligible for Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)	Staff support YC directly with this or refer to Bridges Project for additional 1:1 support
More well-being events such as Segways, Fox Lake and Walking with alpaca's experiences.	Service continually looking for new and varied ways of supporting YC well being to enjoy time alone, with friends or with family

Outcome 4: Breaks from caring are timely and regularly available	
We said....	We did....
Review, with Carers and Carers Representatives, East Lothian's Short Breaks statements ensuring that they accurately reflect the range of local and national opportunities to support breaks from caring	Publish these online and distribute through all local libraries and other public buildings
Consider how these statements can be used as a tool for workers and carers in supporting breaks from caring	Share these with adult and childrens duty social work teams as resource

Outcome 4: Breaks from caring are timely and regularly available	
We said....	We did....
Review replacement care guidelines within social work to ensure these are applied consistently giving equity of service	Deliver training to adult and LD teams Mar/Apr 2023 Support development of a replacement care policy in relation to older peoples services. Review purchasing so we can report on replacement care accurately.
Include an outcome on 'breaks from caring' in our revised Adult Carer Support Plan	Include breaks as part of the ACSP
Monitor innovative solutions to 'breaks from caring' through participation in Shared Care Scotland's promoting variety programme and Health Improvement Scotland events	Keep up to date with research and guidance coming through these programmes
Continue to fund specialist short breaks support for carers so that all carers have access to information and advice on breaks from caring	Make a £25,000 contribution to CoEL's time for me, small grants programme
Increase access to personal budgets within the partnership to provide creative breaks from caring	Implement a new finance procedure to simplify access to grants for carers. Increase links with Time for me
Continue our efforts to secure 2 respite beds in East Lothian for use in planned respite situations or confirm alternative provision	Secure 1 bookable respite bed with Haddington care home and will continue to monitor its use and discuss opportunities with new providers
Continue to support the development of 'Meeting Centres' in Musselburgh and throughout East Lothian to offer support to people with dementia and their carers	Support DfEL to open East Lothians first meeting centre in Musselburgh and explore how the model could support people in other areas
Keep working with our existing day services, for older people, to expand the range of services on offer to support breaks from caring	Secure long term contracts with day centre providers giving a secure footing for them
Commission a day service in Musselburgh where there is now an acknowledged gap.	Complete initial stage of commissioning and gained interest from two providers
Expand resource co-ordinator service to offer support to more people in the community	Not manage to increase provision but promoted alternative sources of support such as Neighbourhood Networks. Offer carers of people with complex disabilities the opportunity to engage in peer support.
Promote our Shared Lives scheme and continue to try and attract new paid Carers to this programme	Create promotional videos to show the benefit of shared lives, promotion on local radio

Outcome 4: Breaks from caring are timely and regularly available	
We said....	We did....
Improve reporting systems so we can more accurately reflect on and build better services to accommodate breaks from caring	Update replacement care purchasing to improve reporting
Monitor numbers of Young Carers accessing breaks through opportunities such as active school and holiday activity opportunities, develop range of opportunities available in response to Young Carers feedback.	Service monitors all opportunities. Liaise regularly with YC forum to check activities meet their needs. Carried out survey to ensure breaks from caring programme was meeting need.
Support Young Carers to attend the Young Carers Festival	Young Carers supported to attend festival over night for the first time. Other Young Carers who had not previously been to the festival went for the day.

Outcome 5: Carers are supported to have a life outside of their caring role and can achieve a balance between caring and other aspects of their lives	
We said we would....	We did....
What we will do for Adult Carers	
As part of planning process have more open and honest conversations about what is possible and what will meet individual outcomes	Update ACSP to support these conversations, ELHSCP and CoEL working more closely to share wider context.
Increase numbers of carers accessing personal budgets to meet their personal outcomes (Community Care Worker appointed July 2022 who will support carers in this)	Processes in place for carers to access small grants but development work still needed
Review implications of updated SDS guidelines (published Nov 2022) to Carers budgets	Included in SDS improvement plan, next stage Apr 2024
Agree guidelines for keeping carers informed throughout the process of completing their ACSP through guidance document	Guidance document developed and project group given opportunity to comment. Improvement in wait between ACSP being shared and Community Care Worker picking up means carers shouldn't feel left wondering what is happening

Outcome 5: Carers are supported to have a life outside of their caring role and can achieve a balance between caring and other aspects of their lives	
We said we would....	We did....
Support carers in employment by increasing awareness of carer specific issues through the local employability network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Access to advice and information o Promoting the achievement of Carer Positive Status across local employers o Promotion of flexible working policies that can support carers 	Carers strategy officer member of LEP CoEL involved in Carer positive event in Edinburgh, included in carers week plans 2024 National Carers leave bill came into force April 2024
Increase numbers of 'Carer positive' employers	Numbers of Carer positive organisations continue to increase, these are not broken down by region so difficult to see if this number has increased. Identifying key local employers could be more effective for future work
What we will do for Young Carers	
Work with schools to improve identification of young carers and to ensure both a flexible and understanding approach towards young carers needs and the provision of appropriate and tailored support	Regular presence in schools, development of relationships with school SLT and guidance staff has helped raise awareness of YC needs. Helped develop and deliver the Children affected by substance use training for all East and Midlothian staff
Work with social work services to ensure that the cared-for person is in receipt of appropriate support (from either Adult or Children's services) to both protect young carers from age inappropriate caring roles and to enable them to have a life outside their caring role	Developed excellent local relationships with Early and Moderate intervention teams which helps prevent cases getting to child protection level.
Develop clear pathways for young carers to access support from YCS and ensure that these are regularly reviewed	In place. Excel tracker regularly monitored to ensure YC are offered the opportunity to review their YCS every 6 months.

Outcome 6: Carers are respected by professionals as ‘Partners in Care’ and are appropriately included in the planning and delivery of both the care and support for the people they care for and services locally

We said we would...	We did....
Through review of ACSP promote more open and honest conversations around what is possible and what will meet an individual’s outcomes	Update ACSP to support these conversations, ELHSCP and CoEL working more closely to share wider context.
Take part in review of learning modules available on LearnPro, which are role mandatory for different staff and promote EPiC training as part of this review	No potential to make EPiC training mandatory but launch new modules promoted by workforce development.
Raising awareness with professionals so every interaction in an opportunity to treat carers as partners in care	Promote EPiC training and deliver think carer across staff groups
Developing and supporting the Triangle of Care Approach to Mental Health Services through review of services and future commissioning.	Service specification reviewed and amended to put more focus on including carers
Review the extent that carers are treated as partners in care within ACSP and YCS and feed back to services results from these	Audit delayed in relation to ACSP, action to be included in process. Use of viewpoint in YCS ensures YC are engaged and participate in the creation of their YCS and care plan. Viewpoint produces reports and co-ordinator regularly uses this as source of statistical information for reports.
Consult carers on the need for provision of independent advocacy support for carers through needs assessment and independent advocacy steering group	Report from review of independent advocacy services shared with head of operations, the needs assessment concluded that “independent advocacy for carers was identified as a gap however given the current financial situation it would be challenging to extend independent advocacy provision beyond what we currently commission”. Engagement on carers strategy did not highlight independent advocacy as a priority, CoEL advocate on behalf of carers but are not an independent advocacy organisation.

Outcome 6: Carers are respected by professionals as ‘Partners in Care’ and are appropriately included in the planning and delivery of both the care and support for the people they care for and services locally

We said we would...	We did....
<p>We will support carers to have a have a say in the development and delivery of services in East Lothian by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintaining the standards for engagement set out in our Engagement policy ○ Ensure that carers are both represented and supported to be involved in the HSCP strategic groups ○ Engage with CoEL “Carers Voice” group on service planning and delivery: ○ Increase avenues for Young carers feedback including the Young Carers Forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carers rep to the IJB appointed in February 2024 ○ Carers voice group consulted on Carers Strategy, Short breaks and planning for an ageing population ○ Young Carers forum now meeting regularly, consulted on service and wider issues. Carers rep to the IJB to attend and hear from Young Carers
<p>Ensure through Service Specifications that all registered and HSCP care services capture feedback from carers as well as from users of services and have forums to engage with key stake holders</p>	<p>Contracts for Older peoples day centres and Elder street mental health support service included need to gain feedback from carers.</p>
<p>Plan awareness raising events for Carers week</p>	<p>Carers of East Lothian delivered a programme of events for carers week 2023. HSCP social media campaign to raise awareness</p>
<p>Play an active role in local Health and wellbeing groups</p>	<p>Officer from planning and performance team allocated to each local group to gain feedback and share HSCP updates</p>
<p>Work with community organisations to share information</p>	<p>Making connections</p>
<p>Facilitate relationships between 3rd sector organisations and carers</p>	
<p>Review findings of Care Inspectorate report ‘adult carers experience of social work and social care’ and implement improvement plan based on its recommendations</p>	<p>Action plan developed, to be reviewed</p>
<p>Work with Community Learning and Development team to highlight carers needs within the learning and development plan for 2025- 28</p>	<p>Strategic planning officer fed into development Feb 2024</p>
<p>Increase avenues for Young Carers feedback, including the young carers forum</p>	<p>Continue to organise YC Forum meetings Use survey to obtain feedback Seek verbal/written feedback during/after every event</p>

Outcome 7: Local communities are supported to be Carer friendly	
We said we would....	We did....
Work within communities to raise awareness of carers, referral pathways and their need for support	Work with older peoples day centres to offer carer support in their local areas
Support Carers Week events	Carers of East Lothian offered a full programme of carers week events and funding has been agreed to support further activities in carers week 2024
Develop and distribute information for carers in spaces carers spend time	Share Short Breaks Services Statements
Encourage the development of local peer and buddy groups for carers	Carers of East Lothian delivering many carer peer support groups including online option. Dementia friendly east Lothian and the meeting centre working to develop a further peer support group for carers.
Play an active role on local Health and Wellbeing groups	Officers are allocated to each H&WBG and promote information sharing between the partnership and community groups.
We aim to make accessing information and support easier and more streamlined by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining the dots between community services • facilitating the relationships between third sector organisations and carers • Working with community organisations to share information 	Ongoing Community transformation agenda
Identify large local businesses to encourage to work towards Carer Positive status.	CoEL attended carer positive event in Edinburgh to encourage local businesses
Promote the role of Volunteer Centre East Lothian as out Third sector interface and continue to support their 'Community First' community support model	Locality worker role promoted to different community groups
Support Dementia Friendly East Lothian in their aim to make our communities great places for people with Dementia and their carers to live, visit and work in	Gathering event to share East Lothians dementia strategy and hear from people and carers

Glossary of terms

Abbreviation	Full text
ACSP	Adult Carer Support Plan
C&YP	Children and Young People
CoEL	Carers of East Lothian
DfEL	Dementia Friendly East Lothian
ELC	East Lothian Council
ELCHASE	East Lothian Care Home Assessment and Support Team
ELHSCP	East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership
EMA	Education maintenance allowance
ID	Identification
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transexual
SDS	Self Directed Support
VCEL	Volunteer Centre East Lothian
YC	Young Carer
YCS	Young Carers Statement
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child