



# Caring During Covid-19

## Healthwatch Report

33



**WOKINGHAM**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Summary: In 2020/21 Healthwatch Wokingham surveyed unpaid carers about their experiences of caring during the pandemic.

89 carers completed the questionnaire



# Top concerns reported by carers

Decline of the person they look after

⚙️ Workload and lack of time out: 78% said the hours of care they provided had increased, 70% hadn't been able to get regular breaks

Carer wellbeing, notably a negative impact on their: mental health (84%) physical health (62%), family wellbeing (73%)



# Other findings

- Carers found it easier to get food and medicine thanks to Wokingham's community response
- Direct payment recipients reported Council inflexibility and delays

2 out of 3 respondents didn't know their rights as a carer

30% didn't know what a carers assessment was

40% weren't registered as a carer with their GP.



Recommendation	WBC Carers Strategy Priority	Action	Ownership	Timeline
Identify hidden carers	Priority 1: Identifying and recognising carers <i>including seldom heard and hidden carers</i>	(aligns to Carers Strategy priority 1) 'Keeping in Touch' Project including data validity exercise	Integrated Network Development Lead/S&C	KIT Project commences March 2022 for 12 months  Data validity – Feb – June 22
Improve GP surgery support	Priority 4: Enabling carers to have a life outside caring <i>including good health and wellbeing</i>	Review GP surgery support for carers	Healthwatch	To be updated by Healthwatch
Increase information and support to known carers 37	Priorities 1 and 4	Develop co-production/customer engagement toolkit enabling greater involvement of carers in recruitment, policy shaping and commissioning  ASC currently reviewing community directory*. Project Joy being recommissioned and will increase info to carers. TuVida undertaking Care Act training and service improvement plan  Review webpages and leaflets	Adult Social Care  Carers' Strategic Group  Corporate Services	January 22  Commenced Feb/March 2022  Commencing April 22
Continue what worked well during the Covid period	Priority 1 Identify & recognise carers Priority 2 Young Carers Priority 3 Working carers <i>including carers' breaks</i> Priority 4	Review WBC's community response WBC has been engaging in welfare calls to carers (approx. 1000 in January) and this will continue Keeping in Touch project will keep this work going	Adult Social Care	Work ongoing



Recommendations	Strategy priority	Actions	Ownership	Timeline
WBC to publish written guidance for direct payment recipients who cannot spend their payments normally	Priority 4	A review on Direct Payments arrangements within Adult Social Care, to strengthen current practice	Adult Social Care	March/April 22
Prioritise provision and take up of respite options	Priority 4	No action required. Respite is already considered in care planning following assessments and carers' assessments	Adult Social Care	NA
Clinical Commissioning Group to consider updates to carers information on GP websites	Priority 4	WBC to explore options with the CCG	Adult Social Care/CCG	Complete – link between CCG and WBC website
End disparity between number of carers registered with GP and number registered with WBC	Priority 1	Incorporated within ongoing data validity work	Adult Social Care	Data validity – Feb – June 22

