

Carers in Devon





Are carers important to our communities, public services or the economy of Devon?



The value of the unpaid care that carers provide is worth £162 billion per year to the UK economy. This is equivalent to **an additional NHS** which receives around £164 billion of funding/year.

In **Devon** this is **£2.3 billion/year**

How well are we performing for carers in Devon?



Measure

Carer Reported Quality of Life

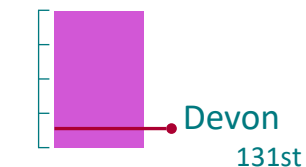
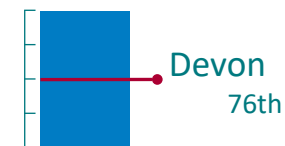
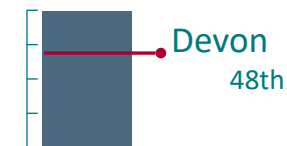
Carer satisfaction with Adult Social Care

Carer inclusion in discussion about the person they care for

Ease of finding information about services

Carer Social Isolation

Rank Out of 152



Trend



Composite measure Static since last survey Includes the measure for Isolation (see right).

This means that carer experience of the **rest of the system** and in their **wider communities** and lives is a concern.

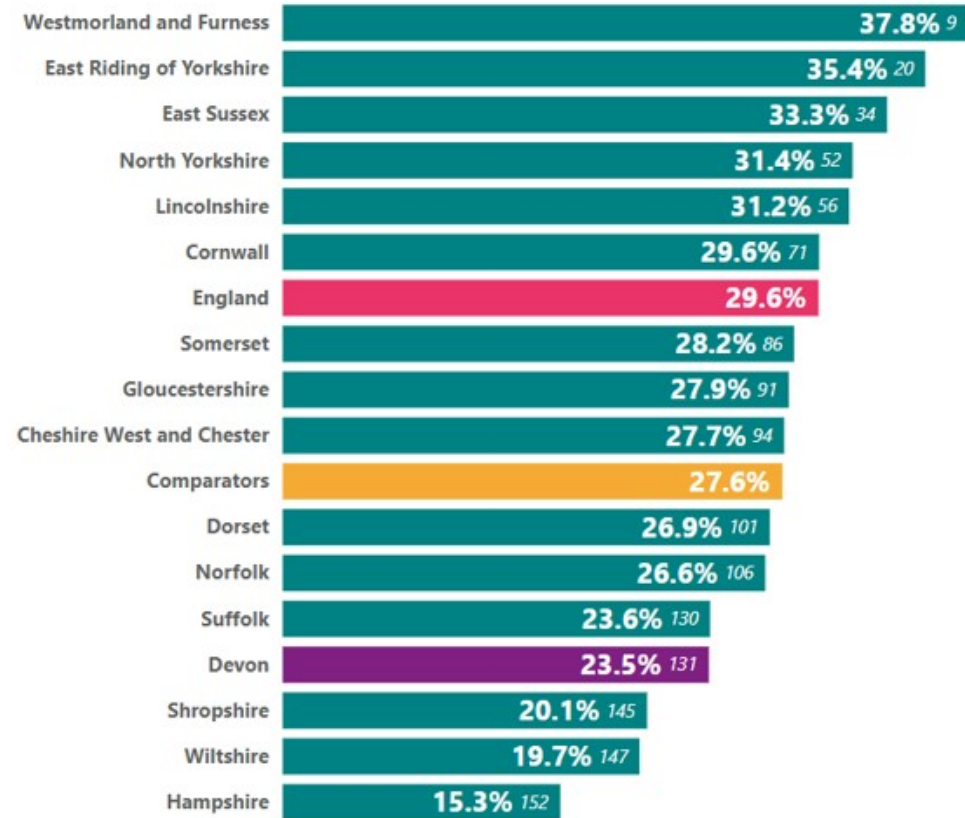
Carers may also be thinking of **General and NHS Practice**; these areas need **determined focus**, as is already being done within Integrated Adult Social Care.

Devon Carers provision highly regarded, so Carers are thinking of **“whole system”** information. The Board must consider how to bring all partners around the table.

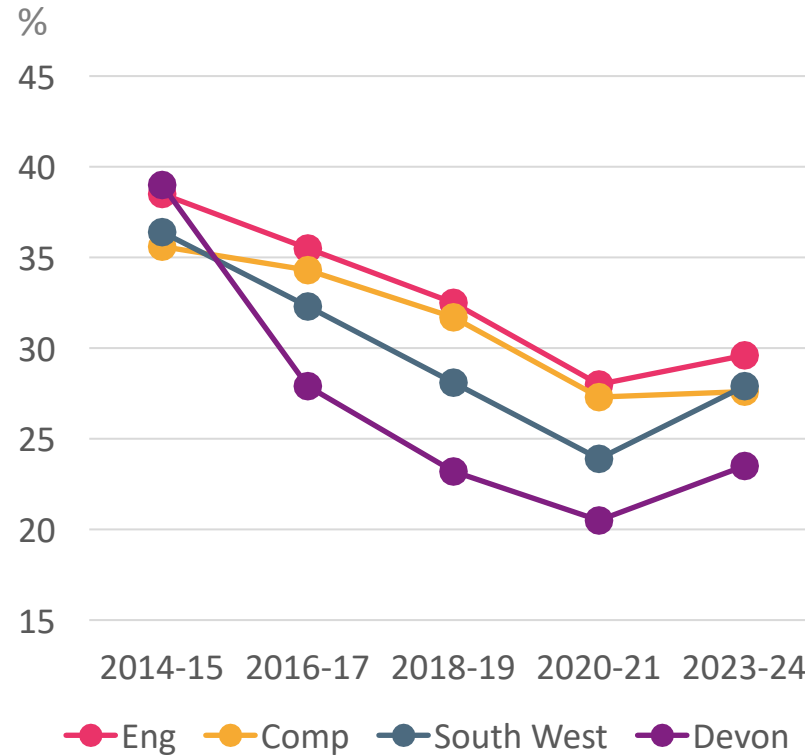
Continues to be a **major cause for concern** nationally and regionally. Adult Social Care alone holds insufficient levers to address carers. Devon's performance on this measure is **poor**.

Turning to Isolation - ASCOF 1|2 – Proportion of carers who reported that they have as much social contact as they would like

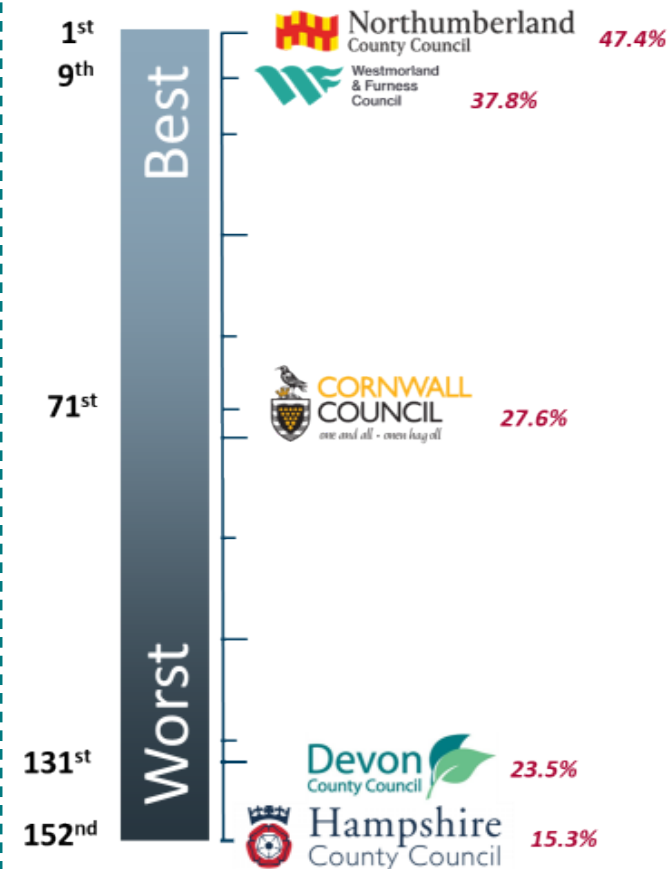
Comparators



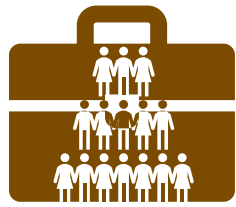
Trend



National Ranking



In Devon this compares with **45.8%** of people who **use services** reporting they had as much social contact as they would like (nearly twice that of Carers)



How many carers are there in Devon, and how many are there of working age?

According to the 2021 Census, there are around **74,500 carers in Devon.**

Of these, over **51,400** (69%) are of **Working Age** (aged 16-64).

The Census figure for Carers has been disputed – Alternative sources put the figure much higher – these include:

GP Patient Survey

18%

146k Carers

The number of working age Carers could be **over 111k**

You Gov Survey (for Carers Week)

20%

162k Carers



How likely is a person to be a carer in their lifetime?



In the UK the chance of providing care in adult life is **65%**



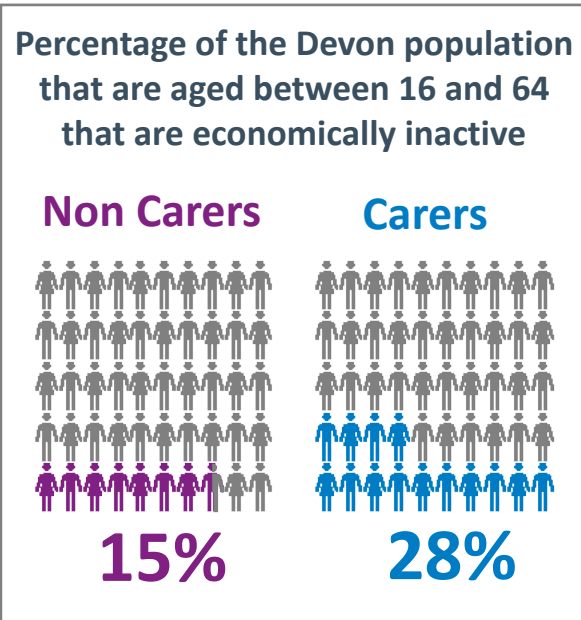
50% of **woman** will have been carers by the time **they are 46** years old



50% of **men** have become carers by the time **they are 57** years old

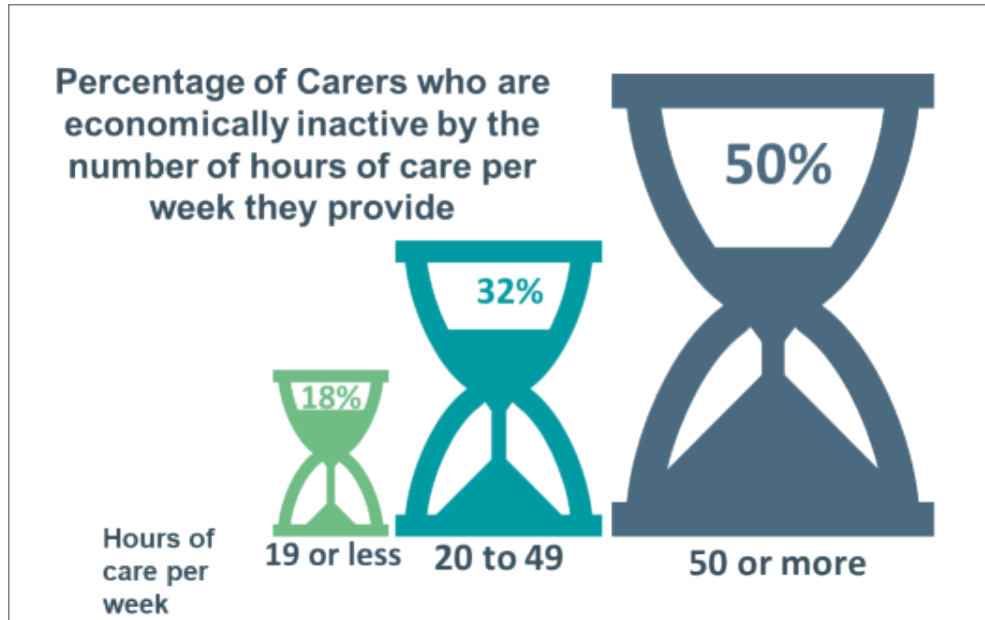
(50% of men and women have become carers whilst of working age)

Working Age Carers – The Numbers



Office for National Statistics, Census 2021.

Carers in Devon are more likely to be economically inactive than Non-Carers



Office for National Statistics, Census 2021.

The higher the intensity of caring the more likely a carer is to be out of work



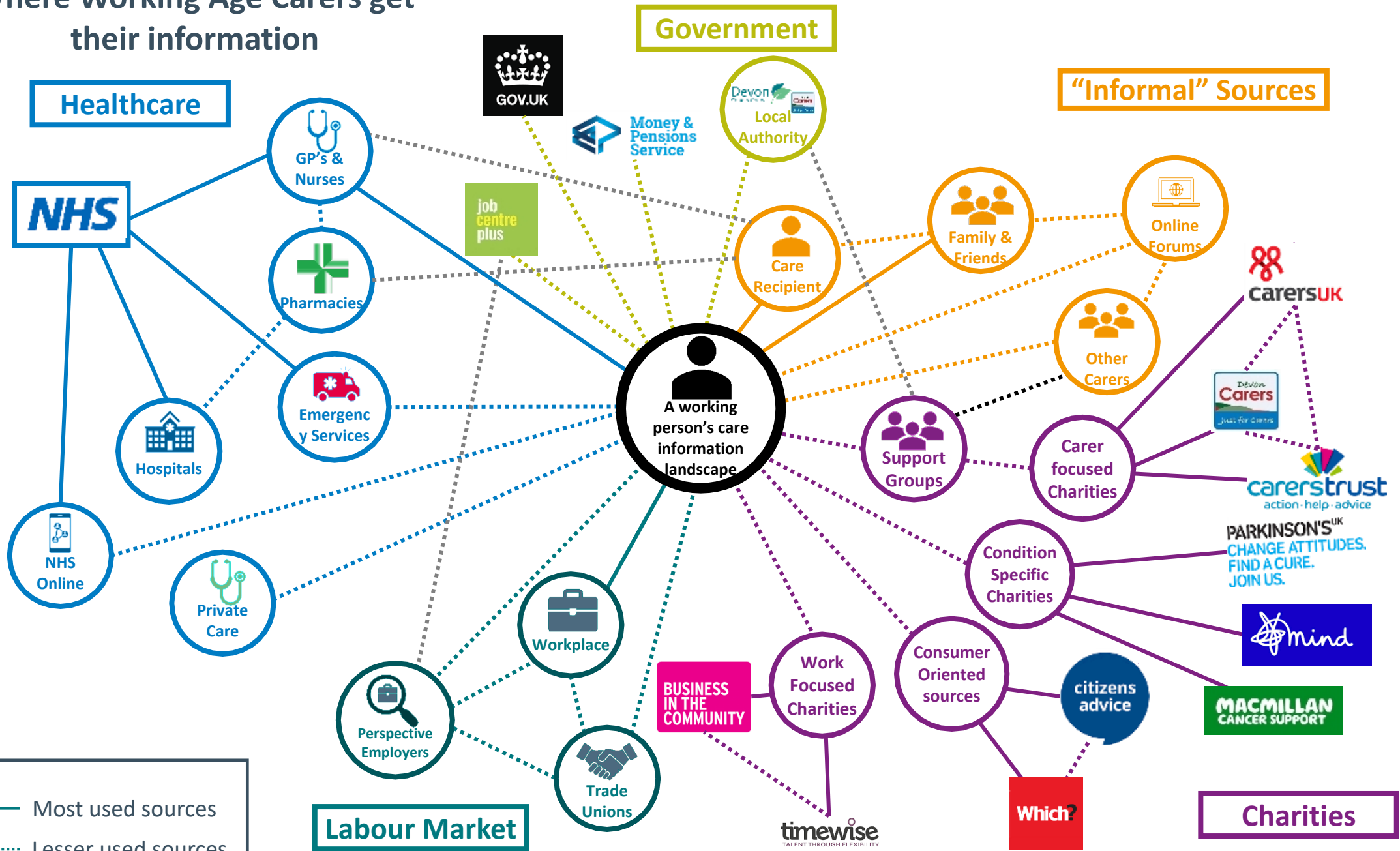
23% of carers felt they needed better support to return to or maintain paid work

- The need for flexible working hours.
- The ability to work remotely.
- Travel restrictions due to location and finances.
- Hesitancy from employers to hire unpaid carers due to concerns of conflicting priorities.

Carers UK (2022). [State of Caring 2022: A snapshot of unpaid care in the UK.](#)

More support for Carers is needed by Employers

Where Working Age Carers get their information



Healthcare



"Informal" Sources



Labour Market

Working Carers get direct information from very few places



Is the health and wellbeing of carers equal to that of the population who are not carers?

Carers in Devon are **less likely to be in good or very good health** (73%) than in the overall Devon population (81%)



8 out of 10 Carers have felt lonely or socially isolated as a result of their caring role

(this would equate to around 60,000 Carers in Devon based on the 2021 census)



- 86% those providing 50 hours or more a week.
- 86% those juggling care with bringing up children
- 89% for Younger Carers under 24 years old
- 84% those who have been caring for 10+ years

Poor Mental Health

Isolation & Loneliness Impacts

- Increased risk of developing coronary heart disease & strokes
- Increased likelihood of high blood pressure
- Increased likelihood in engagement with unhealthy behaviours (e.g. smoking, alcohol consumption)
- Increased likelihood of mortality

“ Social Isolation and loneliness affect mortality similarly to well established risk factors such as obesity, lack of physical activity, smoking, other form of substance abuse and poor access to healthcare ”

World Health Organisation

Vasileiou, K., Barnett, J., Barreto, M., Vines, J., Atkinson, M., Lawson, S., & Wilson, M. (2017). Experiences of Loneliness Associated with Being an Informal Caregiver: A Qualitative Investigation. *Frontiers in Psychology*. Brimblecombe, N. and Cartagena Farias, J. (2022). Inequalities in unpaid carer’s health, employment status and social isolation. *Health and Social Care in the Community*.

Causes and Solutions for Social Isolation and Loneliness- Carers

Causes of Social Isolation and Loneliness



Getting out of the House

Difficulty in being able to get out of the house much



Replacement Care

Difficulty in arranging appropriate and trusted replacement care



Cost of Social Activities

Inability to take part in social activities due to the pressures of caring on finances



Unable to Talk to Friends

Not being comfortable talking about caring with their friends



No Time for Social Activities

Not having time to spend on social activities



Public Misunderstanding

Behaviours can be misunderstood by the public, which can make going out in public more stressful



Transition into Caring

The transition into caring can be isolating, Carers can feel overwhelmed by the complex support systems and the sense of responsibility and feeling alone



Public Facilities not Accessible

Venues and public transport not accessible to those with mobility problems, disabled cared-for or carer



Change in Relationships

Relationships with the person they care for changes e.g. from husband and wife, into carer and cared-for

What carers say would make them feel less lonely



Regular breaks from caring

54%



Greater understanding from society

52%



Taking part in leisure activities

40%



Support with paying for social activities

31%



More understanding at work

31%



Being in touch with other carers

29%



Being able to talk to friends and family

23%



Taking part in education or training opportunities

21%

What are the biggest issues for carers in Devon?



Respite/Replacement Care still an issue that impacts on so many aspects of Caring



Support for Carers caring for people with complex/multiple conditions can feel insufficient



Carers don't always know where to go for support



Finding information can be confusing and time consuming



Lots of Carers are still reaching crisis point



Are carers always taken explicitly into account in our general/generic work?



No mention of Caring in the most recent DCC staff survey



The Director of Public Health's annual report in 2020 explicitly recognised Carers in its plan to tackle loneliness but subsequent work failed to address the **additional specific barriers that carers face** and would therefore likely be ineffective for many carers without additional inputs or adjustments

Recommendations



healthwatch

Devon & Torbay
Probation Service

NHS
South Western
Ambulance Service
NHS Foundation Trust



Devon
County Council

NHS
Devon Partnership
NHS Trust

NHS
Torbay and South Devon
NHS Foundation Trust

Joint Engagement Forum

Tackling carer isolation requires a concerted system wide and system level effort



DEVON &
SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Strategic Environmental Health
Managers Group

Public Health Devon

Devon
County Council

NHS
Royal Devon
University Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Recommendations

- 1 Carers and their specific needs should be considered and **explicitly addressed** in the Director of Public Health's annual reports **and in work arising** from them.
- 2 Member organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board should **lead the way** as large employers of many carers in supporting carers and promoting other Employers to do so. Membership of the Devon **Carer Friendly Employers Scheme** will assist them in this.
- 3 Health and Well-Being Board **nominates a representative** to join the Carers Partnership Steering Group.
- 4 **Caring status** be included in **equality and inclusion frameworks and monitoring** analogous to a primary Protected Characteristic in law.
- 5 The **promotion of carer awareness** should be a **top priority** in the community and among employers.
- 6 The **issues faced by carers** identified in this report are **taken into account** when developing services and strategies for the future.
- 7 Member organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board review "[The Commitment to Carers](#)" and how they can put this into practice.

Any Questions?

