

Caring Together in Belfast 2023 Onwards



Draft Carer Strategy 2023 - 2028

Executive Summary

Introduction

Belfast, as the largest Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust in Northern Ireland, recognises the significant and vital contribution that unpaid and family carers make in our communities.

Caring can come about unexpectedly or can develop gradually over time. Whilst caring can be rewarding, it can also be challenging and many carers often put their own lives on hold to provide care and support to someone close to them. This can impact on their own health and wellbeing, relationships, employment opportunities, finances and having the time to participate in social and leisure activities. We value the support carers offer to the person they care about, which often prevents, reduces and delays the need for more formal services.

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'Caring Together in Belfast 2023 Onwards' sets out how Belfast Trust will work to support unpaid and family carers who provide invaluable support. The Strategy covers the period 2023 - 2028 and

puts into focus an ongoing commitment to continue and build on the work outlined in our previous strategies to advance and embed carer supports across the Trust.

How we developed the strategy

In developing 'Caring Together in Belfast 2023 Onwards', we worked in partnership with the Carer Network which is a representative group of carers from across the Trust. We also engaged with a broad range of stakeholders across Belfast using online and offline methods to identify and develop carer priorities for this draft strategy. We heard clearly how caring can be

rewarding but more focused attention is to be given to:

- **Identify carers**
- **Help carers navigate the system to access information and support**
- **Review respite as carers were at risk of reaching breaking point.**

Laying the foundations for the new Carer Strategy

Belfast Trust has in place a Carer Support Team. This team has been working in partnership with Service Areas to advance carer supports in place across the Trust. Through the creation of the Carer Network, the Trust has established an involvement structure to effectively and meaningfully involve carers in this work. The Trust will

continue to strengthen carer involvement throughout the duration of this Strategy.

The review of the previous strategy, Caring Together in Belfast, 2017-2021, identified how much work has been achieved. This review provided the foundations on which the new Carer Strategy has been developed.

Caring Together in Belfast 2023 Onwards

Our focus for the next five years

'Caring Together in Belfast 2023 Onwards' sets out the vision, priorities and actions that carers across Belfast Trust have told us are important to them.

Vision

We will work in partnership to deliver the highest quality support to Belfast Trust carers.



To achieve all that we have set out to do, we will work with individuals, organisations and communities. We are committed to working together to achieve our collective vision.

Priorities

Four priority areas are identified for action. For each, we have set out the strategic intention, the actions to be undertaken, how we will measure if we have made a difference and who we will work with.

1 Reach all Carers



Raise awareness and identify carers within families and communities

2 Navigate Carer Support



Identify the support that carers require at different stages

3 Support Carer Health and Wellbeing



Supporting carers to protect their health and wellbeing

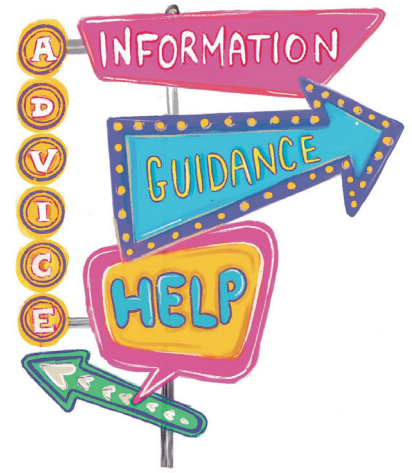
4 Connect with and Involve Carers



Connect with and empower carers to get involved

By 2028, every Belfast Trust carer should:

- Have timely access to the information they need to support them in their caring role
- Clearly navigate carer supports across the carer journey
- Understand their rights and have timely access to a Carers Assessment
- Be identified and recognised as part of the care pathway
- Have information and be linked to support across Belfast to care for their own health and wellbeing
- Have the opportunity to get involved to help shape and deliver services which are carer focused.



Have your say

Belfast Trust has worked with the Carer Network to develop 'Caring Together in Belfast 2023 Onwards'. The full strategy is available at [Caring Together in Belfast 2023 onwards | Belfast Health & Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](https://www.hscni.net/caring-together-in-belfast-2023-onwards)

The Trust is issuing the strategy for public consultation which will close on 8th September 2023. We wish to seek views about the draft strategy and would be delighted if you would complete our short questionnaire which is available at [Caring Together in Belfast 2023 onwards | Belfast Health & Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](https://www.hscni.net/caring-together-in-belfast-2023-onwards) or scan the QR code.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss any aspect of the strategy, please do not hesitate to contact the Carer Support Team at CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net or telephone 028 9504 2126

We aim to make this engagement as inclusive as possible so if you require the questionnaire in alternative formats or in a language other than English, please email CarerSuppSvc@belfasttrust.hscni.net or telephone 028 95042126.

Finally, thank you to Anne O'Reilly, Belfast Trust Board Non-Executive Director, the Carer Network, carers, Trust staff and community and voluntary representatives who contributed to the strategy and helped to identify what will make a difference to the support that Belfast Trust provides to carers across Belfast.

