



To: The Chair and Members of the Adults, Wellbeing & Health Scrutiny & Improvement Committee

Our Ref DemServs/
Your Ref
Contact: Sarah Connolly
Directt line: 01642 444414

Friday, 5 July 2024

Dear Councillors,

**ADULTS, WELLBEING & HEALTH SCRUTINY & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE:
MONDAY, 15 JULY 2024 – ITEM TO FOLLOW**

Please find attached the following agenda item(s) that were marked as 'To Follow' on your original agenda.

4. Scrutiny Review of Unpaid Carers - To Follow 2 - 44

If you have any queries about this matter please contact me on the number listed above.

Yours sincerely,

MR J SAMPSON
MANAGING DIRECTOR (HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

CIRCULATION

Councillors M Ovens (Chair), S Kay (Vice-Chair), C Cawley, C Curr, M Fairley, C Hannaway, G Jeffery, J Lavan, L Rynn, L White, J Hart, P Salvin and M Head
Councillors Earl & Robson (Cabinet Members - for information)

All Members of the Council (for information)

Corporate Director for Resources

The Press [except for Confidential item(s)]

Background Information

Adults, Wellbeing & Health Scrutiny & Improvement Committee
15 July 2024

Definition of a Carer

Carers provide support to partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage without their help.

This could be due to age, physical or mental ill health, addiction or disability.

The care they provide is unpaid.



Our Population Profile

	Young People	Working Age	Over 65+
Redcar and Cleveland	19.9%	56.5%	23.6%
England	20.9%	61.2%	17.9%

In England as a whole there are more than 3.4 adults for every older person. In RCBC there is less than 2.4 adults. This has a significant impact on the number of adults available to provide care both paid and unpaid.

What Care do they Provide?



...all while trying to maintain a life of their own.

Impact of a Caring Role

Carers The National Picture

The most recent Census 2021 puts the estimated number of unpaid carers at 5 million in England and Wales. This, together with ONS Census data for Scotland and Northern Ireland, suggests that the number of unpaid carers across the UK is 5.7 million.

This means that around 9% of people are providing unpaid care. However, Carers UK research in 2022 estimates the number of unpaid carers could be as high as 10.6 million. (Carers UK, Carers Week 2022 research report).

4.7% of the population in England and Wales are providing 20 hours or more of care a week.

12,000 people a day (Pytrillo and Bennett, 2022).

Carers and The Care Act 2014

The Act put in place significant new rights for carers in England including:

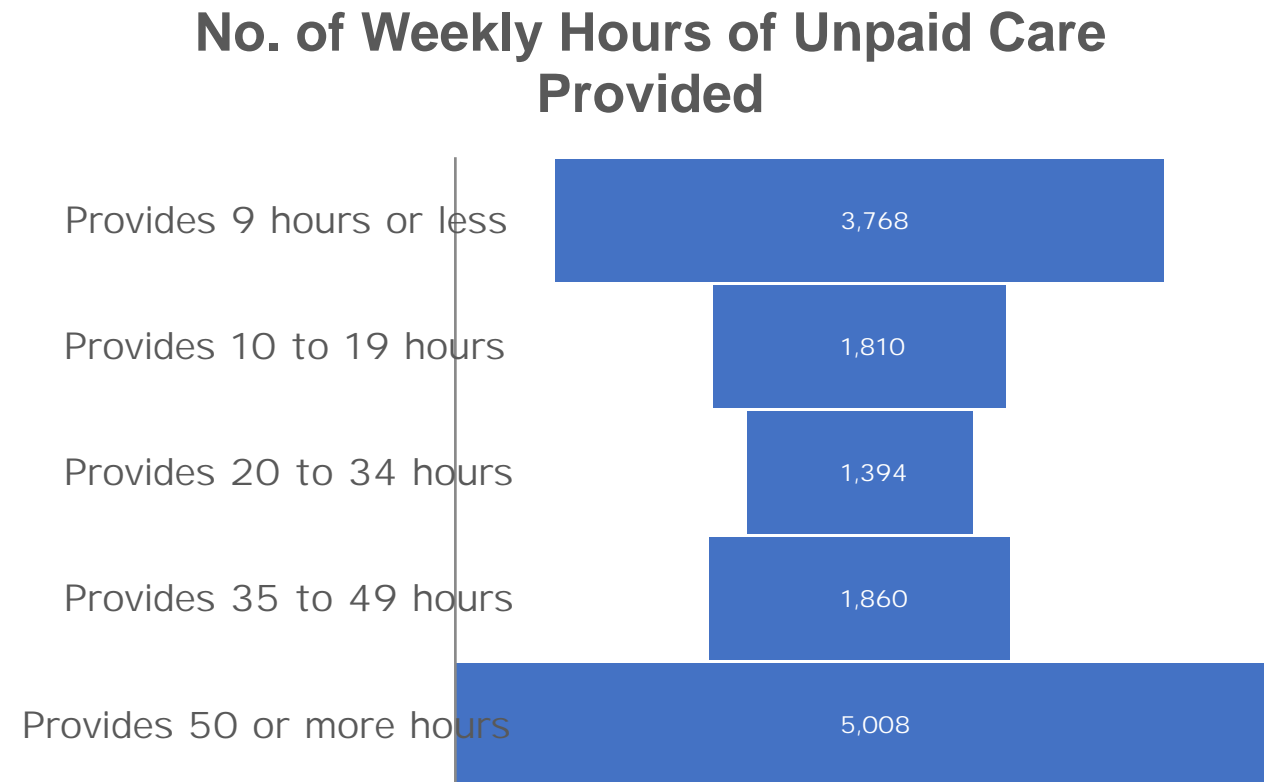
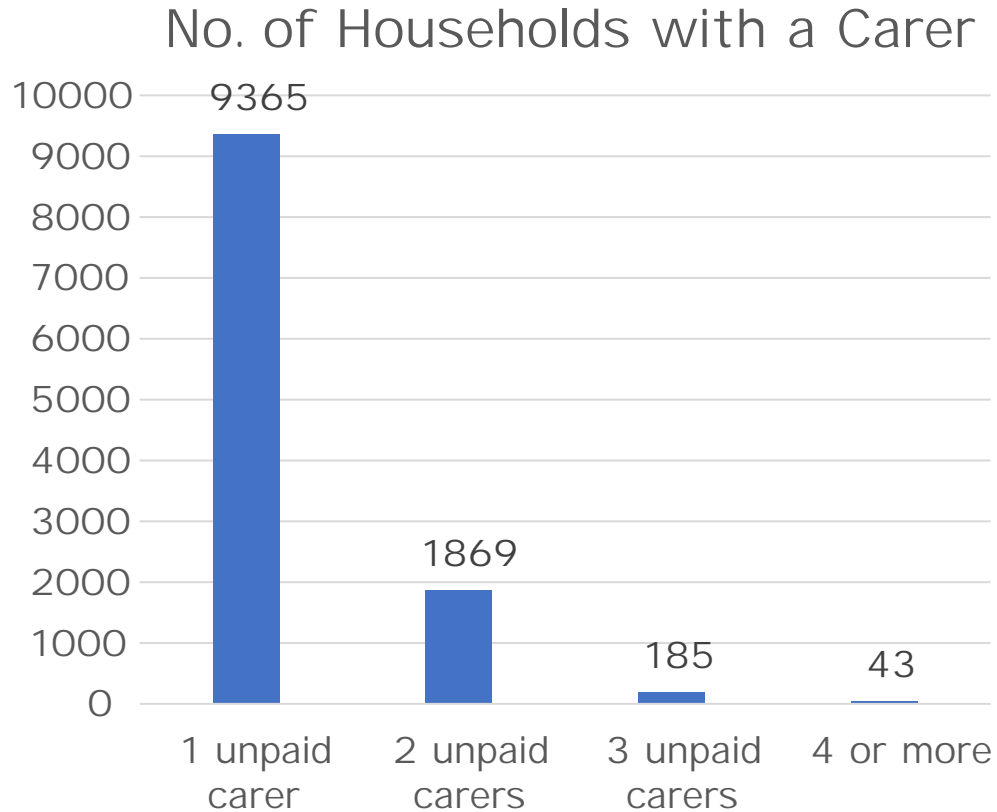
- A focus on promoting wellbeing.

- A duty on local councils to prevent, reduce and delay need for support, including the needs of carers.

- A duty on local councils to provide information and advice to carers in relation to their caring role and their own needs.

- A duty on NHS bodies (NHS England, clinical commissioning groups, NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts) to co-operate with local authorities in delivering their health and social care functions.

Carers in Redcar & Cleveland



10,623 R&C Carers registered with Carers Together since 2004, the majority being 45-65 years

Survey of Carers Redcar & Cleveland

The survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE) is undertaken on a biennial basis. The response to questions provides assured, consistent and comparable local data on whether services received by carers are helping them in their caring and their life outside of caring, and also about their perception of the services provided to the person they care for.

The data collected is used to inform and support policy and decision making both the local and national level; to improve care, services and outcomes for local populations.

The eligible population was 879 carers for the 2023/24 carers survey.

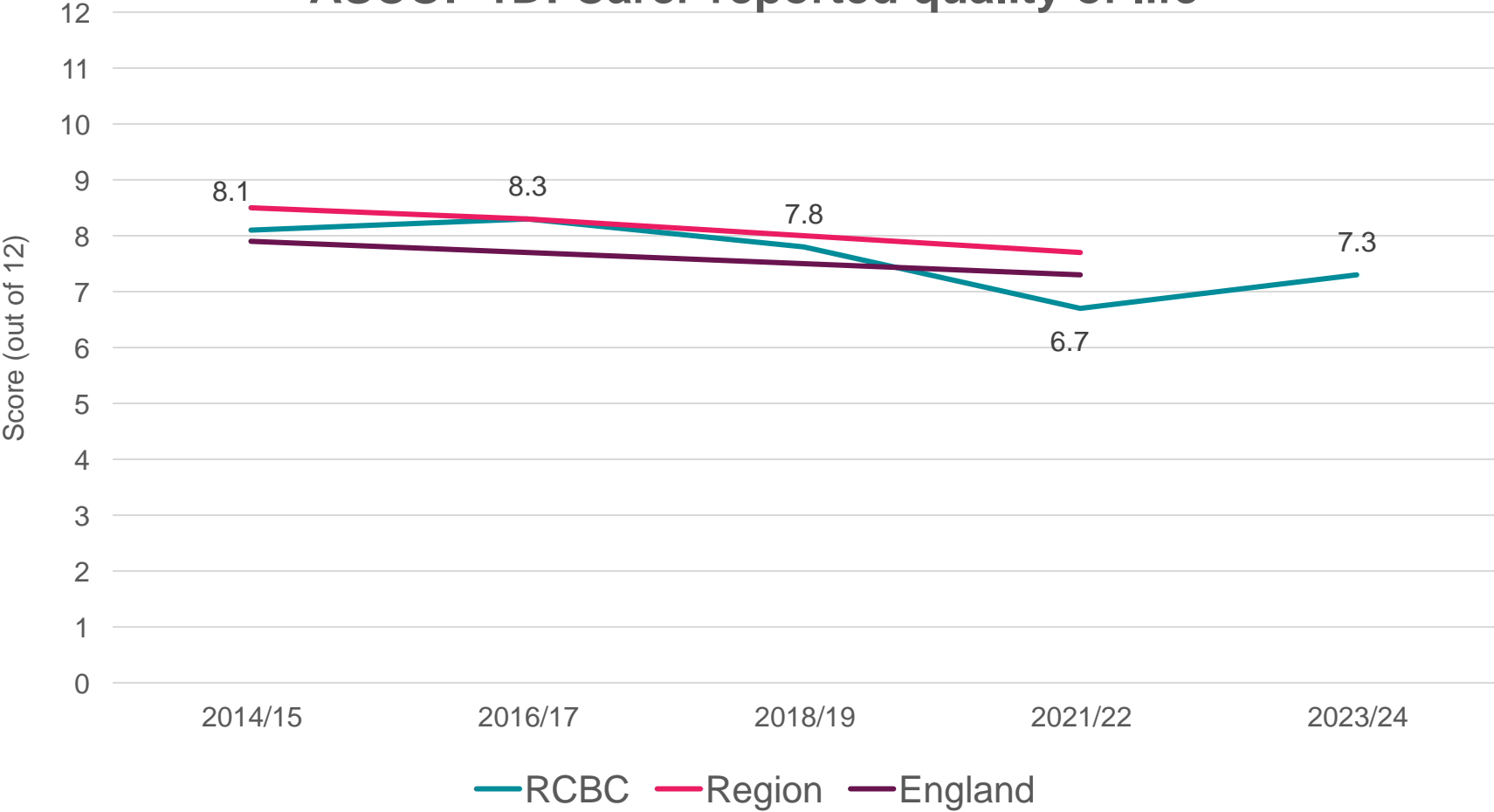
Due to low return rates caused by possible survey fatigue the eligible population of 879 carers were sent questionnaires (stratified random sample method).

270 questionnaires were returned in (2021/22).

This gave a 30.7% response rate (42.5% in 2021/22).

Carers Quality of Life

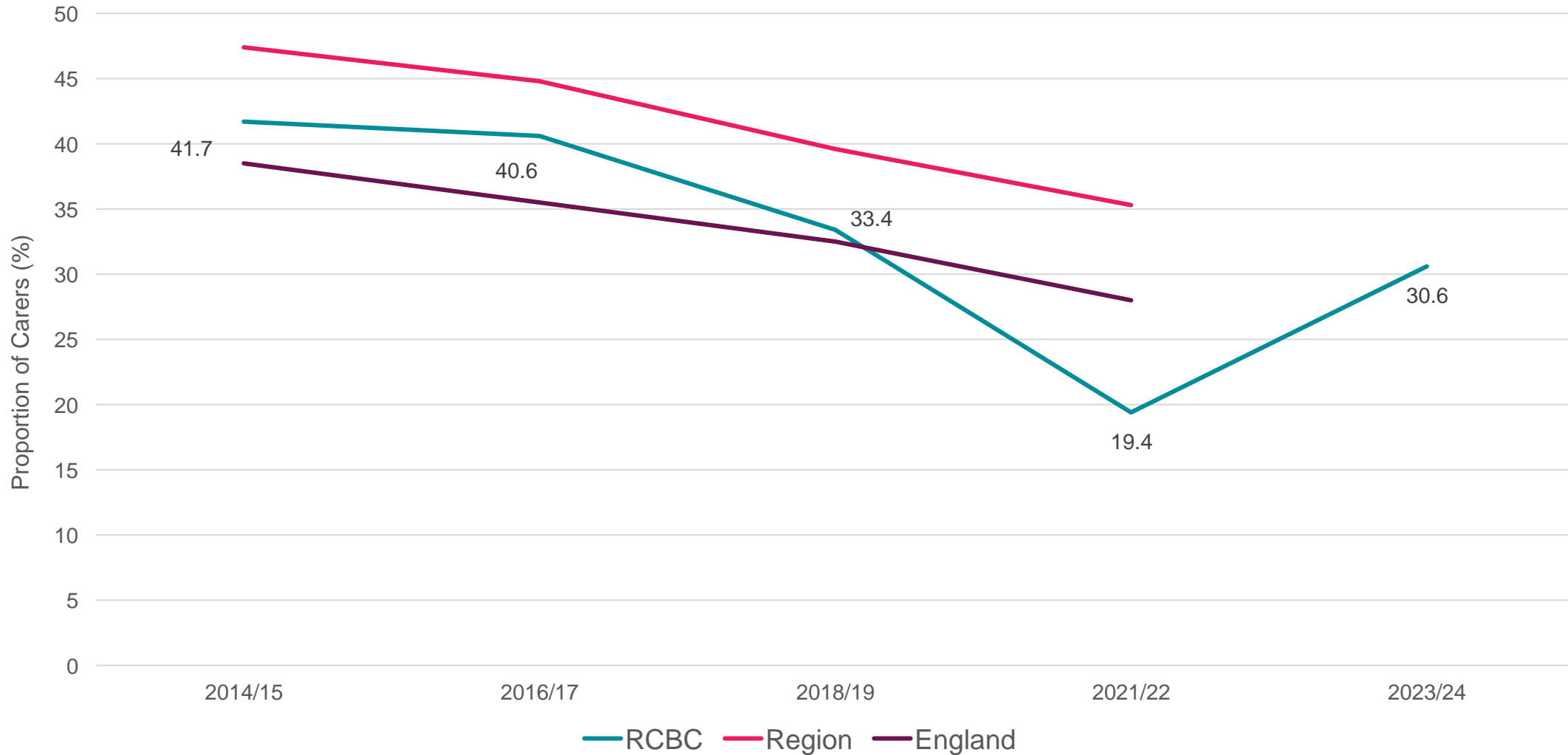
ASCOF 1D: Carer-reported quality of life



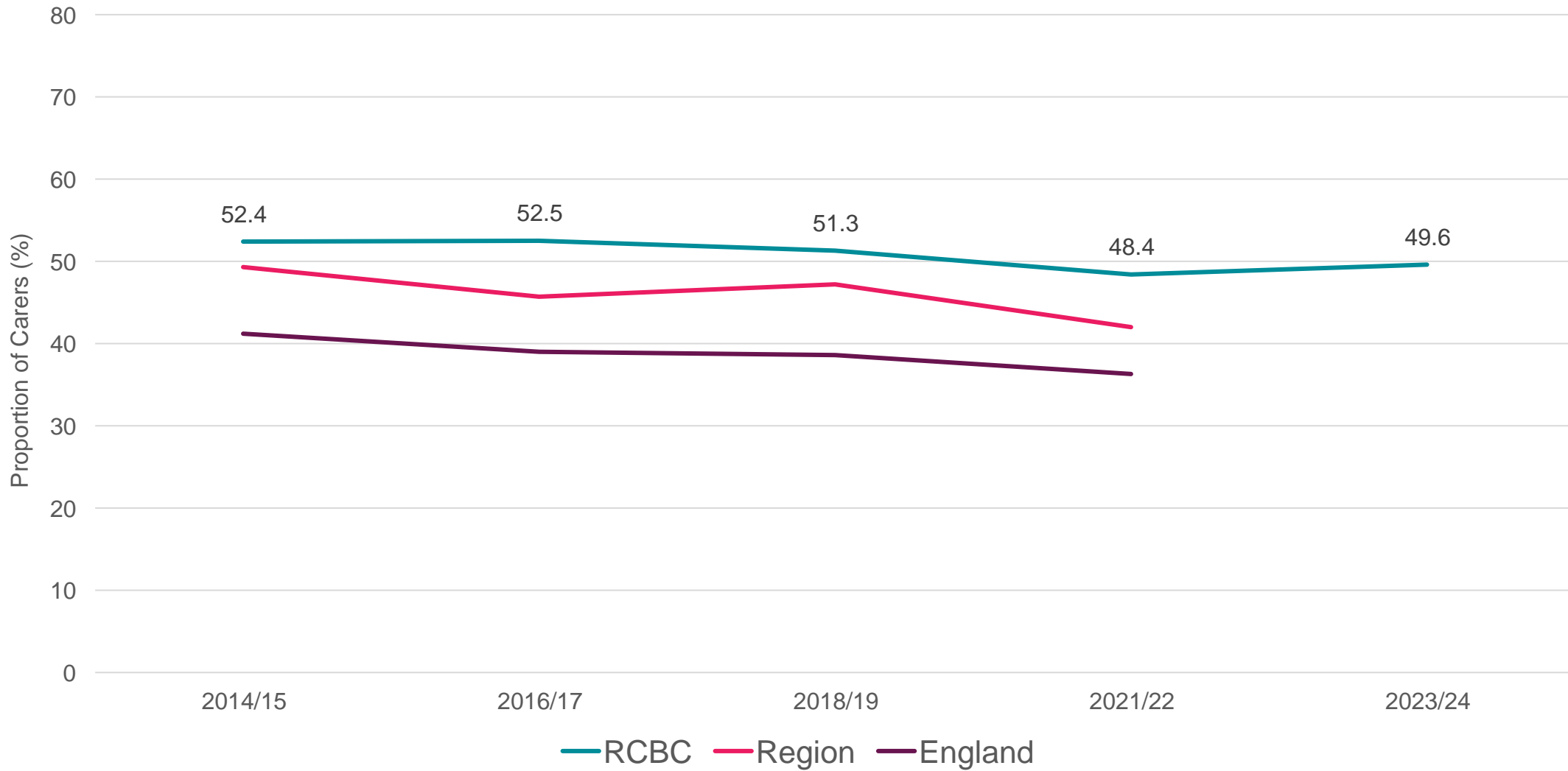
This combines the scores from questions about different

- Occupation
- Control
- Personal Care
- Safety
- Social Participation
- Encouragement and Support

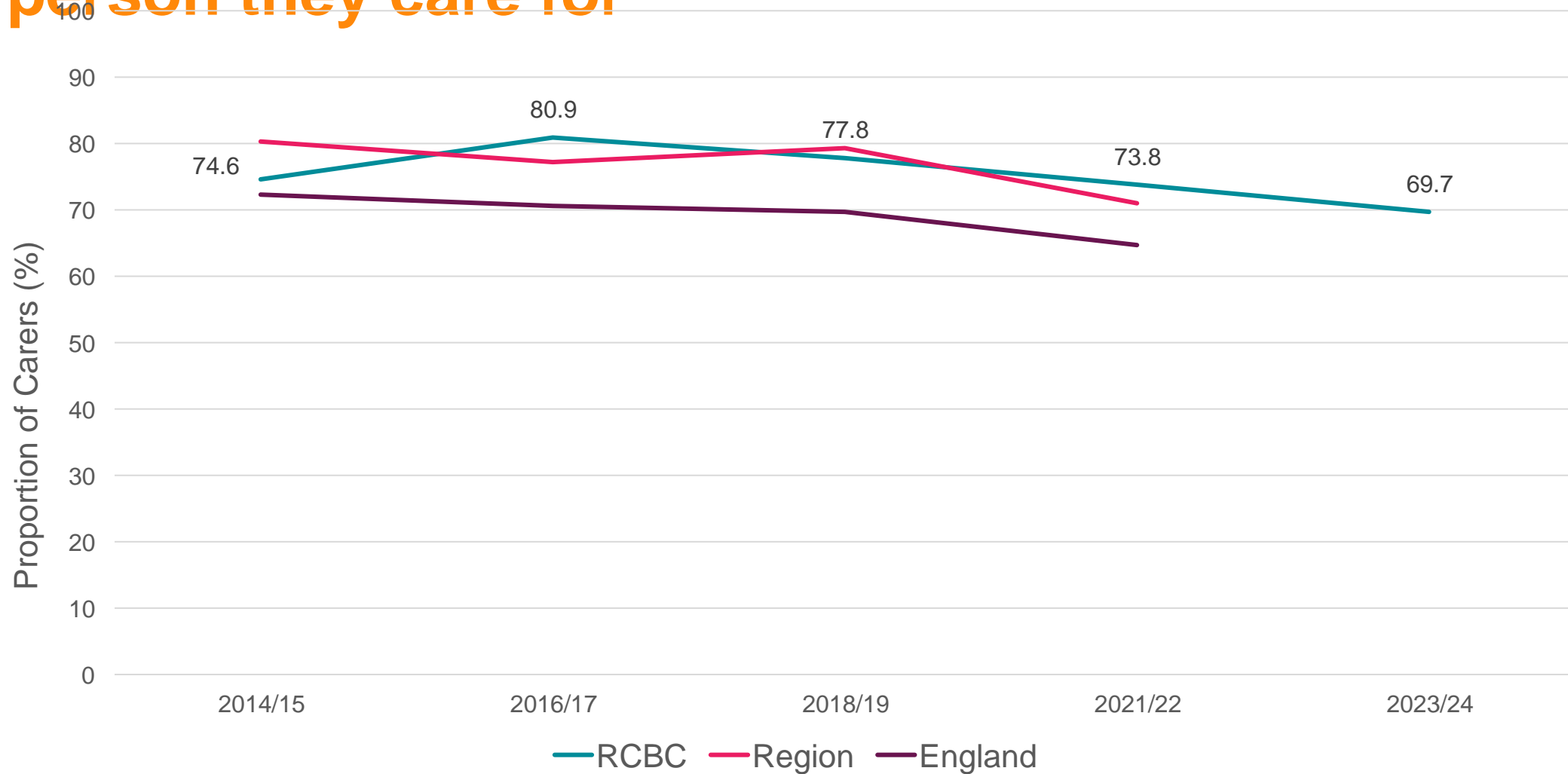
Proportion of carers who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like



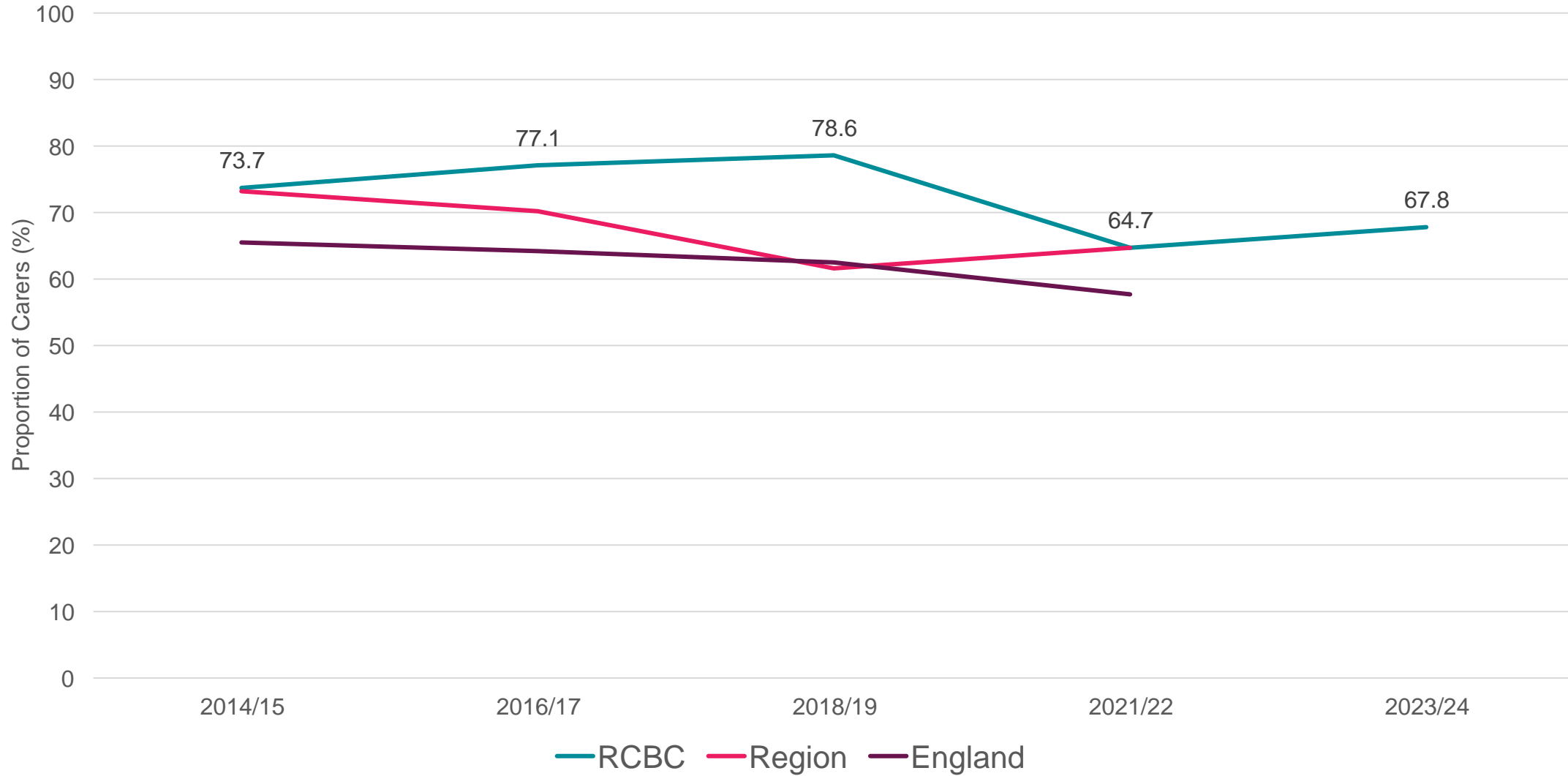
Overall satisfaction of carers with social services



Proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussion about the person they care for



Proportion of carers who find it easy to find



Redcar & Cleveland Care Act Assessment

Assessment under the Care Act, potential support could be:

- Respite

- Sitting Service

- Signposting

- Information & advice

- Referral to a commissioned service

Other Carers Data Requested by CQC for their Assurance Visit

Approximately, 450 carers assessments under the Care Act completed each year.

Carers Assessments:

- Waiting list size: 4 adults

- Median waiting time: 9 days

- Maximum waiting time: 63 days

- Target timescale 28 days

The low number is in part reflected by the proportionately lower number of carers assessments. We recognise this is an area we need to invest in and improve.

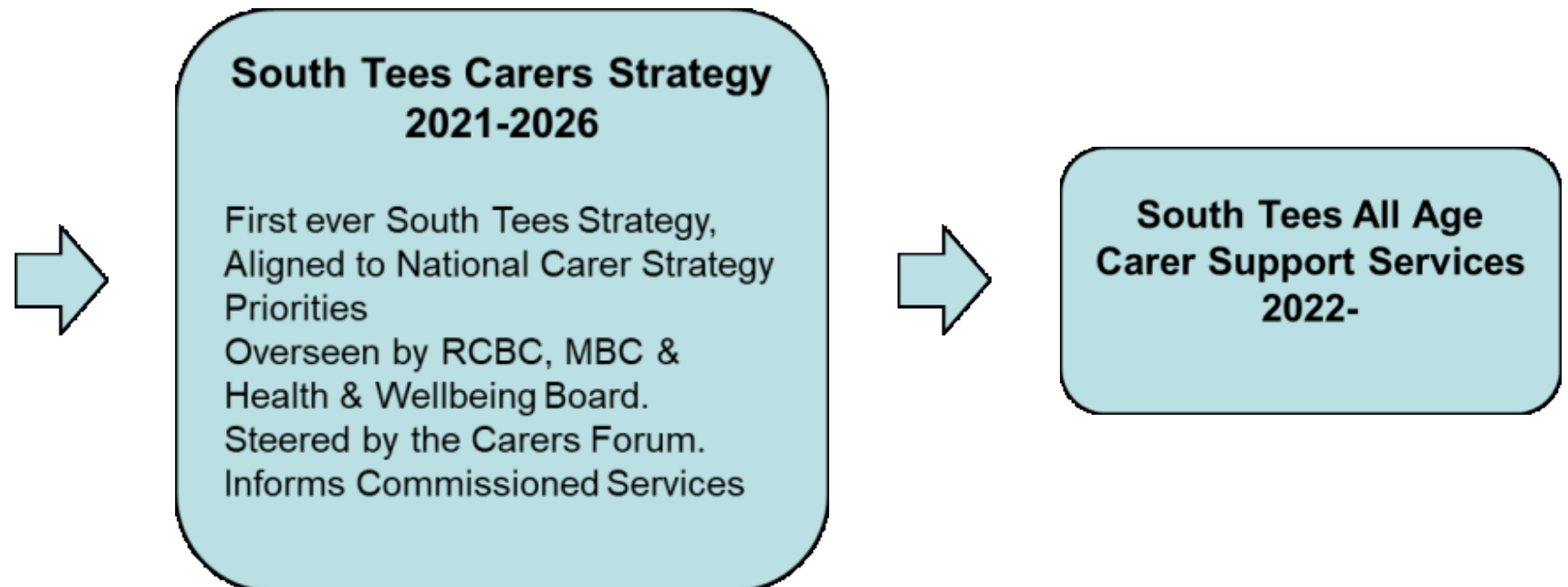
We work with a number of VCS organisations to ensure carers are supported in the community assessment, which in turn enables them to continue in their caring role without necessarily requiring care until needs increase.

We are committed to increasing the number of carers having a full carers assessment, by ensuring we identify all carers, capturing carers not known to us and we have a specific working group to improve practice in this area.

South Tees Carers Forum

Redcar & Cleveland Support to Carers

In 2020/21 in partnership with Middlesbrough Council, we undertook a consultation exercise with carers and providers:



South Tees All Age Carers Support Services

4.

Carers Mental Health Support Service

Teesside Mind

- Support for Carer of Cared-for with MH issues
- Road to Recovery Service

We Care You Care Platform

Internal Carers Working Group

Internal Group together with Healthwatch, seeking to improve the offer to carers

Focus of the Group?

Accurately recording the support our staff and the services we commission currently offer our carers.

The production of meaningful data that can be used to measure and monitor our performance in relation to carer support including emergency card and non-stat carer assessment.

Making sure we have good awareness of the services we commission to help carers but also the wider network of support available.

obstacle to making sure they receive the support they need

Knowing and understanding our offer of support after a care assessment

Continue to use national and regional research to shape services

Continually review our carer service output and Carer Strategy

Utilise government funding streams to develop new, innovative ways of sup

doors approach.

Improve our recording on social care systems of community support offered

Potential Areas of Focus for Scrutiny?

Focus on carers of a particular service group? e.g. dementia,

Focus on a particular type of carer e.g. young carer

Community support for carers

Concentrate on an issue carers face e.g. social contact, mental wellbeing

How do we increase the number of carers that we reach?

SOUTH TEES CARERS FORUM ACTION PRIORITIES 2023-2024

This document defines the priorities agreed by members of the South Tees Carers Forum in relation to the five overarching strategic aims of the South Tees Carers Strategy 2021-2026, which was adopted by the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board in April 2021.

The priorities demonstrate the commitment of the Forum members to work in partnership to improve services, support, recognition and outcomes for unpaid Carers of all ages and backgrounds in South Tees.

Overarching Strategic Aims 2021 - 2026

1. Services and systems that work for Carers

To improve the awareness about Carers with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to increase the identification of Carers and relevant responses to their needs
To ensure Carers can access health and social care services in a way appropriate and personal to them
To take Carers' views into account and facilitate representation across services and systems
To commission services based on evidence, which are responsive to the identified needs of Carers
To improve the collective knowledge, connections and communication between services in South Tees

2. Employment and financial wellbeing

To raise the profile of Carers and encourage employers to improve their working practices to enable Carers to continue to work alongside their caring role.
To provide support and training to Carers to help them to return to work, and at a level that is commensurate with their skills and experience.
To assist Carers who want to work to do so

3. Supporting Young Carers

To address the impact of caring on young people and on their education and life chances
To develop training for social workers and other professionals around identifying Young Carers and assessing their needs
To improve Young Carers' access to support services to make sure they are properly supported at an early stage and that interventions are put in place promptly where necessary
To improve support for Young Adult Carers to enable them to make positive transitions between the ages of 16-24

4. Recognising and supporting Carers in the wider society and community

To increase recognition of Carers in society and their local communities and to improve their everyday experiences.
To seek to better understand how loneliness affects carers and find ways to combat it
To work in partnership with Carers and agencies that support them to develop services to meet their needs
Improve opportunities for Carers to have a life alongside caring, to be active citizens, less isolated, and more connected to family, friends, work, volunteering, education, training, learning and leisure
To provide clear messaging and communications relevant to Carers in the community

5. Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers

To build and expand on existing knowledge so that we can ensure we continue to develop policies and interventions that target support for Carers appropriately.
To carry out research to improve the evidence base of information and data on Carers to inform future strategies to support them
To use evidence to offer innovative solutions to support Carers

WORKING GROUPS

1: Hospital Discharge

Agreed South Tees Carers Forum Priorities 2023-24

1.1 To improve the awareness about Carers with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to increase the identification of Carers and relevant responses to their needs

Objectives and outcomes	Partner preparations and actions	Leads	Measuring progress
1.1 To improve the awareness about Carers with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to increase the identification of Carers, ensure relevant responses to their needs			
Hospital staff and systems ensure that Carers are engaged, treated as experts in care and communicated with on admission, during the stay and at the point of discharge of the people they care for and there is appropriate support in place on discharge	Build on work already being done with hospitals and seek to establish a systemic and consistent approach to the interface with Carers around the patient admission, stay and discharge with relevant process and procedures to trigger action and engagement	Carers Together, NHS Hospital Foundation Trusts, Healthwatch South Tees, NHS Improvement	Progress in implementing a whole system approach Monitoring Carers involvement at stages of admission, stay, discharge and support in place

2. Employment and financial wellbeing

Agreed South Tees Carers Forum Priorities 2023-24

2.1 To improve awareness of and access to support for welfare rights, benefits and financial support for Carers

2.2 To raise the profile and value of Working Carers in the economy, to lead by example and encourage employers to improve their working practices to enable Carers to continue to work and be supported in the workplace alongside their caring role

2.3 To support Young Carers and Young Adult Carers transitioning into education, training or employment

2.4 To assist Carers who want to work to do so through appropriate information, advice and guidance, training and specialist support services, recognising their skills and experience

Objectives and outcomes	Partner preparations and actions	Leads	Measuring progress
2.1 To improve awareness of and access to support for welfare rights, benefits and financial support for Carers			
2.1a Those providing services and support to Carers are aware of the systems and partnerships in place to support Carers' access welfare rights, benefits and financial support across South Tees and across services, and have confidence in providing advice and making referrals	Key advisers on welfare rights, benefits and financial support, redundancy to be engaged in the Forum and share information to raise awareness of what is available and who can provide support – as well as feeding back to their organisations and networks on employment and financial wellbeing about Carers issues and needs. Produce case studies to share and raise awareness Join up information and awareness raising campaigns	Local Authority Welfare Rights DWP and JCP Carers Together The Junction Triage Central Step Forward Tees Valley Beyond Housing	Level of referrals Increase in access to support on welfare rights, benefits and financial support Take up of benefits and financial support Carers feedback on services No. case studies shared as part of a learning resource
2.1b Carers are able to access good quality information to advice and referrals to support around welfare rights, benefits and financial support across South Tees	All those who engage with Carers as part of their service or support will work to Carers have clear information and appropriate referrals around welfare rights, benefits and financial support	Local authority and health services DWP and JCP Voluntary and community sector Businesses	As above (2.2a) Feedback from frontline staff on awareness and confidence incidence of advice/referrals
Objectives and outcomes			
Partner preparations and actions			
Leads			
Measuring progress			
2.2 To raise the profile and value of Working Carers in the economy, to lead by example and encourage employers to improve their working practices to enable Carers to continue to work and be supported in the workplace alongside their caring role			
2.2a Statutory organisations across South Tees will lead by example as employers in introducing schemes and programmes supporting and recognising Carers under the national Carers Action Plan (2018-20), including the Working Carers Passport and Carer Confident Employer Benchmarking Scheme and share good practice to encourage other employers to engage in relevant schemes	Seek an update from ADASS NE on the national Carers Action Plan and initiatives and report back to the Forum on any new developments and schemes of relevance to South Tees not yet being applied (and potential of ADASS area memberships of schemes) Lead by example as employers: NHS prioritizing the roll out of the Working Carers Passport for all NHS organisations and local authorities taking this up. Promote take up across South Tees of the <u>Carer Confident Benchmarking Scheme</u> and resources from Employers for Carers - share the <u>business case</u>	Local authority Commissioners Statutory organisations, including local authorities and NHS Public sector Voluntary and community sector	Report on progress to Forum and recommendations for any actions relating to national plan Extent of roll out of the Passport and take up by Carers Take up of the CC Scheme by South Tees employers

	Share examples of good practice from employers	All partners	No. case studies shared as part of a learning resource
2.2b South Tees Carers Forum will promote awareness raising about the value of Carers in the workforce and to the economy based on research and evidence	Share data and evidence from national research and statistics on the value to the economy of unpaid Carers and profile this through wider networks/for a	Forum members Forum data & evidence sub-group	Level of awareness of wider public, private and VCS partners and how it feeds into strategy
2.3c Engaging and supporting private sector employers to raise awareness of working Carers skills and need for flexibility and to take up of national Carer Confident Benchmarking Scheme and supportive and flexible working practices – as well as reaching out to businesses and business networks and sharing the offers and opportunities available for employment and self-employment	<p>Promote take up across South Tees of the <u>Carer Confident Benchmarking Scheme</u> and resources from Employers for Carers - share the <u>business case</u> Promote the option for SMEs to join through an <u>umbrella scheme</u> (local authority, Chamber of Commerce) and access the resources and scheme free</p> <p>Work with Michael Janes, FSB, to explore issues and options around working with small businesses, including engaging Tees Valley Business Club, Tees Valley Combined Authority (and LEP) to explore issues and support for working Carers and businesses</p> <p>Sharing the opportunities available for self-employment (plus support) and employment in the private sector and working more closely with business, as well as new flexible ways of working</p> <p>Share examples of good practice from businesses</p>	<p>Federation of Small Business NEE Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Federation of Small Business Local Authority and NHS leads</p> <p>FSB Forum members</p> <p>FSB and businesses</p>	<p>Take up of Carer Confident Benchmarking Scheme by businesses in South Tees</p> <p>Feedback from Tees Valley wide authorities responsible for economic planning and action taken around supporting Working Carers and employers</p> <p>Take up of opportunities and review of working with business</p> <p>No. case studies shared as part of a learning resource</p>

3. Supporting Young Carers

Agreed South Tees Carers Forum Priorities 2023-24

3.1 To identify Young Carers in South Tees through awareness raising, training and integrated working across South Tees

3.2 To support integrated working across South Tees services and address the impact on Young Carers on their education and life chances

3.3 To improve awareness, services and support around the transition of Young Carers to Young Adult Carers

Objectives and outcomes	Partner preparations and actions	Leads	Measuring progress
Feedback and coproduction with Young Carers			
The aspirations of Young Carers are routinely gathered and reported on annually through the task group	Quarterly service user satisfaction data User survey Coproduction and social action research data Embedded monitoring and awareness function	The Junction Forum members coming into contact with Young Carers	Information gathered, summarised and shared with the Forum annually
To identify Young Carers in South Tees through awareness raising, training and integrated working across South Tees			
There is more comprehensive intelligence on who Young Carers are, how many there are and their challenges and needs	Share headline data on Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in South Tees Share any Census data on disabilities and parents with disabled children Check whether a question around young people with caring responsibilities could be in the ADASS NE survey	The Junction Carers Together Local Authority data leads Local Authority Commissioners	Repository of data and evidence on Young Carers and how it is shared effectively to influence policy and planning
There is a joined-up approach across South Tees to identify young carers across a range of services and surveys	Embedding of the NHS Health Pack Transition links with LA NEET provision/colleges, etc. Supporting Young Carers in education High levels of awareness and integration	NHS commitment to Carers The Junction Education and children's services, voluntary and community partners	Change in engagement of partners with The Junction Identification of young vulnerable Carers, currently not engaged in support services Increase in level and numbers of Young Carers identified Progress report and systems review with Young Carers task group annually.

Objectives and outcomes	Partner preparations and actions	Leads	Measuring progress
To support integrated working across South Tees services and address the impact on Young Carers on their education and life chances			
Supporting Young Carers in education, training and employment – there are clear systems of support and partnership arrangements to ensure Young Carers are identified and able to access support that will address barriers to attainment and achievement through specialist support	Progress of education and post 16 project Formal agreements with providers – info sharing referral, etc.	The Junction S.Tees Joint Commissioning Group Education, Early Help, Health and Children’s and Adult social services The Junction Carers Together	Feedback on discussions with education and schools on need to address support for Young Carers in education
To improve awareness, services and support around the transition of Young Carers to Young Adult Carers			
Robust transition plans and support offer are further developed and maintained between Adult Carers and Young Carers services and social care across South Tees	Assessments and passports in place, report on next steps service outputs and outcomes to Forum annually	Statutory services The Junction Carers Together	Transition arrangements achieved and their success across Children’s and Adult Services and impact on Young Carers and Young Adult Carers
There is more general awareness of young adult carers, systems of support and integrated working to meet transition needs for young adult carers that ensures successful transitions to adulthood	Next Steps event Jointly promoted comms	All Forum Members Carers Together The Junction	More integrated working and multi-agency support packages
The needs of Young Carers and their families are met during the cost of living crisis			
Services for Young Carers and their families are responsive to situational basic needs and services are accessible and “poverty proofed”	Needs assessment and intelligence gathering Initial response, signposting and meeting needs within service Development of action plan around specific Carers cost-of-living needs brokering in system wide support to meet needs	The Junction The Junction The Forum?	
Social and skills provision			
Develop a strategic response to the identified needs of Young Carers in relation to wider skills and social opportunities for Young Carers	Understand the wider community offer and develop link Brokerage of additional resources to meet demand		

TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

1. Coding and registration in GP practices

Agreed South Tees Carers Forum Priorities 2023-24

1.1 To improve the awareness about Carers with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to increase the identification of Carers, ensure relevant responses to their needs

Objectives and outcomes	Partner preparations and actions	Leads	Measuring progress
1.1 To improve the awareness about Carers with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to increase the identification of Carers, ensure relevant responses to their needs			
GP Quality Markers are introduced across S.Tees to ensure best practice in terms of identifying, registering, coding and responding to the needs of Carers in a consistent way across in South Tees	Encourage and support registration of Carers with GPs to support Carer identification (using NHS read codes) Ensure recording and coding of Carers is consistent across Primary Care and there is awareness training	Carers Together, NHS Improvement NHS Primary Care Networks and GP practices, NENC ICB (Tees Valley), Healthwatch South Tees	Increase in registration of Carers with GPs GP-Carer surveys % increase in satisfaction with services

2. Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers

Agreed South Tees Carers Forum Priorities 2023-24

2.1 To promote and support a shared understanding of and use of data and evidence around Carers' needs, issues and requirements

2.2 To compile relevant research, data and evidence and analyse this for use in communications and planning services, support and actions

Objectives and outcomes	Partner preparations and actions	Leads	Measuring progress
2.1 To promote and support a shared understanding of and use of data and evidence around Carers' needs, issues and requirements			
2.1a Monitoring of contracted services and outcome data gathered to guide development.		Local authorities	
2.2 To compile relevant research, data and evidence and analyse this for use in communications and planning services, support and actions			
2.2a Analysis of the latest census information.		Statutory agencies	
2.2b Link with public health ward information on deprivation and health inequalities.		Statutory agencies	

3: Mental Health

Agreed South Tees Carers Forum Priorities 2023-24

3.1 To ensure that Carers mental health is prioritised in all interactions with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to reduce the drivers that lead to Carers experiencing poor mental health

Objectives and outcomes	Partner preparations and actions	Leads	Measuring progress
3.1 To ensure that Carers mental health is prioritised in all interactions with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to reduce the drivers that lead to Carers experiencing poor mental health			
3.1a Ensure that Carers mental health is prioritised in all interactions and that frontline workers know how to signpost to dedicated mental health support services when needed.			
3.1b Organisations should consider what measures and support they can put in place to reduce stress and anxiety for Carers accessing their services.			



SOUTH TEES CARERS STRATEGY 2021-2026 **Updated June 2023**

This strategy sets out the priorities across the South Tees region for the identification and support of unpaid Carers of all ages. The Strategy is produced jointly between Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council and the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) Tees Valley.

*‘A **Carer** is anyone, including **children and adults**, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is **unpaid**.’¹*

Our vision is to improve services, support, recognition and outcomes for unpaid Carers of all ages and backgrounds in South Tees

Background

Unpaid Carers of all ages across the UK provide a vital care and support network to their loved ones, the value of which should not be underestimated by health and social care services who would otherwise struggle to meet the support requirements that Carers absorb on their behalf. The 2011 UK census showed that there were approximately 6.5 million people of all ages providing unpaid care to a loved one who is older, disabled or seriously ill. However, a 2019 poll published by Carers UK indicates that this number could now be closer to 8.8 million. The number of people aged 65 years or over has also grown from 1.4million in 2011 to potentially over 2 million in 2019.

An Office for National Statistics report highlighted that in 2016 there were a total of 7.9 billion hours of unpaid care provided in the UK, the equivalent to just over 4 million adult social care workers working delivering their average weekly hours for every week of the year every week of an entire year. Despite the importance of unpaid Carers to the social care system, results from the 2018-19 National Carers Survey showed that outcomes for Carers appear to be worsening rather than improving. Over-all Carer quality of life scores had decreased on a national and regional level when compared to the 2016-17 survey. In addition, the number of Carers who said that their caring role had made them feel stressed had increased, as too had the number of Carers reporting that the caring role had caused them significant financial difficulty.

Young Carers

2011 census information showed that there were 166,000 young Carers between the ages of 5-17 providing support to a parent or sibling with illnesses or disabilities in the UK. However, The Children’s Society estimate that this figure is closer to 800,000, largely due to the number of young Carers who remain unidentified. On a regional level, ONS data shows that there are approximately 2,500 Young or Young Adult Carers across South Tees between the ages of 0-24.

¹ [NHS England reference to the definition of Carers](#)

Statistics show that as many as 27% of young Carers aged 11-15 miss school due to their caring role, and 39% of Young Carers report that nobody within their school was aware of their caring responsibility. Also, research by the Carers Trust revealed that 38% of young Carers had experienced problems with their mental health.

It is also important to consider the support that young Carers need when transitioning to adulthood. Nationally there are approximately 300,000 young Carers in the 16-24 age category, yet according to

Children's Society research only 13% of these Young Carers had received a Young Carers Transition Assessment. Early identification and support of Young Carers is vitally important to ensure that caring is not detrimental to the education and life opportunities of young people.

South Tees Demographic & Geographic Comparisons

Both Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland have similar population sizes and comparable numbers of unpaid Carers estimated to be living within their boundaries, approximately 14,000 and 16,000 respectively. However, there are some notable differences in the geographical make-up of the two local authorities with Middlesbrough being a more densely populated urban area compared to Redcar & Cleveland which has more sparsely populated rural towns particularly in the east of the locality, meaning transport and access to services can be more of a challenge for many Redcar & Cleveland residents.

In addition, Middlesbrough has a much more diverse population, with a greater number of black, Asian and other minority ethnic communities (11.8%) than Redcar & Cleveland (1.5%) and there is a higher percentage of people aged 65 and over living in the Redcar & Cleveland area (22.3%) compared to Middlesbrough (16.2%).

Middlesbrough ranks much more poorly than Redcar & Cleveland on the Index of Multiple Deprivation scale by local authority areas in England, however both local authorities are far below the national average rank (Redcar 40, and Middlesbrough 5), meaning that there are significant health and wellbeing and socio-economic challenges affecting the population of both boroughs. In relation to unpaid care within the two boroughs only one other local authority area in England reports a higher percentage of residents providing one or more hours of unpaid care per week than Redcar & Cleveland (11.9%), with Middlesbrough falling just above the national average with 10.2%. (statistics taken from The Local Government Association).

Data from the 2018/19 national Carers survey informed us that Carers in both Redcar & Cleveland and Middlesbrough were reporting a lower quality of life and lower over-all satisfaction with services than they had previously in 2016/17.

The above statistics are a sample of some of the challenges that must inform the range of support that is offered to unpaid Carers within the South Tees area. A new Carer Strategy represents an ideal opportunity to bring about a significant change in outcomes for Carers across South Tees.

National Agenda Informing Local Action

The Carers Action Plan 2018 -20: Support Carers Today outlined the cross-government programme of work to support Carers in England over two years and built on the National Carers Strategy. It retains the strategic vision for recognising, valuing and supporting Carers which has been the vision of successive governments. It sets out the present Government's commitment to supporting Carers through 64 actions across five priorities emerging from the Carers Call for Evidence. The actions focus on delivery and tangible progress and give visibility to the wide range of planned work. Future provision across South Tees will be developed in line with this vision and work will be undertaken locally to establish real outcomes for Carers.

The ambition is to align Carer services into one shared all-age Carer Strategy for South Tees from 2020 onwards. There is a raft of local policy and guidance in existence and it makes sense to streamline this and understand the context for a South Tees approach.

Aligning services and commissioning across South Tees seems like a natural step forward, but also an opportunity to revamp the way we deliver support in the region to our Carers, based on some of the national and regional context.

Our Vision

The vision is that, through a joint commissioning approach, an equitable and efficient offer is provided for Carers across South Tees, ensuring that local authority boundaries do not represent boundaries to services. At the same time a collaborative approach to services aligns with the priorities of the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board and the strategic vision for joining up health and social care.

We are committed to ensuring Carers are supported across South Tees in a range of ways. As part of a joined-up and inclusive approach we will:

- Value Carers as real and expert partners in care
- Ensure Carers have access to a wide range of support and supportive opportunities.
- Focus on prevention to help avoid Carer breakdown.
- Raise awareness amongst the public and staff.
- Work in partnership and Integrate our ways of working.
- Develop a Strengths Based Approach to build on individual Carer's strengths and resources to make positive personal change.

Strategic Aims

The development of the Strategy has been led by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council and NENC ICB, who together form the South Tees Joint Commissioning Group for Carers Services in South Tees.

The Strategy has been prepared in consultation with South Tees Carers Forum, which consists of over 100 representatives from organisations across South Tees, including: Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council and NENC ICB; Carers and organisations supporting Carers; children's and adult social care services; public health; voluntary and community sector organisations and networks; primary and acute care providers; education, employment and skills; business; and housing.

The process of developing this Strategy from Winter 2019 to Spring 2021, has helped build a common vision and ownership amongst partners and stakeholders. There is real commitment to working together in new ways, sharing expertise, improving collaboration and ensuring Carers voices are heard and their lived experience taken into account.

The Strategy will be approved by the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board and is recommended for adoption by all Forum partners. The governance and review arrangements are on p12.

The South Tees Carers Strategy recognises and is informed by:

- Carers' experiences, needs and views.
- the breadth of expertise and existing services and support for Carers from:
- organisations with statutory responsibilities – local authorities and NHS services
- commissioned services designed to provide specialist support to Carers.
- the wider infrastructure of services and support from the public, private and voluntary and community sector which provides support to people in South Tees, some of whom are Carers.
- partners' commitment to collaborate and maximise their combined expertise, reach and resources to address challenges and gaps and to improve integrated working, referral and support for Carers.
- the need to reflect Strategy objectives and outcomes across wider policy, planning and services.

The National Carers Action Plan 2018-20 contains key strands that are based on evidence and feedback from Carers. To ensure we work in line with local and national priorities, we have based our strategic aims on the five themes in the National Plan with a focus on the specific needs of Carers in our region.

The themes are:

1. Services and systems that work for Carers.
2. Employment and financial wellbeing
3. Supporting Young Carers
4. Recognising and supporting Carers in the wider community and society
5. Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers.

Updated Working Groups 23-26

1. Hospital Discharge
2. Employment and Financial Wellbeing
3. Supporting Young Carers

Supported by Task and Finish Groups

1. Coding and registration in GP practices
2. Building Research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers
3. Mental Health



South Tees Carers
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Key Objectives have been set in line with each of the five themes to form key priority areas for South Tees. By setting a series of Primary Outcomes in each of the five themes we anticipate that they will act as our indicators for successful delivery of the Objectives.

The National Carers Action Plan was set to conclude in the summer of 2020 with a report expected from the Department of Health & Social Care on the achievements made and the priorities for Carer support going into 2021 and beyond. However, in light of the Covid-19 global pandemic, it is anticipated that there will be a delay to any revised national guidance being published.

South Tees response

Any revised or new directives from the government going forward will be incorporated into the development of services across South Tees.

1. Services and systems that work for Carers

Carers often have extensive contact with the health and social care system, so it is important that services value and involve Carers. Services and systems should bear consideration to the diversity of Carers and their circumstances, from an elderly neighbour to a Young Adult Carer and including someone serving in the armed forces. They also need to be responsive and flexible, recognising and supporting Carers at different stages in the caring journey. The actions below target the way health and care systems support Carers. They are designed to improve awareness and understanding among health professionals and social workers, and work with local government to ensure Carers are more easily able to access the support and services they are entitled to and thereby reduce the drivers that lead to Carers experiencing poor mental health.

Overarching Objectives

- To improve the awareness about Carers with health and social care professionals, frontline workers and relevant services, to increase the identification of Carers and relevant responses to their needs.
- To ensure Carers can access health and social care services in a way appropriate and personal to them.
- To take Carers' views into account and facilitate representation across services and systems.
- To commission services based on evidence, which are responsive to the identified needs of Carers.
- To improve the collective knowledge, connections and communication between services in South Tees

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We need to address gaps between health and social care services that impact significantly on Carers. Often there is health support available for the cared for person but not to the Carer, and they may not be included in discussions, planning and decision making.

We need to improve the flexibility and support around Personalisation in line with Care Act and Children & Family Act duties to ensure Carers are provided with the resources they need to enable them to care for as long as they wish to do so.

The population across South Tees is ageing. We need to identify and support older Carers and Carers of people with dementia.

We need to reach Carers in the community that are not known to services, especially those supporting people with mental health, substance misuse or domestic violence issues by building community capacity and developing support networks.

Carers need identifying and informing early in the Carer journey not just at point of crisis. We will work alongside Carers to provide information in different formats, particularly the use of social media, and in different venues.

The system tends to operate on a 9-5 basis, which means that many people can only access services in that time and there are gaps at weekends and evenings. We will work together to make sure we commission services for Carers that are flexible and accessible to all.

In times when budgets are tight, we need to explore funding options and sharing of resources to support Carers.

GPs are often the first people to come into contact with Carers. We will encourage and provide support to the newly formed Primary Care Networks to adopt the NHS England 'Quality Standards for Carer Friendly GP Practices' 2019 to provide support to help build Carers resilience and avoid crisis situations.

Primary Outcomes

- Training will be available to health & social care professionals; knowledge gaps will be identified and new ideas developed.
- Mechanisms will be in place to routinely collect the views of Carers in the community.
- A marketing campaign will be in place to provide Carers in the community with information in a range of formats in different venues across South Tees to provide community-based information.
- Carer services across health & social care will have been mapped to identify gaps.

- Carers in the community, particularly those not known to services are identified and community capacity and support developed.
- Commissioned services will be developed based on local intelligence.
- Regularly collect, collate and analyse Carers' views and feedback to inform services and support and promote.
- Partners work collectively under the We Care You Care brand and have a clear communications and engagement plan across South Tees to increase knowledge and awareness of services and support, improve the identification engagement of Carers and ensure effective referrals and signposting.

2. Employment and financial wellbeing

Many Carers told us about the difficulties they face balancing work and performing a caring role. At the same time many are struggling to make ends meet, leading to financial hardship which in turn puts further pressure on the caring role. Where an employer is made aware of an employee with caring responsibilities, they can take simple but effective action to enable Carers to balance their caring and employment responsibilities. It makes good business sense to consider what flexible working practices might help both the employer and employee.

Overarching Objectives

- To raise the profile of Carers and encourage employers to improve their working practices to enable Carers to continue to work alongside their caring role.
- To provide support and training to Carers to help them to return to work, and at a level that is commensurate with their skills and experience.
- To assist Carers who want to work to do so.

Many employers support Carers well in the workplace. We will endeavour to encourage others to develop Carer-friendly work practices and help them to become 'Carer Confident' employers and become part of nationally recognised the national Carers benchmarking Schemes.

We recognise that small employers cannot offer the same support as large employers. Smaller employers probably know their staff very well and their personal circumstances, but they will not necessarily have the capacity to absorb demand. This is a challenge that we will endeavour to address alongside these organisations.

Some working Carers are losing their jobs and some are losing their homes or getting into financial crises because of their caring roles. We will explore how we can help prevent financial crisis for Carers.

We need to challenge the instinct to give up work immediately by providing support and advice on staying in work or support Carers to change to more appropriate jobs that may be more flexible, should they not want to give up working. We will promote flexible working and its benefits to increase opportunities for Carers to return to work or continue to work alongside their caring role.

We recognise that returning to work is very individual and is different to being forced back into work. Care should be right for those who want to return.

Primary Outcomes

- Carer friendly work practices across South Tees will be developed, adopting any nationally recognised scheme. South Tees Carer Strategy partners will take a 'lead-by-example' role in policy development.
- DWP and Welfare Rights will support Carers to access the benefits they are entitled to and the support to stay in work or education.
- Young Carers have a smooth, supported transition to adulthood and co-ordinated services helping them to engage in education, training or employment if they wish to, or are able to do so, alongside caring roles.
- Better integration, awareness and referrals across services to ensure Carers who want to work have better access to training and employment, with relevant support in place for the cared for and their skills valued.

3. Supporting Young Carers

Young Carers can suffer with poorer health and wellbeing, often missing out on education and training opportunities. Improved identification of Young Carers, to enable assessments that identify support needs alongside flexible educational opportunities is vital to providing support. This can ensure that Young Carers are able to access opportunities and have the same life chances as other young people that do not have caring responsibilities.

There are a substantial number of young Carers in the UK aged under 18. Estimates vary widely from 195,000 (2011 census) to as many as 700,000 ([Barnardo's 2017](#)). The wide variation in the estimates of numbers of young Carers emphasises the challenges of identifying them. We know that more needs to be done to support young Carers; 67% of young Carers who responded to the Call for Evidence told us they have not received any support. There is evidence that caring responsibilities can have a detrimental impact on the young person's personal, social and educational development and their health and wellbeing ([Local Government Association](#)).

Overarching Objectives

- To address the impact of caring on young people and on their education and life chances
- To develop training for social workers and other professionals around identifying Young Carers and assessing their needs
- To improve Young Carers' access to support services to make sure they are properly supported at an early stage and that interventions are put in place promptly where necessary
- To improve support for Young Adult Carers to enable them to make positive transitions between the ages of 16-24

We will build on the learning from local and national Young Carers services to empower young people and give them a voice, enabling them to take positive steps and actions for themselves and their communities. Many young people use social media platforms to reach and enable Young Carers to communicate with each other. We will utilise these mechanisms to provide support.

Awareness of the needs of Young Carers in schools and colleges is vital. We will develop mechanisms to encourage educational establishments to support those in their care and help them reach their full potential.

We will work with Adult and Children's Social Services to identify Young Carers, carry out needs assessments and provide family support particularly those in transition.

We will listen to the voice of Young Carers and value their input in developing services to meet their needs particularly those from disadvantaged and seldom heard groups.

Primary Outcomes

- There will be positive working practices within health and social care services to identify and assess the needs of Young Carers and their families.
- Social media platforms are developed to engage with Young Carers in the community.
- Robust transition pathway plans will be developed and maintained between adult and young Carer services and social care across South Tees
- Integrated working across Education, Early Help, Health, Children's and Adult Social Services, alongside commissioned Young Carers' services will ensure a joined-up approach and consistent support for Young Carers and their families, reflected in policies, strategies and operational delivery across South Tees
- Schools across South Tees are aware of and supported to engage with the Young Carers in School Award and identify Young Carers Champions to improve awareness of and positive outcomes for Young Carers

- Transition of Young Carers to Young Adult Carers is co-ordinated across children's and adult services, as well as across all Strategy themes and Action Plans and wider services and support.

4. Recognising and supporting Carers in the wider community and society

Many Carers have little contact with services to meet their needs and are not receiving formal support in their caring role. It is, therefore, vital that we work with partners beyond government to raise awareness of caring among the wider population to build Carer-friendly communities.

Beyond the health and care services, Carers need to be supported by the wider community. Businesses and services are often inflexible and Carers struggle to access services within a standard working day. Carers also tell us that recognition of their role in society is important to them and support in community settings can provide a valuable lifeline to them.

Overarching Objectives

- To increase recognition of Carers in society and their local communities and to improve their everyday experiences.
- To seek to better understand how loneliness affects Carers and find ways to combat it.
- To work in partnership with Carers and agencies that support them to develop services to meet their needs.
- Improve opportunities for Carers to have a life alongside caring, to be active citizens, less isolated, and more connected to family, friends, work, volunteering, education, training, learning and leisure.

Using technology can connect Carers particularly those isolated because of their caring role. We will work in partnership with organisations across South Tees to provide information in a variety of formats to cater for Carers of all ages and abilities.

It is important to deliver support to Carers where they live. We will endeavour to deliver services and support in community settings across South Tees and link developments to the NHS Long Term Plan and Social Prescribing.

We will encourage the adoption of 'Making Every Contact Count' initiatives to provide timely information and support.

We will work alongside Primary Care Networks to provide support and improve early intervention to avoid crisis.

We will endeavour to build links into communities that may otherwise not engage with Carers.

We will support the national agenda for introducing the Carers Passport Scheme on a local South Tees level.

Primary Outcomes

- Information will be available to Carers in a range of formats and through multiple services, not just those traditionally seen as Carer support services, including specialist MH services.
- We will have developed varied and innovative approaches to enable Carers to take a break from their caring role.

- Technology will be in place to connect Carers, particularly those isolated because of their caring role.
- We will have developed services at a community level which are Carer and dementia friendly and help Carers engage in social activities.
- There is a Carer passport scheme established across South Tees

5. Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers

The original national Call for Evidence provided a rich and informative evidence base on the experience of Carers across the country and the changes they would like to see. The process also revealed gaps in our knowledge and we recognise that there is more we can do to develop the evidence base. We know that as our population continues to age and more people live longer, the numbers of people providing unpaid care will also increase and their role may become more complex. Therefore, it is increasingly important to do full justice to the role Carers play so that future policies to ensure they are supported are underpinned by a strong evidence base.

Overarching Objectives

- To build and expand on existing knowledge so that we can ensure we continue to develop policies and interventions that target support for Carers appropriately.
- To carry out research to improve the evidence base of information and data on Carers to inform future strategies to support them.
- To use evidence to offer innovative solutions to support Carers.

We will /apply as well as carry out research to provide us with an evidence base to help us understand Carers' experiences and what works in terms of services and support. This will be shared with decision makers to ensure Carers services are prioritised appropriately.

We will make sure commissioned services and projects are regularly assessed, with Carer input, to determine whether they are working and if not, why?

We will endeavour to engage more diverse groups in research and offer a range of ways to share loved experience to enter in to dialog with more Carers.

We will track Carer-defined outcomes and statistical data across services across South Tees to make sure we understand their needs.

Primary Outcomes

- Commissioned Carer support services are regularly and rigorously monitored.
- Relevant and robust outcomes data is gathered by Carer services and used to inform future service design and delivery.
- New approaches will have been developed to engage Carers not already in receipt of commissioned support, in order to gain their views on the barriers and gaps in service.
- Learning and recommendations from national research will be adopted where necessary.

Adoption, Governance and Review

The South Tees Carers Strategy is formally approved by Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, NENC ICB and by the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board. It is recommended that statutory, voluntary and community and private sector partners also adopt the Strategy through their Boards and make a top-level commitment to support its vision, aims, objectives and outcomes and, where appropriate, the delivery of the Action Plan which supports the Strategy. It is anticipated this will

achieve transformation on a bigger scale and enable provision that is built on people's needs rather than organisational boundaries.

Governance

The Care Act (2014) and Children and Families Act (2014) place a legal requirement on local authorities and all agencies involved in public care to adopt integration, co-operation and partnership approaches to delivering services. This is in line with the strategic vision of the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board for joining up health and social care across South Tees.

The South Tees Joint Commissioning Group, involving commissioners from Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council and NENC ICB are responsible for producing, monitoring and reporting on the South Tees Carers Strategy and the Action Plan that supports it. The Group is responsible for working in partnership to support the commissioning of services to help meet the vision, aims and objectives of the Strategy and for monitoring these and managing their performance. To ensure accountability and transparency, the Group reports to, and is responsible to, the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board.

The South Tees Carers' Forum was established in December 2019 and reports directly to the South Tees Commissioning Group. Its main objective is to act as an advisory body to help develop the South Tees Carers' Strategy and Action Plan, based on local and national priorities set out in the government's Carers' Action Plan 2018-20². The Forum brings together a broad constituency of partners and stakeholders. It enables the voice and views of Carers to be fed into and influence the Strategy and Action Plan, as well as raising awareness of Carers' needs, issues and challenges. The Forum promotes collaboration and integrated working between members in order to improve outcomes for Carers and may set up task groups on specific themes or issues.

We recognise that Carers views', voices and experiences are vitally important to inform the delivery of the Strategy. Not all Carers identify as such or engage with services and there is a need to engage Carers in a wide variety of ways and settings, which are relevant to them and their needs. Work carried out by the Forum will be shared across South Tees through public information campaigns. This will help identify and reach Carers and publicise services and support. It will raise awareness of the South Tees vision and partnership approach to services and support and gather views and information to inform the development of the South Tees Carers' Strategy.

Review

The Strategy will be reviewed and refreshed annually by the South Tees Joint Commissioning Group, in consultation with the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board and the South Tees Carers Forum.

The Action Plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the South Tees Joint Commissioning Group and reported back to the South Tees Health & Wellbeing Board, the Senior Management Teams of the Local Authorities, NENC ICB and the South Tees Carers Forum.