



ISLINGTON

Improving the Offer for Carers in Islington

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Overview

- This presentation will provide an overview of the work completed and identified to date to improve the offer for informal/unpaid carers in the borough.
- This project's aim is to review the current offer for Carers in borough including the Council's offer via social work, the commissioned offer via Islington Carers Hub and any alternative provision be that via the VSC or health partners.
- The outcome of this work is to have collective understanding of what support should be available in Islington for carers, informed by carers, to understand what support is currently in place that works well, what the gaps in support are and how they can be filled, and for this intelligence to translated into a new offer for Carers.

- We are reviewing our current offer for carers in Islington with a view to recommissioning the carers hub but also improving how we support carers internally.
- There are an estimated 18,700 unpaid carers (9.2% of the population aged over 16) based on the 2011 Census. In 2018/19 the number of carers known to adult social care in Islington ranged from 1,061 (0.5% of the population aged 18 and over), based on those known to adult social care to 2,796 carers aged 18 and over registered with the Islington Carer's Hub, accounting for 1.4% of the Islington population.

Age UK Islington

Welcome to Age UK Islington

3200 carers registered - 1200 carers supported per year

Core functions of the service

- Advice service
- Support Groups (30 Carers Support group sessions and 6 Carers Pathway Forum meetings annually)
- Breaks fund
- Events (Carers Week & Carers Rights Day and various other activities)
- Carers Assessments and Carers Card (125 per annum)
- Parking Permit
- Training
- Financial advice (incl. benefits, Carers Allowance, Council Tax)

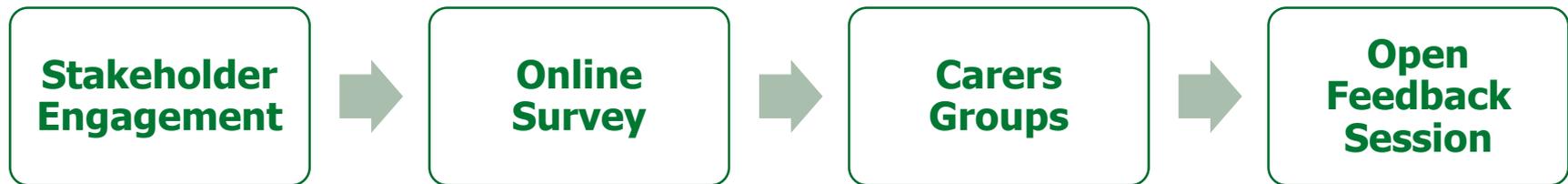
Mobilise

Support for unpaid carers | Mobilise (mobiliseonline.co.uk)

We are running a pilot with an organisation called Mobilise, a tech start up run by carers for carers who use digital marketing to engage harder to reach carers.

They have been working in Camden for the last three months where they have reached 5,774 carers, engaged 364 carers in their online community and completed 73 cases of personalised individual support.

Part of Mobilise's success is the result of an untraditional approach and offer. For instance, 56% of engagement with Mobilise happened outside office hours, meeting the needs of carers at a time convenient to them.



Regular Breaks

- While some carers were in receipt of breaks, they felt that these were not sufficient in terms of frequency and length. Concerns were also raised around the care for the cared for while the carer was on their break.
- Others suggested reduced rates to access leisure activities would also enhance their wellbeing.

Prioritising the health and wellbeing of the carer

- Many comments reflected a sense of being forgotten and underappreciated. Overall, carers felt that support needed to be more personalised and take place one-to-one while also being provided by qualified professionals.
- Carers struggled with their own mental and physical health and were concerned about how these affected their caring role. Suggestions included better mental health support through counselling and more subsidised exercise classes.

Enhancing Peer support

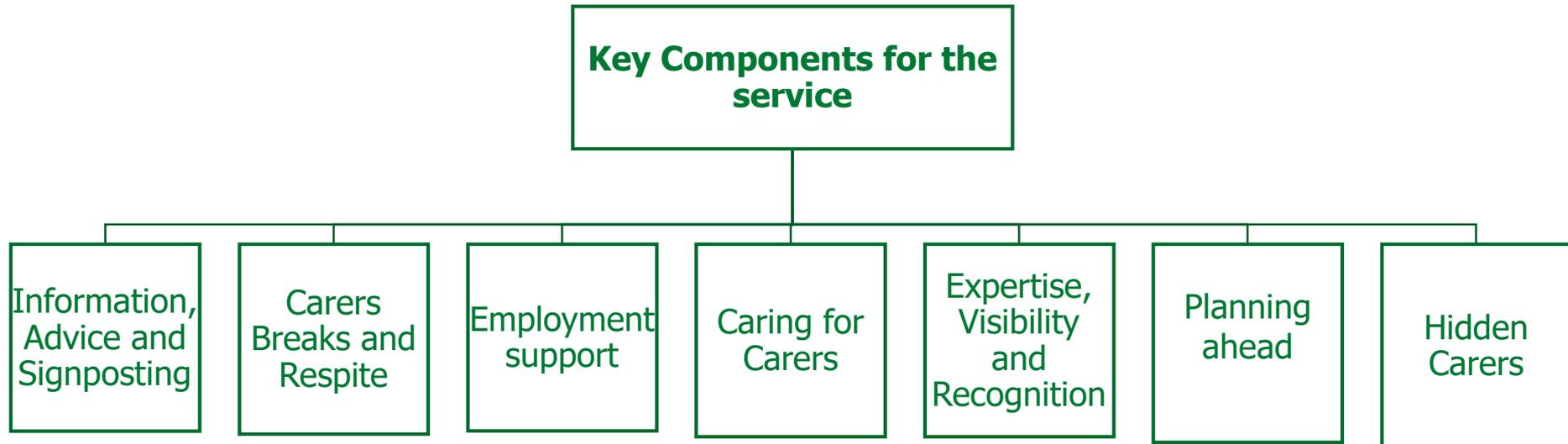
- Spending time with other carers was mentioned frequently as a beneficial outlet and meaningful form of support as were listening services or other activities that led to a sense of being seen and heard.
- The main criticism of peer support was that there was not enough of it and that it was not offered at times convenient to carers who are working or have children to care for too.

Working carers

- Although there was not a large volume of responses from working carers, the reflections on the difficulties of combining caring and work were insightful.
- Concerns were expressed about the large gap in their career life as a result of caring, the impacts of this, not only on their mental health and financial stability, but also on their future.
- Additionally, carers struggled to re-enter employment while those still employed requested more support to advocate for additional paid leave.

Key Components for Islington Carers' Offer

From our engagement, the below list of features for a carers offer have been identified.



Questions

- What gaps exist in this proposal?
- What opportunities exist for GPs to identify carers?
- What opportunities exist for GPs to support carers?
- What mechanisms/avenues would enable closer working between Islington's Carers Hub and GP practices?
- What are good practice examples from elsewhere?
- Do you have any reflections on how Covid-19 has impacted on carers and how GPs could mitigate this?
- Any other thoughts?