



Lambeth Carers Strategy

Year 1 Implementation



Foreword

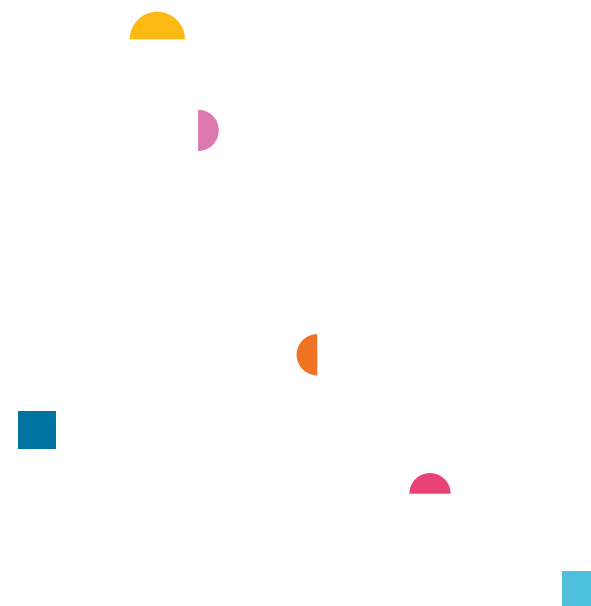
We are proud to present this review of the first year of our Carers Strategy. As set out in our Borough Plan 2030, we are committed to making Lambeth a place we can all call home, and supporting the work of our unpaid carers is a crucial part of that mission.

The 2021 Census recorded that there were 18,439 unpaid, informal carers in Lambeth, equating to 6% of our population. However, this number is thought to be much higher, with Carers UK estimating the real figure around 46% higher than Census data suggests. The largest proportion of carers is made up of those aged 50-64 (33.3%), followed by 35-49 at 27.7%. Carers are more likely than non-carers to have a long-term health condition, a testament to the immense demands placed upon them.

There is a strong economic argument for nurturing and investing in carers and their support networks. When we fail to support carers, we risk not only poor outcomes for

them and those they care for, but we also jeopardise the health of our communities, impacting education, housing, health, and social care services.

The Carers Strategy is the product of close collaboration with carers themselves, as well as a number of health, care and voluntary sector partners. Over the course of the last year significant progress has been made across our strategy priorities, as set out in this document, thanks to the contributions of each partner. Our vision is clear: we will continue striving to fulfil the priorities set out in this strategy, ensuring that unpaid carers in Lambeth receive the support, respect, and recognition they need and deserve for their invaluable role in our communities.



Context

Lambeth Council is striving to make Lambeth a Borough of Equity and Justice, and this principle informs our policy towards unpaid carers and the residents they care for.

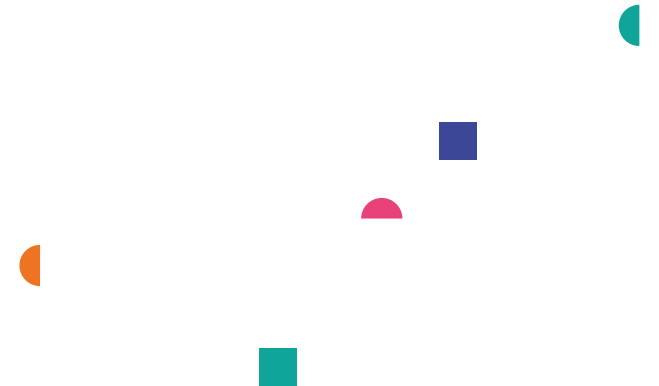
In 2017, Lambeth Council and the Integrated Care Board (CCG at the time) published 'Working together with Families and Carers – A Framework for Action', which set out joint plans to develop a coproduced action plan with carers. The framework led to the formation of the Carers Collaborative Strategy Group (CCSG), which consists of health and social care workers, carers and representatives from voluntary sector organisations working with carers in Lambeth.

The CCSG is managed by Carers Hub Lambeth and Integrated Adults' Commissioning and is supported by the Adult Social Care (ASC) Carers Lead and Carers Champions. The ASC Carers Lead is responsible for overseeing the delivery

of key objectives linked to supporting carers, such as ensuring the appropriate number of carers assessments are carried out. Carers Champions are responsible for promoting best practice approaches to supporting carers in social work practice and championing the local offer for carers.

In 2024 the new Lambeth Carers Strategy was published. The strategy is the result of close collaboration with carers, the voluntary sector and partners across health and social care. The strategy outlines an integrated, all-ages approach to supporting Lambeth carers and is a collaboration across health and social care systems. A draft action plan has been produced and will be developed further under the CCSG.

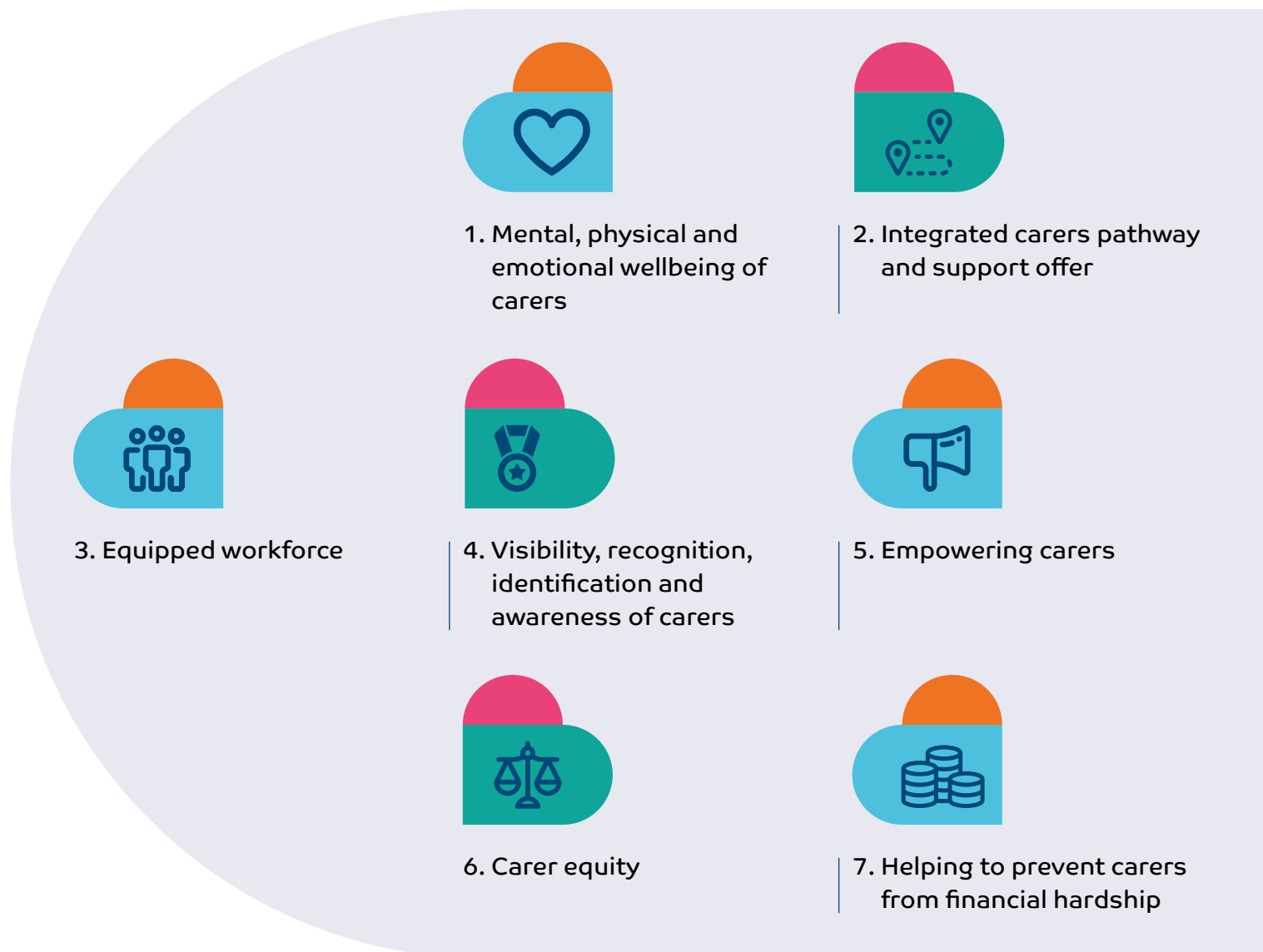
Through close collaboration with unpaid carers and other partners, seven priorities were identified to inform our direction and deliver our shared vision for how Lambeth will support carers in Lambeth. These priorities build upon



what has been achieved during the term of the 2017 framework and sets out a refreshed direction, informed through our consultation. These are:

1. Mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of carers
2. Integrated carers pathway and support offer
3. Equipped workforce
4. Visibility, recognition, identification and awareness of carers
5. Empowering carers
6. Carer equity
7. Helping to prevent carers from financial hardship

There are a series of detailed actions which fall under the seven priorities. The delivery of the action is overseen by the CCSG.



1. What's Been Delivered – Year One

Strategy partners have made significant achievements in the first year of the strategy's implementation.

These include:

Launched discounted memberships at Active Lambeth sites for unpaid carers

Under the **Carer Wellbeing** priority, Lambeth has been able to offer the new offer to carers. This enables Lambeth carers who are signed up to the Lambeth Carers Card to access concessionary rates for gym membership as well as 'pay and play' visits.

Launched and secured ongoing delivery of the Carers Hospital Discharge Pilot for 2025

Under the **Integrated carers pathway** priority, Lambeth piloted a Carers Hospital Discharge service at both King's College Hospital and Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital. The Health and Care Act 2022 placed a duty on NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts

to involve carers, where appropriate, in planning for hospital discharge as soon as is feasible. In collaboration with Carers Hub Lambeth and Age UK Lambeth, health and social care teams launched a year-long pilot programme to support carers during hospital discharge by linking them in with information, support and post-discharge interventions. To continue the success of the pilot, partners were successful in bidding for funding as part of the Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF), which was successful. In May 2025, the service launched in its next iteration, as a joint service alongside Southwark, delivered by Carers Hub Lambeth.

“

It felt like someone understood what I was going through, and that I was reassured that I was doing my best.”

“

Had a difficult time getting heard by the hospital so the support made me feel less alone and less demoralised. Felt good to know back up was available.”

“

It's good knowing there is someone who has local knowledge and experience in this process when your journey starts as a carer, especially when you don't live locally.”



Alongside this work, Lambeth have also committed to working with six other SEL boroughs to develop a coordinated approach for supporting carers at the point of hospital discharge through the development of a Standard Operating Procedure, ensuring consistency across the system. This work will launch in Y2 of the strategy term.

To ensure the involvement and support of carers during hospital discharge, KCH have successfully implemented MyChart across both Trusts, which has been the biggest roll out in the UK. MyChart enables patients and their carers to access information relating to their care, making navigating care systems more accessible. At King's, 49% of patients have an active MyChart account and KCH staff continue to support patients to sign up

Hosted the Lambeth Carers Awards 2024

Under the **Visibility, recognition, identification and awareness of carers** priority Lambeth committed to develop opportunities to recognise carers for their contribution while raising the carer

profile. The Carers Awards event was delivered by Age Friendly Lambeth, Child Friendly Lambeth, Adults and Children's commissioning teams, and was well received by Lambeth carers. The awards also featured an older carers category, aligning with our age-friendly borough ambition to recognise and celebrate the contributions of older residents in the borough. Work is ongoing to identify future opportunities for carer recognition.

“

After being recognised by my peers, community leaders and councillors it was an unexpected surprise, truly humbling. I felt valued as an unpaid carer because usually the priority is all about the person we care for. I would like to thank Carers Hub Lambeth, Lambeth Together, Age Friendly Lambeth and Lambeth Council for putting unpaid carers on the map as part of Lambeth Carers Collaborative Strategy”

Carer - 2024

Developed improved information for carers and raised carer awareness of eligibilities and rights

Under the **Integrated carers pathway and support** and **Empowering carers** priorities, Lambeth has committed to producing transparent and accessible information on support and care pathways. Contributing towards this, Adult Social Care have completed a wholesale review of Adult Social Care webpages, including a review and update of carer-specific pages, which has improved the quality of the information available. In completing this review, partners have ensured transparent information is available on council websites, and that carers are signposted to information outlining their eligibilities, rights and the support available.

To improve proactive information circulation, the council are continuing to ensure the Central Hill Newsletter is distributed quarterly with crucial information for carers. ASC are also collaborating closely with commissioned partner Carers Hub to provide articles for the Carers Hub Newsletter

Alongside this, strategy partners Kings College Hospital launched the 'Welcome to Kings' Guide. 9,800 copies of 'Welcome to King's' have been distributed and the digital version has been viewed over 7,000 times. 86% of those surveyed reported that the guide has improved their experiences. Evaluation of the guide has been completed and the review of content is currently underway. 93% of participants reported that the guide is easy to understand. A new Volunteer Care Navigator role is being created for year 2, to distribute the guide via MyChart.

A new Carer's Welcome Pack rolled out across mental health services in Lambeth, who continue to run carer awareness training with staff including how to refer or self-refer for support. There is also awareness training for young carers and internal carer support services offered by South London and Maudsley including support groups, psychoeducation and all the courses offered by the Recovery College.

Mapped the carer service offer and support pathway across GSTT

At GSTT, a Hospital Discharge booklet has been co-designed with carers, patients, and other stakeholders to enable patients and carers to navigate the hospital support pathway, which GSTT are due to trial in elective care areas.

Key components for a Carer's Passport have been identified with carers. Consultation and piloting of the passport is taking place in year 2 with a small number of nursing teams.

Implemented a 0-25 disabilities service across children and adult social care

Under the **Equipped workforce** priority, Lambeth have committed to promoting a whole-family practice approach across the system. The council have now successfully implemented an integrated 0-25 service model with the aim of enabling improved outcomes and continuity for young people with severe and profound disabilities and their families and carers as they move into

adulthood, which will improve transition arrangements and planning for young people and carers through earlier planning.

Increased the number of carers assessments completed

Under the **Mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing of carers** priority, Lambeth have committed to providing a carers assessment for all eligible carers. In the year 2024-25 a total of 1,994 carers assessments were completed which was an increase on the 1,536 for 23-24. In addition to this, 97% of carers known to Adult Social Care were offered an assessment, exceeding the target of 95%.

Supported carers to quit smoking

Carers providing a high number of care hours are more likely to smoke, impacting their health and wellbeing. Under the **Mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of carers** priority, Public Health Lambeth have partnered with Carers Hub to provide motivational interviewing training to equip anyone supporting carers to have effective conversations around stopping smoking.

Used the recommissioning of Lambeth's carers' services to address culturally appropriate support

Commissioners used the retender of the contract to take stock of current provision and the impact on groups through an equality impact assessment. Options were reviewed and considered alongside the needs of diverse communities through the equality impact assessment process and stakeholders from across the community were consulted on gaps in provision.

As part of the tender, bidders were required to satisfy the following condition: "in line with the specification requirements, please describe your proposal, using specific examples where appropriate, to ensure the service meets the needs of Lambeth's diverse community, including how you will:

- ensure staff are equipped and empowered to support a diverse range of service users;
- ensure services are accessible to and effectively serving Lambeth's diverse population, including groups who may

be harder to reach or less likely to identify as carers;

- collect and track data related to protected characteristics, and use this to support the above."

Involved carers in decision-making

We have ensured carers are involved in the delivery of our strategy action plan by having members of the Carers Collaborative Strategy Group (CCSG) who are experts by experience. Alongside this, strategy partners leading on specific workstreams are ensuring that carers are being consulted, for example the GSTT hospital discharge booklet, KCH Welcome to Kings' Guide and Lambeth Council's consultation on the recommissioning of Lambeth's Carers service.

Sought to maximise carer finances

Under the **Helping to prevent carers from financial hardship** priority, the council has been implementing targeted support to help carers maximise their incomes in several ways, such as inclusion of being a carer in the council's Resilience Index; inviting carers to specific cost of living events and

roadshows to communicate the support offer for residents; and training for staff working with carers to identify financial signs of financial crisis and know where best to signpost. The council has identified opportunities to raise awareness of financial support, such as a recent campaign to increase Attendance Allowance uptake, and continued to send letters to residents newly eligible for Pension Credit.

In June 2024, the Cost of Living Team and Adult Social Care held an event for carers at the Crescent Centre, supported by partners including Age UK Lambeth and Carers Hub Lambeth to increase awareness amongst carers of support available such as:

- General support services
- Energy efficiency measures
- Maximising benefit
- Budgeting, debt advice
- Accessing emergency provision in the borough

The event was well attended and received by carers.

Expanded the carers professional network to include professionals from across the system to share learning and embed good practice

As part of delivering this commitment, ASC commissioners and Carers Hub Lambeth have closely reviewed membership of the network to ensure maximum representation across the system to progress the agenda for carers. The network membership has now expanded to include more colleagues that are responsible for delivering strategy actions.

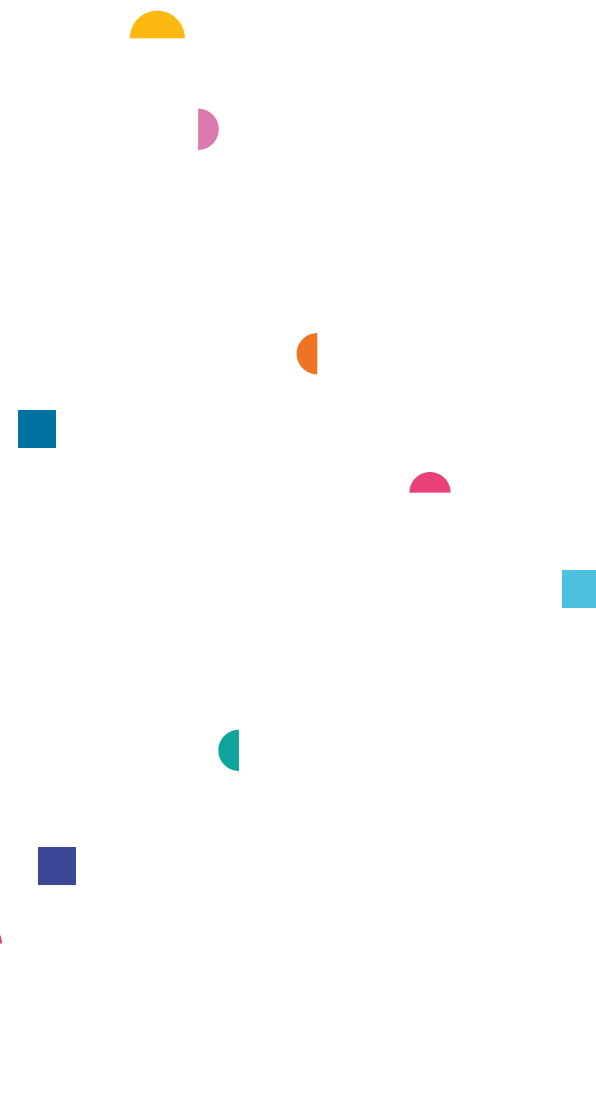
Promoted carers' needs and rights across primary care

Aligning with commitments set out in our All-Age Autism Strategy, Lambeth Council have organised dedicated seminars and workshops for GPs to understand the unique needs of autistic individuals and their families. 283 people attended an online Mental Health Preserved Learning Time event on Suicide Prevention and Autism – feedback on the event was positive.

Primary Care have collaborated with Carers Hub Lambeth to ensure key information is available in GP practices across Lambeth via the Carers Hub information pack.

Launched the Lambeth Staff Carers Forum

Under the **Empowering carers** priority, partners committed to championing peer support. Contributing towards this, Lambeth Council's Equality and Inclusion team have established the Lambeth Staff Carers Forum, providing a safe space for staff and championing those with caring responsibility. The council have held regular Carers Staff Network Meetings since July 2024, with communications have been sent out to staff encouraging them to join the network.



2. Year 2 Strategy Action Plan Overview

In addition to the plans for year two outlined above, there are actions set out across Strategy partners to continue to support carers through each of the priority areas. The plans detailed below are not an exhaustive list but provide an overview for the way the Carer's Strategy is shaping the way that Lambeth Council and our partners are supporting carers.

The Action Plan is monitored and reviewed by the Carers Collaborative Strategy Group, that meets every other month in order to maintain momentum on work that has been carried out to date.

Priority 1: Mental and Physical Wellbeing of Carers

We are promoting and monitoring the use of Active Lambeth's Carers discount, with the aim of seeing if it is possible to increase the opportunities available.

Smoking cessation advice courses will continue to be made available to carer advocacy and support organisations. Analysis of health determinants will inform what further training can be rolled out that supports unpaid carers' specific needs.

We started the respite review process in year 1, when we reviewed the pathway for carers of people with learning disabilities. Further review will take place in year 2, when we review the respite pathway for carers of older people and those with physical disabilities. There will be further promotion of mental health support services, including tailored initiatives for young carers.

Partners in Primary Care are encouraged to offer seasonal flu and vaccinations to carers during the seasons.

Priority 2: Integrated Carers Pathway and Support Offer

Work has begun on GSTT's Hospital Discharge booklet will be piloted in elective care and it is anticipated this will be extended across South East London. This will be completed in year 2.

Regular communications will be maintained through the quarterly Central Hill Newsletter and contributions to the Carers Hub Newsletter. A new Volunteer Care Navigator role will be introduced to assist with hospital discharge navigation, and to ensure an integrated offer of support for carers and their loved ones.

Priority 3: Equipped Workforce

Within Lambeth Council, the Carers Staff Network will continue to be developed, supported by targeted stakeholder



engagement. The Carers Champions model is being broadened in year 2 to include additional training, ensuring that Adult Social Care teams are equipped to understand the specific challenges of LGBT+ and BAME carers.

Carer awareness training is being developed, and is scheduled for 2025/26, for roll out to all Lambeth Council staff.

Priority 4: Visibility, Recognition, Identification, and Awareness of Carers

Following the success of the Lambeth Carers awards, Lambeth carers will be recognised through a dedicated awards category in the Lambeth Civic Awards. The category will be included for the first time in 2026.

Collaboration across council teams and partners will ensure learning opportunities are delivered to GPs via seminars and workshops for GPs, with a focus on the needs of autistic individuals and their carers. The needs of older carers will be addressed through collaboration with the Age Friendly Borough initiative, and our partners at the Black Prince Trust.

Carers Hub will continue to collaborate with strategic partners to promote carers' visibility. In year 2 they will be speaking at a Primary Care Practice Managers' meeting to highlight the offer for carers, and to raise awareness.

We will work with young carers to ensure their unique voices are heard, and we are able to learn from their experiences to identify and support other young carers more effectively.

Priority 5: Empowering Carers

Opportunities for carers to provide feedback will be embedded, building on responses already received. Carers' voices will be championed across partner organisations, supporting their involvement in decision making. Peer support will be strengthened through the ongoing development of the Lambeth Staff Carers Forum.

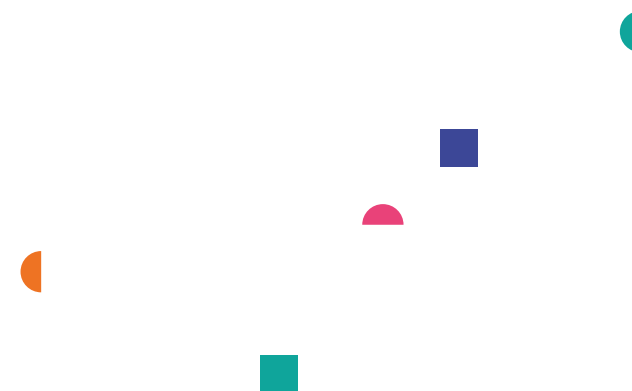
Priority 6: Carer Equity

Carers from LGBT+ and BAME backgrounds will be encouraged to share their experiences, with service provision gaps identified through equality impact assessments addressed as part of delivery

plans. The Carers Champion model will ensure staff keep this learning central to their support of carers within Adult Social Care.

Priority 7: Helping to Prevent Carers from Financial Hardship

Frontline training will be delivered to staff and community partners working with carers. The Lambeth Carers Card discount will be further promoted to local businesses. A Young Carers Card will be developed, making use of grant funding. A carers policy will be developed for Lambeth staff, and investment in support for parent carers will include guidance on benefits and financial help.





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