

Working for You...

NORTH LANARKSHIRE  
**carers**  
**together**



## Message To Unpaid Carers

**This year has seen us face a number of scenarios none of us thought we would ever deal with personally or professionally. As carers, you have been absolutely magnificent. I know you already faced a number of challenges every day before COVID-19 struck, but the way you have responded to the pandemic and the effects it has had on our society has been inspirational.**

You perform a vital role for many of our residents and you have had to be very flexible to continue caring in the compassionate and dedicated way that you do. I know this has been an exceptionally challenging time for you. The situation has, at times, seemed to change very quickly and you have responded accordingly. The way services are delivered in North Lanarkshire has changed and they will not be delivered in the same way in the future. Again, you have found ways to work around this and your dedication has shone through.

Unpaid carers deserve all of our praise. You have had to take on more responsibility during this pandemic and given your all to look after and protect loved ones and those close to you. Thank you.

We are now embarking on the next step of our journey, which is the recovery phase and redesigning services.

However, we're doing this while being aware that we have not conquered COVID-19. Our plan is to restore and, where possible, improve the services we deliver to the people of North Lanarkshire. We are already reviewing with our partners and stakeholders which services should be restored to the way they were; which should be reconfigured; and which new approaches should be retained.



Naturally, we'll engage with, and listen to, the people we are here to help. People like you. At the end of the day we are here to develop services around the people you care for, but just as importantly we want to put in place services which meet the needs of North Lanarkshire's carers.

We are fully aware of how vital it is that people who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing. This includes reducing any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and wellbeing and we are aware of the fact that the health and support needs of carers have only increased throughout the pandemic. This engagement work with you will build on the strong foundations already in place in North Lanarkshire to facilitate the involvement and engagement of people who use services such as carers. *Continued...*



## Message To Unpaid Carers Continued...

We talk about the 'new normal', however this should be seen as a chance to develop services which are better than the previous model. We have a unique opportunity to capitalise on new and successful models and services that are coming out of the crisis response. It is our chance - yours and ours - to take this awful pandemic and seize our momentum to come out the other side with more flexible and agile services. Working hand-in-hand with our communities we are determined to emerge with the services which best meet your needs and allow us to deliver these services in the best and most efficient ways possible.

We are committed to keeping you fully informed of our work through a number of channels such as local newspapers, social media and the NHS Lanarkshire and council websites. We will also link closely with North Lanarkshire Carers Together which is a vital organisation for all of us.

Finally, I can assure you that while we work through the recovery phase a key element will be developing new ways of working so that we can remain vigilant to future risks and controlling the virus.

**Ross McGuffie**

*Chief Officer, Health & Social Care North Lanarkshire (HSCNL)*



## Carers Week 2020 - Making Caring Visible

**New research released for Carers Week 2020 (8th-14th June 2020) revealed a huge increase in the numbers of unpaid carers in light of the Covid-19 outbreak. Figures estimated 390,000 people in the Scotland became unpaid carers as a result of pandemic. This suggests there are now as many as 1.1 million unpaid carers in Scotland.**

With Covid-19 still being very much part of our lives during this time, Carers Week 2020 was different than ever before as the usual local gatherings and events were sadly not possible. North Lanarkshire Carers Together, along with our key partners, learned to navigate a more digital world and so the efforts to keep the momentum of carers week continued regardless. Our Carer Information and Engagement Team developed a week long programme for carers to engage in remotely via our social media platforms. Each day of the week focused on a specific topic which carers raised to us as key concerns during the pandemic, the topics included; emergency planning, health and wellbeing, finances and working carers.

In addition to highlighting the harsh reality for carers during lock down, we offered a variety of ways for carers to engage with us and access our information throughout the week. This included daily polls and surveys to collate carers experiences and views, sharing carer stories in personal videos and recommended top tips from carers, to carers, to maintain good wellbeing during the lockdown period.

This approach proved very successful as we were able to reach more people than ever before. Collectively throughout the week, the videos we produced were viewed by over 14,000 people, with some of our other posts throughout the week reaching over 30,000 people. Now that's what we call raising awareness!

This demonstrates the benefits of the new way in which we are working, by being creative in our approach we can continue to engage with and inform carers as well as spread the carer message wider than ever before.

## Our Service

Whilst there continues to be restrictions in place as a result of Covid-19, we want to take this opportunity to remind all our carer members that we are here to help and support you. As we are still unable to have any face to face meetings, we will be continuing to use our social media platforms and our website as a mechanism for sharing of information as well as engaging with carers and our partners.

We can offer a digital meeting with one of our Carer Information & Engagement Workers and we are always here to take your calls from Monday - Friday from 9am - 4.30pm. We also continue to provide an active referral service including referrals for: Carer & Young Carer Supports, Breaks from Caring, Advocacy, Benefits, GP Services, Social Work Services, Community Support.

We have updated our website to ensure it has accurate and relevant information available. Please use our website to access information on:

- Our services for unpaid carers in North Lanarkshire
- Coronavirus and unpaid carers guidance and information
- Health and wellbeing of carers
- Carers rights
- Local community groups and resources



Our Carer Information and Engagement Team continue to work to raise the profile of unpaid carers and their rights under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 by facilitating our Carer Aware Sessions. These sessions can be tailored to the needs of the audience and can now be delivered remotely via zoom. If you would like to request a Carer Aware session for your team, group or volunteers, please get in touch with us.

## Carer Involvement

Our organisation continuously seeks the views and experiences of carers and will represent those views at local and national levels in order to promote carers rights and continue to strive for a better deal for carers.

As we move out of lockdown it is important that we find new ways to engage with carers to ensure that carer representation is meaningful and supported as part of the recovery and re-design of services. We are always keen for carers to be actively involved and there are various opportunities in which you can do this:

- Express your interest in becoming a volunteer
- Join our North Lanarkshire Carer Forum
- Become a carer representative

We will always offer regular support, guidance and training to enable you to be involved in any way you are able to. If you are a carer or former carer and are interested in working in partnership to make a difference please get in touch.

## Local Supports

The Community Solutions Programme works with local people and key partners to deliver community-based services and activities that promote health and wellbeing and they have been excellent at responding to the needs of communities during the Covid-19 outbreak. The programme has and will continue to provide vital practical and emotional support to people across North Lanarkshire.

To find out more about what is happening in your area and how might benefit from local supports visit our website at: [www.carerstogether.org](http://www.carerstogether.org) or contact our office on **01698 404055**

## Carer Support

Our partners at the Lanarkshire Carers Centre and the Young Carers Project would like to remind you that they are open and available for any carer or young carer who requires support. If you or someone you know requires support as a carer, please get in touch with the appropriate organisation.

**THE LANARKSHIRE CARERS CENTRE**  
Adult Carer Support  
tel: **01236 755550**

**THE YOUNG CARERS PROJECT**  
Young Carers (aged 8-18)  
tel: **01698 258801**





## Our Promise and Aims

North Lanarkshire Carers Together pledges to improve the lives of carers within North Lanarkshire by actively linking carers and professionals in meaningful working relationships. We work in equal partnership with Health & Social Care North Lanarkshire and others to influence policy development and service provision, which affect both carers and the people we care for.

## Proud to Announce

### WELCOME ON BOARD



Helen McAllister has taken up post as Locality Link Officer for the Motherwell locality, Helen previously worked with the Lanarkshire Carers Centre in the post of Short Breaks Bureau Development Officer.

### CHAIRPERSON RECOGNISED WITH QUEEN'S HONOUR

Earlier this year, Liz Seaton was awarded with the British Empire Medal for services to the carers' network in Scotland. Liz has been the Chairperson of North Lanarkshire Carers Together for over 15 years and has also served on the board of the Lanarkshire Carers Centre. We are all delighted that Liz has received this well deserved recognition for her tireless work on behalf of unpaid carers.

### CARER POSITIVE EMPLOYER



As part of our ongoing partnership working with Carers Scotland we were pleased to receive exemplary status as a Carer Positive Employer. We continue to work with local organisations and employers to promote the benefits of supporting unpaid carers in employment.

Like us on Facebook @NLcarerstogether Follow us on Twitter @nlct\_carers

North Lanarkshire Carers Together is a campaigning organisation that gives carers a voice. Please get in touch with us, we want to hear your stories and represent your views in the planning and development of services, please contact [enquiries@carerstogether.org](mailto:enquiries@carerstogether.org)

Our office is open from Monday to Friday 9.00am – 4.30pm.  
For information to help in your caring role call us on: **01698 404055**  
or book an appointment at: [appointments@carerstogether.org](mailto:appointments@carerstogether.org)



In association with...

