

Event Report

Involving Carers in Hospital Discharge National Network Event

March 2024, Glasgow

The **Unpaid Carers Improvement Programme** held an in-person event, bringing together delegates from across Scotland who have a role in improving carer involvement in hospital discharge. This included staff from frontline NHS services, Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) and third sector organisations. The event explored a quality improvement approach to involving carers in hospital discharge, with a focus on understanding the whole system as a crucial basis for undertaking improvement activity.

There were a mix of presentations and workshops, with opportunities for delegates to network with local and national colleagues. Workshop sessions looked at understanding local activity to support unpaid carers through the hospital pathway, from pre-admission to post-discharge. The new [Involving Carers in Hospital Discharge change package](#) was introduced to support delegates to identify improvement ideas to prioritise in their local areas. Delegates then created an improvement pledge and worked in groups to pinpoint next steps.



Our Audience



77

delegates
attended on the
day

Delegates from **11** NHS Board areas were in attendance. Roles represented included:

- Hospital discharge leads,
- Social work and frontline NHS staff,
- Carer support workers,
- HSCP carer leads, and
- Carer centre managers and staff.



Some delegates had lived experience of the hospital discharge process as unpaid carers themselves.



Presentations

Collaborative Caring supporting the role of the Unpaid Carer

Collaborative Caring: supporting the role of the unpaid carer

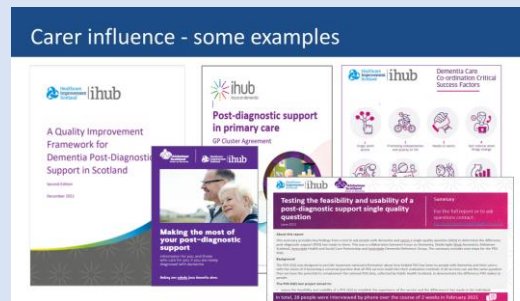
Gillian McAuley, Nurse Director, NHS Lothian
Watch the presentation [here](#).

The Focus on Dementia experience of involving carers

Julie Miller, Improvement Advisor, Focus on Dementia

Watch the presentation [here](#).

Look at the presentation slides [here](#).



The Occupational Therapy Caregiving Pathway

*Alison Buchanan, Clinical Lead Occupational
Therapist and Catriona Brown, Specialist
Occupational Therapist, East Lothian HSCP*

Watch the presentation [here](#).

Look at the presentation slides [here](#).

Workshops

Delegates worked in groups to map current activity in their local areas and to identify innovative practice across the hospital pathway. Some examples of activities include:

Pre-admission	Admission	Discharge Planning	Discharge	Post-Discharge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising awareness and supporting carers to initiate Power of Attorney process Supporting carers to plan for future hospital admission e.g. using Emergency planning, Anticipatory Care Planning tools Development of a leaflet/welcome pack to prepare carers for a hospital admission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing carer aware workshops for staff to support early identification Communicating with families to outline each MDT member's role within the unit Raising awareness with carers of their right to involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of carer stress and referral for support Provision of training for carers e.g. manual handling or topic specific sessions Carer support worker activity e.g. liaising with professionals, attending ward meetings, providing emotional support for carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small grants for carers to support discharge from HSCP Referral to local carers centre Identify carers and refer to other agencies for support e.g. Red Cross, Maggie Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social work team follow up all care packages to see how carers are coping after patient is home Carers centres providing services to support long term caring role e.g. income maximisation, access to short breaks, counselling Working with home care providers to increase recognition of carers

Improvement Pledges

During the final workshop, delegates identified an improvement idea to take back to their local team and put this in writing in a pledge, highlighting their next steps. Analysis of these pledges has identified several common themes to the improvement ideas:

My Pledge to Unpaid Carers

I,
on this date, pledge to improve the
involvement of carers in hospital discharge

What I'm planning to improve
.....
.....

Where I'm going to do it
.....

Who or what will be impacted on by this?
.....

How will I know it's having an impact?
.....
.....

What will be my 1st step?
.....
.....

I'll take the first step by this date

Signed

- Improving early identification of carers: changes to processes, conversations at treatment planning meetings
- Raising awareness with staff and carers regarding carer rights to involvement: improved carer facing information, using the Getting to Know Me tool
- Making connections with other parts of the system: improving understanding of current systems, stronger links between services, improved information sharing

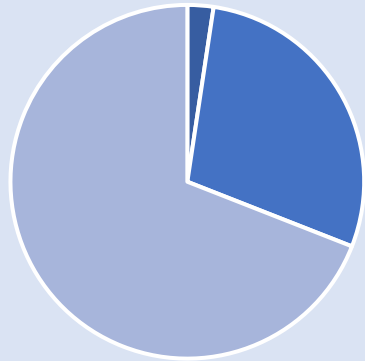
After thinking I had nothing else to give as it's been so hard getting the attention of staff on the wards, seeing what others are doing has me feeling fired up! Like I can chip away at the edges again and I realise I'm trying to go too big – I need to find that one friend on the wards or in the discharge hub to support me with this – building the conditions one person at a time!

- *Hospital Carer Support Worker
NHS Forth Valley*

Event Evaluation

We surveyed our delegates at the end of the day to find out what they thought about the event, and if we met our event aims.

On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate today's event?

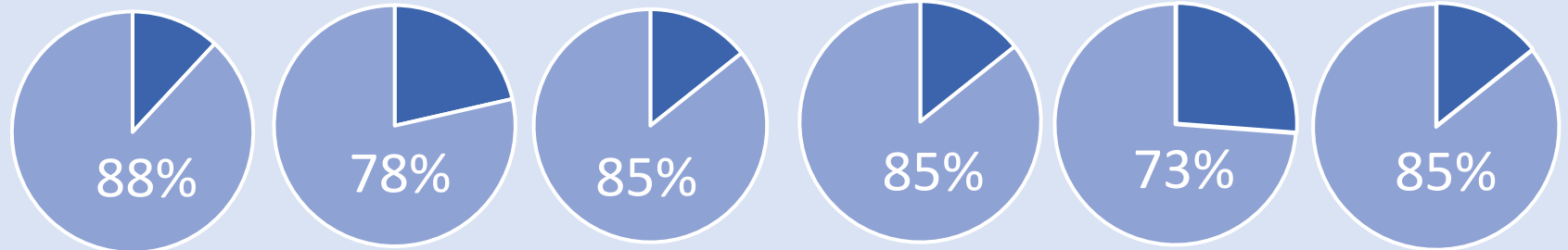


■ 3 = Good ■ 4 = Very Good ■ 5 = Excellent

What did you like about today's event?

How well did we meet our event aims?
(% show delegates who agreed we had met the aim)

Aim	Description	Percentage
Aim 1	Reminder of importance and value of involving unpaid carers	88%
Aim 2	Increased understanding of quality improvement approaches	78%
Aim 3	Understanding of value of good planning and understanding your system	85%
Aim 4	Opportunities to share good practice and learning	85%
Aim 5	Stronger connections with local colleagues	73%
Aim 6	Inspiration to get started on improvement work	85%



Find out more

To learn more about the work of the Unpaid Carers Improvement Programme and access our resources, including our [change package](#) for improving carer involvement in hospital discharge, visit [our webpages](#).