

# Employers for Carers NHS Case Studies

## West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership (also known as Integrated Care System)

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There are an estimated 260,000 unpaid carers living in West Yorkshire and Harrogate, many of whom are 'hidden' and provide the majority of care without formal support. Being a carer can be stressful and have a major impact on your health, relationships, education and employment.

With this in mind we have been working with NHS England to ensure that identifying carers and supporting them is further embedded within our work. This includes developing ways to support the existing and future workforce who balance caring responsibilities, signposting and identifying service standards for all organisations – not just in the public sector – and promoting Employers for Carers membership resources across the area.

More recently the programme has worked with local carer organisations to develop 'My Coronavirus/Covid-19 'Plan B' which will help carers think about the different ways and people that can help them in an emergency if they look after someone who couldn't manage without their support. Other initiatives include introducing a flexible working arrangement via the working carers' passport. This is an agreement between the carer and their manager, on behalf of the organisation. The intention is for the carer to be able to manage their working role alongside their caring responsibilities. It's a mutual beneficial arrangement, enabling the organisation to maintain staff retention, reduce unplanned absenteeism and to retain the skills they need whilst improving staff morale and loyalty.

### **Owen Williams, Chief Executive Calderdale and Huddersfield Foundation Trust:**

"We still want to do more work on this but the Working Carers Passport has assisted in what can be a difficult conversation with managers easier, and enabled our carers who balance work and caring to be honest and start to talk about what they need as a carer and employee".

## **Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**

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At Nottinghamshire Healthcare, we believe it's vital to have the right support in place for all staff, and particularly those who are, or will become carers. Nottinghamshire Healthcare became an Employers for Carers member in January 2020.

The resources are all available digitally and provide a useful tool to promote the importance of supporting working carers and to help us provide a carer-friendly workplace. In March 2020 we were recognised as a Carer Confident Active Employer and the benchmarking scheme has provided a helpful framework for us to develop our support for staff who are also unpaid carers or may become a carer in the future

The award application, was submitted by the Involvement, Experience and Volunteering and the Human Resources Team detailing the support that the Trust offers to carers including a 'Wellbeing – 'How are you doing?' plan, special leave guidance, flexible working guidance and a Carers Connect Network. We were inspired by the Triangle of Care model used successfully within our Trust with dedicated carers leads and links to provide ongoing support to carers.

### **Clare Teeney, Executive Director of People and Culture:**

"I'm very proud that Nottinghamshire Healthcare has achieved Level 1 Carer Confident accreditation, it's a brilliant first step and incredibly positive to be recognised for the excellent support we offer to our carers. We very much value our staff who are carers and the contribution they make and want to make sure that the right package of support is available to them. We are also committed to raising awareness of our carers benefits and improving the support we offer."

## Surrey Heartlands CCG

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### Organisational Case Study

Our journey to become a carer friendly employer started during Carers Week 2019. With the support from our Executive Lead, Vicky Stobbart, and our Surrey Heartlands Independent Carers Lead, Dr Sue Tresman, we launched our [staff carers survey](#) the results of which have been the foundation for our '[supporting staff carers action plan](#).'

On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, four Surrey CCGs merged to become the new Surrey Heartlands CCG reflecting our ICS footprint. The Surrey Heartlands CCG Staff Health and Wellbeing Group host our staff carers workstream.

Our action plan is based on the three incremental levels of the 'Carer Confident' accreditation scheme. We are delighted to be the first CCG in the country to achieve an 'Active level' status but our overall system ambition is to progress this work through a collaborative partnership with Surrey County Council to ensure we achieve carer friendly employment practices across Surrey Heartlands ICS.

The NHS People's Plan has signalled a clear expectation that the NHS has both a moral and economic imperative to support staff who are also caring. Luckily for us Carers UK's Employers for Carers service has provided a road map around how this can be achieved.

### Staff Carers Case Study

#### Working and Caring - a Journey

My journey as a carer has been evolving over time, I have cared for close family members locally and elderly relatives at a distance for many years. I have enjoyed caring for all my family members at these important times in their lives when they are at their most vulnerable, even though it has often been exhausting and challenging juggling caring whilst working full time.

Having a supportive employer has been imperative. This includes having a line manager and HR process that understands the needs of carers which have helped me achieve a more productive work-life balance including looking after my own emotional health and wellbeing needs, whilst still being able to deliver within my role and continue to care for my loved ones.

We are all aware that health appointments can rarely be accommodated around the working day. Having the flexibility to make up worktime later has had a huge positive impact on my wellbeing. This is invaluable where the caring cycle extends due to health necessities.

Isolation during the COVID period has brought with it lots of challenges and new ways of working and caring, and the continued support of my organisation has been very much appreciated.

## **Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust**

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“At Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust we engaged with EfC last year, taking out a membership to support our staff after focus groups showed that a lot of our staff could be carers in line with national statistics.

It was a busy year with EfC, we engaged with staff via communications initially and EfC had a stand at our leadership conference which was well received. I worked on meeting people at events and induction to share the EfC message of support and signposting for managers and staff.

We worked up to a host of events over October and November which included drop in sessions across or Trust, with leaflets, information and posters with support of our HR and OD team and also our Carers health team.

These proved very valuable to staff and were often quite emotive. Some staff attended just to tell their story and some felt emotional about the pressures they were under in different areas of life outside work.

One member of staff attended with her manager so they could find useful solutions during a time of diagnosis and treatment of her husband. The manager was so supportive in helping find a solution to work, without added pressure.

This gave us opportunities to engage with staff about practical ideas for flexible working and balancing work with caring.

We had some great feedback and planned for EfC to come in and see us for a session in November for Carers Rights Day to share information with managers, HR staff and others about moving forward, what we had learnt, and how to support staff.

We have taken out another membership recently for this year, there is lots of good work to be done and we can't wait to get started in Carers Week in June!"

Provided by **Lisa Duff, OD and Inclusion Facilitator**