



Carers Network bulletin

December 2024

The aim of this current awareness bulletin is to provide a digest of recent guidelines, reports, research and best practice.

For more information on Library and Knowledge Services please go to:
www.nhslincslibrary.uk

[Connect to Support Lincolnshire: Good Home Lincs](#)

Good Home Lincs provides information to help you stay safe, warm and well at home; from identifying work that needs to be done, financing repairs to improve energy efficiency, safety and security, and even moving home. Good Home Lincs has information and advice on all aspects of home improvement, maintenance, repairs, and adaptations.

The cost of caring: a scoping review of qualitative evidence on the financial wellbeing implications of unpaid care to older adults

This [study examines how unpaid carers perceive the financial consequences of caregiving](#). Based on a review of 35 qualitative studies, findings indicate that unpaid carers often face significant financial strain, with many incurring costs that exceed available support which can lead to experiences of poverty. Recommendations highlight the need for further research on carers' financial well-being, particularly through qualitative longitudinal studies to capture changes over time.

Care fully considered podcast

This podcast aims to inform and entertain with each episode discussing the unpaid carers agenda. Available via [Spotify](#) (and other podcast platforms).

Effectiveness of psychological interventions for carers of patients with SMI: a systematic review

This review included 3,869 participants from 32 RCTs and demonstrated a beneficial effect of psychological interventions for carers. Psychoeducation was widely used and the most evaluated intervention for carers. [This article from BMJ Open concludes that psychological interventions for carers are beneficial in helping to reduce negative outcomes and enhance positive outcomes](#).

Government to launch independent review into Carer's Allowance overpayments

The [DWP have announced that the Government will launch an independent review into Carer's Allowance overpayments](#). The review will focus on how and why overpayments were accrued, operational changes to minimise future overpayment risk and how the DWP can best support those with overpayments. This follows concerns over increasing reports of carers unknowingly accruing large amounts of overpayments of Carer's Allowance.



Informal carers health and wellbeing

Informal and unpaid carers provide vital support for many people with health and social care needs. However, there is growing evidence that the demands of caring are increasingly impacting carers' own physical and mental health. [This review from the House of Commons library explores the evidence.](#)

Manifesto for a disability inclusive UK

The [Business Disability Forum manifesto](#) sets out five key strategies that need to be seen from Government and business to create better experiences and opportunities for disabled people. It also sets out the key principles that we believe are critical to achieving those aims.

Missing millions: exploring hidden and unmet social care need for disabled people

This [research from Healthwatch into social care for disabled people](#) shows how transformative social care can be for those receiving it. However, extrapolating survey data to national-level data, it found that as many as 1.5 million working-age disabled people in England are not receiving social care support, despite potentially being eligible for care. The report outlines the findings and sets out recommendations to decision-makers, including government, local authorities and integrated care systems.

Online support groups for family caregivers: A qualitative exploration of social support and engagement

[Drawing together the findings of this research from the British Journal of Health Psychology](#), the authors present a new framework, the Journey of Engagement and Support in Online Support Groups for Family Caregivers. This maps the stages for engagement and support in an online support group which can be used by practitioners for running online support groups and researchers to generate hypotheses about the relationship between social support and engagement.

Preventing people with a learning disability from dying too young

Around 1.3 million people in England have a learning disability and may need more support to stay in good health. This [report from the Nuffield Trust](#) examines whether they are able to access the services they are entitled to in order to prevent illness. It looks at a set of five key preventive health care services and functions to understand whether they are working as they should for people with a learning disability.

Preventing suicide among parent carers

A growing body of research has identified unpaid carers as a high-risk group for suicide. Only a handful of studies, however, have focused on parent carers and none of those were conducted in the UK. The [results of the current study from the University of Birmingham](#) are ground-breaking and should raise serious concerns about the needs and experiences of parent carers in the UK.

Support for neurodivergent children and young people

This [Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology \(POST\) note](#) considers



support available for neurodivergent children and young people in healthcare and education, and barriers to accessing that support.

Supporting people back to work: the intersection of health and economic policy

It makes sense to think about the impact of ill health on economic inactivity. Not least to highlight that – particularly with the upcoming Budget – funding the NHS is not just a cost to the taxpayer. As the saying goes, health is wealth. You can't build a thriving economy if people are too sick to work. But recent suggestions have sparked significant debate. In large part that might be due to a lack of detail behind these ideas: they seem to be signalling 'new thinking' rather than specific policies. [So, what do we know about these new proposals?](#)

Ten ways to improve support for minoritised informal adult carers at local government policy level to redress inequality

The authors of this [review from Public Health in Practice](#) identified ten potential ways in which inequalities in support for minoritised unpaid adult carers could be addressed locally. Although the existing evidence base is limited, these ten areas could usefully be targeted for further investigation in research and within local policy development.

The cost of caring: a scoping review of qualitative evidence on the financial wellbeing implications of unpaid care to older adults

This [study from Ageing & Society](#) examines how unpaid carers perceive the financial consequences of caregiving. Based on a review of 35 qualitative studies, findings indicate that unpaid carers often face significant financial strain, with many incurring costs that exceed available support which can lead to experiences of poverty. Recommendations highlight the need for further research on carers' financial well-being, particularly through qualitative longitudinal studies to capture changes over time.

The relationship between disability, long-term illness and financial wellbeing

Previous research has shown that financial wellbeing is lower among people with disabilities or long term health conditions. This [study from the Money and Pensions Service](#) examines how this varies for people with different types of disability or condition. It finds that financial wellbeing varies considerably between people with different types of disability. It also finds that within the disabled population, wellbeing is lowest for women, single parents, unemployed people and those living in deprived areas. These are some of the same groups that have lower financial wellbeing among the non-disabled population. This suggests that there is some intersectionality, i.e. that these other characteristics can compound the financial impact of disability.

UK disability statistics: Prevalence and life experiences

An estimated 16.1 million people in the UK had a disability in 2022/23, [accounting for 24% of the total population](#).

Unpaid carers provide an essential but often invisible service



[New research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) is filling the evidence gap around why people are unpaid carers and building understanding of their essential role alongside paid care services.

What needs to improve for social care to better support people with dementia?

The number of people living with dementia in the UK is rising. Even if treatments can be developed quickly, the social care system needs to change in order to better support the growing numbers of people affected. This [report from the Nuffield Trust](#) sets out the current challenges involved in providing good social care for people with dementia and makes recommendations about what needs to change to improve social care for people with dementia.

What support do young carers find helpful?

Young carers are children or young adults who care for a family member with long-term physical or mental health issues, substance misuse, or disability.

Researchers explored the needs of young carers and the people they care for.

- NIHR have summarised this article here: [NIHR](#).
- You can read the full article published in March 2024 here: [PLoS One](#).