

Title: Carer Lanyard Pilot in Kirklees
3 month evaluation – September 2022

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Background

A volunteer member of the Healthwatch Kirklees' team (Lynne), who is also an unpaid carer, told us that when she is supporting someone as their carer, in health and care settings, she is regularly asked: **"Who are you and why are you here?"**, requiring her to repeatedly explain and justify her presence. She highlighted that she feels that her role as a carer is not always recognised, understood and supported.

Lynne suggested an idea to her Healthwatch colleagues of having a 'carer lanyard', for use across all health and care settings, so that carers could be easily identified by staff and offered support, where needed.

Healthwatch Kirklees engaged with other carers to ask what they thought of the idea and the results are below:

81% were in favour of having a lanyard
12% said they might use a lanyard
7% said they wouldn't use a lanyard

One person said: "What a great idea. Saves time, and also recognises the value and importance of the carer's role in a simple way"

There were some comments expressing support for carers to be easily identified but with **some hesitancy about the idea of having a lanyard**, suggesting that alternative ideas could be considered.

One person said "Some form of discreet 'identity card' would seem a better option"

What we did

Healthwatch Kirklees worked with local partner organisations and carers to develop a plan to produce and launch a lanyard for carers. The lanyard can be used across all health and care settings in Kirklees, along with a card which can be attached to the lanyard. The card can be used separately for those who want to identify themselves as carers more discretely. It was agreed that Kirklees would be used as a pilot area for the launch of the lanyard in hope that the pilot would be extended to other local areas across West Yorkshire and nationally.

The following health and care services and carer support organisations across Kirklees agreed to support the carer lanyard project:

- Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust
- Calderdale & Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust
- South West Yorkshire NHS Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Locala
- Kirklees Council
- Carers Count
- Carers Wakefield & District
- Curo Health
- My Health Huddersfield

The initiative was launched during Carers Week 2022 (6 – 12 June), with Healthwatch Kirklees providing a 'toolkit' containing information for staff (Appendix 1), a poster to display and communication templates to help spread the word.

The posters says:

Carers: we see you, hear you and support you.

We recognise and support carers in this setting.

When we see this lanyard or this card we know that you are a carer (pictures of both are shown).

Carers are family members and friends who are relied upon to provide essential care and support to someone who has a physical disability, long term health condition, learning disability, mental health issue or who is frail. If

you are a carer and would like a carer lanyard, please speak to a member of our staff.

Logos of all partner organisations are displayed on the poster.

Note: Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust already have a carer lanyard in use at their hospital sites and the Trust agreed that their design could be replicated across all health and care settings to ensure consistency for carers. Mid Yorkshire Hospitals and other providers also offer things like carer passports.

The lanyard and card developed by Healthwatch Kirklees and partners are not intended to replace any organisation's existing carer support resources but can be offered alongside those.

Healthwatch Kirklees visited lots of services and events during Carers Week 2022 to promote the launch of the lanyard and photos from these visits are available.

Organisations also supported the launch by sharing messages on their social media, sending communications to their colleagues and by including information in newsletters.

Funding

Funding for 1,000 lanyards and cards was secured from Kirklees Council; demand was so great during and after the launch that a further 1,000 were needed and Locala funded those. Healthwatch Kirklees designed the poster and funded the printing costs. Healthwatch Kirklees and other partner organisations are extremely grateful for the funding provided so far.

What people said about the carer lanyard

Feedback from carers

Feedback from carers has been overwhelmingly positive; from people who care for people with hidden disabilities, young carers and from carers who feel they are often overlooked and their role

misunderstood, the lanyard has helped people to feel recognised, supported and for the importance of their role to be appreciated.

One carer said “This is going to be so useful for me and my husband as we currently face a battle when we go to appointments. My husband has complex medical needs as well as mental health problems and I’ve been told before by both reception staff, GP and consultants (who are aware of her husband's condition) 'oh he's a big boy now, he can go in alone' 'he doesn't need you to hold his hand'. I feel the lanyard will help me to be recognised as a carer and will face less of a challenge to accompany and support my husband”

A young carer told us “I’m often not taken seriously or sometimes completely dismissed' as a carer because of my age and so the lanyard gives me a sense of recognition and makes me feel like I will have less resistance from clinical staff in future”

Another carer said “it will be extremely useful, it gives Carers a proper identity when ‘doing our job’”

One carer told us their real life experience using the lanyard at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary, **“my mum was referred by her GP to A&E at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary. I accompanied her wearing the carer lanyard and was immediately and proactively advised that it would be OK for me to stay with my mum, on account of my carer status. I noticed a carer lanyard poster on display in A&E.**

My mum was subsequently admitted to a ward and I went with her when she was transferred to the ward from A&E. Once again, the carer lanyard was immediately "recognised" by the ward team and I was advised that, as her mum's carer, I could visit "any time".

We appreciated the proactivity displayed by hospital staff who were clearly already aware of the significance of the lanyard. We had, on previous occasions, had the negative experience of being advised that I could not stay with my mum in A&E with comments being made along the lines of: "Your mum will be fine on her own - won't you, mum? We will look after her." However, mum has a range of hidden disabilities that can often cause her

significant anxiety and distress, when she is required to remain/wait alone within a healthcare setting - so it was a great relief when we had a very positive experience this time."

Feedback from professionals

Feedback from professionals has been just as positive as from carers. Here's a few examples of what people have told us so far:

From a GP practice:

"Thank you for the information and lanyards for carers which I am sure will be very useful and greatly appreciated by our carers. We have set up a protocol for issuing these and have put a system in place to make our carers aware"

From the Cancer Alliance Community Panel Co-ordinator:

"I think it's a really excellent initiative and I can definitely see it catching on, as it would be hugely beneficial to patients and their carers across all West Yorkshire"

From A&E at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary:

The staff team in the Emergency Department (ED) at HRI have been gathering feedback from everyone they have given a carer lanyard to and you can see this data in Appendix 2. Here are just a couple of comments from staff working in ED:

"I think being able to identify who Carers are will make a massive difference for patients and the person they are with. We could have done with this when Covid-19 first started. Then Carers wouldn't have felt they had to keep explaining why they are there'.

"Having an extra prompt to check in on the Carers will help. ED is so busy, but the lanyard acts as a reminder to check how the Carer is too, even if this is something as simple as making them a cup of tea'.

From John's Campaign (supporting carers of those with dementia, especially around being able to stay in hospital with their loved one if they are admitted)

"I think this is absolutely brilliant. It's what people are crying out for across the country... absolutely congratulate you and your colleagues"

From Kirklees Clinical Commissioning Group

"it's a great idea"

"well done to you and your team"

The numbers

Almost 1,700 lanyards and cards have been distributed across Kirklees so far (June-Sept 2022). Here's a breakdown showing where they have gone:

Carers Count, Carers Wakefield, Carers Trust & Young Carers Service - 25%

Hospital Trusts - 18%

Locala - 12%

Kirklees Council - 5%

GP practices - 32%

Other services – 4%

Sent direct to carers by Healthwatch – 4%

The remaining 300 lanyards are with Healthwatch Kirklees engagement colleagues, ready to distribute as and when they come across carers who might benefit from having one.

What next?

Other areas of West Yorkshire have expressed an interest in having the carer lanyard available as a resource. For example, partners in Calderdale have included the lanyard in their new carers strategy. However, it is unclear who would lead on launching the lanyard in other areas and crucially, who would fund it.

Healthwatch Kirklees will be meeting with partners to discuss steps to ensure the carer lanyard is sustainable in Kirklees and to decide whether there's anything else that can be done to encourage system leaders to adopt the initiative across West Yorkshire.

Appendix 1

Key information for frontline staff

We ask that all frontline staff are made aware the project and support in the following ways:

Show carers your support – please display the enclosed poster prominently in your service reception area(s). This lets carers know that you will recognise their role, that you won't question why they are there, and that you will offer support, information or signposting where needed.

Look out for carers – look out for anyone wearing this lanyard or showing you this card (pictures of card and lanyard are shown).

- Ask if they need any support.
- Make a note of their caring role on your records if possible (for the carer and the cared for).
- Offer any information/support they can access from your organisation, eg your carers passport, free parking.

Identify carers – many people in a caring role do not identify themselves as carers and may miss out on valuable information, advice and support, as a result. If you become aware that a person is a carer, please signpost them to local carers support services; details are below. You could also show them the description of a carer on our poster.

Issue a lanyard / card – if you come across a carer who would like a lanyard / card, please give them one and write your organisation's name on the card to show who has issued it. If they are registered with a carers organisation, please write that on the card too.

We are currently issuing cards and lanyards to the following people:

Unpaid carers – family members or friends who support someone

Paid carers – such as personal assistants

We are currently not providing cards and lanyards to private care company employees as they already have a different form of identification provided by their employers.

If you would like to request additional lanyards or cards, please contact Healthwatch Kirklees on 01924 450379, email info@healthwatchkirklees.co.uk or use the contact form on our website www.healthwatchkirklees.co.uk and put 'Other' in the subject heading.

If a carer is not registered with a carers organisation, please signpost or give them details of their local carers support service; details are below.

Carers Count

0300 012 0231

info@carerscount.org.uk

www.carerscount.org.uk

Carers Trust Mid Yorkshire

01484 537036

info@ctmy.org.uk

www.carerstrustmidyorkshire.org.uk

Appendix 2

Calderdale & Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust (CHFT) Carers Lanyard Update

Through Healthwatch Kirklees, CHFT joined a cluster of local healthcare providers and third sector organisations to pilot the Carers Lanyard during Carers Week 2022.

Through reviewing our primary sources of patient experience intelligence (PALS, Complaints, FFT) we identified that there was an opportunity to improve our identification of Carers within our ED at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary (HRI). Staff working within reception completed Carers Awareness Training, as they are the first point of contact into the Trust when patients are accessing unplanned, urgent care. We displayed posters throughout the waiting areas, triage rooms and paediatric area. All staff within ED were e-mailed with a briefing about the launch of the lanyard.

In addition to helping with identify Carers, we also wanted to capture some additional information about Carers visiting ED. As part of the initial conversation with our Carers we also captured their details for a follow-up conversation, which they signed an agreement for.

Within 7 days of visiting HRI a member of staff from our Virtual Support Team telephoned the Carers and completed a brief survey with them. The findings were as follows:

81% of carers provided with a lanyard identified as female and 19% as male
87% described their ethnicity as white, with 6.25% describing themselves as black and 6.25% as Asian

60% of carers live with the person they provide care for, with 40% living elsewhere

88.5% of the carers were of working age

13% of carers have a disability or their own

37.5% of carers look after someone with dementia

76% of Carers told us that within the last 12 months they found it easy or very easy to find info and support services within the local area. 24% found it difficult or very difficult.

100% of the Carers felt they would benefit from the 'free parking' we have offered with the Carers lanyard. 13% said they would start utilising this incentive from the day they were issued with their lanyard

When asked if there was anything the hospital could do to improve their experience when attending with their cared for person.

100% said they felt there was nothing we could do to improve our service.

When asked if they would like signposting to local support networks *100% said this was something they did not require help with.*

Staff statements:

"I think being able to identify who Carers are will make a massive difference for patients and the person they are with. We could have done with this when

Covid-19 first started. Then Carers wouldn't have felt they had to keep explaining why they are there'.

"Having an extra prompt to check in on the Carers will help. ED is so busy, but the lanyard acts as a reminder to check how the Carer is too, even if this is something as simple as making them a cup of tea'.

Recommendations:

Provide information on the Trust intranet and website for local and national carer support services for patients who find accessing information difficult.

Monitor the ethnicity of the Carers we are identifying. Establish if more work is required within '**hardly reached**' communities.

Identify what information/ support is available locally for working Carers. If there is a shortfall in provision feed this into the wider health economy health strategy and Carers blueprint.

Feedback to the ED patient experience group about the findings. Special thanks to be given to the Reception Team who have truly embraced this pilot.

Nicola Greaves – Quality Improvement Manager at Calderdale & Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust
July 2022