

## Healthwatch B&NES Community Pot Final project report 2019-20

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Vanessa Scott,  
Portfolio Manager Healthwatch B&NES  
T: 07754780487 or E: [vanessascott@thecareforum.org.uk](mailto:vanessascott@thecareforum.org.uk)

**The deadline for report submissions is 12.00 (midday) on Friday 29 January 2021**

*NOTE: The text boxes will expand as you type.*

### SECTION A: YOUR ORGANISATION

1. Name of Organisation	BaNES Carers Centre
2. Full Address of Organisation (for correspondence)	Woodlands Lower Bristol Road Bath BA2 9ES

#### 3. Contact details

Main Contact for reporting	
Name	Claire Abrahams
Position	Senior Services Manager
Telephone	07455 046945
Mobile	
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### SECTION B: THE PROJECT

#### 4. Focus of project

- Please state clearly what issue(s) your project looked at.
- Were these the issues that you had planned to focus on?
- If not, please explain what the project focused on and how and why the focus changed.

Our project was to extend our Carer Support Line hours to maximise the support we could provide to carers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Carers has been particularly adversely affected by the pandemic, with the majority of carers living with someone over 70 or someone who may be immunocompromised. This project aimed to give carers more access to reliable advice, emotional support, and signposting.

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### 5. What did you do?

- Using your Memorandum of Understanding for reference, please tell us what progress was made against each of the activities that were due to be delivered through this project - including numerical data for outputs where agreed.
- Please include details of any factors that contributed to or impeded the achievement of the agreed outputs.
- If the agreed outputs were not achieved, please explain the reasons why and any actions that were taken to try to address this.

***NB** - Please include any photos, video links, examples of surveys, media and communications used etc to illustrate what you did in the box below or attach them as an appendix.*

#### **Project outputs:**

##### **1) BCC will work to reassure and promote carers' access to clear and trusted information and advice -**

Our support line operating hours were extended from 8.15am - 12pm Mon-Fri, to 8.15am - 3pm Mon- Fri. Our Support team were more widely available to offer carers quality information, advice and signposting during these times, and were able to offer research and investigations into issues outside of these hours.

##### **2) BCC will support carers to maintain their wellbeing and stay connected.**

Our Carer Support Line referred carers to the most appropriate support for their needs. Our internal offer to support carers to stay connected and maintain their wellbeing included;

- Remote breaks, where a carer received a 'kit' which could be used in their own time
- Online breaks, where carers could meet together to do an online activity such as yoga or crafts
- Online Carer Cafes, a chance for carers to meet via zoom and give and receive peer support and generally connect with other carers.
- Telephone Carer Cafes, as above but on the phone!
- Wellbeing calls. Over this period we have made over 3000 outbound wellbeing checks to our registered carers.

##### **3) The issues identified by carers, and their plans to address them will be shared with Healthwatch so that they can be shared with Healthwatch England.**

- Please see attached report for main themes.

One issue that has been identified through out support line which is a concern, is a lack of provision for parent carers to receive a carers assessment. We are however, working with BaNES Council and our commissioner to find a solution to this. We will keep HealthWatch updated with any developments and to assist if necessary.

Following another repeating theme around issues to accessing carers assessments, we are working with Virgin Care to create a Carer Pathway, which will ensure Carers are

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referred to the most appropriate support at the best time. It will also reduce the carer repeating their story by sharing information (with consent) between our organisations.

### 6. What did you find out?

- Please outline the key findings from your project, considering:
  - key themes from the feedback that you received
  - themes related to any particular health and social care services that participants said that they used
  - what participants said worked well (with regards to health and social care)
  - where participants felt things could be improved (with regards to health and social care)
  - any conclusions or recommendations that your organisation would like to make based upon the feedback that you have received (please try to make these SMART - if you would like to discuss these further please do not hesitate to get in touch with us)

***NB** - Please include any relevant survey data, tables/ graphs, case studies etc to illustrate what you learnt in the box below or attach them as an appendix.*

#### **4) BCC will share their findings in a written report which will be submitted to Healthwatch B&NES:**

See attached report

#### **5) BCC will record the following information about the project's participants:**

- **Demographics to be recorded for carers and dependant (where known):**

See attached report

### 7. Demographic information

- Using your Memorandum of Understanding for reference, please report who you engaged with through this project, including any agreed questions such as:
  - postcode
  - age range
  - disability
  - carer etc
- Did you identify any differences or themes in the experiences of different demographic or protected characteristics groups (i.e. that might suggest barriers to and/or potential inequalities in access to health and social care services)

Nearly all those who were affected by this project were carers, with the exception of some professionals and members of the public looking for advice for carers in their community.

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We did note in the attached report, that the most common age for seeking our support through our support line was between the age of 45-65, however this is representative of the demographic of our members. We also noted that this age group were most likely to call about financial concerns.

Unsurprisingly, carers above 65 were more likely to be contacting us for help and advice on care at home or care homes. With emotional support being a priority across all the age groups.

Please see the attached report for further details.

### 8. Outcomes - please tell us how this project has impacted those people who took part?

**NB** - If you have any testimonials or quotes that you would like to share to demonstrate the outcomes that your project achieved, please include them in the box below or attach them as an appendix.

We have seen a huge increase in demand for help on our support line since that start of the pandemic. As mentioned before carers have been particularly affected and many of their support networks have been removed. By increasing our support during this very difficult time, we have been able to offer trusted advice and support which has been critical for many carers who are trying to cope alone. Here are some quotes from the carers we have supported:

Carer called the CSL after receiving a letter from us regarding the passing of her mother, she was so touched that she wanted to call and thank the team for all our support and reiterated that she would like to stay for 6 months and perhaps help in the future within our cafe's.

"I want to thank and at the same time congratulate you for such an excellent project to support and help all of us as caregivers. "

"I'm so pleased that you called today, it all feels so new and I didn't know who to go to for help."

Carer called CSL to say thank you for all the letters and communication from us. He said "I find these letters very comforting thank you so much for all you do for myself and my wife and all the carers like us"

"It's so comforting to know that the line is there if I need it - you've been a big help in the past"

"Thank you for being there for us - it's been enormously valuable and I really appreciate it."

B called the CSL to thank me for finding this programme for his wife, he said I only called to see if you can find anything to help my wife's arthritis through exercise and wasn't expecting much as the specialist couldn't find anything for her, so delighted that you came back to me with this. If I have time I'll write an email in to thank you as well. - Carer took the carers support email address

"It's been a struggle to say the least - very hard. We feel alone. But just the fact that you've called is worth a thousand pounds - thank you so much"

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"Thank you SO much for your email and clear answers to my questions. I will definitely register with the carers centre.

Please keep up your good work, and thank you again."

### 9. Considerations

Did you have to take any steps when designing and conducting the project to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your participants? If yes, please explain what these steps were and how you overcame them. Example areas include: Data Protection, Ethical considerations, safeguarding etc.

Data protection and being GDPR compliant were already a high priority for our organisation, as is safeguarding and all our staff hold a Level 2 safeguarding certificate.

Our staff have had to adapt to working from home, which has raised a few challenges along the way, and we have a 'working from home' policy to ensure we are looking after the needs of both our carers and staff. We have put in extra support for our staff to ensure they have support themselves during this time when face to face contact is limited.

### 10. Next steps...

What action do you think needs to be taken now to share the feedback/ conclusions/ recommendations from your project and help to improve people's experiences of health and social care services in B&NES?

- Please refer to your Memorandum of Understanding for any actions that had been agreed between your organisation and Healthwatch B&NES.
- Please let us know if your organisation is planning to carry out further work in this area.
- Please let us know if there is anything further that could be done in partnership with Healthwatch B&NES. We are very happy to work with you to escalate feedback, best practice and concerns where required. If it would be useful to talk about this in more detail please do get in touch

E: [vanessascott@thecareforum.org.uk](mailto:vanessascott@thecareforum.org.uk) or T: 07754780487

We have shared our findings with HealthWatch and Virgin Care. We will continue to work with both organisations to help identify issues and improve services for carers. We are continuing our work with HealthWatch from our first project, looking into better appointment systems for carers. I see this project to be no different and we will continue to gather these insights and engage with HealthWatch BaNES to find appropriate solutions.

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### 11. Working with Healthwatch B&NES

This is the second time that we have run a small grant scheme for VCSE organisations. We very much hope to be able to continue this funding stream and build relationships with partners across B&NES. We would therefore be very grateful for your thoughts on which elements of this process have worked well and if there was anything that you think we could improve on or do differently next time.

This is the second grant provided by HealthWatch BaNES to the Carers Centre, and once again we value working together on our projects on an ongoing basis, after this funding has ended.

Our Support Line will continue to operate to support carers through this difficult period and beyond, and we would welcome the opportunity engage HealthWatch in helping to resolve trending issues affecting carers in BaNES.

The process has been very easy, and has encouraged us to look in depth at some of the data we are collecting which has been very useful in a number of ways. The monitoring has been easy to complete.

I have always found HealthWatch staff and members to be helpful and informative, and we look forward to working together in the future.

## SECTION C: WHAT NEXT?

Please ensure that you have completed **all** sections of this report. Once complete, please submit this report electronically along with any accompanying documents) to Vanessa Scott E: [vanessascott@thecareforum.org.uk](mailto:vanessascott@thecareforum.org.uk)

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We aim to hold an event for all grant recipients to discuss the findings of their projects with one another and the Healthwatch B&NES Executive Board. Details of this event will be shared in due course.

**NB** - The financial report is a separate document. This also needs to be submitted by 12.00 (midday) on Friday 29 January 2021.