

# Valuing carers in Southwark

## Our pledges for the next three years

Carers in Southwark make a huge contribution to the life of our borough and every day, give their time and energy to care, unpaid, for their friends and family. We know that they need the best support possible to help them continue to care, while still staying well themselves, having choice and control and having a life outside of their caring responsibilities.

We asked carers themselves what they need and for their thoughts on our draft strategy to support carers. From that consultation, we can now make these pledges to our borough's carers and over the next three years, we and our partner organisations in the community will be working to make sure that these pledges are delivered.

### Reaching out

#### You said

We need to get in touch with carers as soon as they start caring, so that they know what support and services are on offer and can make choices about what works best for them.

#### We pledge

- To work with the key people providing health and social care, and with organisations in the community, to make sure that all carers – including young carers – know what services are available to them and are offered different types of support, so they can choose what's right for them.
- To make sure that carers can get support through their GP or at hospital; this will include GPs identifying when someone is a carer in their practice records and recruiting professionals to look out for the health of carers.
- To make sure professionals working with young people are more aware of young carers' role and needs.

### Health and wellbeing

#### You said

Carers need support to stay healthy and well.

#### We pledge

- To make it easier for carers to access services that can support their mental and physical health, like counselling, health checks and other mainstream services.
- To make it easier for carers to have a life outside of caring, whether that is by making sure they can take part in leisure activities or by helping them return to training, education or work.
- To help carers receive services that will give them support and peace of mind, like telecare.

## Information and advice

### You said

We need to make sure carers are fully informed about the caring role and their rights as a carer and are given the right information and advice.

### We pledge

- To make it easier for carers to get the information they need, making information available in different ways that suit different carers, including online. We will also develop training and education opportunities.
- To make professionals working in health, social care and education more aware of the role and needs of carers
- To give carers more choice and control over the services they get by improving their access to mainstream services; helping them get opportunities to train, work or access education; getting them access to carer and personal budgets; and making sure that carers are regularly meeting with professionals to see how they are managing and whether their needs are being met.

## In an emergency

### You said

Carers need to be able to get help in an emergency.

### We pledge

- To make sure carers know where to get support in an emergency.
- To make sure that the people providing services know about what a carer's role is and can respond to their needs in an emergency.

## Policies and strategy

### You said

The council and NHS need to have policies that complement each other and reflect the needs and aspirations of carers.

### We pledge

- To get carers to design and evaluate services and policies, so that as much as possible they meet their needs and allow their aspirations to be fulfilled.
- To make sure that health and social care services work together, fully recognise what carers do and support young carers as they move into adulthood.

## Young carers

### You said

Young carers need support so that they can have the same life experiences as other young people their age.

### We pledge

- To work closely with young carers to create services that meet their specific needs and to reach out to young carers in Southwark.

## Short breaks

### You said

Short breaks that allow carers to take a break from their role are very important.

### We pledge

- To make sure that carers can enjoy short and longer breaks, which are flexible and let them have a life outside of caring.