



Carers and Diversity: Evidence and Practice

Chair:
Claudia Brown, Co-Chair, ADASS
Carers Policy Group and
Director of Adult Social Services
Brent Council



Speaker:
Melanie Crew,
Senior Research and Policy Officer
Carers UK



Speaker:
Abinaya Kamalanathan, Carers Support and
Development Officer and
LGBTQ+ Project Co-Ordinator
Wandsworth Carers Centre



Speaker:
Matthew McKenzie FRSA,
Convenor of peer-led Mental Health Carer Forums
Lewisham and Lambeth
Author of A Caring Mind blog
Chair of Carers UK carers from
ethnic minorities advisory group



Carers UK: Making Carers Count

Melanie Crew

Senior Research and Policy Officer - Carers UK

November 2023

Carers UK has conducted research across 4 areas

- **Ethnic minority carers**
- **LGBTQ+ carers**
- **Older carers who are digitally excluded**
- **Carers of faith**



Research reports based on surveys with carers:

- **Ethnic minority carers** more likely to be worried about finances, and more likely to feel services do not meet needs
- **Lesbian, gay and bisexual carers** more likely to have poor mental health and to be lonely

Forthcoming research reports based on surveys and interviews with carers:

- **Carers of faith:** how faith can impact on caring and the role of places of worship
- **Trans carers:** challenges faced by trans carers in relation to caring

Carers UK best practice guides featuring case study examples and recommendations for practice

- Supporting **ethnic minority carers**
- Supporting **LGBTQ+ carers**
- Supporting **older carers who are digitally excluded**

All reports and guides published on Carers UK website:

<https://www.carersuk.org/policy-and-research/policy-library/>

Key facts

- **People over 75 are most likely to be offline**, with 26% of this group not having internet access at home (Ofcom, 2022)
- Although a quarter (24%) of over-75s in England increased their internet use during the pandemic, **more than two in five (42%) people aged over 75 were still non-users** a few months into the pandemic (Age UK, 2021)
- The biggest barrier for people not using technology was a perceived **lack of skills** (Age UK, 2021)

Digital technology and caring

- Our understanding of what it means to be digitally excluded is changing, as technology evolves
- Many support services are moving online
- Technology can offer benefits for carers, but some carers are unable to go online

Survey with 90 Carers UK Affiliates (local organisations)

- Main challenge faced by digitally excluded older carers was **loneliness and isolation** (83%)

“So much communication is only done by email or social media promotion – this significantly limits those who do not have access to information in this format.”

- Most reported barrier to accessing digital services was having a **lack of confidence** about how to use technology (88%)

“Confidence is huge as this isn’t the norm for them. They spend years not needing to do this and think why start now?”

Survey with 90 Carers UK Affiliates (local organisations)

- Accessing **funding** for non-digital services can be challenging

“Funders are seeking solutions and services which reach ever growing numbers of carers at ever reducing levels of resource.”

“As budgets are restricted, providing online services and support is a more affordable method of service delivery.”

- A lack of **staff capacity** can also be an issue

“There are also time constraints and offering 1-2-1 support to enable older carers to develop the skills and confidence to use digital devices can be time consuming.”

Best practice examples

- Carers Link East Dunbartonshire
- Hartlepool Carers
- Surrey Coalition of Disabled People
- Darlington Carers Support
- Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
- Rochdale Carers Hub



Recommendations for practice

- Considering **carers' individual needs**
- Providing **training and support** to help people use digital technology
- Providing carers with **devices and data**
- Improving the **accessibility** of online support services
- Offering **non-digital support**



For more information please email:

melanie.crew@carersuk.org

London LGBTQ+ Carers Project



**MAKING
CARERS COUNT**
Working in partnership with Carers Trust

W Wandsworth
Carers' Centre

Peer Support (in-person)





LGBTQ+ CARERS TRIP THE LONDON CANAL MUSEUM



For LGBTQ+ unpaid Carers living in London

A Visit to the London Canal Museum, including a boat ride and light refreshments

Followed by a hot drink and chat at a cafe

Sunday 29th October at 1.30pm

To sign up and for more information contact:
abinaya@wandsworthcarers.org.uk



Monthly Trips for Carers

UK-wide Online Coffee Meetups LGBTQ+ unpaid Carers



Are you
LGBTQ+
living in the



Do you support
friend, child,
neighbour,
partner, chosen
birth family
member who
couldn't manage
without you?



Come along to
our online
coffee meetups
on Zoom



Chats and
information
sessions
Share a w
Find con



Challenges with Online Support

Training for Professionals working with Carers

Supporting LGBTQ+ Carers



October 2023



Working with LGBTQ+ Carers Toolkit:

<https://carerswandsworth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/LGBTQ-Carer-Toolkit-.pdf>

Supporting carers better: ethnicity, culture and diversity

Matthew McKenzie FRSA

Author, Convenor

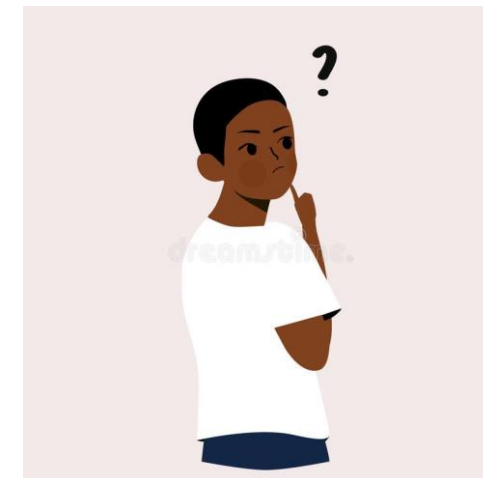
**Co-chair Carers UK's steering group for carers from
ethnic minorities**

Carers UK volunteer

Unpaid carer

The difficult journey ethnic minority carers face

- Specific barriers faced by carers from ethnic minorities
- Language and translation
- Understanding the complex pathways of Health & Social care
- Social stigma, social trauma and increased mental & physical health issues



The Carers UK good practice briefing for supporting ethnic minority carers

Following on from the report about the issues raised. Carers UK produced a good practice guide.

Aims focused on

- Raising awareness of the cultural and tailored needs of ethnic minority carers.
- Providing information, advice and guidance to services on those needs.
- Steps to help improve the health and wellbeing of ethnic minority carers
- Providing examples of good practices





Following on from the report about the issues raised. Carers UK produced a good practice guide.



Offers specialised support to carers from ethnic minorities



Tailored support groups, translation and also initiated a research study on The Dementia Experience of People from Caribbean, Chinese and South Asian Communities



Promoting the translated resources and having a support worker who speaks additional languages



Wellbeing Service and dedicated Asian women's group. Raising awareness and working on the needs of ethnic minority carers



Supported the development of culturally sensitive community services for Irish people to address the needs those with dementia.



Newcastle is recognised as a City of Sanctuary, committed to welcoming refugees and helping them to rebuild their lives.

The Carers UK ethnic minority carers advisory group

Following on from the report themes, discussions and agendas were set at the new Carers UK ethnic minority carers advisory group

Aims focused on

- Discussed the guidelines and how the good practices can spread across the UK.
- Continued engagement with ethnic minority carer groups to get feedback on other reports
- A way for members to update on their projects regarding ethnic minority carer engagement



My thoughts on the guidelines and the future

- Spread the awareness of the guidelines so that other services are aware of ethnic minority carers' needs.
- Continue to meet in the new year on the impact of the guidelines.
- Engage and continue to get feedback from diverse communities.

Last thoughts : Challenges on resources and awareness, but there are also positives





Thank you for listening!

Get in touch with us: policy@carersuk.org

Find our research and practice resources [here](#):

Submit your practice for the ADASS President's Carers Challenge:

<https://www.adass.org.uk/carers-challenge-2023>



@CarersUK **#ncasc23**