

Wrexham Carers Lead Officer

Consultation Overview Report

This document is available in Welsh.



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1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of consultation undertaken and the results, it includes responses to selected questions and some of the comments made. A full report of 27 pages has been provided to Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) who commissioned this work.

The remit of this consultation was to ascertain the views of stakeholders about services for unpaid carers in Wrexham County and the views of professionals in this field on the need for a Carers Lead Officer for Wrexham. Amgen Consultants Limited undertook the consultation in March and April 2022, with the support of the commissioning team.

There were four templates developed for the consultation, ones for:

- a) Unpaid carers
- b) People receiving unpaid care
- c) Staff from Partner Agencies
- d) WCBC staff.

All four templates contained 11 core questions about services for unpaid carers in Wrexham County, but differed in contextual information and some of the questions asked.

2. Consultation methods

2.1 Structured interviews and small focus groups

The first structured interviews took place on Saturday 05.03.2022 and the final small focus group took place on Tuesday 12.04.2022.

2.2 Templates completed and returned

A total of 7 people took the option to complete and return templates themselves.

2.3 Completing questions on Your Voice Wrexham

The questions from the four templates were placed on Your Voice Wrexham and the questions were live between Wednesday 30.03.2022 and Monday 11.04.2022.

2.4 Participation in Welsh

All methods included the options of taking part in Welsh or in English and a number of respondents took part through the medium of Welsh.

3 The people who responded

3.2 Number of people responding by different methods

TABLE 1

Group	Number spoken to by a consultant	Number returning a completed template	Number answering questions on Your Voice Wrexham*	Total
Unpaid carers	14	2	70	86
People receiving unpaid care	8	3	24	35
Staff from partner organisations	19	1	10	30
WCBC staff	19**	1	8	28
Totals	60	7	112	179

*Those that signed on but did not answer any questions other than those included for context are not included in these totals. **Two people spoken to that did not result in a completed template are omitted.

3.1 Some contextual data for staff from Partner Agencies and staff from WCBC

TABLE 2

Years worked in this field	<1	1 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	20+
Number	5	1	8	5	7	4	15

TABLE 3

Are you an unpaid carer?	Yes	No	Have been previously?	Extrapolated – people who have never been a carer
Number	15	36	17	19 out of 51* = 37%

The number (32) and percentage (63%) of staff responding to this question who were unpaid carers or had been unpaid carers previously is worthy of note.

3.3 Some contextual data for unpaid carers and people receiving unpaid care

TABLE 4

Person cared for	Relative	Friend	Other	Prefer not to say	Gender			
					Female	Male	Other	Prefer not to say
Number	89	3	4	2	51	43	1	-
Person cared for age range			0-15	16 -24	25- 49	50-64	65-80	80+
Number			20	5	16	13	23	16

TABLE 5

Person providing care	Relative	Friend	Other	Prefer not to say	Gender			
					Female	Male	Other	Prefer not to say
Number	89	3	4	2	71	19	-	-
Person cared for age range			0-15	16 -24	25- 49	50-64	65-80	80+
Number			1	1	32	26	28	3

TABLE 6

Years as an unpaid carer OR of unpaid care provided	<1	1 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20+
Number	-	9	16	19	13	12	9

TABLE 7

Hours a week of unpaid care provided on average	0 - 19	20 – 49	50 – 99	100 – 167	24 / 7 (168)
Number	13	14	7	12	34

The notable fact about the responses to this question was the number (34) and percentage (43%) of respondents who said they provided care on a 24 / 7 basis. Upon discussion, a number of the respondents pointed out that even when they were sleeping they needed to be available for the person cared for.

4. Responses to selected questions

4.1 Examples of responses or comments included

A few examples of the comments or responses are included. These have been selected more or less at random, but consideration was given to reflecting the balance of responses and there has been an attempt to include quotes that give some insight.

4.2 Support for unpaid carers in Wrexham County

TABLE 8

1. What support for unpaid carers are you aware of in Wrexham county?

Categorised Responses	Referred to one or more services	Did not know of any services	Negative response e.g. 'Very little'	No response to the question
Unpaid carers	33	31	3	19
People receiving unpaid care	2	12	2	19
Staff from partner organisations	19	0	1	10
WCBC staff	25	0	0	3
Totals	79	43	6	51

TABLE 9

1. The services referred to most often by respondents

Service	Unpaid carers	People receiving unpaid care	Staff from partner organisations	WCBC staff	Total
1 NEWCIS	21	1	15	21	58
2 Wrexham Family Information Service	1	0	12	6	19
3 Credu WCD Young Carers	2	0	6	10	18
4 AVOW	1	0	5	7	13
5 Respite or holiday	3	0	1	8	12
6 Your Space	2	0	5	4	11
7 Social Services / Social Worker	6	0	2	1	9
8 Dynamic	2	0	4	3	8
9 Grant / WCBC grant	6	0	1	1	8
10 Bridging the Gap	0	0	1	6	7
10 TAC Team	1	0	4	2	7

4.3 The most positive aspects

TABLE 10

2. What are the most positive aspects of the support for unpaid carers in Wrexham County?

Categorised Responses	Referred to a specific service or services	Other positive response	Negative response	Don't know etc.	No response to the question
Unpaid carers	23	6	5	27	25
People receiving unpaid care	1	1	1	12	20
Staff from partner organisations	12	3	0	0	15
WCBC staff	16	8	0	1	3
Totals	52	18	6	40	63

Most of the people who gave a positive response referred to a specific service or services. Examples of responses to this question include:

"The recognition of the invaluable work that unpaid carers do, the fact that carers' assessments are offered and are readily available, and the fact that the main provider NEWCIS has a good range of services available." Member of staff from WCBC, Structured Interview

"Very easy to speak to NEWCIS and SPOA were clear with support for adaptations." Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham

"You tell me, have yet to receive any." Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham

4.4 Quality of services provided

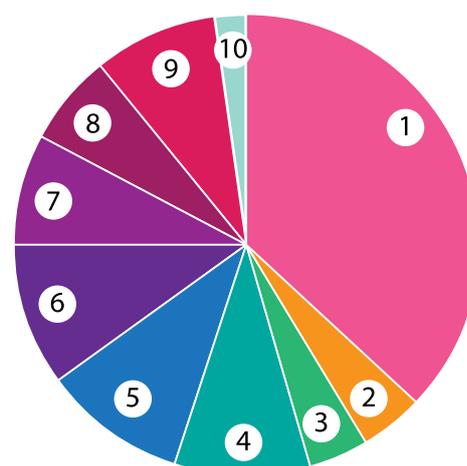
TABLE 11

3. On a scale of 1 - 10 (with 1 being very poor and 10 being very good) how would you rate the quality of the services currently provided to unpaid carers in Wrexham County?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
52	6	6	13	14	14	11	9	12	3

The average score given for this question was 4.1

Of the 52 responses rating the quality as a '1', 50 of those came from responses received via Your Voice Wrexham with the majority coming from unpaid carers and people receiving unpaid care (41).



Some of those giving a low score added a comment to the effect that they did not know what services were available and it would therefore appear that the low score in a number of cases was not actually for the quality of services provided but for a perceived lack of services or information about services.

A similar point seems to apply to a number of questions where low scores or negative responses were given. Comments in relation to this question included:

"I feel I have had lots of support and have been kept in touch when new support has become available." *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham*

"The quality of the service provided by Bebris agency to my daughter is very good. We, her parents, do not get any service. We were offered, and accepted, a carer's assessment some years ago which involved much form filling but we had no feedback from this. It was merely a box ticking exercise on the part of Social Services." *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham*

4.5 How easy it is to find out what services are currently available

TABLE 12

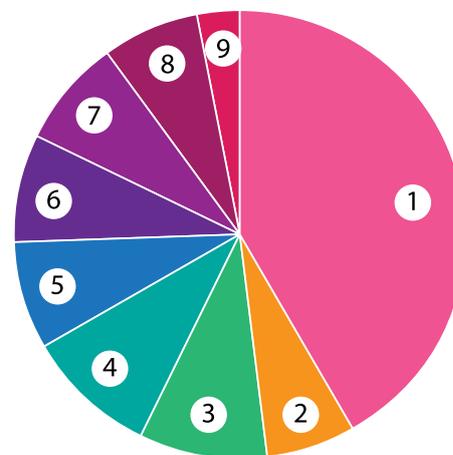
4. On a scale of 1 - 10 (with 1 being very hard and 10 being very easy)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
59	9	13	13	11	11	11	10	4	-

The average score given for this question was 3.4, which was the lowest for any of the 1-10 questions.

Of the 59 responses rating how easy it was to find out what services are currently available as a '1', 52 of those came from responses received via Your Voice Wrexham with the majority coming from unpaid carers and people receiving unpaid care (44).

Comments in relation to this question included:



"This is a difficult one to answer, because now that I know about what is available it seems really easy for people to find out. However, when I was an unpaid carer myself I didn't find it at all easy."

Member of staff from WCBC, Structured Interview.

"I cannot answer this as I don't know what they are." *Unpaid carer, Structured Interview.*

"I only found out about the one charity, NEWCIS, through another charity, Your Space. I don't really see anything being openly advertised." *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham.*

"There are so many gaps, and there are so many different groups of carers and people needing unpaid care. One size does not fit all and some of the children and young people have very complex needs." *Member of staff from Partner Organisation, Structured Interview*

4.6 Availability of services for unpaid carers

TABLE 13

5. On a scale of 1 - 10 (with 1 being very poor and 10 being very good) how would you rate the availability of services to unpaid carers in Wrexham County?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
56	12	10	7	17	14	10	4	4	5

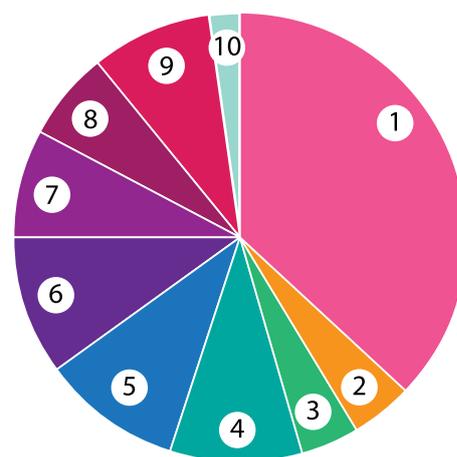
The average score given for this question was 3.6

Of the 56 responses rating the availability of services as a '1', 50 of those came from responses received via Your Voice Wrexham with the majority coming from unpaid carers and people receiving unpaid care (44).

Comments in relation to this question included:

"If you know who to go to and how to ask, the services are available." Member of staff from Partner Organisation, Structured Interview.

"Social Services are impossible to contact, don't respond to messages you leave and then deny you made contact, and don't meet their legal obligations in the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014." Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham.



4.7 How easy it is to access services currently available

TABLE 14

6. On a scale of 1 - 10 (with 1 being very hard and 10 being very easy)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
53	9	2	8	21	10	8	7	7	6

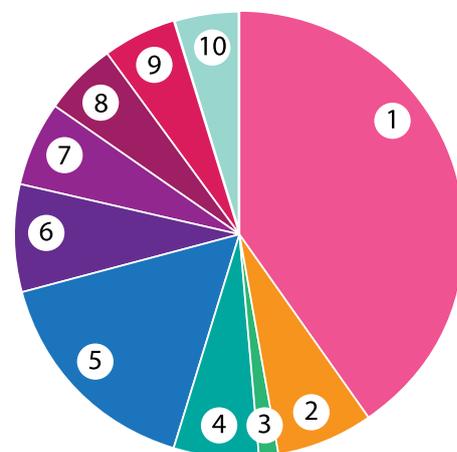
The average score given for this question was 3.8.

Of the 53 responses rating how easy it is to access services as a '1', 49 of those came from responses received via Your Voice Wrexham with the majority coming from unpaid carers and people receiving unpaid care (43).

Comments for this question included:

"Once you are at that point, it is very easy to get access." Member of staff from WCBC, Structured Interview

"There is again a bit of a split between services such as respite that are not that easy to access, and the services like advice and guidance which you can access more easily." Member of staff from WCBC, Structured Interview.



4.8 Gaps in service or amount of improvement needed

TABLE 15

7. What are the greatest gaps or areas for improvement in terms of support for unpaid carers in Wrexham County at the moment?

Gap(s) in service or amount of improvement needed:	Don't know	None	Some	Significant	Large
a. Amount of support provided	33	19	27	12	16
b. Availability of services	33	16	27	14	13
c. Communicating what is available and how to access it	31	13	20	19	27
d. Finding out what is available	28	15	18	25	22
e. Gaining access to services	30	17	24	18	11
f. Available services meeting the needs of unpaid carers	34	17	24	14	15
g. Coordination between different teams & services	42	8	24	14	20
h. The quality of the services provided	39	19	23	10	9

Comments in relation to this question included:

"More services need to be made available and I think Covid has impacted upon carers' ability to obtain face to face support and groups." *Member of staff from WCBC, Structured Interview.*

"We need a Carers' Officer to help us!" *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham.*

4.9 If there was one thing you could change

TABLE 16

8. If there was one thing you could change about services for unpaid carers in Wrexham County, what would that be?

Categorised Responses	One or more suggestions	Said they did not know	Did not respond to the question
Unpaid carers	33	14	39
People receiving unpaid care	8	7	22
Staff from partner organisations	15	0	15
WCBC staff	25	0	3
Totals	81	21	79

Responses to this question included:

“Availability and knowledge for grants that are available and information and help filling them in. For example respite/holiday grants.” *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham.*

“Having more services, having more accessible services, and having more information more readily available about those services.” *Member of staff from Partner Organisation, Structured Interview.*

“I just think there should be more for carers of children. Proper respite services and help with health needs. I used to have a social worker but am now told I don’t need one.” *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham.*

“That it is proactive – some kind of mechanism where people are not required to self-identify as unpaid carers. When an individual is identified as ‘in need for care’ that the support structure swings into action to support BOTH the cared for and the carers.” *Unpaid carer, Completed Template.*

4.10 Are the services the ones that are really needed?

TABLE 17

9. On a scale of 1 – 10, (with 1 being very poor and 10 being very good) to what degree are the services that are provided in Wrexham County those that are really needed?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
40	9	4	8	12	16	6	8	4	9

The average score given for this question was 4.2, which was the highest for the five 1-10 questions.

Of the 40 responses rating the degree to which the services provided are those that are really needed as a '1', 36 of those came from responses received via Your Voice Wrexham with the majority coming from unpaid carers and people receiving unpaid care (32).

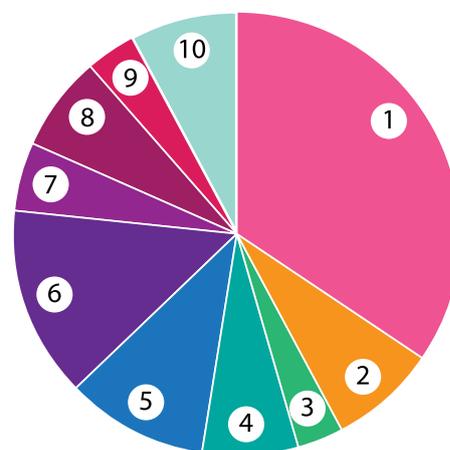
Comments in relation to this question included:

“We don’t know about them and we don’t know where they are. We don’t know how to access them.” *Person receiving unpaid care, Completed template.*

“There is lots of good stuff but there are some gaps in terms of advocacy and respite.” *Member of staff from WCBC, Structured Interview.*

“Your services are diabolical the waiting lists are a joke and you can’t provide the services that you are legally required to.” *Person receiving unpaid care, Your Voice.*

“Based on the feedback that I have seen the respite care is there, but it is not flexible enough to meet the needs of some of the carers, there is always room for improvement, obviously within the financial constraints of each local authority.” *Member of staff from Partner Organisation, Structured Interview.*



4.11 Do unpaid carers that need help in Wrexham County get the help they need?

TABLE 18

10. In general, do you think that the unpaid carers that need help in Wrexham County get the help they need?

Categorised Responses	Yes	Some do and some don't	No	Don't know	No response to the question
Unpaid carers	8	4	36	6	32
People receiving unpaid care	0	0	12	3	20
Staff from partner organisations	3	5	6	2	14
WCBC staff	1	15	8	0	4
Totals	12	24	62	11	70

The responses to this question included:

"The people who shout the loudest get the most, and we need to work out a way of carving out a fair share for everyone. Generally people don't get the support unless they are in the system, and that probably means there are a lot of people whose needs will be overlooked."

Member of staff from WCBC, Structured Interview.

"It depends on so many different things, including the confidence to access the help that is available. Those in the system do get the help, and those who aren't in the system don't get it. Some don't want to see themselves as being in need of help."

Member of staff from Partner Organisation, Structured Interview.

"I wouldn't think so. Caring for a relative is a very demanding job and very few relatives ask for help."

Unpaid carer, structured interview.

4.12 Financial impact of the caring role (questions asked of unpaid carers only)

TABLE 19

11. Has your caring role had a significant financial impact on you?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say	No response
37	15	10	24

Comments in relation to this question included:

"All my wages and income are used to care." *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham.*

"Yes I had to give up work, so I lost my income – but I am now retired."

Unpaid carer, Structured Interview.

"I am unable to work full time due to caring for my son and don't get any help financially unless I give up work." *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham.*

TABLE 20**12. Is there enough financial support available for families providing unpaid care?**

Yes	There should be a little more	There should be a lot more	I don't know what is available	No response
0	10	24	19	33

Comments in relation to this question included:

"Pay carers a full time hour equivalent pay! 40 hrs at £9.50 = £380 per week."

Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham

"More grants are needed and make applying for them easier!" *Unpaid carer, Your Voice Wrexham*

"No, I don't know what financial support is available. The lady who is filling in this form has asked if I am claiming carers' allowance which I didn't know about, but she has told me how to do this."

Unpaid carer, Structured Interview.

4.13 Should having a Carers Lead Officer Post be a priority for WCBC?

(Question asked of WCBC staff and staff from Partner Organisations only)

TABLE 21**13. Do you think having a Carers Lead Officer Post should be a priority for WCBC?**

Yes	No	Not sure	No response
44	1	4	9

"There is a need for coordination across Adult Services and Children's Services. There is also a need to have a focal point to gather together the relevant information and knowledge in order that people can be helped in a timely and effective way rather than being passed from one officer to another."

Member of WCBC Staff, Structured Interview.

"A Carer's Lead should be able to move things forward, and the role would really need to sit within the Council. The complexity of the field will be challenging." Member of staff from Partner Organisation, Structured Interview.

"To coordinate and link the services available, address the gaps, increase awareness and ensure robust referral, and ensure that contacting these services are easy / immediate for an unpaid carer to feel listened to and understood. (Usually make requests for support when highly stressed from caring role)" *Member of WCBC Staff, Your Voice Wrexham.*

"I think having such a post should be a priority, but I am not sure that it should be a post within Wrexham County Borough Council. I think that having it located within an impartial third sector organisation might be better. From a parent's point of view they might tend to be more sceptical of someone based within the Council." *Member of staff from Partner Organisation, Structured Interview.*

Overview Report provided by Amgen Consultants Limited August 2022.