

# Case studies

## Heather, Harrow

“ Since I joined the Working for Carers programme my motivation and energy has increased because of the new job search skills and techniques that I have learned from the programme.”

### About Heather

Heather is a 44-year-old single mother and carer for over 20 years for her physically disabled son. Heather stopped working ten years ago but her caring situation has recently improved as she is receiving more help to care for her son. She started to look for work two years ago but found she lacked the motivation and confidence to find a job and didn't really know where to start.

### How did Working for Carers help?

Heather found out about Working for Carers through her local carers service. Her Employment Personal Adviser worked with her through an initial assessment to find her employment needs and strengths, and the best way to increase her wellbeing.

Heather opted for group workshops and some one-to-one support. She was initially nervous but soon started chatting to other carers and taking part in the workshops. Heather developed new skills in tailoring her CV, as well as interview and job-search techniques, which improved her confidence.

Heather started applying for jobs mainly in the NHS. After several job applications and a few interviews, she was thrilled to be offered a customer adviser position in the NHS 111 call centre.

## Louise, Lewisham

### About Louise

Louise is 38 and has four children, two of whom have a disability. Louise decided to give up her nursing degree to care for her children and has done so for the last 24 years. As her children have reached an age where they are more independent, Louise decided to pursue her dream of working in conservation and applied for a degree in this subject.

### How did Working for Carers help?

Louise was offered an interview for her course but felt she needed additional help. After getting in touch with Working for Carers, she worked with her Employment Personal Adviser on role-playing interview preparation and researching the course.

She secured an offer but came up against another barrier – financial support. Her course was run at a private college and she could only secure a portion of funding from student finance. Louise's adviser helped her to research possible grants and bursaries and they found one that offered discretionary first year funding. They then worked on the application together and prepared for another interview.

One month later Louise was informed she had qualified for the grant and she was awarded the difference in tuition fees, financial support for course materials and child care support for her youngest child. She started her degree course in Conservation in 2017.



### References

- Carers Trust surveyed 130 carers. (2016).
- Carers UK (2014), *Facts About Carers 2014* (Carers UK). <https://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/facts-about-carers-2014>.
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2008), *From Safety Net to Springboard* (Equality and Human Rights Commission).
- Pickard, L (2012), *Public Expenditure Costs of Carers Leaving Employment* (LSE). <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/healthandsocialcare/2012/04/25/dr-linda-pickard-public-expenditure-costs-of-carers-leaving-employment>.
- UK Census 2011. Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.1.0. The Census identified 6.5 million carers in the UK. However, we know from research that young carers are vastly under identified by the census. Carers Trust believes it is important to recognise young carers as they are too often invisible. We therefore use an estimate of in the region of seven million.

### About Carers Trust

Carers Trust is a major charity for, with and about carers. We work to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems.

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Please note, identities of carers have been changed in the interest of privacy, except for Nadera.

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# Working for Carers Progress Report September 2018

“ Since joining the programme my outlook to work has completely changed and I have more purpose in life.”

Nadera, carer age 47

“ They feel they've got their life back. Whether or not they take that next step, this programme concentrates on them not on the person they look after. Most of their lives are based around the person they look after but we look after them.”

Employment  
Personal Adviser



For more Working for Carers case studies go to [Carers.org/workingforcarers](https://www.carers.org/workingforcarers).

# About Working for Carers

## What is Working for Carers?

Working for Carers is a London-wide project that supports **unpaid** carers and former carers aged 25 or over to move closer to employment. Carers are eligible to join the project if they are able to live and work in the UK and are not in any form of employment. The project is led by Carers Trust and delivered by its network of 23 Network Partners across London. Working for Carers is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery, through the Big Lottery Fund.

Carers Trust was awarded a total of £2m for Working for Carers. The funding is for three years: 1 October 2016–30 September 2019.

## What are the aims of Working for Carers?

Working for Carers aims to support 833 carers and former carers in London by:

- Supporting carers to pursue their employment goals through confidence building and skills development.
- Offering a flexible service that considers individual needs and ambitions.
- Engaging with employers and other partners to create opportunities for carers and highlight the benefits of employing carers.

## What does Working for Carers offer carers?

Carers can access free support, designed to meet their individual needs and delivered in their local area. This may include:

- One-to-one support and advice with a dedicated Employment Personal Adviser.
- Group activities and training workshops.
- Support with writing CVs and interview techniques.
- Help with job searching.
- Access to employment, volunteering and training opportunities.

**“ We are there to work on their employment but also to build a rapport with them and to be more carer focused. We have to take other issues on board too and put them in the right direction for this. It is holistic.”**

### Employment Personal Adviser

Simon is 62 and from Richmond. He was made redundant five years ago and since then has been caring for his elderly mother. He is now looking to return to work in social care. Simon found out about Working for Carers at a local jobs fair and was soon linked with his Employment Personal Adviser. Simon received support in creating a CV, finding and paying for an IT course, searching for work and finding a volunteering opportunity. Working for Carers also helped Simon to buy a mobile phone – allowing him to be contacted by potential employers.

Simon is now volunteering with two organisations that support people in the community with a view to securing a job in the care sector.

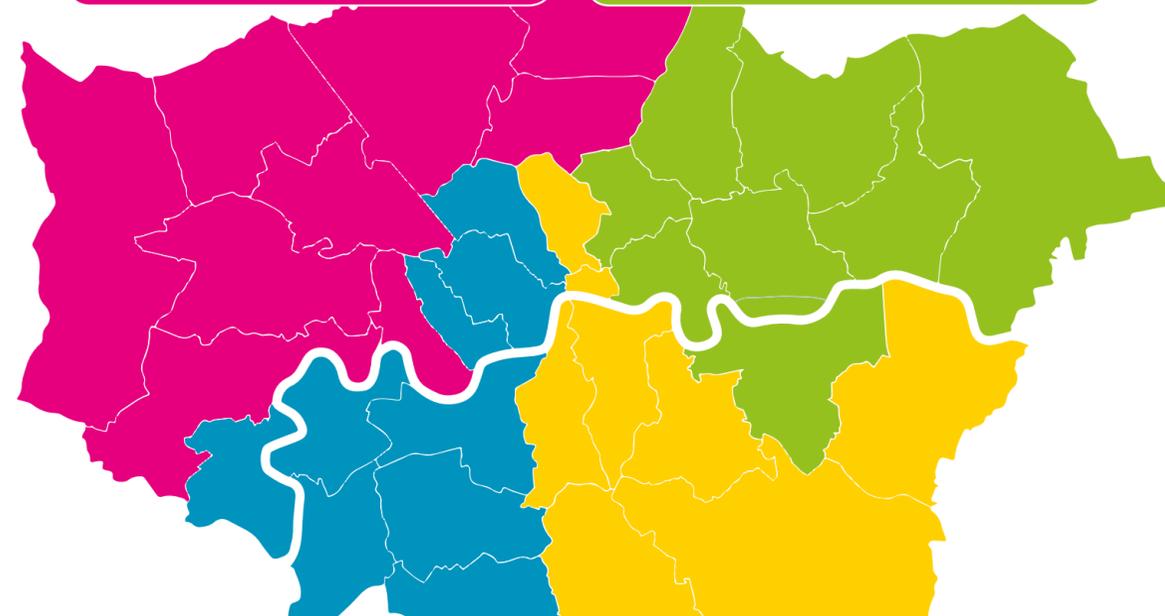
# Delivering Working for Carers

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## Interim evaluation findings

- Working for Carers is filling a gap through providing a specific and targeted employability support programme for carers in London.
- The project is delivering holistic, varied and flexible support to carers.
- Partners across London offer venues to support delivery at a local level.
- Carers who already have strategies in place to support their caring role are most likely to see positive results.
- Project staff report that carers involved in the project have improved confidence, are less socially isolated, and are more in control of their lives.

# Evaluating Working for Carers

Ecorys has been commissioned to evaluate Working for Carers. The evaluation involves interviews and focus groups with carers, project staff and partners, analysis of data, and a literature review. The final report is due in September 2019.

## Why Working for Carers?

- There are around seven million carers in the UK – that is one in ten people. This is an 11% rise since 2001, an increase of over 620,000. (UK Census, 2011).
- There are 689,000 carers in London (UK Census, 2011).
- 68% of unpaid carers in London are unemployed (Carers Trust, 2016).
- The overall employment rate for carers in the UK is 67% with over half of those who are not working saying that they wish to do so (UK Census, 2011).
- Nearly 70% said the main barriers to finding and keeping employment were the pressures of their caring role and 75% said it was the need for part-time work (Carers Trust, 2016).
- In the UK, family and caring responsibilities account for 26% of economic inactivity in the working age population, compared with 19% in Germany and 18% in the Netherlands (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2008).
- £5.3bn has been wiped from the economy in lost earnings due to people having to leave work to take on caring responsibilities (Pickard, L, 2012).
- For those providing over 50 hours of care, 45% of men and 35% of women remain in work. Carers of working age were significantly less likely to be in work than non-carers of working age (Carers UK, 2014).

## Working for Carers' achievements to date

At the end of October 2018, **576** carers had registered with the Working for Carers project. The registered carers are from all 33 London boroughs:

- 88 carers have gained employment and 41 have started an education or training course.
- Nearly 60% have been supported to apply for jobs, and 39 are now job-searching independently.
- 56% have attended Working for Carers workshops or external training while supported by the project.
- 81 participants have had volunteering opportunities.
- 86 have been referred to other specialist support, and 265 have proactively looked after their health and wellbeing.
- 286 have shown improvements against their tailored action plans.
- 237 have reported increased confidence, and 238 said they had gained new skills and experiences.