

Lunch
& Carers' Services Marketplace
Speakers

Caring Together, Stronger Together

NHS
West London
NHS Trust

Wellbeing

An Event for Carers
Support | Inform | Connect

Wednesday 29th July

1pm – 4pm

Information

Poetry



**TRIANGLE
OF CARE**

MEMBER ★★

Summary Report

Let's Grow a Carer-Friendly Community Together



Developing the Event



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- Planning started early in 2026
- Through the Triangle of Care Working Group – Carers and Staff working together to coproduce an event for Carers, by Carers
- Supported by the Coproduction and Partnerships Team
- Teams from across the Trust, our community and system partners were all involved
- The Carers Film was created especially for the event
- With opportunities for learning, networking, and peer support included in the event
- Resulting in a true collaboration with Carers involved throughout

On the Day

- **42** Carers attended from across Ealing, Hounslow and H&F
- Reaching new Carers, with some reporting '*not to have connected before*' and '*not knowing anything like this existed*'
- **16** information points hosted by West London NHS Trust along with community and system partners
- Co-Chaired by Elaine Robinson (Carer) and Gillian Kelly (Chief Nurse)
- The event was a mix of:
 - Poetry
 - Mindfulness and Wellbeing
 - A presentation from the Carers Trust
 - Information sharing
 - 'Caring Together' Carers' Film premier
 - A hot lunch and Goody Bags
 - Carers and staff sharing and learning together

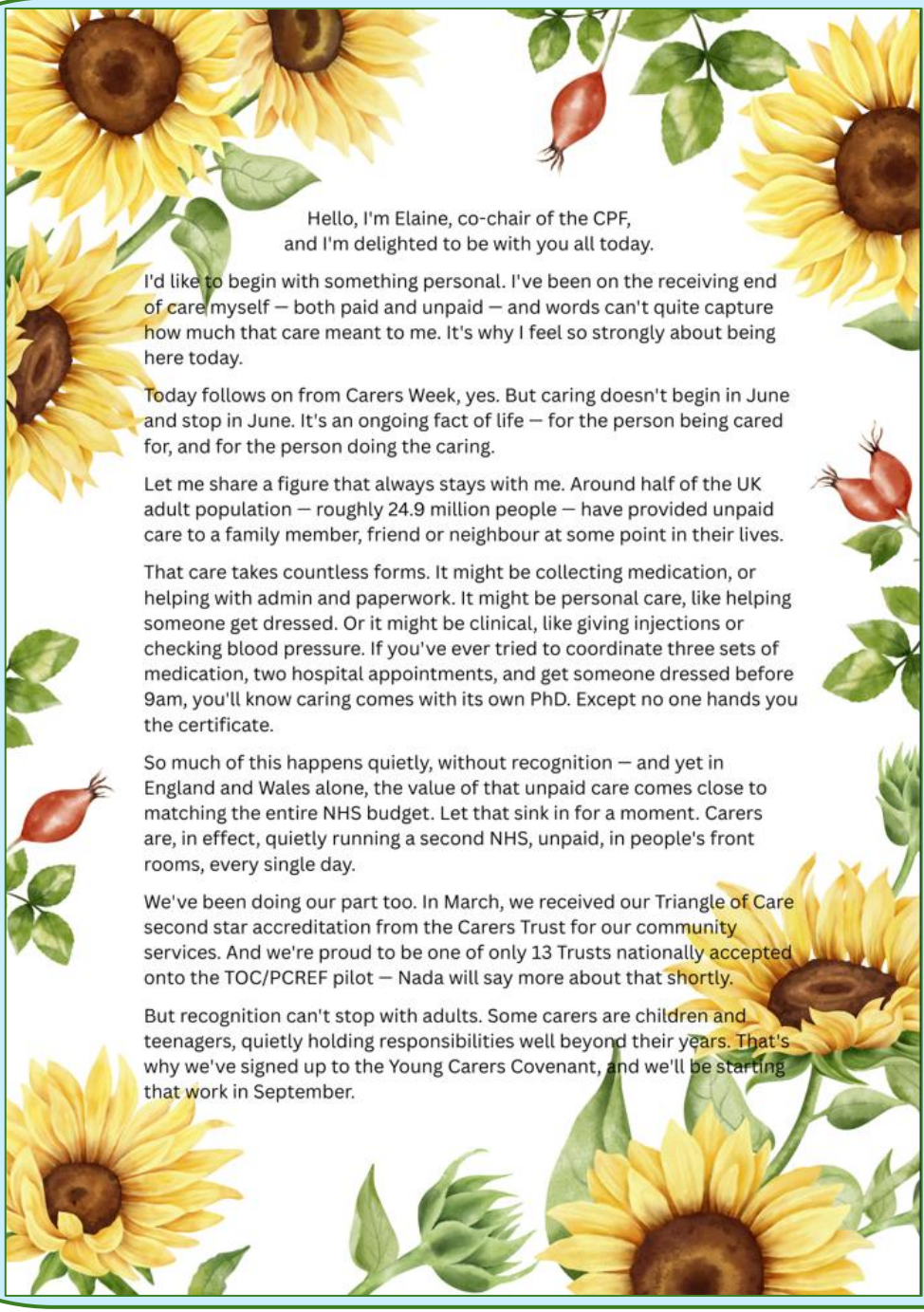




The Co-Chair's Welcome

Elaine Robinson

Carer, Co-Chair West London Trust Carers Partnership Forum (CPF)



Hello, I'm Elaine, co-chair of the CPF,
and I'm delighted to be with you all today.

I'd like to begin with something personal. I've been on the receiving end of care myself – both paid and unpaid – and words can't quite capture how much that care meant to me. It's why I feel so strongly about being here today.

Today follows on from Carers Week, yes. But caring doesn't begin in June and stop in June. It's an ongoing fact of life – for the person being cared for, and for the person doing the caring.

Let me share a figure that always stays with me. Around half of the UK adult population – roughly 24.9 million people – have provided unpaid care to a family member, friend or neighbour at some point in their lives.

That care takes countless forms. It might be collecting medication, or helping with admin and paperwork. It might be personal care, like helping someone get dressed. Or it might be clinical, like giving injections or checking blood pressure. If you've ever tried to coordinate three sets of medication, two hospital appointments, and get someone dressed before 9am, you'll know caring comes with its own PhD. Except no one hands you the certificate.

So much of this happens quietly, without recognition – and yet in England and Wales alone, the value of that unpaid care comes close to matching the entire NHS budget. Let that sink in for a moment. Carers are, in effect, quietly running a second NHS, unpaid, in people's front rooms, every single day.

We've been doing our part too. In March, we received our Triangle of Care second star accreditation from the Carers Trust for our community services. And we're proud to be one of only 13 Trusts nationally accepted onto the TOC/PCREF pilot – Nada will say more about that shortly.

But recognition can't stop with adults. Some carers are children and teenagers, quietly holding responsibilities well beyond their years. That's why we've signed up to the Young Carers Covenant, and we'll be starting that work in September.

More needs to be done to ensure carers are recognised, understood and valued by the communities around them. And that's exactly what we're here to do. An annual campaign to raise awareness matters because it does two things. It shines a light on the real challenges unpaid carers face, and it celebrates the enormous contribution they make to families and communities right across the UK.

Just as importantly, it helps people who have never thought of themselves as "a carer" to recognise that they are one – and to reach the support they're entitled to.

This year, our theme is Building Carer-Friendly Communities. Because carer-friendly communities and services make a real and lasting difference. They are the places, organisations and services where unpaid carers are seen, understood, valued and supported in this vital role.

That work continues beyond today. From the autumn, we'll be running carer roadshows in each borough – taking this support directly to where carers are.

This campaign will be brought to life by thousands of individuals and organisations, all taking action so that more communities understand, recognise and empower their carers. And that is why we're here today: to build on that legacy, to share ideas, practical guidance and real examples from communities that have already taken those first steps.

Positive change can look like this. And if there's one thing I hope you take away from today, it's this: caring is everywhere, but it's invisible – and community is what makes it visible.

Because caring goes on always. And so should our support for the people who do it.

If you'd like to get involved, there's more information on the posters around the room, or simply speak to a member of staff.

Thank you

Elaine Robinson
Carer; Co-Chair West London Trust Carers Partnership Forum (CPF)



Carers Solutions – Discussion Session



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1. Being heard, recognised and valued

- Carers want to feel recognised and valued for their role and expertise.
- Professionals need to listen to carers and service users, patiently and without judgement.
- Carers want their lived experience to be acknowledged – *“you don’t know what you don’t know.”*
- Recognition should be tangible and visible, e.g. carers cards/networks and having the caring role formally acknowledged.

2. Connection, community and peer support

- Peer support and community networks were repeatedly described as transformative.
- Carers value opportunities to meet face-to-face, share experiences and reduce loneliness.
- There is a need for ongoing relationships, rather than support that repeatedly starts and ends.
- Former carers can provide valuable lived-experience support and advice to others.

3. Loneliness, wellbeing and having space to be yourself

- Loneliness and isolation are major issues.
- Carers need time and space for themselves – both physical and mental space.
- Activities such as sport, singing, socialising, breaks and simply getting out can support wellbeing.
- Short breaks/respite, such as the “Carefree” two-day breaks, can make a meaningful difference.



Carers Solutions – Discussion Session



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4. Joined-up, consistent and accessible services

- Strong demand for better coordination across services and service lines.
- Communication needs to be clear, consistent and joined-up.
- Carers want continuity and lasting relationships with competent, trained staff.
- Access to the right people at the right time is important, particularly when needs become complex.

5. Professionals who listen and understand caring

- Professionals need to have time to listen, rather than rushing interactions.
- Understanding the carer's perspective means understanding the person they care for: *“To stand in my shoes you need to stand in the shoes of the person I care for.”*
- Carers want professionals who demonstrate patience, kindness, competence and understanding.
- Parents and carers should be treated as partners in decisions about care and support.

6. Practical support and meaningful choice

- Carers identify a need for physical/practical help, appropriate housing and employment support.
- Direct payments and access to suitable services can give carers greater choice and control.
- There is a strong sense that support should focus on what people actually need, rather than forcing them to navigate inappropriate systems.



Carers Solutions – Discussion Session



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7. Advocacy, empowerment and persistence

- Carers often have to fight for services and advocate strongly for themselves or the person they care for.
- Themes include “*stick to your guns*,” “*don’t give up*” and “*you are your child’s greatest champion*.”
- There is a desire for effective complaints procedures and action when needs are not being met.
- Carers want systems that respond to problems before they become more severe and costly.

8. Culturally safe and inclusive support

- Support needs to recognise that carers have different cultural backgrounds, family circumstances and experiences.
- The call for culturally safe spaces suggests that generic support does not always feel accessible or appropriate.

Overall message

- The strongest overarching theme was relationship-based support.
- Carers want to be seen, heard and valued, not simply treated as an extension of the service system.
- They want consistent relationships, joined-up services, peer/community connection, practical help and genuine involvement in decisions.
- At its heart, the feedback identifies working *with* carers as key to improved services and better outcomes.



What People Said: What Worked Well



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Feedback from Carers was overwhelmingly positive. Attendees particularly valued the welcoming and relaxed environment, the venue, food, seating layout, and opportunities to connect with others. The mix of topics and formats – including poetry, mindfulness, film, presentations, group work and discussion – were well received and helped keep the event engaging and varied.

Carers appreciated the opportunity to hear from subject matter experts, exchange knowledge and experiences with other Carers, and learn about different sources of support. The information stalls and take-away materials were also well received. The event was described as ‘well organised’, ‘informative’ and ‘thoughtfully paced’, with several attendees highlighting the high standard of the session.

Importantly, Carers valued having space to discuss challenging personal experiences while also being encouraged to identify positive things to focus on. Overall, the feedback describes a supportive, informative and meaningful opportunity for Carers to connect, learn and share their experiences.



What People Said: My Favourite Part and Key Take Away



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The most popular aspects of the event were the poetry, film and opportunities to connect with other Carers. Attendees particularly valued the shared table discussions and conversations with a range of Carers and professionals, which helped create a sense of connection and 'reassurance that we are not alone'.

The film was highlighted as especially impactful, with one attendee noting that 'it effectively demonstrated real-life experiences from a Carer's perspective'. Mindfulness, and the speakers were also well received, alongside the lunch and hand massage.

Attendees highlighted a range of positive take-aways, particularly hope, greater awareness and a sense of connection. Many valued Carers and professionals working together to achieve better outcomes. The event also increased awareness of the wider Carer community and provided useful information, networks and new connections. Mindfulness was another key take-away, with attendees planning to practise the exercises and learn more.

Overall, the feedback indicates the event left Carers feeling more informed, connected and hopeful, with a renewed sense of the strength that can come from working together.

What People Said: The Last Word

Attendees expressed **thanks, appreciation and a strong desire for 'more events like this'**. For some, it was their first experience of the Carer community, and they particularly valued the welcoming and professional approach. Many attendees also expressed an interest in **staying involved and contributing to the TOC work**, as well as being invited to future events.

While feedback was overwhelmingly positive, there were also suggestions on how we can improve. Attendees noted that they would value more time for lunch, mindfulness and informal interaction, as well as additional opportunities for hand massage and more short breaks. There was a request for more Carer voices and real-life journeys, including how Carers manage crises while maintaining a life outside caring. It was also noted that not all Carers can attend this type of 'in person' event – an online session for carers is being planned for the autumn to support this.





The Poetry



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We are so thankful to our Carers who shared their stories through poetry. The following pages are dedicated to them.

- Matthew McKenzie
- Debbie Best
- Christine Williams
- Alison Roberts



We Look After Each Other

Sharing is caring
Distributed across people
Caring is sharing
For community it's belonging

A neighbour checking in
Community members appearing
We Look After Each Other
We are all volunteering

Someone cooking cultural food
With drinks overflowing
Care Passed between generations
Where we are all belonging

Reducing our burnout
Caring is sharing
Building our resilience
Sharing is caring

It's all about partnership
Don't ever stop
Valuing community knowledge
All the way to the top

Matthew McKenzie
Carer, Carer Advocate
Chair, National Ethnic Mental Health Carer Forum



Change is Possible

Defeating racism won't be quick
I am hopeful, but need to be realistic
Change is possible
Change is possible

Minority Carers have to influence care planning
It takes small steps to get services listening
Change is possible
Change is possible

You have to understand those doors opening slowly
But as a collective we will walk in boldly
Change is possible
Change is possible

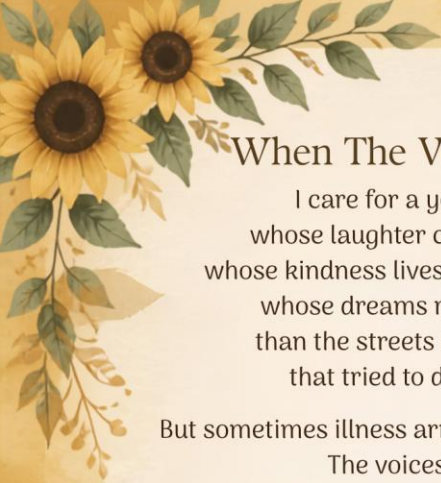
People with experience should be recognised as partners
Policies shaped by real lives, not shaped by martyrs
Change is possible
Change is possible

Minority carer voices echoing into action
Promoting co-production, turning listening into action
Change is possible
Change is possible

Your experience has value, that's what counts
Speaking up is not pointless, our voice is what amounts
Change is possible
Change is possible

Matthew McKenzie
Carer, Carer Advocate
Chair, National Ethnic Mental Health Carer Forum





When The Voices Come

I care for a young man
whose laughter can fill a room
whose kindness lives in small gestures
whose dreams reach further
than the streets and hospitals
that tried to define him.

But sometimes illness arrives without warning

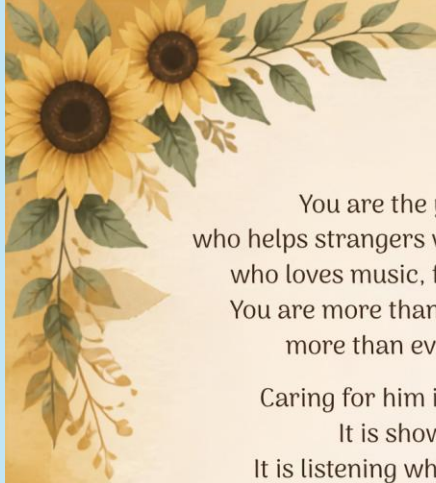
The voices come
uninvited, relentless
whispering poison into his ears,
wearing the language of hatred,
that wound and confuse.

They tell him lies about himself
about the colour of his skin
about his worth,
as if centuries of prejudice
have found another doorway.

And I watch him struggle
against enemies I cannot see.

I sit beside him
through long nights and silence,
holding onto patience.

I remind him, again:
You are not the voices.
You are not the cruel words they speak.
You are not the illness.



You are the young man
who helps strangers without being asked,
who loves music, family, and hope.
You are more than every symptom,
more than every shadow.

Caring for him is not heroism.

It is showing up.
It is listening when fear is loud.
It is standing firm
when the world seems to tilt.

And when the illness loosens its grip,
when the storm begins to pass,
I see him emerge once more,
tired, scarred, but still himself.

The voices do not own his story.
For beneath the noise, the pain
there remains a young Black man
of dignity, strength, and beauty.

And those of us who care for him
will keep holding the truth
until he can hold it for himself.

Christine Williams

Carer

TOC Working Group and Carer Trainer



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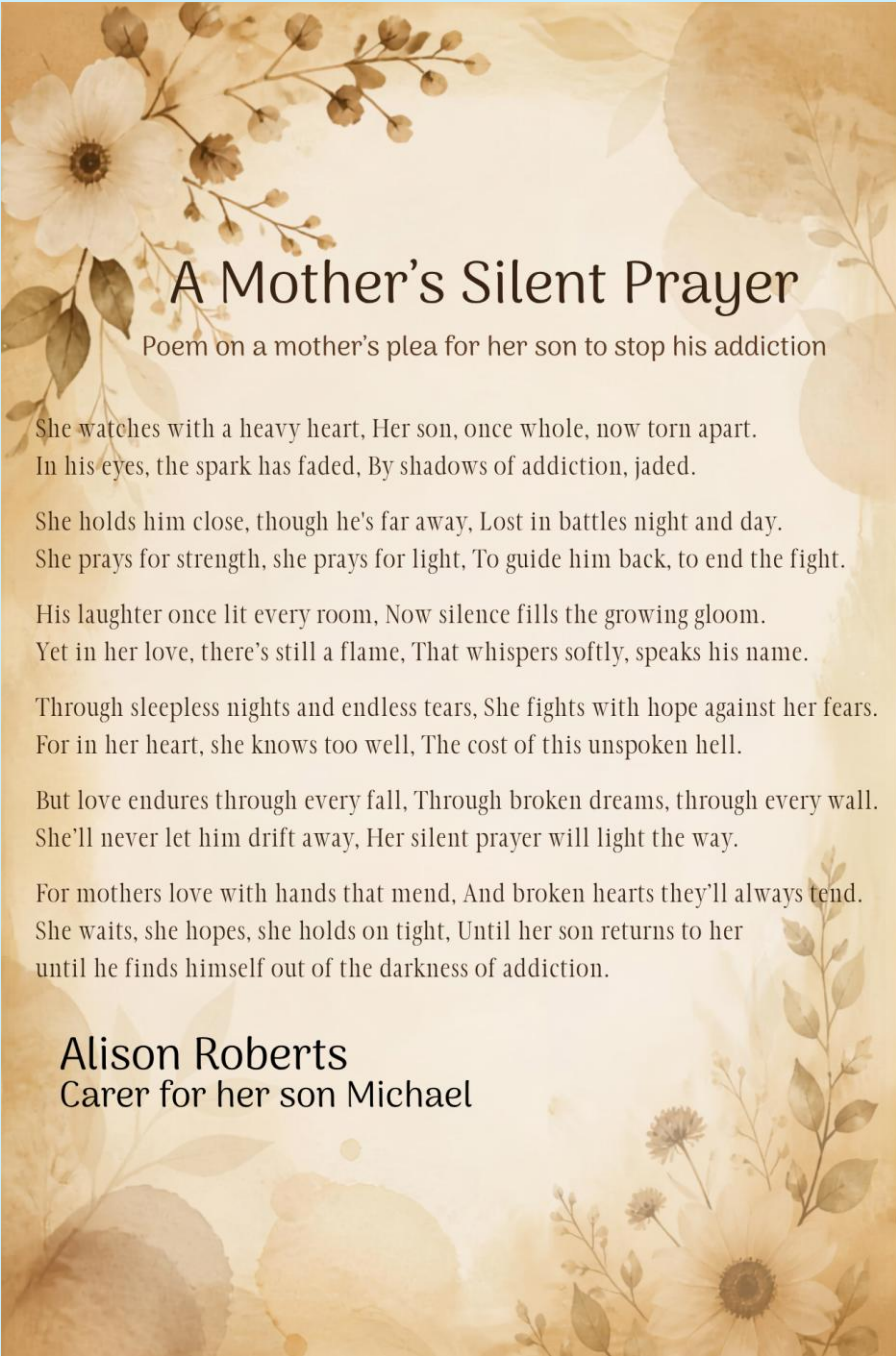
Matthew is the Chair of the National Ethnic Mental Health Carers Forum which meets monthly, online and has an online blog [A Caring Mind | A blog for carers of mental health and cancer](#)

He is also Carers Trust Triangle of Care Community Lead.

He runs an online Poetry Session with Ealing Carers Partnership once a month on Fridays, 6-7.30pm.

n.bangar@ealingcarerspartnership.org



The poem card has a light beige background with a delicate floral pattern. In the top left corner, there is a large, detailed white flower with a dark center and green leaves. Smaller, similar flowers and leaves are scattered throughout the background, particularly towards the bottom right. The title 'A Mother's Silent Prayer' is centered in a dark, serif font.

A Mother's Silent Prayer

Poem on a mother's plea for her son to stop his addiction

She watches with a heavy heart, Her son, once whole, now torn apart.
In his eyes, the spark has faded, By shadows of addiction, jaded.

She holds him close, though he's far away, Lost in battles night and day.
She prays for strength, she prays for light, To guide him back, to end the fight.

His laughter once lit every room, Now silence fills the growing gloom.
Yet in her love, there's still a flame, That whispers softly, speaks his name.

Through sleepless nights and endless tears, She fights with hope against her fears.
For in her heart, she knows too well, The cost of this unspoken hell.

But love endures through every fall, Through broken dreams, through every wall.
She'll never let him drift away, Her silent prayer will light the way.

For mothers love with hands that mend, And broken hearts they'll always tend.
She waits, she hopes, she holds on tight, Until her son returns to her
until he finds himself out of the darkness of addiction.

Alison Roberts
Carer for her son Michael

Alison is also the Partnerships and Outreach Lead at Managing our Mental CIC, based in Hammersmith and Fulham.



<https://www.managingourmental.org.uk/>



Mindfulness Links

[Mindfulness – NHS](#)

[How to meditate for beginners - Mental wellbeing tips - Every Mind Matters - NHS](#)



Information Stands on the Day



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- [Parentsactive](#)
- [Advocacy Specialist London & South East | Libra Partnership](#)
- [Support For Women | SHEWISE | United Kingdom](#)
- [The Company | For Brian CIC](#)
- [Ealing Carers Partnership | Supporting unpaid carers in the London Borough of Ealing](#)
- [Ealing Carers Information](#)
- Hounslow Adult Social Care [Support for carers | London Borough of Hounslow](#)
- [Home | Healthwatch Hounslow](#)
- West London NHS Trust [Our services :: West London NHS Trust](#)
 - Adult & Children's Safeguarding Team (Ealing, Hounslow, Hammersmith and Fulham)
 - Qi Curious
 - Specialist Community Forensic Team
 - Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE)
 - Patient Safety
 - H&F North MINT Team
 - Ealing Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP)
 - Complex Emotional Needs
 - Coproduction and Partnerships



Special Thanks To...



West London
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- West London NHS Trust Triangle of Care Working Group Carers – **Christine, Elaine, Lorraine, Nadia, Naheed**, and staff – **Karmjit, Lilian, Sarah**, for developing and delivering the event
- **Elaine Robinson** and **Gillian Kelly** for Co-hosting
- **Matthew, Debbie, Christine** and **Alison** for Poetry
- **Nada Savitch** for Carers Trust presentation (slides shared separately)
- **Miriam Emanuela Presta** and **Daniel Graham** for developing and **Miriam** for delivering the Carers Solutions session
- **Andrew Waterhouse** for Mindfulness
- **Rima Al-Souss** for hand massage alsouss@yahoo.co.uk
- **Ochi Catering** for the delicious food <https://ochitakeawayandcatering.co.uk/>
- **Marcin Urban** for the Carers Film info@urban-rec.co.uk (film to follow)
- Staff and partners for your continued support
- The staff at the Irish Cultural Centre, Hammersmith for all their support and lovely venue [Home | Irish Cultural Centre Hammersmith London](#)