



Supporting young carers:
The impact of the Hampshire Young Carers Alliance (HYCA) collaborative approach

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Executive Summary

Using an allocation of The Big Lottery funding, HYCA commissioned the University of Winchester to undertake an independent evaluation of the work of the Alliance over the three year period from September 2016 to August 2019. The evaluation presented HYCA with an opportunity to explore their service delivery and how the individual services worked together as an alliance.

The evaluation had several aims, including evaluating the impact that the HYCA collaboration has made to young carers and families, the impact of the collaborative approach, an evaluation of value for money and of the progress made towards sustainability. The aim of this part of the evaluation and this report focusses on the **impact of the collaborative approach** and builds on the initial research that was undertaken between December 2016 and August 2017 which included an exploration of the HYCA collaboration and its potential benefits.¹

The evaluation included the following:

- The completion, by the HYCA leads (e.g. Managers or Coordinators) of the individual young carer services or 'projects', of an online questionnaire which was developed using the findings from the initial research.²
- The completion by the HYCA Lead³ of a 'structured questionnaire framework' (See Annex 1) which was based on the recommendations for HYCA from the first report.
- A semi-structured interview with the HYCA Lead (See Appendix X).
- In order to supplement the data regarding the impact of the collaborative approach across Hampshire, a short telephone interview was undertaken with the HCC Lead for young carers and the question was posed: 'How has the work of HYCA helped impact young carers across Hampshire?'
- Supplementary data sources:
 - Notes and minutes taken from HYCA meetings; data from audits of the provision of support by the HYCA services; reports produced by HYCA, for example for Hampshire County Council.⁴
 - A short 'Outcomes Exercise' with HYCA staff⁵

The data from each of the free response questions from the online questionnaire was summarised using categories. Data from the other sources was used to supplement this, as well as for cross-referencing.

The main findings is that taken as a whole the collaborative approach of HYCA has been beneficial and has had some positive impacts. However, it was found that there

¹ Phelps, D (2017), Supporting young carers: The provision of county-wide support for young carers, University of Winchester

² Questionnaire was developed using JISC online surveys.

³ During the evaluation, the position of the HYCA Lead transferred from Basingstoke Young Carers to Eastleigh Young Carers Project (in July 2017). The questionnaires and interviews relating to this report were completed after this transfer.

⁴ Audits were carried out between May and August 2017 and in October 2018.

⁵ A short 'Outcomes Exercise' was administered with staff from 7 HYCA projects. Staff were asked 3 questions about which outcomes they felt were important. Answers given by staff were put into themes (See Appendix 2).

were also several negative impacts and challenges that had come about as a consequence of the collaborative approach. HYCA has learned from and begun to address several of these challenges and partners are generally positive about the collaboration's future.

The collaboration had impacted at three different levels; on individual projects, on young carers and their families directly and on a locality and county level.

Individual projects

The collaborative approach has positively impacted projects:

- Project partners cited a range of positive impacts for their own service.
- All projects now deliver the 'three-pronged approach' (although standardization has not been achieved).
- Projects supported each other. They provided guidance, shared practice, ideas, information and paperwork and in one case a staff member.
- Projects had opportunities to run joint activities for young carers (e.g. the Wellness Recovery Action Programme (WRAP) and a National Citizen Service (NCS) residential)
- Projects have a shared database.
- Improving the consistency of data collection and the recording of information about young carers onto the shared database which is a 'shared knowledge base' that can be used for funders.
- Being a part of the HYCA collaboration facilitated relationships with other agencies and improved the profile of services.

The collaborative approach has negatively impacted projects:

- A few partners reported that the collaboration had led to negative impacts
- Pressure on projects increased to achieve targets and to perform at a higher level.
- Creating time pressures from attending HYCA meetings and from the mandatory reporting procedures.
- The collaboration has led to some frustration between partners
- One partner reported that being part of the collaboration made their service feel different and this was unhelpful

Young carers and their families:

The collaborative approach has positively impacted young carers and their families:

- The total number of young carers benefitting from support from HYCA increased minimally in the first year but decreased slightly in the second year, Numbers however appeared to have risen again in the third year.
- As a collaboration the three target outcomes set for the Big Lottery have been surpassed as measured by the change indicators used by HYCA. However, there is a large variation in the outcomes achieved by the individual projects.
- New practice has evolved for projects and has been driven forward as a result of sharing practice, modelling interventions and from funding targeted at specific outcomes (e.g. the YCAG), however not all new interventions have been sustained.

- The collaboration provided more and varied opportunities for the young carers and families (e.g. the TESSA award, trips, outings, residential and the YC festival and the Young Carers Action Group (YCAG)).
- Improved practice by services was seen by some to have made a positive impact on young carers and families, including the use of the database, improved record keeping and monitoring
- Working as a collaboration and having a common database has made the referral process easier if a family moves area within Hampshire.
- Improved awareness of young carers and families has made community organisations in at least one area more aware of the local service. One partner believed that the overall profile of the support for young carers in Hampshire had been raised.

The collaborative approach has negatively impacted young carers and their families;

- Half of the partners did not report that the collaboration had led to any negative impacts on young carers and families.
- Additional HYCA related work (additional questionnaires, time spent on YCAG and on the conference) had taken time away from projects core delivery

On a locality and county level

The collaborative approach has positively impacted young carers and their families;

- The majority of partners reported wider positive impacts in their localities including increased engagement with stakeholders and collaboration (e.g. with the FSS).
- The profile of projects increased
- HYCA has been able to influence policy and practice at county level including the development of the HCC Supporting Families criteria and the HCC Young Carers Strategy.
- New relationships with stakeholders have been developed including with local NHS trusts.
- HYCA is raising awareness of young carers across the county and increasing public awareness.
- HYCA ensures that there is regular and reliable performance data on young carers in Hampshire.

Challenges and barriers

There have been some barriers to the collaborative approach and projects have experienced a range of challenges.

- There are issues with the level of engagement of projects, partners not being fully on board (lack of 'buy-in') and their accountability.
- There is not full standardization of service provision, for example with age-groups worked with or how assessments are carried out.
- Not taking the differences between the projects into consideration and accommodating these differences had caused specific challenges for some projects, for example by requiring them to grow their service too quickly.
- The leadership and coordination of HYCA had been a challenge as a consequence of staff leaving, poor handovers and insufficient time for the role.
- The HYCA meetings were criticised for not being productive.

Partners proposed different ways to strengthen the collaboration which were as follows:

- Strengthening the accountability of partners, for example through the 'Partnership Agreement'.
- Recognising and accepting the differences between partners (which is already planned by HYCA).
- Increasing the investment in the strategic role to coordinate the collaboration and having a more structured approach to the collaboration.
- Developing the joint training meetings and support sessions for HYCA with for example *'more workshop style meetings'* with *'subject matter experts'*

The 'Outcomes Exercise' highlighted that although there were some commonalities with the outcomes communicated by partners, there was a wide variation in the specific outcomes that were felt to be important for their projects, for the collaboration and for the outcomes for the three-year Big Lottery funded project.

The findings in this report are important in that they provide a first overview of the impacts at different levels, of the collaborative approach taken by the ten young carer services in Hampshire. The report outlines the positive and negative impacts that the collaborative approach has made and identifies key challenges of the collaboration. The findings have led to recommendations for HYCA and the projects for further developing the collaboration. These recommendations and the findings are likely to be of value to other similar collaborations or to services that are considering developing collaborative approaches.

Findings show that the collaboration has led to a range of both positive and negative impacts at different levels; on the projects (and staff), on the young carers and families themselves and on the wider development of support in localities and across the county (e.g. at a strategic and policy level). Findings also show that there are several challenges that the collaboration has faced which has impacted on its development. HYCA however has learned from and begun to address several of these challenges including the 'buy- of projects in' and the allocation of funding between projects. Partners are generally positive about the collaboration's future and have made suggestions for strengthening the collaborative approach.

Going forward it will be helpful for HYCA to be encouraged by the positive impacts that the collaboration has achieved and build on these, but also to respond to the negative impacts and the challenges. It would seem that the collaboration holds further potential that can be tapped into. However, service development should be done with sustainability in mind.

There are many areas for potential future research and evaluations. These might focus in more detail at specific areas of the collaborative approach, for example assessment and monitoring outcomes of young carers, the centralisation of funding and raising awareness of young carers.

List of acronyms

FSS	Family Support Service
HYCA	Hampshire Young Carers Alliance
HCC	Hampshire County Council
NCS	National Citizen Service
SAP	Student Assistance Programme
SMART	e.g. Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Realistic; Time-Bound
WRAP	Wellness Recovery Action Programme
YC	Young Carer
YCAG	Young Carer Action Group a participatory group for young carers set up by projects
YC Voices	The Young Carers' Forum: a participatory group for young carers set up by projects

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The Hampshire Young Carers Alliance (HYCA)

The Hampshire Young Carers Alliance (HYCA) is an alliance of ten young carer services or 'projects' within Hampshire, with the common aim of supporting young carers within the county (See Appendix A). One service is part of a national charity, four are local young carer specific charities and the other services form part of other local charities with broader remits.

Originally composed of five young carer projects, the Alliance was formed around 2005 in order for the individual services to work closer together, share good practice and resources, to develop a single county-wide voice and to advocate and campaign for young carers within the county.

HYCA services are currently funded by a broad range of funding streams, including funding from the local authority. Historically, the services have had different capacities and have worked in varying ways to meet the local needs of young carers. As has taken place nationally over the last ten to fifteen years, some of the HYCA young carer services have complemented the respite activities, clubs and trips that they had generally offered (and that are common to most young carer services), with schools work and a 'whole family approach' to supporting young carers and their families. For some of the HYCA services, this has included employing specific staff to work with families and other staff to provide targeted work in schools.

Between 2011 and 2014, HYCA received funding from the Big Lottery 'Youth in Focus' (YiF) grant for a pilot county-wide project. At the time, only seven of the HYCA services were in a position to join this 'Hampshire Young Carers (HYC)' project. This pilot project employed seven 'Schools Workers' and five 'Family Workers' within the seven funded areas and delivered support to over 1300 young carers and their families. During this period HYCA also developed and advanced what it describes as a '**3-pronged support model**', with its services offering respite activities, family support and support for young carers in schools.

The 3-pronged support model

This consists of three areas of intervention:

1. Family support: Aims to support the needs of the whole family and not the needs of young carers in isolation
2. Respite support: providing opportunities to young carers to have time away from their caring role, to experience new opportunities and to create peer networks
3. School support: Providing awareness, advocacy and opportunities for young carers to engage positively with education

1.1.2 Current provision of HYCA services

HYCA services are currently in contact with 1596 young carers across Hampshire. They are actively providing support to 1109 young carers, including 570 within schools.⁶ Services cover both rural and urban areas, with more urban areas covered by services such as Basingstoke, Fareham and Gosport and Havant and more rural areas covered by the New Forest and Romsey.

1.1.3 Big Lottery Funding 2016 – 2019

In 2016 HYCA was awarded additional funding from The Big Lottery in order to roll out and further embed the '3-pronged' support model across *each* of the ten districts within the county where the HYCA services operated and to bring about a more consistent county-wide service. HYCA aimed to achieve this enhanced and consistent service by further developing and strengthening its collaborative working and through sharing resources, such as a new shared database, whilst still maintaining the support delivered by the individual HYCA services that targeted local needs.

1.1.4 The evaluation and aims

Using an allocation of The Big Lottery funding, HYCA commissioned the University of Winchester to undertake an independent evaluation of the work of the Alliance over the three year period from September 2016 to August 2019. The evaluation presented HYCA with an opportunity to explore their service delivery and how the individual services worked together as an alliance. The evaluation had several aims including evaluating the impact that the HYCA collaboration has made to young carers and families, the impact of the collaborative approach, an evaluation of value for money and of the progress made towards sustainability.

The aim of this part of the evaluation and this report focusses on the **impact of the collaborative approach** and builds on the initial research that was undertaken between December 2016 and August 2017 which included an exploration of the HYCA collaboration and its potential benefits.⁷

This report on the impact of the collaborative approach should be read alongside the second report on sustainability and the first main report.^{8 9}

⁶ These figures are the most accurate figures that could be currently provided by HYCA from the database in October 2018. Figures used do not necessarily reflect variations in how individual HYCA services define and record support for young carers

⁷ Phelps, D (2017), Supporting young carers: The provision of county-wide support for young carers, University of Winchester.

⁸ Phelps, D (2019), Supporting young carers: Evaluation of progress towards sustainability of the Hampshire Young Carers Alliance (HYCA) collaboration. University of Winchester.

⁹ Phelps, D (2017), Supporting young carers: The provision of county-wide support for young carers, University of Winchester.

2 Methodological Approach

The evaluation included the following:

- The completion, by the HYCA leads (e.g. Managers or Coordinators) of the individual young carer services or 'projects', of an online questionnaire which was developed using the findings from the initial research.¹⁰
- The completion by the HYCA Lead¹¹ of a 'structured questionnaire framework' (See Annex 1) which was based on the recommendations for HYCA from the first report.
- A semi-structured interview with the HYCA Lead (See Appendix X).
- In order to supplement the data regarding the impact of the collaborative approach across Hampshire, a short telephone interview was undertaken with the HCC Lead for young carers and the question was posed: 'How has the work of HYCA helped impact young carers across Hampshire?'
- Supplementary data sources:
 - Notes and minutes taken from HYCA meetings; data from audits of the provision of support by the HYCA services; reports produced by HYCA, for example for Hampshire County Council.¹²
 - A short 'Outcomes Exercise' with HYCA staff¹³

The data from each of the free response questions from the online questionnaire was summarised using categories. Data from the other sources was used to supplement this, as well as for cross-referencing.

Limitations of the methodology

- One potential challenge to the methodology is that it has primarily relied upon the subjective views of particular HYCA staff. Challenges experienced by individual projects may have impacted personally on these staff and therefore might have elicited emotionally biased responses.

¹⁰ Questionnaire was developed using JISC online surveys.

¹¹ During the evaluation the position of the HYCA Lead transferred from Basingstoke Young Carers to Eastleigh Young Carers Project (in July 2017). The questionnaires and interviews relating to this report were completed after this transfer.

¹² Audits were carried out between May and August 2017 and in October 2018.

¹³ A short 'Outcomes Exercise' was administered with staff from 7 HYCA projects. Staff were asked 3 questions about which outcomes they felt were important. Answers given by staff were put into themes (See Appendix 2)..

3 Results

3.1 Time spent on work specific to HYCA collaboration work/activities

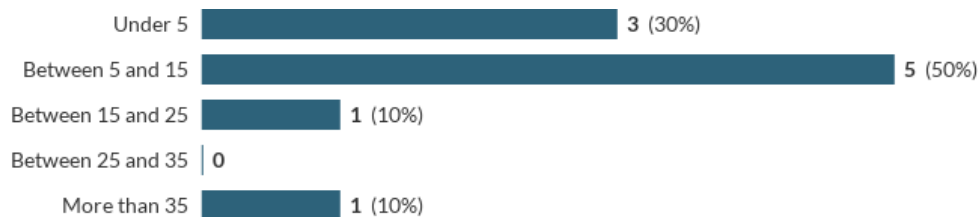


Figure 1 On an average month how many hours do you spend on work specific to HYCA collaboration work/activities, rather than your individual project work?

There was a wide range of how much time individual projects reported that they allocated to HYCA specific work and activities. The majority (n=8) reported allocating up to 15 hours per month on HYCA specific activities, with most allocating on average between 5 and 15 hours per month. The organisation whose member of staff is currently taking the lead for HYCA reported spending more than 35 hours per month on HYCA activities.

This variation reflects to a degree what was reported by the HYCA Lead, that in addition to attending HYCA meetings there is a core of about 4 or 5 projects that have 'done extra bits outside of the HYCA meetings...' In their opinion, all services showed willing to prioritise the HYCA specific work however, the partnership agreement was not strong enough to enforce sanctions when projects did not prioritise those core areas of work.

3.2 General Benefits

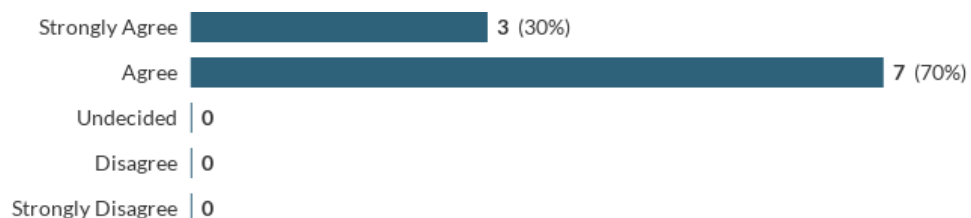


Figure 2 Has the HYCA collaboration benefitted your project?

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Figure 3 In your role, do you feel less isolated being part of the collaboration?

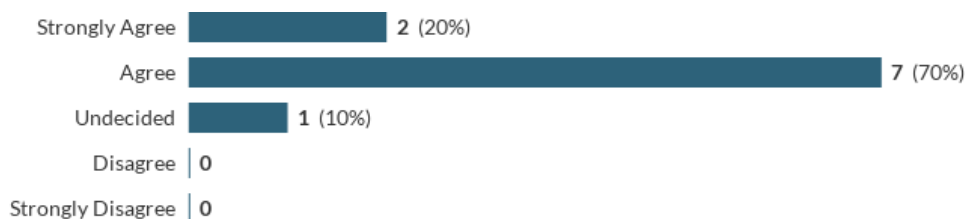


Figure 4 Do you receive advice and help from your HYCA colleagues?

All of the HYCA leads reported that the collaboration had benefitted their own project, with some (n=3) strongly agreeing that it had. For example, the majority of HYCA leads felt less isolated as a consequence of being part of the collaboration. Only one HYCA lead thought that the collaboration had not reduced their isolation.

Receiving help and advice from HYCA colleagues was another general benefit and the majority of HYCA partners reported that they had benefitted in this way. One partner was however undecided about this. The HYCA Lead reported that mutual support had taken place locally among HYCA staff, however there needed to be a greater emphasis on using technology such as Skype to facilitate this. In addition, further joint training opportunities have taken place in the last year and additional funding for training would be sought by HYCA in the future.

3.3 Communication

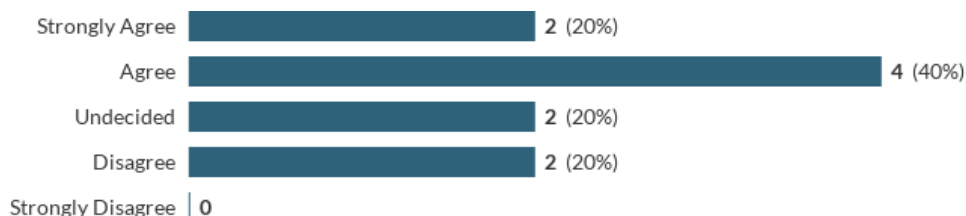


Figure 5 Do you find there is efficient communication between the HYCA services?

There was variation in opinion about whether or not the communication between HYCA services was efficient or not. Six out of the ten services either agreed or strongly agreed that this was the case.

The recommendation from the first report that HYCA services should develop and implement an email protocol had not been implemented however, the HYCA Lead stated that email communication had been less of an issue. They reported that increased contact from themselves (as Coordinator) had encouraged quicker email responses from partners.

3.4 Sharing practice and mutual support

3.4.1 Sharing knowledge and resources as a collaboration



Figure 6 Have you benefitted from other HYCA projects sharing resources with you?



Figure 7 Have you benefitted from other HYCA projects sharing ideas with you?



Figure 8 Do you share resources with the other HYCA projects?

The majority of HYCA partners reported that they shared both resources and ideas with colleagues and the majority of partners felt they benefitted from this. One partner thought this sharing aspect of the collaboration was one of its best achievements. Only a single service reported that they did not benefit from projects sharing resources and only one (different) project felt their project did not benefit from projects sharing ideas with them:

'The shared best practice element is also superb. Supportive HYCA members can help new staff 'bed in.'

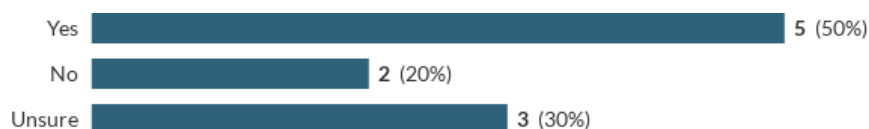


Figure 9 Has your service modelled any of the provisions from other HYCA services?

There has been some transfer of practice across services with half of the partners reporting that their service had modelled some provisions from other HYCA services (and particularly from one project), Interventions such as the SAP (Student Assistance Programme) the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), 'Drawing and Talking' and parent coffee mornings had all been modelled by services.¹⁴

One service had modelled several different provisions (Whole family approach/ family support; Respite; Youth Clubs; In-School provision). However, a couple of the services had not modelled anything and three leads were unsure whether or not their service had. In addition to directly modelling provisions, one of the leads stated that they 'all share ideas and may pick up tips' but had not directly 'modelled' any provision.

As recommended in the first report, HYCA have established a Google drive in order to house shared documentation. This has so far been in relation to resources being developed through the evaluation, however it is intended that this common drive will continue to be developed. A number of recommendations however from the previous report relating to sharing practice and developing activities collaboratively had not been implemented due to 'a lack of Coordinator [HYCA Lead] time', This included the recommendation to consider new, creative ways to transfer practice between HYCA services and using the different strengths of services. These recommendations according to the HYCA Lead, would be developed in the future.

3.5 Consistency of practice

3.5.1 The '3-pronged approach' and a postcode lottery



Figure 10 Is your service delivering the 'three-pronged approach' to support young carers and their families?

All services (n=9) that responded to the question as to whether they were delivering the 'three-pronged approach' to support young carers and their families, reported

¹⁴ <http://www.drawingandtalking.com>

that they were delivering this. However, the questionnaire did not seek to explore any differences in *how* the 3-pronged approach was being delivered by projects.

One service reported that one of the achievements of HYCA was that it ensured a standard set of services:

'HYCA is superb for ensuring young carers throughout Hampshire receive a core gold standard set of services. There may be regional differences in delivery, there may be different 'extras' but the baseline remains the same.'

The HYCA Lead however reported that although the projects were delivering the three different elements of the '3-pronged approach' (whole family support, respite and school support) how these were being delivered by projects was variable. They stated that there *'isn't a standardised offer at the moment'*, however this would be looked at by HYCA following the current project. Although the HYCA collaboration was now able to offer young carers anywhere within Hampshire support through the 3-pronged approach, since its delivery is not yet standardised across the projects, there remained a 'post-code lottery' for young carers and families in relation to the service they received.

3.5.2 Promotion of service

The main HYCA website (<https://hyca.org.uk/>) had not been recently updated with any changes that had taken place with service delivery. Moreover, each of the projects have their own individual mission/aim/vision or objective listed on the website, as well as their own individual offers of support. However, the HYCA Lead reported that basic literature (a HYCA flier) had been developed to promote the HYCA collaboration and that this information was consistent and focused on the same aims and criteria. They also reported however that promotion had been difficult as a consequence of not having centralised marketing time, but that projects themselves were great at marketing their own projects at a local level. Dedicated time and money were seen as necessary in order to develop consistency in the future.

3.5.3 Data collection

The consistency of data collection and the recording of information about young carers onto the shared database were viewed by both project leads and the HYCA Lead as being particular areas of success.

A guide has been developed for all services that sets out what needs to be collected through an assessment and what is required to be inputted into the database – a procedure which services are now carrying out themselves. Although the data that is collected is consistent, the process with which services carry out assessments may differ. This can take place either during a home-visit, within a school, by telephone, as is the case in Basingstoke where capacity has become a limitation. There are also some variations in the forms used by projects for collecting data. For example, one service is required to use a different media/medical consent form because it is part of a national charity and they are also obligated to collect additional information when

assessing young carers and families. Other modifications to the referral form have also been made by one service in order to collect additional information for specific funders.

There is now a standardised criteria used by HYCA services for young carers across the county and projects are now using a common referral form. Projects have also achieved consistency in recording the engagement of young carers. For example, the activities they take part in, or the individual support that they receive from their project, is now recorded directly onto the database. Although greatly improved, the HYCA Lead reported that work still needs to be done to ensure there is consistency with defining, collecting and recording data across the services.

3.6 Impact

3.6.1 Achievements

A range of responses were given by partners to the question 'What do you feel is the best achievement of the HYCA collaboration?'

Funding and county-wide support

Four of the leads highlighted the receipt of funding as an achievement, including the funding from the BL which had enabled one service to continue operating three years ago. For another partner the funding had '*enabled more YCs and their families to access support and services right across Hampshire*'. This county wide support for young carers was also highlighted as an achievement by two other project leads.

'Knowing there is a young carers' service across the county.'

HYCA working relationships

Another achievement that was reported by four of the partners was the working relationships that had been established within the group. This included the support available for new staff from existing HYCA members and the opportunities to share practice and training together.

'The shared best practice element is also superb. Supportive HYCA members can help new staff 'bed in.' '

Strategic impact

Two project partners reported achievements that were more strategic in nature. One highlighted the collaboration with Hampshire County Council, whilst the other thought that having a common baseline of support across the county provided stronger evidence with which to report back to grant funders.

'Improved collaboration with Hampshire County Council's Children's Services, and representation of young carers at county strategic level.'

Another two leads highlighted the HYCA conference that was held towards the end of 2017 as the best achievement. The conference drew over 100 stakeholders from a

range of different services including social care, health, education and the police force and was a 'catalyst' to various developments including new local working relationships and new schools implementing support.

WRAP

One project emphasised the importance of the WRAP sessions that were delivered by partners however, they felt that the importance of this intervention was not shared by all the project partners.

'I also think we should be more proud of what we have been achieving with the WRAP work ...it is groundbreaking though and unfortunately not all of the partners seem to appreciate that.'

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)

'The Wellness Recovery Action Plan® or WRAP®, is a self-designed prevention and wellness process that anyone can use to get well, stay well and make their life the way they want it to be' ¹⁵. WRAP has been studied extensively in rigorous research projects and is listed in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices.

The New Forest project secured funding of £195 000 from the NHS Children and Young People's Mental Health Innovation Fund to train young carer project workers from each the 10 projects, to enable them to facilitate WRAP in their local areas. The aim of HYCA was to develop a young carer focused 'Wellness Recovery Action Plan' (WRAP) which could then be rolled out to other areas after the pilot.

Training for facilitators lasted 7 days in total and included project workers undertaking their own WRAP. Once trained, projects workers co-facilitated WRAP groups with other project leads for young carers either within one area, or in some instances, from different projects.

Depending on the group size, between 10 and 16 hours is required to deliver the material. WRAP workshops have been delivered to young carers either over a weekend, over a couple of Saturdays over a five to six-week period.

Each WRAP session is evaluated and young carers rate the overall experience using a simple scoring form. All scores so far have been between 4-6 (where 6 is excellent and 1 is poor). WRAP support has been used with individuals and has also been given to parents.

WRAP statistics

18 staff have been through WRAP Seminar One

11 staff have been through WRAP Seminar 2 and are trained as WRAP facilitators

1 member of staff has been through Advanced Level facilitator training

10 YCs have been given intensive one to one WRAP support helping them deal with issues and emotional problems in their lives

64 YCs have taken part in two-day WRAP groups and started their own WRAP plans

¹⁵ <https://www.copelandcenter.com/> <http://mentalhealthrecovery.com/wrap-is/>

Approximately 40 YCs have undertaken elements of WRAP as part of YC Club nights and activities

Some projects are continuing to run WRAP workshops, however others do not currently have the capacity to do this.

'The facilitators all seemed to care and really know their stuff. It was good to be asked what I thought and not being forced to join in if I didn't want to. The breakdown of each section was really clear and I'm going to take a lot away to look back on and start using.'
(young carer)

'I have enjoyed delivering it and it was great to have young carers from 2 projects working together... It has been great to be able to draw on the ideas that have been shared and that came out of the training.'
(young carer worker)

3.7 Impact on individual projects

3.7.1 Positive impacts on individual projects

Project partners cited a range of positive impacts for their own service that were similar to the best achievements which they reported (above).

Funding

When asked about any positive impacts that the HYCA collaboration had had on their services, partners' responses focused significantly on funding. Seven services reported that receiving funding had been a positive 'impact' on their service. A couple of partners highlighted that having multiple year funding had either allowed '*continuity of provision for the very vulnerable young carers*', or '*allowed us to significantly improve the work with parents/adult relatives of young carers, and improve our reach to young carers themselves*.' However, this 'improved work' was not quantified in any way. Being part of HYCA itself was seen by one lead as important for facilitating funding:

'HYCA is a good selling point for other funding.'

A key development has been the allocation of funds for a dedicated HYCA fundraiser (based within one of the partner charities). Their remit is to develop a consistent approach to fundraising until the end of the current funding period.

Support and sharing

Several of the HYCA leads reported the positive impact of the support or guidance that they received from the other projects. It was generally useful knowing that support was there if it was required, but especially useful where staff were new in

their role, The sharing of practice, ideas, information and paperwork, and in one case, the ability to share staff with another project were thought to make a positive impact.

The HYCA Lead stated that the partners do support each other, and that this had been demonstrated when one service had been buddied by another however, due to resources this was not always possible.

'We are rarely left without guidance when an unusual issue arises, there will always be someone it has happened to before, or someone who can advise on solution.'

Opportunities for activities

A couple of partners reported that sharing activities with other projects and joint training had made a positive impact. For example, joint activities for young carers had taken place with other projects including WRAP and a National Citizen Service (NCS) residential and community activity that was organized.

'It has opened up some opportunities for activities. It has brought us closer to other projects.'

WRAP

The WRAP programme was highlighted by three of the projects as having a positive impact.

Database and outcome STARS

Another commonly reported positive impact was *'having one database for all projects'* and *'a shared knowledge base'* that could be used for funders. This common data collection, data logging and its potential to be used for reporting was evidently something that the projects believed was important and was reported by 7 of the services. One partner stated *'we have benefitted from the standardised statistical evidence gathering and reporting'* however no specific detail was provided about this such as what the standardised evidence was, or how reporting had been improved. Two partners stated that using the Outcome stars (My Star and Shooting Star) made a positive impact, however no further detail was provided.¹⁶

Profile of services

Being a part of the HYCA collaboration was seen by a couple of partners to facilitate relationships with other agencies and improve the profile of their service:

'Being part of something bigger than just an individual project, looks good to other professionals.'

3.7.2 Negative impacts on individual projects

A few partners reported that the collaboration had led to negative impacts, including the additional pressure to achieve targets and to perform at a higher level.

¹⁶ A proprietary tool used by HYCA services for supporting and measuring change.

Time and pressures

However, the most common negative impact of the collaboration cited by project leads was related to time. Time pressures that are created by working within the collaboration came about from attending HYCA meetings and from the mandatory reporting procedures. Specific issues mentioned were (historic) short deadlines that *'created chaos'* and *'time taken in meetings where nothing was achieved'*. Partners suggested that making time for HYCA activities was a challenge and particularly difficult for the smaller services.

'Too much of my time spent on HYCA and not on my own project'

Frustration

There was suggestion that the collaboration had led to some frustration between partners. This included frustration over a lack of appreciation shown by partners of the support being given to them. *'Historic poor leadership'* was also cited by one partner as being a cause of frustration. There was however also optimism that this issue had now been resolved and that the collaboration was now in a *'great place'*.

Feeling different

One partner reported that being part of the collaboration made their service feel different and this was unhelpful:

'Feeling different and smaller than other projects has not been helpful for some projects in the past, hopefully we will support each other better going forward.'

3.8 Impact on young carers and families

3.8.1 Positive impacts on young carers and families

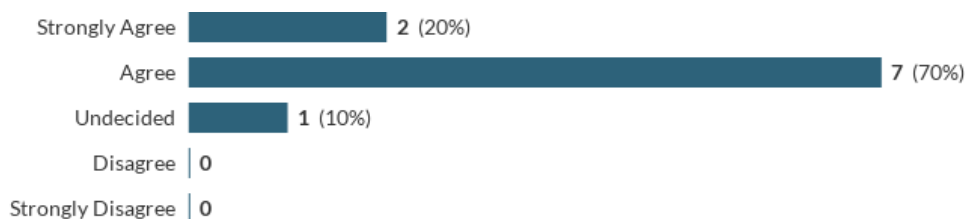


Figure 11 Has the HYCA collaboration helped young carers and families?

The majority of project leads (n=9) agreed that the HYCA collaboration had helped young carers and families, with two strongly agreeing that it had. One partner however was undecided.

Funding and numbers supported

Once again, the continuation of funding was a common focus, with half the partners citing this as a positive impact in itself since it enabled continued support for young carers and families. One service reported that the funding had enabled an increased number of young carers to be supported. However, the total number of young carers benefitting from support from HYCA, although it increased minimally in the first year, actually decreased slightly in the second year. Numbers however appear to have risen again in the third year.

As a collaboration the three target outcomes set for the Big Lottery have been surpassed as measured by the change indicators used by HYCA however, according to the HYCA Lead, there is a large variation in the outcomes achieved by the individual projects. Some projects are achieving numbers lower than had been targeted whilst others were achieving more than double their target figures.

The overall number of young carers support through the year dropped slightly in year 2 from the year 1 figures,

Activities for young carers and families

Several partners stated that collaborative working, (such as information sharing and running joint activities) had provided more and varied opportunities for the young carers and families. Examples given were the TESSA award, which *'had a huge impact on one of our young carers and his family'*, trips, outings, residential opportunities and the Young Carers Festival.¹⁷ Young carers also benefitted from participation opportunities through the Young Carers Action Group (YCAG) which hosted the young carers' conference, and further joint activities reportedly provided opportunities for young carers to make new friendships. Furthermore, the New Forest project have set up a number of young carer clubs and some of the projects have introduced parent support groups.

Young Carers Action Group (YCAG)

The Young Carers Action Group (YCAG) is a participation group with young carers to provide a platform for promoting their voice. It has been led by Eastleigh Young Carers with support from the Participation Officer from HCC and has involved 18 young carers to date (coming from the majority of the projects). Seven sessions which (including team building work and an 'away day') have been run with the young people, with the primary focus of preparing to host the young carers' conference in 2017.

Running YCAG drew heavily on the capacity of HYCA and the group is currently inactive.

Improved support

Improved practice by services was seen by some to have made a positive impact on young carers and families. One partner for example stated that their approach to supporting parents and families had been influenced by practice that was shared by HYCA colleagues. The database and improved record keeping and monitoring by

¹⁷ The Tessa Award was established in memory of a young carer, Tessa. It celebrates her many great personal qualities and aims to encourage them in others. It is given to a young person who shows selfless commitment to making a difference, who is kind and caring and who shows great determination in their life.

projects was also seen to be having a positive impact. The HYCA Lead thought that the 'outcome tools' (the Outcome Stars) that HYCA were using on individual young carers were robust but also thought that developing measures for the whole family approach would be useful. Furthermore, the Lead reported that work towards a monitoring dashboard was required so that all partners could monitor their own work.

Drawing in additional funding for young carers and families

One project has made referrals to the Early Help Hub to access funding for individual families. Although this has been successful (with one family receiving £350) this has required considerable work by the project. Some projects have been successful in facilitating the use of the Pupil Premium to support young carers with school trips and this funding has also been accessed by a few of the services to work in local schools (although it is currently funding only one project).

Cross boundary referrals

Working as a collaboration and having a common database has made the referral process easier if a family moves area within Hampshire. Although there are not huge numbers moving across borders, it is seen as beneficial by the HYCA Lead since projects will already have information about a young carer and their family.¹⁸

'So because everyone is on the database, you can just share the record, so you see all their past stuff, whereas before you'd just get a name, details and you'd just have to start from scratch or get kind of an overview of that young person where as you can see their interactions with their projects and stuff now. Whereas we didn't have that before.'

Raised awareness

A couple of partners thought that improved awareness had made a positive impact for young carers and families. In one community organisations were now more aware of the service. Another partner believed that the overall profile of the support for young carers in Hampshire had been raised.

3.8.2 Negative impacts on young carers and families

Time away from core delivery

Half of the partners did not report that the collaboration had led to any negative impacts on young carers and families. However, some did state that work related to the HYCA collaborative; work spent on the database, additional questionnaires, time spent on YCAG and on the conference, had taken time away from their core delivery.¹⁹ Additional questionnaires for the young carers themselves was reported by one partner as impacting on their respite.

Other negative impacts that were reported was the uncertainty of the future funding of HYCA, and confusion over the *'blurring of geographical boundaries'* which

¹⁸ It was estimated by the HYCA Lead that there were about 5 young carers moving from one area to another and a similar number moving the other way within the last year.

¹⁹ The participation group for the young carers (Young Carers Action Group (YCAG))

according to one partner, was a consequence of some projects attempting to *'boost their numbers.'*

3.9 Wider impacts

3.9.1 Impact across localities

Increased engagement and collaboration

Despite one partner reporting that there had been not been any wider impacts from the HYCA collaboration across their local area, and another stating that the impacts are *'more often negative due to some other projects not doing what they should be doing'*, the majority of HYCA partners (n=8) did report wider positive impacts in their localities including increased engagement with stakeholders. Examples of increased engagement were, *'speaking regularly with local NHS trusts'*; *'increased interaction with Children's Services'*, *'opportunity to work with our CCG and other agencies on young adult carers' transition support.'* and *'FSS joint working'*. For at least one project, the partnership working with the FSS has enabled it to support a wider age range and therefore more young carers.

Increased profile and 'knock-on' impacts

A couple of the projects stated that as a result of the collaboration, (for example, the requirements of HYCA to be working in the multi-agency hubs and in schools) the awareness and profile of their projects had increased. For one service this had led to further benefits including *'having increased communication with agencies and organisations for presentations, meetings* as well as *'Charity of the Year and ad hoc donations'*.

3.9.2 Impact across Hampshire

Influencing policy at county level

Several partners reported how important it was that HYCA was able to influence policy at a county level. The HYCA Lead has been able to champion the support for young carers across the county at a range of meetings including the Children's Trust Board, the Joint Carers Strategic Group and the Adult Safeguarding Board. They sit on the HCC Young Carers Steering Group which has - according to one of the partners - helped develop a better working relationship with the county. The Steering Group meetings provide opportunities for HYCA to share how the collaboration is supporting young carers and families across the county and to be involved in shaping the direction of policy.

Every HYCA project now represents young carers at their local multi-agency hub. One key development at locality level and across the county has been the establishment of the Young Carer Champion role within Hampshire's Early Help model. One partner attributed this development to the strategic work that HYCA had

Supporting young carers:

The impact of the Hampshire Young Carers Alliance (HYCA) collaborative approach

carried out with HCC and the HCC Young Carer Operational Lead also acknowledged its involvement in this development.

Multi-agency hub YC champions based in Family Support Services (FSS)

In each district's multi-agency hubs, there is now a 'Young Carer Champion' who is based within the Family Support Service (part of Children's Services) ²⁰. Champions link up and work with the HYCA projects who regularly engage with the Early Help Hubs (EHH). Gaps in provision for younger carers are now being identified and filled and a more consistent approach is being achieved. The partnership working increases capacity through facilitating events and groups for young carers if required, and can improve communication between local projects and the Children's Services Department.

HCC Supporting Families criteria

One big success reported by HYCA is that the HCC Supporting Families criteria has been changed to include young carers with the consequence that families who do not meet the statutory threshold, can now access support. The involvement of a HYCA representative at the Hampshire Young Carers Steering Group was highlighted as beneficial in this development.

New relationships with stakeholders have also been developed. One service reported that they are now speaking regularly with local NHS trusts and another is working with the Isle of Wight young carers.

Awareness raising

Several of the partners highlighted that HYCA was raising awareness of young carers across the county and increasing public awareness, by attending and presenting at county-wide conferences such as the one run by HCC and The Children's Society, which schools from across the county attended. HYCA had also contributed to the HCC YC eNewsletter for professionals across the county.

Although the recommendation from the 2017 report to develop a joint county-wide awareness raising strategy and action plan had currently not been implemented, the HYCA Lead did report that projects had teamed up to raise awareness of young carers and that the collaborative work with the YCAG had been beneficial. Further funding for awareness raising would be sought in future bids.

WRAP

One partner emphasised the importance of the WRAP programme which in their opinion was not being maximized.

'Our WRAP work has been major in the areas where it has been happening as this kind of work has not been done before in the UK - we should be making more of it and doing more.'

²⁰ <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/familysupportservice/earlyhelp>

The Operational Lead for young carers from HCC Hampshire County Council reported that HYCA had been significantly involved in the young carer operational meetings which feeds into the strategic work of the council. HYCA had contributed to the development and the review of the Young Carers Strategy which was published in 2017 by supporting the council with the development of objectives. Furthermore, HYCA had been supportive to HCC by providing feedback on other development areas, such as the young carers' assessment process, which has been improved.

'They (HYCA) have been really, really key in my operational meetings'
(Operational lead for young carers, HCC)

Regular and reliable performance data

The Operational Lead further reported that HYCA had played a central role in ensuring there was regular and reliable performance data on young carers in Hampshire. This data is used to evaluate any trends or gaps across the county such as gender differences or differences across districts. However, it was noted that since projects were funded by a variety of sources, the service delivery of projects was restricted which caused inconsistencies across the county (e.g. different age groups were supported). The HCC Lead believed this issue was now being resolved through partnership working with HYCA and the establishment of 'Young Carers Champions'.

Duplication

The HCC Lead also felt that HYCA and the FSS were both undertaking Outcome Stars with some of the same young people and therefore duplicating work. They felt that improved communication and information sharing between HYCA and HCC could avoid some young carers having to complete these twice and noted this was already improving in some areas.

3.10 Negative impacts, challenges and barriers

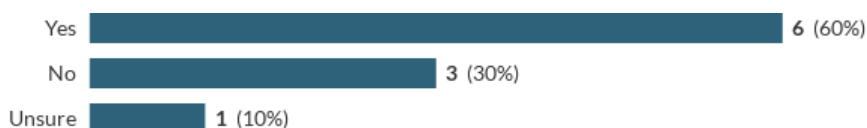


Figure 12 Is there anything negative about the HYCA collaboration?



Figure 13 Are there any challenges to the smooth running of the HYCA collaboration?

Engagement of projects and accountability

A number of the partners reported that there had been issues with the level of engagement of projects and partners not being fully on board with the collaborative work of HYCA. One described this as *'lack of buy-in'* and another stated that there was *'reluctance of some projects to set aside their 'individuality' to promote practices for the good of the whole.'*

'If I'm honest, it can feel like not all partners pull their weight - some are very fixed in "this is how we do things" and don't want to try new things.'

The ability of HYCA to deal with this issue was also highlighted by a couple of the project partners who stated that there was *'no accountability'* for the projects or for not meeting the outcomes that were expected from them. Lack of 'buy-in' from some partners was one reason given by the HYCA Lead for HYCA not having developed an action plan to assign different tasks to different projects.

Differences in projects

Several of the partners reported that the differences between the projects had not been taken into consideration when the three-year project was established. This they thought had caused specific challenges for some projects, by for example requiring them to rapidly grow their service:

'Joining the 2nd Lottery-funded HYCA project put pressure on the project to grow at rate that was difficult to achieve, putting the project at a disadvantage from the outset.'

There was some criticism aimed at HYCA. Firstly, from one project that felt that their request to HYCA for support had been acted upon late. Secondly, one project felt that the feedback that they had given when the application was being drawn up (and that highlighted the need for 'lead-in' time), had not been taken on board.

It was suggested by another partner that *'a better joined up approach, taking everyone's needs in to consideration'* was required in order to accommodate for the fact that the projects are *'all so different'*. This partner also proposed a *'better support network and sense of team for all partners'* however they also thought that HYCA was *'getting there now'*.

One project questioned how funding was allocated between the different partners. The funding they suggested did not seem fairly proportioned for the needs of individual areas. Another partner felt that some projects were struggling more than others as they approached the end of the Lottery funding. According to the HYCA Lead the differences in infrastructures between the projects and their individual plans for growth would be acknowledged in future funding bids, for example by having a tiered level of funding.

Coordination and leadership

The coordination and leadership of HYCA was seen as important by projects however, several changes in staff had taken place with the role of Coordinator during the project and this had been a challenge to smooth running of the collaboration. One partner felt that there had been a *'loss of expertise/experience in running multi-agency projects and working with large funders'* and this had been a challenge. Other challenges reported were the [ineffective] management handover and the *'lack of coordinator time'*.

HYCA meetings

Although information is shared at the HYCA meetings, (by guest speakers from different projects and by partners sharing information) a couple of partners felt that the monthly HYCA meetings were not productive and that there were too many of them.

'It can feel like we have too many meetings and don't always achieve what we want to do.'

Addressing this concern, the HYCA Lead has stated that meetings needed to be more concise, less frequent and 'SMART'.

3.11 Future solutions

'We are all working on a better collaboration right now, with the new bid to the Lottery, that's a good change.'



Figure 14 Does anything need to change to improve the HYCA collaboration?

Accountability

According to two partners the accountability of partners needed to change. One partner stated that HYCA should '*enforce minimum delivery target to ensure baseline service for all Hampshire children*'. A third project felt that a stronger partnership agreement and sanctions were necessary.

Recognition of differences

Recognition and acceptance of the differences between partners was highlighted by one project so that services were free to develop in response to their local context and organisational capabilities. This partner proposed that the BLF Partnership Programme might be a helpful route to take as it would recognise the differences and commonalities between the organisations and would hopefully enable HYCA to work to a smaller number of shared outcomes and allow variations in delivery.

'move towards our own appropriate targets and activities under one funding umbrella, rather than being all forced into one agreement which has caused issues and resentment.'

The strategic role

Several projects recognised that increased investment was required for the strategic role to coordinate the collaboration. Each of these partners thought that more time was required for this role, with one stating that more funding and time was needed for the lead partner *'so they can be more strategic and forward thinking/pro-active rather than re-active.'* One partner suggested that there needed to be a change in the lead partner and that a more structured approach to the collaboration was necessary.

Support and training

Other suggestions put forward for changes in the future were *'more formalised support (i.e. subject matter experts) to be drawn from HYCA'* and *'more workshop style meetings working together to meet outcomes.'*

3.12 Legacy of the collaboration

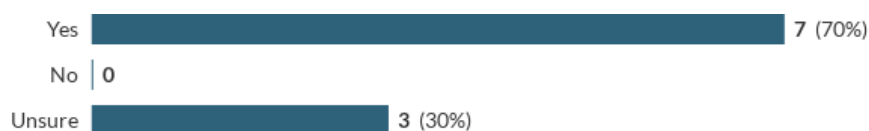


Figure 15 After March 2019, will there be any lasting impacts from the HYCA collaboration?

Seven partners believed there would be lasting impacts from the HYCA collaboration, Three (n=3) however were unsure about this and although several lasting impacts were proposed by partners, there was a degree of uncertainty in their responses:

Collaborative resource and activity

The database was mentioned by two partners as being a potential legacy of the collaboration, however both proposed this with some hesitancy;

'Possible continued use of database and outcome star' and *'hopefully the database'*

Another partner highlighted the shared working, research, shared resources and training that had been established. The WRAP sessions were also mentioned by one project lead as well as *'schools having a young carer lead and many having clubs.'*

Uncertainty, optimism and relationships

For a couple of partners there was however some uncertainty about the future. One partner stated that *'if we are unsuccessful with The Lottery funding, our project and service will cease.'* and another highlighted that any lasting impacts would depend on whether the partners were all still together.

There was also optimism for the future. *It [the collaboration] gives us a platform to learn and move forwards'*, stated one partner, while another highlighted that relationships had been built up across Hampshire and between the HYCA services:

'Partnership working will continue, as good relationships have been developed between HYCA agencies'

One partner was particularly optimistic about the future collaboration and viewed the collaboration as being at an early stage:

'HYCA has only just begun, and must continue to really ensure that young carers in [locality] are given every chance in life, and their needs met. I firmly believe that the benefits and advances associated with this collaboration will continue. We will be able to present evidence from projects which work to the same goals and standards. We will continue to support.'

3.13 The 'Outcomes exercise' with HYCA staff

The exercise highlighted that although there were some commonalities with the outcomes communicated by partners, there was a wide variation in the specific outcomes that were felt to be important for their projects, the collaboration and the outcomes for the three-year Big Lottery funded project.

The outcomes that were cited by partners as being **important for their projects** fell under 13 different themes including 'raising awareness of young carers', 'reducing isolation for young carers' and 'improving their wellbeing'.

Outcomes cited by partners as **important for the HYCA collaboration** fell under 12 different themes with just under half of these being specific outcomes for young carers (e.g. young carers feeling supported and young carers having respite) whilst the other outcomes were related to practice such as working collaboratively and sharing practice.

Partners on the whole were not able to spontaneously communicate **the current 3 Big Lottery outcomes** but reported other outcomes instead. 3 of the partners did report that the BL outcomes were related to either resilience or wellbeing and 3 staff reported that they related to school or education. However, where the outcomes reported by partners were related to the BL outcomes, how they were reported was not comprehensive. Apart from one mention of 'increased resilience' and another of 'making decisions', the first outcome for the BL (young carers will report being better able to cope with managing their situations) was not reported at all.

When the responses to each of the three questions were aggregated and themed there were some commonalities emerged. There was however a large number of outcomes related to young carers that were proposed by partners and which fell under 11 different themes.

4 Discussion

4.1 Overview

The initial research phase during year one of the evaluation found that HYCA partners had been generally positive about the collaboration and had already identified certain benefits such as mutual support and the sharing of knowledge and resources.²¹ They also reported that the funding for the three years had enabled projects to increase their provision of support for young carers and improve the stability of their services. Some services had reported that they would like to have increased the frequency of their clubs. Furthermore, there was optimism that a more consistent county-wide service would be developed which in turn would directly benefit young carers across the county.

Findings show that the collaboration has led to a range of both positive and negative impacts at different levels; on the projects (and staff), on the wider development of support in localities and across the county and on the young carers and families themselves. Findings also show that there are several challenges that the collaboration has faced which has impacted on its development. HYCA however has learned from and begun to address several of these challenges and partners are generally positive about the collaboration's future.

4.1.1 Impact on individual projects

The fact that 100% of the project staff reported that the collaboration was beneficial to their individual projects is an important finding. Although negative impacts of the collaboration were reported as well as frustrations (see below), staff maintained that being part of the collaboration was in general a positive thing.

Sharing knowledge, resources and activities and mutual support

Despite projects varying in terms of size, staffing and experience of working with young carers, the value to staff of sharing and receiving advice from colleagues is clearly beneficial. However, the different impacts on young carers and their families as a result of colleagues sharing ideas is likely to vary enormously. One 'nugget' of advice shared by one colleague might well have significant benefits for another project's development and then ultimately on young carers themselves. Such a forum for sharing ideas can often drive change fast.

Relationships between staff have also grown through HYCA meetings, joint training, and running joint activities for young carers, such as WRAP workshops and the NCS. It seems to be important for staff not to feel isolated but to have colleagues to whom they can turn to for support and advice, especially for those working in the smaller projects. This supportive element of the collaboration could perhaps be explored further by HYCA though more formal supervision sessions offered to workers by colleagues from other projects and as reported by one staff member using technology such as Skype to enhance mutual support opportunities.

²¹ Phelps, D (2017), Supporting young carers: The provision of county-wide support for young carers, University of Winchester.

The variation in size and experience of the HYCA services has perhaps led to some projects becoming predominantly 'givers' whilst others remaining 'receivers' of support. However, over time, a more equal distribution of support is likely as projects grow together and as the different strengths of projects and staff are recognised. Sharing resources online on a Google Drive has been initiated and has the potential to be developed significantly. 'Buy-in' from the majority of projects and an effort by them to embed such a sharing platform as they develop their processes together is likely to be required in order to make this successful.

The transfer of practice between projects by the modelling of practice has been helpful to some services and particularly useful to one project. For some of the projects this is however less beneficial. Despite this there is a huge potential for individual projects to pilot different types of practice and intervention, to evaluate these, and for the other projects to model them if they are successful. This might be further explored as a model for change for HYCA. Pilot funding could be sought purposely for specific projects with the added value of a potential much larger roll out across the other projects. Individual projects and staff who have a particular interest in a certain field would be appropriately placed to run such pilots and such a model could be appealing to funders.

4.1.1.1 Consistency of practice

Provision of support

One aspiration of the collaboration and the three year project was for there to be a consistent approach to supporting young carers across the county. All the projects are indeed now offering respite activities, family support and support for young carers in schools. One partner described this as '*young carers throughout Hampshire receive a core gold-standard set of services*'. However, although HYCA is now working in these different ways across the county and provision has developed in some services, provision across the county is not standardised. Young carers can receive support in each area however, what they receive will differ. Interventions vary considerably (such as school work, the frequency of youth groups and respite activities). Two projects work with young adult carers (over 18 years old) and 4 projects are working with young carers under the age of 8, whilst the WRAP sessions that were initially delivered by each service, are now only being delivered by some of the services as a consequence of capacity.

Furthermore, in response to a significant increase in referrals, the Winchester service has modified its approach to supporting young carers in order to try and ensure that it is meeting the needs of *all* young carers within its area. Their support model has changed to a more targeted, short-term support approach where young carers are offered an 'Exploration Programme' lasting 10 sessions that covers topics such as 'Who are young carers?', 'What are the challenges?' and 'How do you cope?'.

Young Carer Exploration Programme

The programme aims to enable young people to explore who they care for, why they care for them, the impacts this can have and the challenges this brings. It is facilitated by staff and volunteers and aims to provide a safe place for young carers to meet and

get to know other young carers and to explore a range of topics related to being a young carer. The programme has 10 x sessions:

1. Who are young carers? Meet and get to know other young carers
2. Who do you care for? Understanding the illness/disability of the person you care for
3. What do you do? Exploring the different types of caring roles
4. What are the impacts? Recognising the impacts caring have on you
5. What are the challenges? Sharing any worries and concerns you have
6. How do you cope? Learning how to deal with feelings
7. How do you look after yourself? Creating your own wellness toolbox
8. Who can support you? Identify your own support network
9. Where are you now? Reflecting on what you have learnt
10. What next? Sharing your hopes for the future

There is no evidence that projects are aiming for complete uniformity of service provision, but rather individual differences appear to be valued, or are a necessary consequence for example of a project's geography. However, the differences across projects have and will cause challenges to collaborative working. Firstly, it is important to recognise any differences and for the Collaboration to be understanding of the need (if there is one) for those differences. Secondly, any differences in support provision and data collection make comparability of data extremely difficult. Thirdly, differences in interventions between projects will inevitably complicate collaborative funding bids - including the development of common project outcomes (see below). Therefore a 'common core provision' with individual project differences would appear an appropriate model to work towards.

The importance of developing standardised criteria for stakeholders, so they are clear about who can receive support from HYCA, as well as ensuring those services are clear for all stakeholders, were both recommendations within the initial report. HYCA has responded by developing a standardised criteria across the county which sets out who young carers are and some of the outcomes for young carers that HYCA aims to bring about. Some projects however did not seem to be clear about what the standardised criteria were.

Data and reporting

The database has driven consistency in relation to the data that is collected on the young carers, however arriving at the point where all projects are now inputting data has been a significant investment of time for the projects. Modifications that have been required to the database have slowed progress in general and taken the focus off other areas of development. Further training sessions to the original database training have been necessary for staff. Reporting from the database is also time-consuming for the HYCA Lead. However, positively, the database can now support reporting for funders and for HCC. It enables a Hampshire wide picture of young carers to be developed which is highly valued by the county council. In order for data to become more standardised however, the processes for collecting data should become consistent which is currently difficult due to the differing capacities of projects and how they are working.

Funding and provision for young carers

The fact that 'funding' itself was commonly perceived by partners as an achievement, or a positive impact of the collaboration, is perhaps indicative of the reality that the pressure of funding has on projects. Sustainability of projects was often mentioned by partners in the context of uncertainty of the future of their service. The Big Lottery funding was viewed by some as the reason why their service was able to continue to provide support for young carers and being able to make joint funding bids as a collaborative was commonly viewed as a necessity for the survival of their service. The success of the collaboration to increase the profile of individual projects and to draw in further funding was evidenced in their successful application for the NHS funding to train staff and deliver WRAP workshops to young carers. However, this was to deliver a new intervention which, although appears very successful, requires further capacity for some of the projects in order for them to continue delivering this.

By taking the decision to allocate funds for the role of a dedicated fundraiser, HYCA have taken a strategic approach towards securing future funding and maintaining a collaborative approach. It will be important that lessons from this collaborative project are learned and acted upon. In particular projects might consider developing a common core delivery model with common outcomes that are agreed upon by all projects and establishing a more effective partnership agreement (see below). Furthermore, there is wide variation in how projects will be affected by the BL funding coming to an end. Appropriate 'lead-in' time should therefore be allocated in order that all projects avoid a 'cliff edge' with their funding. **Sustainability is discussed in a separate report.**

One lesson already learned by HYCA has been in relation to the allocation of funding between projects and HYCA has already taken steps to address how this might be addressed in future funding bids. The acknowledgement of the differences between projects is important, including their differing capacities, local aims and the objectives of a particular funding stream. All these factors should determine how funding is apportioned between projects. Equal distribution of funding may not be the most appropriate means. This issue should be considered and decisions made for each individual funding stream.

Time allocation

Staff were very conscious of the amount of time that was required for HYCA activity and how this impacted on them and added further pressures. For some, there was evidently a tension between time spent on HYCA activities and the time they could dedicate to their individual core project work. Indeed, the establishment of the database, its protracted development, and the additional training that was necessary for this, required significantly more time than was originally anticipated. This undoubtedly impacted the project development as a whole.

HYCA meetings

The monthly HYCA meetings were also reported to be causing frustration and were seen by some as taking significant time away from individual project work, as well as being criticised by some partners as being unproductive. The productivity of meetings is now being addressed by HYCA which aims to reducing their frequency and ensure they are 'SMART'. Having a specific focus for each meeting might also present the opportunity for different staff to represent their project for specific

meetings. However rotating staff attendance perhaps should be balanced with the advantage that having continuity of staff brings in establishing relationships between partner projects. The suggestion of using technology such as Skype for meetings would certainly seem to have potential and save time and travel costs. Increased productivity is likely to help develop a virtuous circle - where projects see the value of working collaboratively and are subsequently more willing to invest their time into it.

Another area which HYCA has found time consuming is using the Outcome Stars to monitor young carers. Initially all projects were using the 'My Star' tool to track a young carer's journey however due to the time these were taking to carry out with the young carers, some of the projects are now using the shorter 'Shooting Star' tool.

Significant time was also reported to have been allocated to running the conference, facilitating the YCAG group and to staff training for the WRAP workshops, all of which are additional to the core activity of the projects. However, since the value of these new activities has been recognised by HYCA, consideration ought to be given to whether they should become part of the 'core-activity' of HYCA. Investing time heavily into new and successful initiatives without embedding them, would seem both a waste of resources and of the potential that those new initiatives hold.

There is some evidence that the varying amounts of time that partners allocate to HYCA activity is a cause of frustration and tension among the projects. This is perhaps one consequence of the partnership agreement (which states that a representative from each project should be sent to all HYCA meetings, but provides no other directive in relation to the amount of time projects should allocate to HYCA activity). However, ultimately, this perhaps reflects the differences between the projects such as their 'buy-in' to the HYCA aims and their individual capacity as a service. A strengthened partnership agreement might have some utility as a control mechanism, however what is more essential is a greater common 'buy-in', where all projects believe strongly in the objectives of the collaboration and view investment into the collaboration as investment also into their own project and the support they offer for young carers. Joint ownership and responsibility of the HYCA objectives and outcomes is likely to lead to stronger buy-in from partners and this will be important in any future joint bids.

Division of responsibility and time for coordination

One approach to strengthening the ownership and responsibility of projects is the division of responsibility between projects. Dividing different development areas and specific actions between the projects has already been recognised by HYCA, and steps have been taken in this direction, for example with running the conference and facilitating the YCAG. However, despite this being a recommendation in the first report, this has had only partial success because of limited resources and 'buy-in' from projects. It has also been recognised that the allocation of sufficient time to coordinate HYCA and its activity will be required in the future.

Leadership

The importance of leadership was highlighted by partners. However, it was also recognised that time for this role had not been allocated sufficiently. The fact that three different staff members have taken on this leadership role, that insufficient time

was allocated to the role and that the first management handover was perhaps inadequate, are all likely to have limited the effectiveness of the collaboration.

By allocating sufficient time to this strategic role, the coordination of the development of HYCA and all its different parts could be improved. Even still, it will likely remain important for each project to play their part willingly and for different areas of development to be strategically planned and given enough capacity and time to become embedded. The division of tasks between the projects ought to mitigate the impact of future leadership changes, as would the establishment of a Deputy Lead role. Strong Leadership, strategic planning and realistic action plans are vital, so too is the communication of and transfer of key information between the HYCA Lead and those projects taking the lead on different areas.

4.1.2 Impact on young carers and families

Enhanced and varied provision

The impact on young carers and families themselves as a direct consequence of the services working as a collaboration is difficult to determine. However, the provision for young carers has been enhanced across the county and this therefore is likely to have impacted positively on the young people and their families themselves. A focus on the impact on young carers and families will be addressed in a separate report.

Although the Big Lottery funding has enabled services to continue to support young carers, there was little change in the *total* number of young carers being supported over the first two years. What does seem to have been achieved however is a more varied offer of interventions across the projects which has included WRAP, YCAG and schools work in some projects. More opportunities (through joint activities such as WRAP and the young carers' festival) have been developed to enable young carers to meet new friends from other projects.

Evidence does not show a marked increase in referrals across the projects which might have been expected as a result of increased awareness across the county. However, there may not be a straightforward link between awareness raising and referrals, for example where professionals have an increased understanding about the projects and their referral criteria, this could have reduced inappropriate referrals from professionals that might historically have been made. HYCA might like to consider monitoring how awareness raising activities impact on the number of referrals made to HYCA services and how appropriate these referrals are.

The database itself has made it easier for projects to share records and has reduced the potential for duplicating assessments of young carers. However, no other concrete examples were provided by projects as to how the improved record keeping and monitoring has enhanced support. This might simply have not been reported by projects. Alternatively, the use of the database may still be too new for projects to recognise how it can be used to enhance practice. Rather than simply for maintaining records, a key aim of assessment and monitoring should be to inform future support for both individual young carers and for young carers collectively. It would therefore be worthwhile HYCA exploring how their assessment and

monitoring procedures and the database could be used most effectively to inform and improve support provision.

4.1.3 Wider impact across Hampshire

The role that HYCA has played through the HCC young carers' operational group in the development of policy and practice across the county was recognised by both HYCA staff and by the HCC Operational Lead for HCC. This would seem to be an important role for several reasons. Firstly 'experience from the field' which HYCA services have, is key to shaping policy and practice that meets the needs of young carers. HYCA services have regular contact with young carers and their families and as the first report highlighted, trusting relationships are often built with staff. Projects therefore have their finger on the pulse when it comes to hearing the voice of young carers through informal mechanisms and more formal ways such as through evaluations and through the YCAG. Projects also are ideally placed to hear from parents as well. They will have frequent interactions and informal chats, through coffee meetings and through the parent WRAP group for example that Winchester is now running. A second important thing which HYCA brings to the table is rich data on young carers across the county which again was recognised positively by the HCC Operational Lead. Thirdly, the collaborative working itself between policy makers at the council and between HYCA projects and the FSS Champions in the districts is likely to bring added value.

It appears that working together as projects and working with HCC has led to increased opportunities and platforms for raising the profile of the services and raising awareness of young carers with stakeholders across the county. The HCC YC eNewsletter now also provides HYCA with an additional channel for promoting what they do. There are perhaps further opportunities for HYCA to develop an even more strategic and systematic approach (perhaps with HCC) to raising awareness of young carers, promoting their services and raising understanding about eligibility and referral processes. Using their county-wide data, HYCA are now in a position to specifically target professionals who are working with specific groups of young carers who are currently underrepresented in HYCA projects.

The potential for duplication by HYCA projects and the FSS in undertaking Outcome Stars with young carers should be addressed, since young carers can often be bombarded with assessment tools. Furthermore, consideration should be given to how assessments undertaken by HYCA services and the statutory young carers' assessment (under the Children Act 1989 and the Care Act 2014) are working together and how any duplication could be avoided.

Differences between projects

The differences between projects appears to have been underestimated and not accounted for sufficiently within this three year project. This has led to different pressures for some of the projects and to frustrations for others. Smaller projects have felt pressurised to grow more quickly than they were able to for example, whereas the larger, more established projects, have felt that they have had to help prop up other projects and although they have shared ideas and practice, have not themselves benefitted in this way.

Going forward therefore, acknowledgment of these differences before collaborative funded projects are established will be important. Joint bids will need to reflect and accommodate the differences of each project and the apportioning of funding should reflect this (see above).

Outcomes and monitoring

HYCA has implemented a range of methods to track progress and the outcomes it is aiming to achieve. A combination of My Star, Shooting Stars, one-to-one reviews with young carers and families, questionnaires and other sources of information such as attendance records and feedback from parents, schools and professionals has been used to monitor and assess progress.

The time needed for measuring impact permeates many different activities that the projects undertake; planning and evaluating activities, assessing young carers (and designing assessments), recording data on the database, monitoring how young carers are progressing and reporting to funders. Although the database has been beneficial to projects with regards to recording data, it has been time-consuming for the HYCA Lead to generate reports from it. Completion of the My Star outcomes tool has also been time-consuming for projects. When the time spent on these activities is aggregated it can be significant. It would be a helpful exercise therefore for HYCA to evaluate the time that is being invested in measuring the impacts of their services and the proportion of time this requires relative to other activities.

Multiple outcomes

HYCA is currently using (or promoting) **a wide range of different outcomes to measure progress (See Appendix 1)**. This includes the three main outcomes for the Big Lottery funded project, 3 'SMART' targets for HCC, other outcomes that projects may be working towards individually, four outcomes on the common HYCA criteria form and 7 outcomes specified on the HYCA promotional flier.

Having multiple outcomes is not uncommon for charities and is a natural consequence of the current funding landscape. However, it is important that as far as possible, the number of outcomes are managed carefully by services and are replicated where possible in order to reduce the complexity of assessment, recording, monitoring and reporting.

The 'Outcomes Exercise' reflected findings from the questionnaire and highlighted that although partners communicated some common themes when citing outcomes, there was not a consensus between HYCA staff about the main outcomes that projects were, or should be working towards. One reason for the lack of consensus on the key outcomes is perhaps the wide range of outcomes that are relevant to young carers in general. In all, 11 different themes (or categories) of outcomes were reported, with some themes having several different outcomes within them. The exercise also highlighted that the 3 BL outcomes were not a clear focus for staff. Consequently, staff were not able to communicate these outcomes consistently nor accurately.

In order for all services to be working in concert with each other, partners need to be clear about the main outcomes that the collaboration is working towards. These outcomes also need to be communicated clearly and simply, with a common

language (e.g. to professionals, young carers, families and funders). It would be helpful for each service to use consistent messaging, for example, on the individual project pages of the HYCA website and in individual project promotional materials.

Before further funding applications are submitted, it might be helpful for HYCA to:

- Achieve a consensus on a **'common-core delivery model' and a simplified set of common objectives and outcomes** for the collaboration (individual projects can then work to additional individual outcomes that are separate from what is required from HYCA).
- Agree on outcomes which can be measured using tools common to all HYCA projects.
- Maintain consistency of outcomes in order that impacts can be monitored over long periods.

Measuring outcomes and monitoring progress should ultimately lead to improvements in outcomes for young carers. It is important therefore that services ensure sufficient time is allocated to enable assessment, monitoring and record keeping to be used effectively to inform the support planning for young carers.

4.1.4 Legacy of the three year project

It is positive that there was optimism regarding the legacy and the future of the collaboration. Generally, it seems that partners regard this project as having created a platform on which to build on. A few partners also viewed the collaboration as still being in its infancy. It might be helpful for HYCA to consider various models of change and to consider where it currently views itself along those change graphs.

5 Conclusions

Using an allocation of The Big Lottery funding, HYCA commissioned the University of Winchester to undertake an independent evaluation of the work of the Alliance over the three year period from September 2016 to August 2019. The aim of this part of the evaluation and this report focusses on the impact of the collaborative approach and builds on the initial research that was undertaken between December 2016 and August 2017 which included an exploration of the HYCA collaboration and its potential benefits. From this initial research there were hopes that the collaboration would have a range of impacts including drawing in further funding, bringing a consistency of support to young carers across Hampshire, providing young carers with further opportunities to meet others living in different areas and increasing the awareness of young carers across the county.

The main finding is that taken as a whole, the collaborative approach of HYCA has been beneficial and has had some positive impacts. All the project staff were in agreement that the collaboration had been beneficial to their project, although there were several negative impacts and challenges that had come about. The collaboration had impacted at three different levels; on individual projects, on young carers and their families directly and in localities and across the county (e.g. at a strategic and policy level).

Firstly, at an individual project level, the collaboration has benefitted projects by providing a forum for projects to support each other and to learn and share practice and resources with each other. Working collaboratively has also helped projects increase consistency of practice across the county, including the collection of data that had been driven by the common database. Projects were working towards the '3-pronged approach' (offering respite activities, family support and support for young carers in schools) which all projects in some way were achieving, however there are variations in the provision across the county (for example how assessments are undertaken) and is therefore not yet standardised. Projects also benefitted from having an increased profile, from being able to run joint activities such as the WRAP programme and from having drawn in additional funding for training staff and delivering WRAP.

New practice has evolved for projects and has been driven forward as a result of sharing practice, modelling interventions and from funding targeted at specific outcomes (e.g. the YCAG), however not all new interventions have been sustained.

The second area that HYCA has made an impact on is on the young carers and families themselves. By working collaboratively, HYCA as a whole has enhanced its provision across the county (for example through WRAP, YCAG and schools work and awareness raising). Although the impact on young carers and families is hard to quantify, they will have benefitted in some areas by having additional support opportunities available to them and by other indirect developments such as project procedures and increased awareness of young carers.

Thirdly, the collaboration has led to wider impacts in the localities and across the county. The engagement and collaboration of projects has increased and HYCA has

had an impact on the development of practice and policy across the county through its collaborative role with HCC and being part of the county young carers' operational group. Furthermore, the rich data on young carers and their families that HYCA collects on the database has been highly valued.

However, the evaluation also found that the collaborative approach to supporting young carers and families has also been challenging at times and has impacted negatively in some areas. Firstly, the differences between projects and their varying starting positions and their capacity seems to have been underestimated, causing pressure on some projects and difficulties for them in developing their projects at the expected rate. Secondly, the protracted development of the database, and the staff training required had an impact on project development as a whole. Thirdly, the time required by HYCA activities, such as the meetings, the reporting requirements and the time to keep the database up to date, has been challenging for some projects. Lastly, the Leadership of HYCA has been a significant challenge to the progress and smooth running of the collaboration. The co-ordination role lacked consistency due to staffing changes and the handover of information appears to have been inadequate. Moreover, the co-ordination role itself seems not to have been adequately resourced.

The findings in this report are important in that they provide a first overview of the impacts at different levels, of the collaborative approach taken by the ten young carer services in Hampshire. The report outlines the positive and negative impacts that the collaborative approach has made and identifies key challenges of the collaboration. The findings have led to recommendations for HYCA and the projects for further developing the collaboration. These recommendations and the findings are likely to be of value to other similar collaborations or to services that are considering developing collaborative approaches.

Going forward it will be helpful for HYCA to be encouraged by the positive impacts that the collaboration has achieved and build on these, but also to respond to the negative impacts and the challenges that have been highlighted. HYCA has already learned lessons and recognised and begun to address several areas for developing its collaborative approach, including the importance of taking into account the differences between projects, the 'buy-in' of projects (before funding applications) and the need to invest further in the coordination role. Another lesson already learned relates to the allocation of funding between projects and HYCA has already taken steps to address how this might be addressed in future funding bids.

It would seem that the collaboration holds further potential that can be tapped into, for example by developing a funding model where new interventions are piloted by individual services and using the database more strategically to raise awareness and support young carers. However, service development should be done with sustainability in mind so that successful new interventions (such as the WRAP programme) can be maintained. There are many areas for potential future research and evaluations. These might focus in more detail at specific areas of the collaborative approach, for example assessment and monitoring outcomes of young carers, the centralisation of funding and raising awareness of young carers.

Recommendations

Consistency of practice

- Recommendations and other new initiatives and processes should be prioritised and included within an Action Plan in order to assimilate systematically into both HYCA and project working practices.
- HYCA should define the 3-pronged approach or any future common offer more explicitly.
- A 'common-core delivery model' is agreed upon with simplified set of common objectives and outcomes
- A strengthened partnership agreement is developed.

Assessment, monitoring and impact

- A 'common-core delivery model' is agreed upon with simplified set of common objectives and outcomes
- Processes for assessment should be further standardised where possible.
- Consider running a workshop focused on outcomes - the key outcomes of HYCA.
- Consistent messaging is developed to communicate the outcomes that HYCA achieves.
- Evaluate how long assessment, monitoring and reporting is taking relative to other activities.
- Ensure sufficient time is allocated to enable assessment, monitoring and record keeping to be used effectively to inform support planning for young carers.
- Consideration should be given as to how assessments undertaken by HYCA services and the statutory young carers' assessment under the Children Act 1989 and the Care Act 2014 are working together and how any duplication could be avoided.

Leadership and coordination

- Coordinated by the HYCA Lead, areas for development are strategically planned with an Action Plan and responsibility for different areas are divided between HYCA partners.

- Consideration should be given as to whether to have a Deputy HYCA Lead and/or small management group to support and deputise for the HYCA Lead.

Time and productivity

- Projects should consider allocating dedicated time for HYCA activity and formalise this in job descriptions so this is viewed as an intrinsic part of individual staff roles.
- Evaluate how long in total measuring impacts takes and the proportion of time this encompasses relative to other activities.
- Re-visit the structure and purpose of HYCA meetings:
 - Consider which staff should attend (should this vary according to focus of meeting?)
 - Consider mixing up with focussed workshops
 - Consider making meetings more outcome focussed
 - Consider using SKYPE or other technology
 - Consider having a regular short 'online coffee morning' for sharing updates rather than at the monthly meeting.

The collaboration, funding and new projects

- Consider different ways for apportioning funding between projects.
- Develop a stronger partnership agreement.
- Seek further collaborative funding to continue to deliver the WRAP training and YCAG.
- Align the timing of evaluations of service provision with future funding bids in order to be able to use learning within those bids
- Plan in sufficient time for assimilation of learning from evaluations.

Promotion of HYCA

- Using data on referrals, explore a strategic and systematic approach (perhaps in collaboration with HCC) to raising awareness of young carers, (Awareness raising activity is monitored in relation to the number, type and appropriateness of referrals made to projects and awareness raising activity is modified accordingly).
- Develop a short quarterly HYCA newsletter for stakeholders (professionals, Schools, families) and /or piggy back on the HCC young carers eNewsletter.

See also previous recommendations from Report 1²²

²² Phelps, D (2017), Supporting young carers: The provision of county-wide support for young carers, University of Winchester.

Recommendations (from Report 1)²³

Recommendations for the HYCA collaboration and its development

(Relevant to the HYCA Alliance specifically and those interested in the development of similar collaborations of services).

Strategic

- All services should prioritise the core areas for the development of HYCA that are required and/or set out in the collaborative bid to the Big Lottery:
 - HYCA as a collaboration and as individual services should prioritise the development and implementation of consistent and accurate data collection.
 - HYCA as a collaboration and as individual services should prioritise the provision of the 'Three-pronged approach': providing respite for young carers, support in schools and support for the family.
- Ensure the partnership agreement is sufficiently robust by including timescales for example and consider what actions should be taken where services are not hitting agreed targets.
- Re-evaluate and modify as appropriate, the HYCA partnership agreement on an annual basis.
- Develop an action plan, divide up tasks and assign different HYCA services with lead roles based on strengths and interests.
- Where possible, align the development of specific areas of work within individual services with other HYCA services.
- Agree on, and embed within HYCA's annual monitoring and review processes, a set of measures for how well HYCA is 1. Delivering a preventative whole family approach 2. Impacting individual young carers.
- HYCA should consider how best to support the development of those HYCA services with less infrastructure than the larger services. This might be achieved through a buddy system.
- HYCA needs to acknowledge the infrastructures of individual HYCA services and consider how best to allocate any future joint funding across services.
- Plan timescales for the development of HYCA that accommodate all HYCA services.

²³ Phelps, D (2017), Supporting young carers: The provision of county-wide support for young carers, University of Winchester.

- Continue monthly HYCA meetings and consider establishing an annual 'HYCA away day' with focused workshops for reviewing and planning purposes and targeted staff training.
- Using the HYCA audit undertaken as part of the study as a guide, agree on metrics for an annual audit and embed this within HYCA's annual monitoring and review processes.
- Develop ways to spread well-developed practice of individual HYCA projects across the other HYCA services. An audit of project strengths may be a useful initial phase.
- Develop a sustainability plan for the HYCA collaboration and identify opportunities for further joint funding bids at an early point.

Development of a consistent approach

- Carry out an audit of individual service processes and consider which of these should be standardised across HYCA services.
- Develop, implement and promote with stakeholders, standardised criteria for young carers and families to be supported by HYCA services.
- Develop a more standardised referral and assessment process across HYCA services: Implement and promote with stakeholders, standardised referral processes, guidelines and forms.
- Simplify the standardised criteria being and be explicit about who can receive a service
- Ensure there is consistency with defining and recording data across services.

Sharing practice and mutual support

- Consider new, creative ways to further develop opportunities for mutual support among HYCA staff.
- Seek collaborative ways of raising awareness of young carers across the county and sharing resources.
- Recognise the value of the character and skills of staff. Seek ways of undertaking joint staff training and development.
- Develop a shared HYCA knowledge bank of resources, tools and forms.
- Consider new, creative ways to further transfer practice between HYCA services, utilising the strengths of services in different domains.
- Capitalise on greater buying power when purchasing resources.

Supporting young carers:

The impact of the Hampshire Young Carers Alliance (HYCA) collaborative approach

- Develop a joint HYCA county wide awareness raising strategy and action plan.

Developing activities collaboratively

- Develop a shared bank of resources for activities and clubs and a shared contact list for activity providers.
- Plan and run more joint activities between HYCA services to enable young carers to meet others from different groups.
- Capitalise on greater buying power when booking activities and trips.

Strengthening communication

- To improve communication and reduce workload, HYCA services should develop and implement an email protocol which includes timescales for responses

Promotion of service

- HYCA as a collaboration should develop more consistent and focused messaging about its aims, its criteria for support and its services, based on the research findings about what is important about the services and its benefits for young carers and families.
- Further develop joint HYCA promotional literature for stakeholders.
- HYCA should strengthen its promotion of its services to young carers, families and professionals to ensure that that all stakeholders are aware and are clear about what the services offer, for example using leaflets, the HYCA and individual service websites and perhaps an annual HYCA 'Open Day'.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Outcomes projects are working to

HYCA currently works to/or is communicating, **a wide range of different outcomes:**

- the three main outcomes for the Big Lottery funded project:
 1. Young carers will report being better able to cope with managing their situations
 2. Young Carers will have improved health, resilience and emotional well-being
 3. Young Carers will feel better equipped to make informed choices and succeed educationally
- 3 'SMART' targets for HCC and
 - SMART 1 - Ensure that there are consistent processes/assessments between the projects that offers an umbrella/consortia for the early identification of young carers, and where appropriate the escalation to the early help hubs where coordinated/multi-agency support is required.
 - SMART 2 – Provide quarterly reports (statistics illustrating total project breakdown) of the number of young people accessing and being supported at level 2 and 3 report the type of support being delivered (i.e. one to one, group). Updates should clearly state the number of new young people engaged to the service per quarter.
 - SMART 3 – All projects to be part of the core membership of Early Help meetings and have regular contact and attendance where possible at weekly meetings. To be evidenced by early help quarterly reports and feedback from projects.
- Other outcomes that projects may be working towards individually for other funders
- Different outcomes on the common HYCA criteria form:
 - Reduce social isolation
 - Enable the young carer to be better able to cope with their caring role
 - To increase confidence and self esteem
 - To improve wellbeing and build resilience
- Outcomes specified on HYCA promotional flier:
 - Improved resilience
 - Higher self-esteem and confidence
 - Building Friendships
 - Upskilling
 - Raising aspirations
 - Empowering positive change
 - Improved well-being & life balance
- Projects also have differing mission and vision statements on the HYCA website

Supporting young carers:
The impact of the Hampshire Young Carers Alliance (HYCA) collaborative approach



CONFIDENCE RELAX TALK FUN STAFF FRIENDS UNDERSTANDING