



Essex Respite & Care Association Impact Report 2024

Why is there a need for our support service?

There is an acute need for mental health support, it fosters stronger relationships and communities. Good mental health contributes to a happier and more resilient society overall.

Mental health is often misunderstood by family, friends, co-workers and others; adults with mental illnesses often experience bullying, physical violence and harassment.

There are strong links between mental illness and learning difficulties, substance misuse, unemployment, gambling and poverty. Poor mental health can affect an individual's safety in the community, often leading to social exclusion.

An estimated **1 in 6** adults have experienced a 'common mental disorder' like depression or anxiety in the past week.

researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk

7% of people (approximately **3.1 million** people in England) reported that they felt lonely often or always, a slight increase of 1 percentage point from 6% in 2021/22.

www.gov.uk

In England, it's estimated about **1 in 4** of us will experience a mental health problem at some point each year.

[Mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk)

One in two of us will be affected by dementia in our lifetime.

Either by caring for someone with the condition, developing it ourselves, or both.

[dementiastatistics.org](https://www.dementiastatistics.org)

Over 2 million People on waiting lists for NHS mental health support in England alone.

[Mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk)

What do we do?

Essex Respite & Care Association provides mental health support and respite.

We support adults living in Essex who suffer from a mental health diagnosis including Dementia, Brain Injury, Stroke, mild to moderate learning disabilities and those who are depressed and socially isolated.

Every client agrees their support plan and sets achievable goals, with our support clients will achieve some, or all the following:

- Manage and improve their mental & physical health
- Improve their self-care and fitness levels
- Improve their general living skills
- Break their social isolation and access their local communities



The difference we made during 2024

Our support workers completed **3,713** visits and delivered a total of **9,301** hours of support across Essex, benefiting **51** clients and **45** caregivers.

During each visit, support workers assess the client's support plan. We worked with our clients to accomplish **239** established goals. Currently, **98** goals have been achieved, **110** are in progress, **13** are newly set, and **6** have yet to be met.

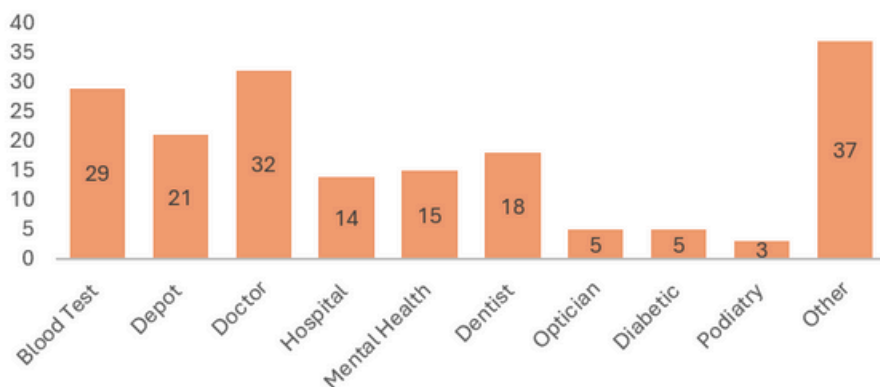
It is essential to acknowledge that some clients may experience a lack of motivation, resulting in slow progress. Our support workers celebrate the small steps clients take toward achieving their goals.

Here are some of our clients' most significant accomplishments over the past year:

- I can now independently do the laundry after receiving support from ERCA.
- I have been able to engage more in the community.
- I can walk longer distances.
- My confidence has increased.
- I feel more motivated to do housework and am less anxious around others.
- I have organised and decorated my flat to my liking.
- I received assistance in acquiring a new bed.
- I am trying to cook for myself more frequently.
- I have successfully participated in voting.
- I have cleared out items from my home.
- I am becoming fitter and healthier.
- I enjoy taking leisurely walks.
- I have started swimming.
- I can walk longer distances.
- I traveled independently from Harlow on one occasion without any issues.
- I am actively going out into the community.

We assisted clients in attending an average of **three** significant medical appointments each week.

APPOINTMENTS SUPPORTED DURING 2024



Only **1 in 3** of our clients report that they are able to attend appointments independently

Support workers helped clients to arrange visits to various places, including hairdressers, gyms, Ikea, cinemas, theatres, local antique markets, and community support groups.

We provide not just a support service, but also advocate for our clients and work in partnership with other organisations to ensure their needs are completely met.

Referrals completed during 2024



We have assisted clients in completing applications for disability parking, benefits, and Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Additionally, we have participated in Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings to discuss and ensure our clients receive ongoing care, as well as drafted letters of support for universities.

Client's view- August 2024 survey results

Every client was looking forward to their visit and decided how the time would be spent.

Less than Half of our clients will see someone else during an average week

Only 52% of clients are able to go out into their local community without support

82% of our clients state accessing the community with a support worker helps to reduce their levels of anxiety.

7/10 visits involved the client going out into their local communities.

Clients reported having help with housework, shopping, laundry, paying bills, cooking, understanding paperwork and recycling.

We asked if clients feel more confident completing these tasks following support 56% said definitely whilst 44% said slightly.

8 out of 10 client's mood improves following their support visit.

88% of clients said having a regular support service from ERCA helped them to manage their own mental health and 82% of clients are able to discuss concerns with their support worker.

We asked our clients what the support service mean to them

Nice to see them, stops me getting lonely and depressed nice to have conversations

GOOD COMPANY AND STOPS THE FEELING OF LONELINESS. Somebody to talk to about a range of things

HELPS ME FEEL MORE CONFIDENT AND HAPPIER

I always look forward to the visits

IMPROVES MY LIFE BECAUSE THEY CAN HELP ME IN DIFFERENT WAYS,

I feel very lucky to have this service as it enables me to go out THE WORLD

Help with daily tasks which I cannot do on my own; shopping, doctors, laundry, dealing with post and appointments etc

MAKES ME FEEL MORE CONFIDENT Someone who listens to me and helps me talk through difficulties

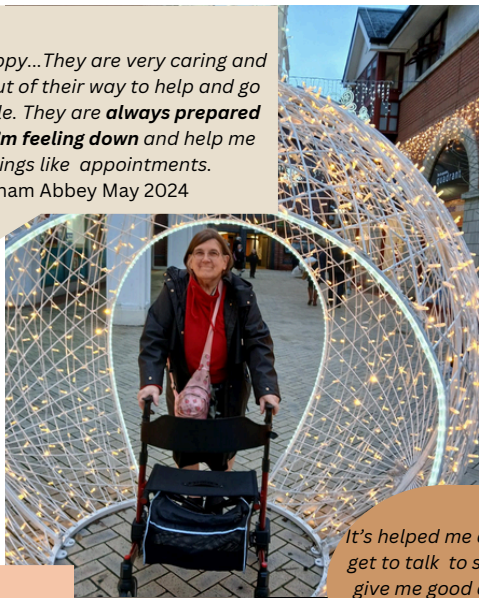
Means everything to us, we would be lost without the service. HAVING REGULAR HELP WITH GOING OUT AND TRANSPORT

Helps break the day up as I don't see many people and get very lonely

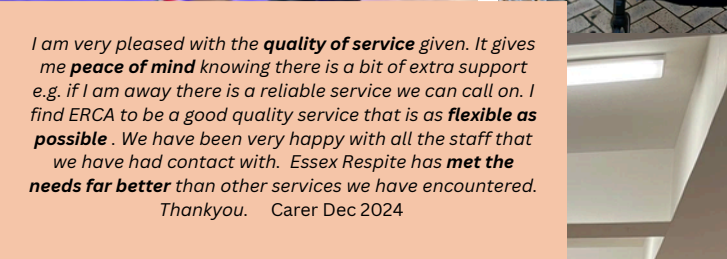
Service Feedback



I am very happy...They are very caring and always go out of their way to help and go the extra mile. They are **always prepared to listen if I'm feeling down** and help me with things like appointments.
Waltham Abbey May 2024



I am **extremely happy** with my care and very grateful after each session – **I feel alive within** Thankyou.'
Harlow Oct 2024



I am very pleased with the **quality of service** given. It gives me **peace of mind** knowing there is a bit of extra support e.g. if I am away there is a reliable service we can call on. I find ERCA to be a good quality service that is as **flexible as possible**. We have been very happy with all the staff that we have had contact with. Essex Respite has **met the needs far better** than other services we have encountered.
Thankyou. Carer Dec 2024

It's helped me a lot just **breaks the boredom**. I get to talk to somebody. They are good. They give me good advice. Overall I'm very happy with ERCA.
Braintree May 2024



'I very much enjoy the visits by our support workers, the service is superb. They are very nice. I enjoy going shopping with them and going to lovely places. It's so nice seeing a friendly face and we talk together. Sorting boxes, going through things and help me pay for my TV licence. It makes me feel great for my mental health. **It brings sunshine into my life.**' Heybridge Oct 2024

ERCA help me deal with a range of practical/psychological issues at home and I get to enjoy lovely days out in the company of their friendly support workers and the **highlight of each week** is my visit. Most importantly they provide EXACTLY the sort of emotional support I need. Their logo says, "central to your needs". They really do provide special tailored care to their clients. There is a wonderful caring ethos at ERCA, something very special, unique to the charity, in my opinion you will not find a better organisation than ERCA.
Harlow January 2024



Volunteers

Throughout 2024 we have welcomed volunteers in the office who have assisted us with the day to day running of the charity. The testimonial below highlights the benefit to both the charity and volunteer.

I became a volunteer as my employer suggested volunteering would aid me in returning to working after having been off long-term sick due to my mental health. During my time at ERCA I have assisted in many different administrative tasks and attended two staff training days.

Whilst volunteering at ERCA there was a marked improvement in my confidence, competence and overall wellbeing and I am incredibly grateful for the experience. I now consider myself to be fully recovered and would like to thank ERCA for the huge part they have played in my recovery process.

I believe the Charity provides a unique, wonderfully caring and much needed service that I hope will continue long into the future for the sake of those who are suffering in a way that I have suffered myself.

We are currently looking for volunteers who can help us market the charity with leaflet drops or via social media.

Fundraising

We rely on grants and donations to continue to provide our support service and secure the future of Essex Respite & Care Association. Every year there is greater competition to secure this much needed funding.

MARSH
Charitable Trust

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We are extremely grateful to have received support from the following Organisations and Trusts which allows us to continue with our essential support service helping vulnerable adults in Essex live a happy and healthy life.

Essex
Community
Foundation



The Edward Gostling Foundation
Enhancing Quality of Life for People in Need

Stronger
Starts.

Tula
TULA FOUNDATION



During 2024 our staff, trustees and clients have looked at ways in which they can help generate funds and have managed to raise an amazing **£5,000** taking part in a sponsored bike ride from Hockley to Richmond, participating in The FunWalk 2024 and the London Hyrox Men's Doubles.



Scan to donate



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Registered Charity No. 1051589



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