

# WHO CARES? A Personal Perspective on 21st Century caring and opportunities (and challenges) for the future

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## **WHAT WE WANT – A bigger, bolder and braver view of social care!**

- ‘We ALL want to live in the place we call home with the people and things we love, in communities where we look out for one another, doing things that matter to us.’ *[Social Care Future]***
- But a ‘reality check’ shows both increased post-covid pressures across the sector and importantly the potential of unpaid carers themselves to help shape a very different future.**

# Five decades of caring – From institution to family life – messages from a veteran carer!



**‘Collaborative care’ – ‘we are the experts by experience’ working with the NHS and social care but we’re team players too. Use us or lose us!’**

- **Caring often means managing complexity!** Pandemic underlined the importance of mutual respect, recognition and coproduction.
- **‘It was crisis management, not care and support’.** Hospital discharges too often ‘tipping points’ for carers.
- **Carers increasingly care coordinators** [for multiple services in and out of the NHS – *we need information to care well*].



Managing the Web of Care  
(Last 7 yrs)

Care team  
2 live-in carers  
(alternating weekly)  
Replacement carer  
[Some night nursing  
– Health]  
Emergency carers  
& Barbara

Out-of-Hours  
Doctors/  
Paramedics

Consultant

Continence  
Adviser

GP

District  
Nurses

Speech &  
Language Adviser

Dementia  
Advisory  
Nurse?

Dietician

Malcolm &  
Barbara

Community  
Dentist

Social  
Worker

Occupational  
Therapist

Direct  
Payments  
Team;  
Rowan  
Org.

Alzheimer's  
Soc outreach  
worker

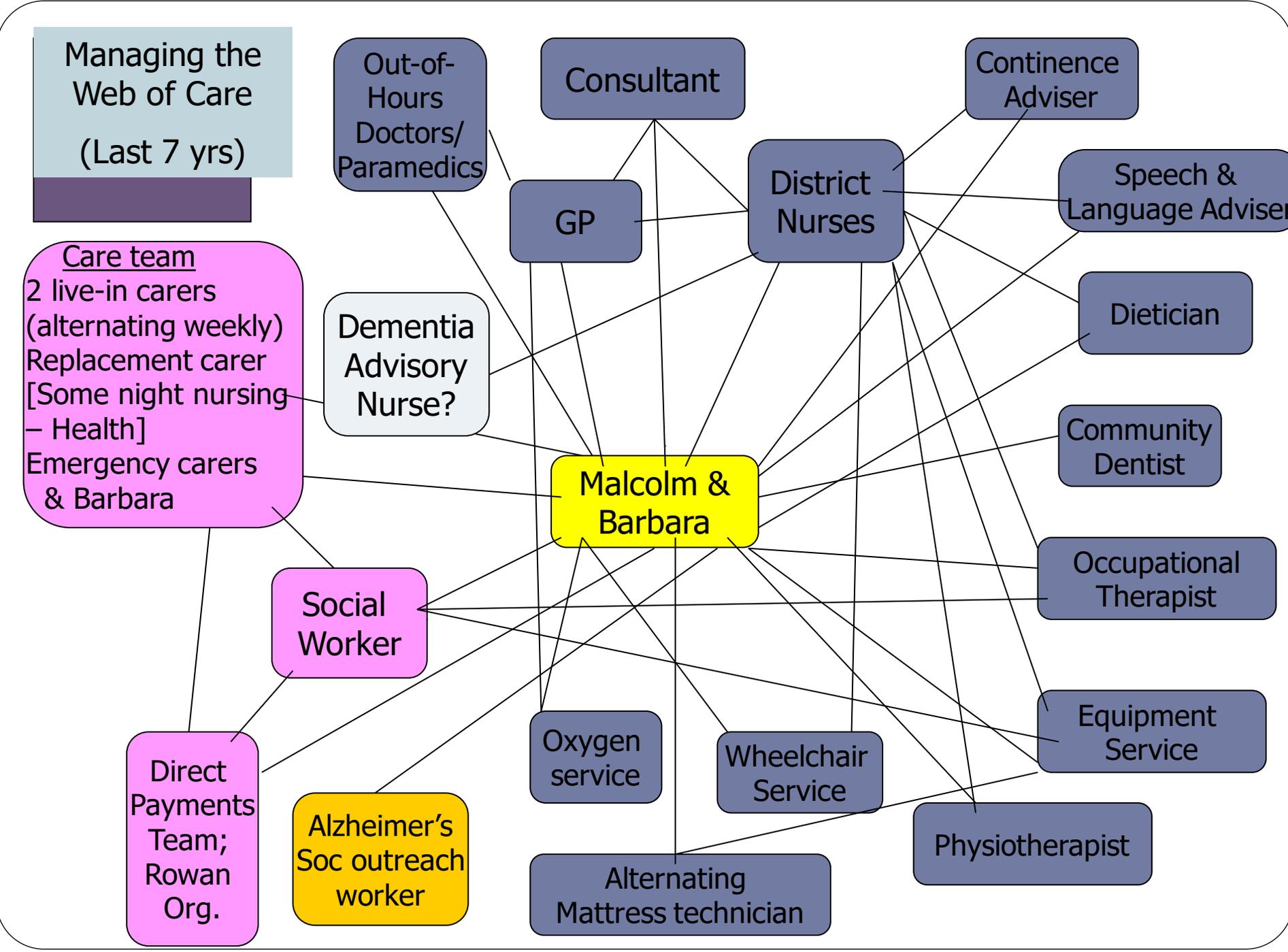
Oxygen  
service

Wheelchair  
Service

Equipment  
Service

Alternating  
Mattress technician

Physiotherapist



## Looking to the future – More inter-generational care and increase in *younger* people caring or needing care and support.

- **Planning for digital futures**  
– the ‘smart house’ reduces dependency on carers and increases independence.
- **Reconnection:** we still have a digital divide, but a wealth of opportunities from Alexa to robots and managing health conditions at home.
- **BUT we still need people** and (and the neighbours don’t always appreciate Alexa!)



**‘Building back better’ – ‘ASK US! *We’re the experts, if you listen.*’ Putting carers themselves at the heart of health and social care reform and asking what THEY want .**

- **Peer support** - Sharing the journey!
- **Managing transitions**  
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- **Co-production and creativity**
- **‘Having the big conversations** to influence, co-design and co-produce a better future. Solidarity matters!’.



# And a reminder: *‘What’s his future, what happens when I’m not here?’*

- **‘Demographic change** –the first generation of disabled people who are likely to outlive their parents!’
- **‘The big anxiety** – we need a revolution in housing with support. For older people, housing IS part of a triangle of care. ‘
- **‘WHO cares when I can’t?’**



## **Social Care Reform? – We already have the legal framework to support carers. Can we ensure that it works?**

- **Care Act 2014 gives carers a legal right to a carers assessment (which should embrace health and social care as appropriate).**
- **Carers have ‘parity of esteem’ with the person they support or do they?.**
- **Carers should be asked IF they are willing and able to carry out the care specified in their relative’s care plan.**
- **Looking after the ‘care market’ – many carers need to share their care with care workers, Personal assistants and care homes – we need to recognise our shared ‘community of care’.**

## Looking to the future for Health and Social Care Reform – what would make a difference for me?

- **Parity of esteem for health and social care!**
- **Paying for care – what's fair and affordable for the state, the community and the family?**
- **'Shared care': Investing in our workforce (our partners in care!)**
- **With demographic change, we need a Long Term Plan for social care – no quick fix.**

# A final reflection.....'people matter most!'

Maya Angelou

I've learned that  
people will forget what you said,  
people will forget what you did,  
but people will never forget  
how you made them feel.