

Easy Read



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National Strategy for Unpaid Carers

We want to know what you think about our new plans



February 2026

How to use this document



This is an Easy Read version of: **National Strategy for Unpaid Carers 2026.**



You might need help to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Where the document says **we**, this means **Welsh Government**. For more information contact:

Website: gov.wales/draft-national-strategy-unpaid-carers-2026

Email: UnpaidCarersPolicy@gov.wales



Hawdd ei Ddeall Cymru
Easy Read Wales

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About this booklet



We have made this new plan to support unpaid carers in Wales. It is known as a strategy.



We also made a plan in 2021. This strategy replaces that.



We would like to know what you think of the strategy.

How to respond



Please read this then answer the questions in the Response Form.



You can answer them here: gov.wales/draft-national-strategy-unpaid-carers-2026



Or email your answers to:
UnpaidCarersPolicy@gov.wales



Or you can post your answers to:
Unpaid Carers Policy Team
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF10 3NQ



We need to receive your answers by **Monday, 13 April 2026.**

How we use your personal information

If you would like an Easy Read version of how we use and store your personal information, please contact:



Data Protection Officer

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

CARDIFF

CF10 3NQ



Email: dataprotectionofficer@gov.wales

About the Strategy



Welsh government is making a new National Strategy for Unpaid Carers.



This is a draft strategy. That means it is not the final version.



This is a plan for what we need to do to help and support unpaid carers.



We will make the final version when we have listened to people's views.



It is based on 8 main priorities. Priorities means the 8 important areas we think we need to focus on.



We made these priorities by speaking with:

- unpaid carers
- and organisations across Wales.



We have then made actions. These are the things we need to do to achieve the priorities.

The 8 priorities are:



1. **Recognition and awareness** – This means we want to make sure more people know about unpaid carers.



2. **Access to services** – Unpaid carers need support too. They need to know their rights and are assessed for their needs.



3. **Young carers** – they need support through education and community services. They also need regular assessments for support.



4. **Financial hardship** – this means unpaid carers often don't have enough money. They need support to access benefits.



5. **Paid employment** – unpaid carers need support to stay in work and return to work. Employers need to support unpaid carers.



6. **Respite and breaks from caring** – respite means taking a break. There needs to be more options to support people.



7. **Mental health and wellbeing** – check services and support groups work well.



8. **Carers and care planning** – make sure carers are fully involved in having a say about those they care for. For example, care planning and leaving hospital.

What is an unpaid carer?



Unpaid carers are different from paid social care workers or volunteers working through an organisation.



It is a person who provides care for an adult or disabled child. But they are not doing it as part of a job.



Some people prefer not to use the term unpaid carer.

What people told us



Unpaid carers often say they feel they are not valued or heard.



Many people do not understand how important their role is. And the rights they have.



Many are not given support they need or when they need it.



Some people said they felt supported. Others felt they weren't.



Some said they waited a long time to have their needs assessed.



Many people said peer support groups were important. These are groups where carers meet up and support each other.



Many young carers feel they are not listened to. They find it hard to balance caring with school or college.



They often miss out on other activities. They also experience a lot of stress and need more support.



They feel they should have more of a say on how things are done.



Unpaid carers often do not have enough money. They often have high costs for things like heating and transport.



Many found it hard to care and to work. This often means people leave their jobs or work less hours.



They also said they had to wait for assessments for those they cared for, or themselves. This was hard. It means they were waiting for support.



Some said their employers were helpful and supported them. Others said they were not understood.



Many carers felt respite care was not good enough. This is a really important issue for them.



Many carers are very stressed. They often feel alone and very tired. They need more support.



People with learning disabilities often don't get information in Easy Read. People from ethnic minority groups also often don't get information they can understand.



They also said there were less day services. This means more caring duties for them.



The 8 priorities are based on what unpaid carers have told us. They are about how they feel and what they need.



We will now talk about each priority and the actions that need to be taken.



The actions will be carried out by Welsh Government, local councils, health services, care organisations and others.

Priority 1: Identification and recognition

This means:



- We want more people to understand who unpaid carers are and what they do.



- We want more unpaid carers to recognise their own roles.



- We want more unpaid carers to be supported.

Actions:



- There will be a campaign talking about unpaid carers and their rights.



- Make online training and info about unpaid carers.



- Make sure more health and social care staff do the online training. Including GPs.



- Make sure more people know about young carers.



- Make sure Health Boards record details of unpaid carers.



- Make sure staff who work for the council know enough about unpaid carers.

Priority 2: Access to services

This means:



- We want more unpaid carers to know what rights they have.

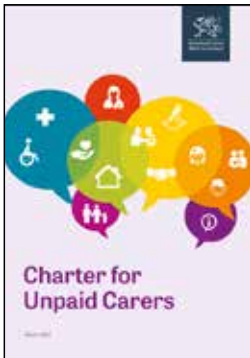


- We want more unpaid carers to have a carers' needs assessment. When they need it.



- We want them to receive the support they need.

Actions:



- Make sure more people know about the Carers' Charter.



- Carer organisations will run campaigns about carers rights.



- Make sure people get the right information about assessments.



- Make sure staff are well trained.



- Councils improve how to re-assess carers when their needs change.



- More carers have support plans through their council.



- Unpaid carers get the right information about services and support plans.

Priority 3: Young carers

This means:



- We want young carers to know their rights.



- We want them to have a say on services.



- We want local councils to check young carers are not doing too much. For example, making sure their education or wellbeing is not affected from caring.



- We want young carers to be supported in their school or college.



- We want better information about wellbeing for young carers. We also want more mental health support.



- We want Young Carer Identity Cards to be recognised in schools and chemists.



- We want more services to understand and listen to young carers. For example, health and the police.



- We want to make sure they don't lose out on chances for learning and work.

Actions:



- Have information on social media about the Young Carers Covenant.



- More services ask for young carers' views.



- Local councils make sure assessments of young carers take place. Also repeated when changes happen.



- Young carers get the support they need. This should be in a Carers' Support Plan.



- Councils check young carers are not doing too much.



- Schools and colleges support young carers and have rules in place to help them do that.



- Councils keep running the Young Carer Identity Cards.



- Welsh Government to make sure chemists know about these cards.



- Young carers get mental health and wellbeing support.



- Young carers should have a say about those they are caring for. When it is right to do so.



- Make sure more staff working in education settings have information to support young carers.



- Young carers to have access to respite and short breaks when they need it.

Priority 4: Financial hardship



This means:

- We want unpaid carers to know what benefits they can receive and how to make the most of their income.

Actions:



- Unpaid carers are recognised for benefits and services they can receive.



- Services staff tell unpaid carers where to go to get help with benefits.



- Carers services give information about benefits.



- The Welsh Government Carers Support Fund keeps running.

Priority5: Paid employment

This means:



- Unpaid carers are able to stay in work or return to work. This won't affect support for the person they care for.



- Employment support organisations know more about unpaid carers.



- Employers know about carers rights and are positive about employing carers.

Actions:



- Carers needs assessments cover the carers choices about work.



- The care and support plan includes the care services needed when they are in work.



- Staff working in job support roles know about unpaid carers and their rights.



- Unpaid carers get the right support to return to work.



- Employers have information about carers and their rights in work.



- Welsh Government and others will look into ways of improving the workplace for carers.

Priority 6: Respite care and breaks



This means:

- Unpaid carers can access breaks from caring. These are right for them and those they care for.

Actions:



- Local councils to review and develop respite services. This includes shorter breaks and holidays.



- Unpaid carers get the information they need about respite.



- The Short Breaks Scheme continues to provide carers with breaks from caring.

Priority 7: Mental health and wellbeing

This means:



- Unpaid carers can manage their mental health and wellbeing.



- Unpaid carers at risk of suicide are supported. Suicide is when someone tries to take their own life.



- Unpaid carers get support if caring ends.

Actions:



- Councils and health services provide services to support mental health for carers.



- Carer organisations provide wellbeing support.



- Mental health services learn more about carers.



- Training is given to organisations who support carers about suicide.



- More information is made about life after caring.

Priority 8: Carers in care planning

This means:



- Unpaid carers are fully involved in assessments, care plans and treatment plans.



- Unpaid carers are fully involved when the person they care for leaves hospital. They also feel supported.



- Unpaid carers are involved in decisions about health and social care services.

Actions:



- Staff involve unpaid carers in assessment, care plans, treatment plans and reviews.



- Staff involve carers when a person leaves hospital.



- Unpaid carers are listened to when decisions are made about care and support.