



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

# Charter for unpaid carers: youth friendly version

Youth friendly version of the Charter for Unpaid Carers, explaining the rights and principles of unpaid carers.

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# Introduction

Unpaid carers look after someone in their family, a relative, or a friend because they:

- have a disability
- have an illness
- have mental health issues
- have a substance misuse issue
- have other issues

The Welsh Government wants unpaid carers to be valued and have their rights respected. What carers do is important.

**The charter for unpaid carers.** It sets out the legal rights of all unpaid carers in Wales.

We developed it with unpaid carers, their representatives and professionals. We want to raise awareness of it so:

- all unpaid carers know about their rights
- unpaid carers recognise when they aren't getting their rights
- professionals, in all services, know about unpaid carers rights

## The right to well-being

Your local authority, local health board and Welsh Ministers must promote your well-being, so you get the support you need.

## What this looks like

You'll get support so you can be healthy in all areas of your life.

## Support that makes a difference

Making sure you get breaks from caring and opportunities to work or learn makes a big difference to your well-being. This type of support should be part of your needs assessment.

## Story

Sarah is an unpaid carer. She found out about a Small Grants Scheme. She used a grant to pay for her gym membership. Doing aqua-fit, yoga and dance classes lifted her well-being, and she met new friends.

## Example

The Young Carers in School Programme in Gwent has:

- staff training
- assembly videos
- information for families on young carer services
- information, advice and help for schools

# **The right to have information, advice and support**

Your local authority must have information, advice and support that are easy to find and easy to understand.

## **What this looks like**

You'll get the right information, advice and support at the right time.

### **Information that makes a difference**

The information you get should be easy to find, easy to understand, and help you get the support you need.

Staff across all services should know about your rights and make sure you have the information you need. This includes staff working in:

- health care services such as a local pharmacy or GP surgery
- social care services
- advocacy support services
- education services such as teachers
- community services
- organisations that support carers

## **Support with money issues**

You should be able to find information on benefits, grants and money management advice.

## Direct payments

More information about direct payments is available on the [Direct Payments Resource Hub](#)

## Story

Susan is an unpaid carer. She was worried about bills and caring. She went to CAB4Carers for advice. They looked at her income and helped her claim the benefits she could get. They also made sure she had a Carers' Needs Assessment from her local authority, so she had more support.

## The right to an assessment

Your local authority must offer you a Carers' Needs Assessment.

## What this looks like

You'll get a carers' needs assessment that will spot what you need, so you get the right support.

## Getting the support, you need

During your Carers' Needs Assessment staff will explain everything to you. They will be clear about what is happening, the process, and the support you can expect.

## Story

Bob is an unpaid carer. He went to NEWCIS, a carers organisation. The stress of caring was affecting his health. Bob didn't believe he needed help and didn't want to ask. Staff worked with him, assessed his needs and together they made a plan for the future. The plan included support for his mental health, advice for money issues and taking breaks away from caring.

## The right to have a voice and control over decisions

Your local authority must ask you what matters to you and involve you in decisions about your support.

## What this looks like

You'll have opportunities to take part and be listened to.

## Being involved

You will be involved in decisions that affect your life and the services you use. This means you can have a voice in the:

- development of policy and services
- planning and delivery of services
- development of research and training

Services should understand how important this is and make sure you have the

support you need to take part.

## Having control over your support

Direct payments are a way for you to arrange your own care and support. They can be used to buy services or equipment. Direct payments:

- don't affect benefits or income tax
- can improve people's choice, control and independence

### Example

In 2020-21, we involved Unpaid Carers from across Wales to help us write our new Strategy for Unpaid Carers. They told us what was important, and the support they needed. This shaped the plan and the priorities we focussed on.

## The right to advocacy

Your local authority must let you know about advocacy services.

### What this looks like

You'll have someone on your side so your opinions are heard and valued.

### Support in every situation

It can be stressful when there is a lot of information to take in, or decisions to be



made. You can have an advocate who will help you understand things, or help you get heard if you feel people aren't listening.

## Story

Fiona cared for her dad who had to go into hospital. She was frustrated that no one was keeping her up to date on what was happening. She went to carers' support and got an advocate. They helped her communicate with the doctors, nurses and hospital staff. They also made sure Fiona was involved in planning how her dad left the hospital, so they had the support they needed.

## Other rights

You also have rights in:

The Human Rights Act 1998 including:

- the right to respect for a private and family life. Article 8

## The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

If you're a young carer, you have rights in the UNCRC including:

- the right to have opinions heard and taken seriously. Article 12
- the right to an education. Article 29
- the right to have fun. Article 31

## The ‘active offer’

You have a right to support in the language you choose. Services must offer you support in Welsh without you having to ask for it. We call this the 'active offer'.

## When there's an issue

If you have an issue, or feel you're not getting your rights, you can make a complaint. Local authorities, health services and organisations should give you information explaining how to do this.

## NHS Wales - Putting Things Right

If you have issues about support, try to talk to the staff first so they have a chance to put things right. If you still have an issue, you can contact.

**NHS Wales complaints and concerns: Putting Things Right**

## Local authority complaints process

Every local authority has a complaints process. You can find out about it and how to make a complaint on your local authority website or calling them.

There's also a list of **[council contact telephone numbers and their websites](#)**

## Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

If you go through a complaints process and are still not happy, you can make a complaint to:

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales  
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae  
Pencoed  
CF31 5LJ

0300 790 0203

[ask@ombudsman.wales](mailto:ask@ombudsman.wales)

## Care Inspectorate Wales

You can give feedback about services online:

<https://careinspectorate.wales/providing-feedback-about-care-services>  
<https://careinspectorate.wales/contact-us/raise-concern>

## Community Health Councils

Each local health board has a community health council that gives free advice and support to people who have a complaint. You can contact them at:

02920 235558

[enquiries@waleschc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@waleschc.org.uk)

**[Your local CHC - Board of Community Health Councils in Wales](#)**

[nhs.wales](https://nhs.uk))

## Other useful contacts

### Carers Wales:

Advice line — Monday to Friday: 0808 808 7777

[www.carersuk.org/wales](https://www.carersuk.org/wales)

### Carers Trust Wales

0300 772 9702

[wales@carers.org](mailto:wales@carers.org)

[Our work in Wales - Carers Trust](#)

### All Wales Forum:

029 2081 1120

[admin@allwalesforum.org.uk](mailto:admin@allwalesforum.org.uk)

[www.allwalesforum.org.uk](https://www.allwalesforum.org.uk)

### Age Cymru:

0300 303 4498

[advice@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:advice@agecymru.org.uk)

[www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/)

## **Older People's Commissioner for Wales**

03442 640670 / 02920 445030

[ask@olderpeoplewales.com](mailto:ask@olderpeoplewales.com)

## **Older People's Commissioner for Wales**

## **Children's Commissioner for Wales**

01792 765600

[post@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:post@childcomwales.org.uk)

[www.childcomwales.org.uk](http://www.childcomwales.org.uk)

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