



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY, DOCUMENT

Unpaid carers delivery plan annual report 2023

How we have worked together with partners to progress the national strategy for unpaid carers.

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Strategy for unpaid carers: delivery plan annual report 1 January to 31 December 2023

This report sets out the progress made against our [national strategy for unpaid carers](#). It describes our collective achievements working with local authorities, local health boards, the third sector and unpaid carers.

This overview document highlights our priorities and achievements from this past calendar year including:

- the short breaks fund
- the carers support fund
- the carer aware programme
- supporting carers with hospital discharge
- the young carers ID card project

Short breaks fund

Our £9 million short breaks scheme (2022 to 2025) continues to offer unpaid carers additional opportunities to take a time out from their caring role and have a life alongside caring. The funding can be used for short holidays, day trips and other innovative approaches such as attending a weekly keep-fit class or going to the cinema with friends.

Carers Trust Wales is the national coordinating body for the scheme and is working collaboratively with Regional Partnership Boards and the third sector across Wales to encourage innovation and promote good practice. The programme aims to deliver 30,000 short breaks for unpaid carers across Wales over the 3 year period.

A third sector grant scheme, Amser, was launched in January 2023, as an

additional aspect of the short breaks fund. This is administered by Carers Trust Wales who are working with over 30 local carers groups to provide additional short break opportunities. The programme has attracted carers who were not previously known to services. The value of the scheme is not just in providing much needed breaks from caring, but in raising awareness of support services for carers more generally.

Carers support fund

Our £4.5 million carers support fund (2022 to 2025) enables unpaid carers to access small grants and support services offering financial advice and information. The fund is administered by Carers Trust Wales and enables carers on low incomes to buy basic essential items such as food or school uniforms or pay an outstanding utility bill. In some areas, 70% of applicants were previously unknown carers who now have access to information advice and support.

Supporting unpaid carers at point of hospital admission and discharge

We provided £1 million to the 7 local health boards in Wales to support unpaid carers when the person they care for is admitted to or discharged from hospital. Health boards have schemes and initiatives in place to identify and support carers, including where increased levels of care are needed at discharge. These schemes also enable carers to consider how their own health and wellbeing needs can be supported to aid them in their caring role. This funding has continued for 2024 to 2025.

Carer aware

Welsh Government has continued to fund Carers Wales and Carers Trust Wales to deliver the carer aware project. The project focuses on increasing carer recognition, respect and support across health and social care settings. This helps to raise awareness of unpaid carers rights and supports unpaid carers to be more involved. Training is provided to social workers and health care practitioners. Guidance and good practice principles have also been established. This includes a hospital discharge guide, delivery of training and a co-produced toolkit enabling healthcare settings and patient experience teams to recognise unpaid carers.

Young carers ID card

The young carers ID card operates across all local authorities in Wales. It is intended to be a key tool to help young carers identify themselves to teachers and staff in schools and colleges, as well as with their local health services such as a GP or pharmacist. We are currently undertaking a review of the scheme to ensure that young carers are recognised in school and college settings and are aware of, and can easily access, the ID card.

Carer representation

We continue to support the Young Carers Advisory Board, which we established in 2022. The Board, made up entirely of young carers, provides a valuable resource to scrutinise Welsh Government policies and inform policy considerations from a young carers' perspective.

During the year, we established new members on the Ministerial Advisory Group for Unpaid Carers. There are now 3 places for adult and young carers. Unpaid

carers bring valuable lived experience to the group, alongside representation from our national carers' organisations.

Information, advice and assistance (IAA) and carers' needs assessments

Welsh Government commissioned the Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru (ADSSC) to lead a rapid review of how the rights of unpaid carers are being upheld. The [report was published in November 2023](#).

In response, the Welsh Government established a task and finish group in January 2024, comprising key stakeholder representatives. The focus of this important work is to promote national best practice in the provision of information, advice and assistance to unpaid carers and the delivery of carers' needs assessments. We are working collaboratively with unpaid carers, local authorities and health boards.

Carers leave act

Our strategy for unpaid carers recognises the important role that employers play in enabling unpaid carers to work alongside their caring role. The [unpaid carer's leave act 2023](#) came into force on 6 April 2024 and brings in the right to 1 week's unpaid leave per year for employees who are providing or arranging care for a relative or dependant. We welcome this provision and have worked with the UK Government as the bill developed. We are working closely with Carers Wales to ensure employers are aware of their obligations and working carers are aware of their rights under the act.

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