



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Charter for Unpaid Carers

Summary

The Charter for Unpaid Carers sets out the legal rights of unpaid carers in Wales under the **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014**.

Principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

- Voice and Control
- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Well-being
- Co-production

Community based preventative support

Early intervention and prevention can help unpaid carers and the people they care for to continue with their caring role and avoid reaching a crisis point before accessing vital support services. Prevention should be a consistent focus for a local authority in meeting people's care and support needs and support needs for carers.

Rights under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

- Right to well-being
- Right to information, advice and assistance
- Right to assessment
- Right to have your voice heard and control over decisions about your support
- Right to advocacy

Access to information, advice and assistance

Local authorities and health boards must make sure unpaid carers can get information and advice about what care and support is available and how to access that support. Information, advice and assistance must be provided in a way everyone can understand and should take account of language needs.

“Active offer” of Welsh Language

All carers should be made an “active offer” of using the Welsh language. The responsibility is on health and social care services to offer services in Welsh rather than rely on the carer, or person they care for, having to request them.

Carers' needs assessment

Unpaid carers have a right to have a carers' needs assessment and, where eligible needs are identified, to have them met to help them achieve the outcomes they need. Such an assessment is separate from any assessment of the needs of the person they care for.

Co-production

Unpaid carers should be equal partners in the creation of policy and services. This means being given a voice in policy and service development, planning and delivery, but also in the development of research and training.

Direct payments

Direct payments are intended to improve choice, control and independence for people. Individuals can work with the local authority to decide how their care and support needs will be met using direct payments. The individual or unpaid carer can decide who provides that support and control how, where and when it is delivered.

Hospital discharge

Unpaid carers should be identified and meaningfully consulted with from the start of the hospital discharge process. Unpaid carers should be treated as someone who has relevant and important knowledge about the person they care for, and they should also be reminded at this stage that they have a choice over whether to begin or continue caring.

NHS Wales – putting things right

If you have concerns about your care or treatment, it is recommended that you talk to the staff involved with your care or that of someone you care for, as soon as possible. They will try to resolve your concerns immediately. If this does not help, or you do not want to speak to the staff, you can contact the health board or trust's complaints team.

Unpaid carers in education and employment

Under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act, there is a clear requirement for education and employment to be considered as part of a carers' needs assessment. The assessment should consider whether the unpaid carer works or wishes to do so; whether the carer is participating in or wishes to participate in education, training or any leisure activity, and in the case of a carer who is a child, their developmental needs and whether it is appropriate for the child to provide the care (or any care) in light of those needs.

Local authority complaints process

Local authorities in Wales are expected to have formal processes in place for when there is dissatisfaction or concern about the standard of service provided. The Complaints Officer for the local authority will provide advice and support and will help to determine if and when the complaint should move from local resolution to formal investigation.

Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance is a UK Government benefit for unpaid carers. You could get £69.70 a week if you care for someone at least 35 hours a week and they get certain benefits. You do not have to be related to, or live with, the person you care for. You do not get paid extra if you care for more than one person. If someone else also cares for the same person as you, only one of you can claim Carer's Allowance.

Representation and advocacy

If you are unable to fully take part in discussions yourself as a carer, an advocate is someone who can help make your voice heard when decisions are made about your support. An independent advocate must be arranged if you are unable to speak up for yourself or do not have someone to support you to express your views, wishes and feelings.

If you would like to know more about the rights of unpaid carers under the **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 please read our more comprehensive **Charter for Unpaid Carers document**.**