

Charter for Unpaid Carers



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



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



have a disability



have an illness



have other issues



have mental health issues



have a substance misuse issue

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 such as school 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 [Direct payments: a guide | SOCIALCARE.WALES](#)



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



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



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.



Example

In 2020-21 Unpaid carers from across Wales helped us write our new **Strategy for Unpaid Carers**. They told us what was important, and the support they needed. This shaped the plan and our priorities.



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 talk to 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**

CYMRAG

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 | GOV.WALES

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 at: **Understanding your rights as a carer (PDF)**

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

Telephone: **0300 790 0203**

Email: **ask@ombudsman.wales**

www.ombudsman.wales

Care Inspectorate Wales

You can give feedback about services online:

**Providing feedback about care services |
CAREINSPECTORATE.WALES**

**Raising a concern about care services |
CAREINSPECTORATE.WALES**

Community Health Councils

Llais is an independent organisation which can help if you need to raise a concern or complain about an NHS or social care service. They will provide free, independent, and confidential support.

www.llaiswales.org/have-your-say

You can find the contact details for your local area at:

www.llaiswales.org/in-your-area

Llais, 3rd Floor, 33–35 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9HB

Telephone: **02920 235 558**

E-mail: **enquiries@llaiscymru.org** or use the general enquiries contact form online.

From April 2023 the new Citizen Voice Body will represent the voices and opinions of people in Wales about health and social care services.



Other useful contacts



Carers Wales

Advice line — Monday to Friday:
0808 808 7777
www.carersuk.org/wales



Age Cymru

Telephone: **0300 303 4498**
E-mail: advice@agecymru.org.uk
www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru



Carers Trust Wales

Telephone: **0300 772 9702**
E-mail: wales@carers.org
<https://carers.org>



Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Telephone: **03442 640670 / 02920 445030**
E-mail: ask@olderpeoplewales.com
<https://olderpeople.wales>



All Wales Forum

Telephone: **029 2081 1120**
E-mail: admin@allwalesforum.org.uk
www.allwalesforum.org.uk



Children's Commissioner for Wales

Telephone: **01792 765600**
E-mail: post@childcomwales.org.uk
www.childcomwales.org.uk