Easy Read

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National strategy for unpaid carers

A plan to support unpaid carers



November 2026

How to use this document

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



You may need support 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:

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National strategy for unpaid carers | GOV.WALES

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Easy Read Wales

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Important words used in this document



Assessment

Assessment is a way of finding out if someone needs help, support or care. This is done by asking questions and finding out about you.



Older people

Older people in this document usually means people aged 60 or over.



Respite

Respite means having a break from caring.

Someone else may provide care while the unpaid carer takes a break or does other things.



Unpaid carers

This means someone who cares for another person but does not get paid for it.

Some people who care for others may not see themselves as unpaid carers.



Young carers

A young carer is a child under 18 who cares for someone.



Young adult carer

A young adult carer is usually someone aged 16 to 25.

About this document



We have made a new plan to support unpaid carers in Wales. It is called **National Strategy for Unpaid Carers**.



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



The Plan has 7 **priorities**. **Priorities** means the important areas we think we need to focus on.



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

Our priorities



Our main aim is to improve the lives of unpaid carers. We will do this by focusing on these 7 important areas:

1. Recognising unpaid carers



This means we want to make sure more people know about unpaid carers.



Make sure carers from all backgrounds are recognised.

2. Access to services



Give carers clear information and advice. Help them get the support they need.



3. Young carers

Find and support young carers early. Make sure they can enjoy their childhood and future.



4. Money and paid work

Help carers with money, education and work. Support them to balance caring with work.



5. Respite - respite means taking a break.

Help carers get time away from their caring role. Make sure they can have a break when they need one.



6. Mental health and well-being

Support carers with their mental health and well-being. Make sure they can get help when they need it.

7. Being involved in care decisions



Involve carers in decisions about the person they care for.



Give them clear information and support when things change.

Priority 1: Recognising unpaid carers

What we want to achieve



We want more people to know who unpaid carers are.



Staff in health, care and education services should know more about the needs of unpaid carers. They can find carers early and help them get support.



Places like hospitals and GP surgeries will identify carers and offer help.

Actions



Help people know who unpaid carers are and what rights they have.



Share information in different languages and formats.



Provide online training about unpaid carers for health, social care staff and other workers.



Hospitals must record the details of unpaid carers when the person they care for is in hospital.



Help carers get information and support when they use hospital services.



Work with GP surgeries and other health services to support unpaid carers.

Priority 2: Access to services

What we want to achieve



We want unpaid carers to know about their rights.



Unpaid carers should get an assessment for their needs on time. This should be done the same way across Wales.



Unpaid carers get the support they need.



Unpaid carers should get training to help them care for someone.



Carers have a say in planning and improving services.

Actions



Update and share the Charter for Unpaid carers. So, carers understand their rights.



Check the laws and guidance about carers rights. Make changes if needed.



Local councils should make sure staff are trained to carry out assessments.



Give carers of all ages clear information about the assessment process.



Find out what support all unpaid carers need. Including young carers and carers in rural areas.



Use this information to make and review support plans for unpaid carers.



Local councils will help unpaid carers with Direct Payments. Make sure carers get clear information about Direct Payments.



Provide training to help unpaid carers in their caring role.



Make sure carers have a say in decisions made by local and regional groups.

Priority 3: Young carers



All 7 priorities in this strategy apply to young carers too.

What we want to achieve



Young carers should know about their rights.



Make sure caring does not harm young carers wellbeing or education.



Young carers and young adult carers get support in education. They have the same chances as other young people to learn, train and work.



Young carers can get a **Young Carer Identity Card.** Health workers and other professionals will recognise the card.



Young carers can get the mental health and well-being support they need.



Young carers know how to get support with money.



Young carers can get breaks from caring when they need them.

Actions



Give young carers clear information about their rights and support.



Create a Carers Charter for young carers. Help people know more about young carers' rights.



Tell organisations to support young carers.



Make sure council websites have clear information for young carers.



Involve young carers in decisions about local services.



Make sure young carers get assessments when needed.



Help schools and colleges recognise and support young carers.



Find out how young carers are doing at school, in training and at work.



Local councils continue to deliver **Young Carer Identity Cards**.



Use information about young carers to plan support services.



Make sure young carers have access to support with money. Such as the Carers Support Fund.



Make sure young carers can take breaks from caring. Tell young carers about the Short Breaks Scheme.

Priority 4: Money and paid work

What we want to achieve



Unpaid carers get support to study at college or university.



Unpaid carers know what benefits they can get.



Unpaid carers get support to stay in work or return to work.



Employers should know about the needs of carers and support them at work.

Actions



Local councils will think about carers education when making an assessment.



Help unpaid carers find out what benefits and help with money they can get.



Give unpaid carers advice about benefits through the Carers Support Fund.



Make sure carers can get support while they are at work.



Provide support to employers to learn more about unpaid carers and their skills.



Tell people about carers' rights at work.



Check how well employer schemes support carers at work.

Priority 5: Respite



Respite means taking a break.

What we want to achieve



Unpaid carers can get breaks from caring when they need them. And it meets the needs of carers and the people they care for.



Breaks respect carers' beliefs and **culture** – the shared values and ways of thinking and living in their communities.

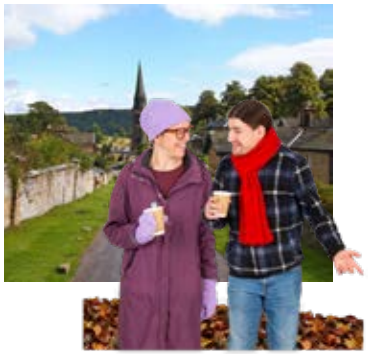


Unpaid carers know what breaks are available and how to get them.

Actions



Make a plan to improve access to breaks for unpaid carers.



Make sure carers can access flexible respite care. This includes carers in rural areas and people with complex needs.



Continue funding the National Short Breaks Scheme until 2029.



Make sure unpaid carers get clear information about how to get breaks. And how to ask for them.

Priority 6: Mental health and well-being

What we want to achieve



Unpaid carers get help with their mental health and wellbeing. They get urgent help if they are struggling to cope.



Unpaid carers get support when their caring role changes or ends. This includes when someone they care for dies.



Unpaid carers who may be at risk of suicide are offered support. Suicide is when someone tries to end their own life.

Actions



Make sure unpaid carers can get mental health support quickly.



Provide well-being support for carers in their caring role.



Make sure carers know where to get help when someone they care for dies.



Help health and social care workers recognise when carers may be at risk of suicide. Or self-harm.



Self-harm is when someone hurts themselves on purpose.



Provide training to professionals to understand these risks and how to help.

Priority 7: Being involved in care decisions

What we want to achieve



Unpaid carers are involved in decisions about the care and treatment of the person they care for.



Unpaid carers help to make a plan for the person they care for leaving hospital.



Listen to unpaid carers when making decisions about care and support.



Unpaid carers get support when the person they care for is dying.

Actions



Involve unpaid carers in planning and reviewing care.



Include carers in decisions about treatment. With permission from the person, they care for.



Make sure staff know when they can share information with carers.



Involve carers in planning for someone to leave hospital. Check if carers can provide the care and support needed.



Give carers information and support when someone leaves hospital.



Give carers information about their rights and support. Including after someone dies.



Involve carers in planning care for someone who is near the end of their life.

Who will help make these changes happen



We will work together with organisations and services. Such as:

- Unpaid carers.
- Local Health Boards.
- GP surgeries and other local health services.
- Third sector organisations – charities and other organisations that support people.
- Local councils.
- Regional Partnership Boards.
- Young Carers Advisory Board.
- Education places.
- Other services.

How we will check if things are improving



We will listen to unpaid carers about the support and information they get.



Find out how many staff complete training. And how confident they feel supporting carers.



Find out if carers can find information easily. And if they know their rights.



Make sure councils and other organisations provide the support unpaid carers need.



Use reports, surveys and reviews to see what is working well and what needs to improve.

What happens next



We will check if the strategy is working.



We will set up a group to oversee the work. It will include unpaid carers and organisations that support carers.



All parts of the Welsh Government will work together to support unpaid carers.



We will share plans every year that explain what we will do and by when.



We will check we are doing the actions in these plans. We will check if our work is improving things for unpaid carers.



We will share reports every year about all this.



The Deputy Minister will report to the Senedd every year.

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