

Meeting of:	Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, 07 March 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Healthy Living and Social Care
Report Title:	Support for Unpaid Carers in the Vale of Glamorgan.
Purpose of Report:	To update Scrutiny Committee on support for unpaid carers
Report Owner:	Director of Social Services
Responsible Officer:	Operational Manager, Safeguarding & Service Outcomes
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Operational Manager, Accountancy Operational Manager, Legal Services
Policy Framework:	This report is consistent with the Policy Framework and Budget
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Scrutiny Report provides an overview of the current services and support available to unpaid carers in the Vale of Glamorgan and a link to the Annual Report 2022/23.

Recommendations

1. That Scrutiny Committee considers the Annual Report on Support for Unpaid Carers and work undertaken to support unpaid carers in the Vale of Glamorgan.
2. That Scrutiny Committee considers the duties of the Council and its partners in regard to delivering services for Unpaid Carers within the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.
3. That Scrutiny Committee considers how the Council and its partners are meeting the Ministerial Priorities for Unpaid Carers and the regional work of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Unpaid Carers Board.
4. That Scrutiny Report receives a Report on support for Unpaid Carers in the Vale of Glamorgan on an annual basis.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure that Members continue to exercise effective oversight of this important function undertaken by the Social Services Directorate.
2. That Scrutiny Members are aware of the duties outlined within legislation.
3. That Scrutiny Members are informed of the Ministerial Priorities set for carers and the regional work taking place for unpaid carers and facilitates support from the lead Member for Carers.
4. To ensure that Members continue to exercise effective oversight of this important function on an annual basis.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Social Services Directorate has produced an update to Scrutiny Members on an annual basis and the last Report was presented to Scrutiny on 8th March 2022.
- 1.2 Over the last year a number of key developments have been progressed, many of which are being delivered on a regional basis.
- 1.3 The Directorate continues to develop its response to the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and manage its statutory responsibilities and local needs within its resources, making the most of collaborative arrangements and Government funding streams where appropriate.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** The Directorate continues to develop its response to the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and manage its statutory responsibilities and local needs within its resources, making the most of collaborative arrangements and Government funding streams where appropriate.
- 2.2** Whilst the core funding for carers services was not increased in line with this growth in legislation to support unpaid carers, there has been grant funding available through the Regional Partnership Board to assist the transition, to develop and introduce new services for carers.
- 2.3** The Council has maximised the impact of the available funding by putting in place arrangements to enhance carers' experience of the support available from Social Services and our partners by developing our existing arrangements and encouraging creativity and innovation.
- 2.4** Working with our partners on a regional footprint, enables the sharing of knowledge, experience and resources which together will improve the essential support to those who provide a care giving role within our communities.
- 2.5** The Council successfully delivered the Welsh Government 's Support Payment for unpaid carers in the Summer of 2022. 1,233 payments of £500 were made to unpaid carers which totalled £616,500. This was made available as an acknowledgement of the difficulties encountered by unpaid carers during and post Pandemic and provided additional financial support during the ongoing cost of living crisis.
- 2.6** A key national development over the last year is the publication of a National 'Charter for Unpaid Carers'. This provides a simple and practical guide to support carers to understand and access their rights. The charter is also intended to help professionals to gain a better understanding of what is expected of them under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The charter was considered by committee on the 6th September 2022 and it was subsequently amended following feedback from members. It was formally approved by Cabinet on the 20th October 2022
- 2.7** Locally, February 2023 will see the official launch of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Unpaid Carers Charter, pledging the commitment of partners across the region including NHS, local authorities, voluntary and 3rd sector organisation to support unpaid carers.
- 2.8** Respite continues to be one of the main requests made by carers for support. We have been able to meet a wide range of needs by continuing to make funding available. Practitioners are actively encouraged to be creative and innovative in finding solutions to meet the individual needs of unpaid carers.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The work of the Regional Unpaid Carers Board is governed by the Regional Partnership Board. The Unpaid Carers Board provides highlight reporting on its progress to the Regional Partnership Board.
- 3.2** The Partnership is committed to ensuring that unpaid carers are recognised within our communities and that every step is taken to ensure that the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan region is an environment that supports the highest quality of life both for those providing and in receipt of care.
- 3.3** The work stream is a long-term joint commitment due to the need for longer term enhancement and development of services for unpaid carers. It will also be necessary to revisit our commissioning strategies and arrangements over time and to work with partners to the delivery of duties that are social services specific under the Act.
- 3.4** The Unpaid Carers Board has varied membership, drawing members from across the Regional Partnership as required.

This work stream has contributed to the refresh of the Population Needs Assessment and the priorities for the Area Plan.

- 3.5** Under the Terms of Reference for the Board, the purposes of the group are:
- To inform the ongoing development and delivery of support for carers.
 - To support regional process and practice and compliance with the Social Services and Well-being Act.
 - To ensure all funding streams for carers are co-ordinated by bringing related discussions to one place.
 - To provide oversight and assurance of all RPB funded projects related to carers for the Strategic Leadership Group.
 - To contribute to the delivery of carers actions in the Area Plan.
 - To work with a wide range of partners to develop and implement a Regional Unpaid Carers Charter.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** There are no Climate Change and Nature Implications as a direct result of this report.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

5.1 There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

Employment

5.2 There are no employment implications resulting from this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.3 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 introduced new rights and entitlements for unpaid carers in Wales. It introduced a broader definition of a carer and placed stronger duties on local authorities to identify, assess and support unpaid carers.

5.4 Included in the Act is the continuation of the requirement on the NHS and Local Authorities in Wales to co-operate in relation to the delivery of preventative services, unless this is incompatible with their own duties. It also requires regional partnerships to ensure information, advice and assistance is offered across the region in a manner which is accessible and suits the needs of their population.

5.5 The United Nations Convention and the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) have relevance to a child as young carer. Article 3 includes the provision that in all actions concerning children by public or private social welfare institutions etc. the best interests of the child should be of primary consideration. Article 12 makes provision for ensuring that the child's views are expressed freely and given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. There are other Articles which relate to the rights of the child.

6. Background Papers

Unpaid Carers Annual Report 2022/23.



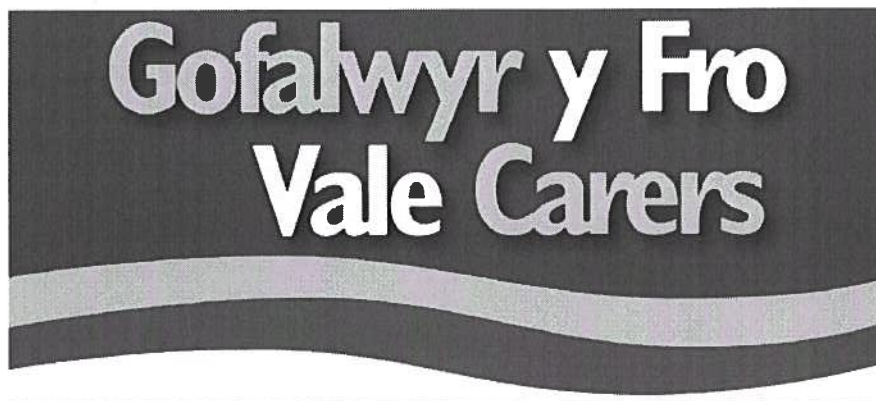
Health and Social Care: Unpaid Carers Annual Report 2022/23

Adult Carers: To identify and recognise unpaid carers for the vital contribution they make to the community and the people they care for, and in doing so enable unpaid carers to have a li...

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Health and Social Care: Unpaid Carers
Annual Report 2022/23



Our Vision

Adult Carers: *To identify and recognise unpaid carers for the vital contribution they make to the community and the people they care for, and in doing so enable unpaid carers to have a life alongside caring.*

Young Carers: *Young carers are really important to us, to the communities where they live and to the people they care for. We want to make sure that they are recognised and supported if they care for someone, so that we can help them and the person they care for, and make sure they have time to do things for themselves.*

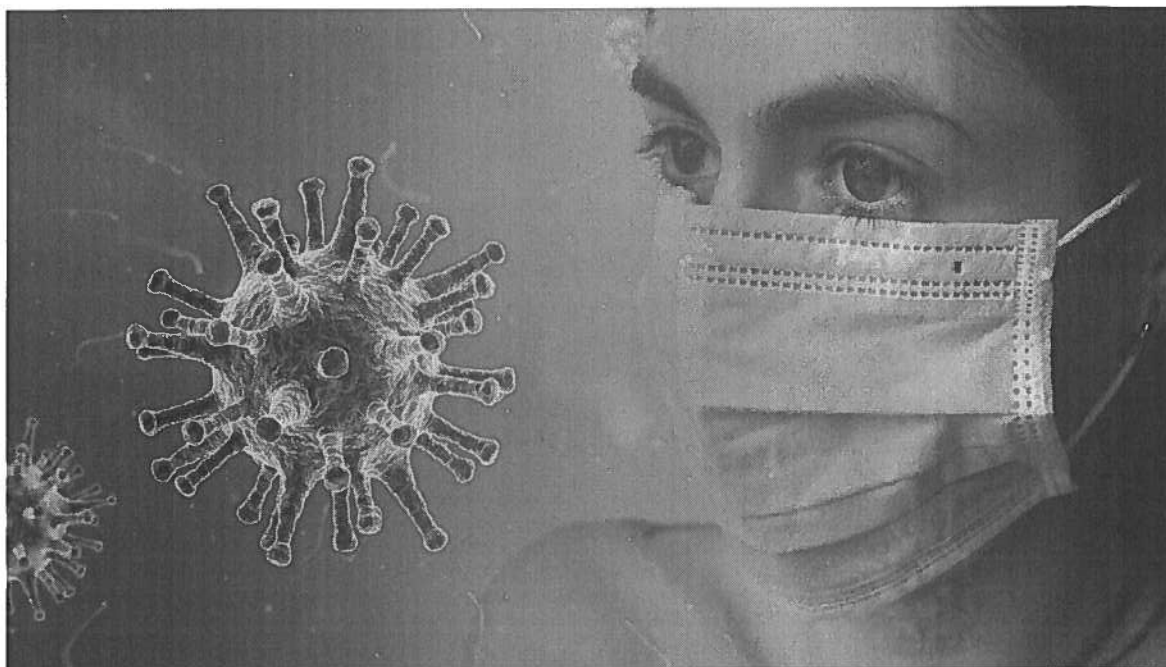
Introduction

A diverse, flexible and wide range of services and support are required to support unpaid carers given the incredible amount of invaluable unpaid care they provide to our communities. Unpaid carers are the largest source of care and support in all regions of the UK. It is in everyone's interest that they are supported effectively.

Given the current situation in our hospitals, lengthy NHS waiting times and recruitment and retention issues in social care, the responsibilities and pressure experienced by unpaid carers has intensified. This, in addition to the cost-of-living crisis, is placing unprecedented strain on unpaid carers in Wales and many are close to collapse.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 introduced a broader definition of a carer. An unpaid carer is someone who provides unpaid care to an adult or disabled child. The cared for person may be a family member or a friend, who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot manage without their support. An unpaid carer could be a husband caring for his wife, a parent caring for their child who has care and support needs or a child caring for their parent. The care unpaid carers provide ranges from providing practical help, to personal care, and to supporting emotional and mental wellbeing.

Legacy of the Pandemic on unpaid carers

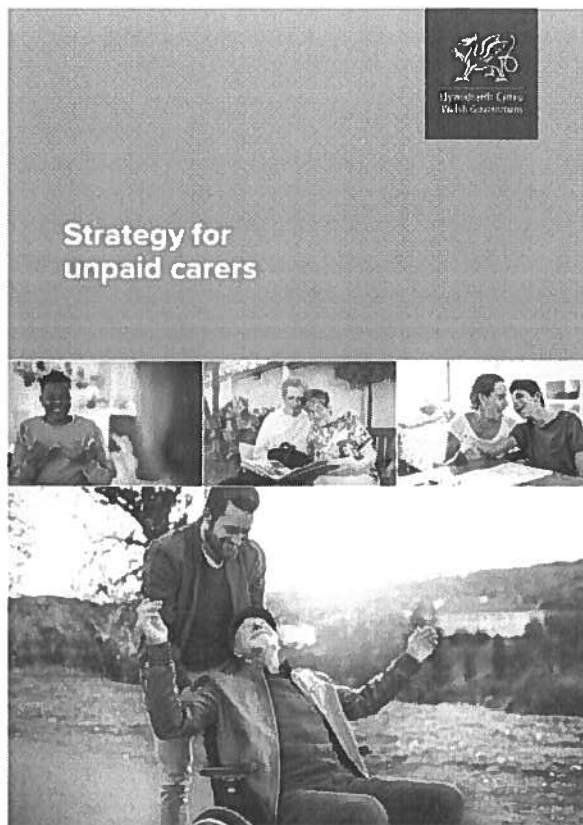


During the pandemic the number of unpaid carers in Wales increased dramatically as did their recognition as a third pillar of the health and social care system. Recovery to a pre Pandemic status for many unpaid carers has not been realised and many have seen their physical and mental health deteriorate further as they continue to provide more care with less support and their ability to take a break limited both for financial and practical reasons.

The report "Voices of Carers during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Messages for the future of unpaid caring in Wales." was conducted and compiled by Cardiff University and funded by Public Health Wales.

National Picture

National Strategy



The Welsh Government published its [Strategy for Unpaid Carers](#) in March 2021

It sets out the revised national priorities for unpaid carers, including the addition of a new priority on education and employment. It also notes priority areas for action and is supported by a more detailed [Strategy for Unpaid Carers delivery plan 2021](#) published in November 2021.

Priority One: Identifying and valuing unpaid carers – encouraging unpaid carers to self-identify, and raise public awareness of the value of unpaid carers

Priority Two: Providing information, advice, and assistance - it is vital that all unpaid carers have access to the right information and advice at the right time and in an appropriate format.

Priority Three: Supporting life alongside caring - All unpaid carers must have the opportunity to take breaks from their caring role to enable them to maintain their own health and well-being and have a life alongside caring.

Priority Four: Supporting unpaid carers in education and the workplace - Employers and educational/training settings should be encouraged to adapt their policies and practices, enabling unpaid carers to work and learn alongside their caring role.

The Charter for Unpaid Carers in Wales

September 2022 saw the launch of the national [Charter for Unpaid Carers](#), which sets out the rights of unpaid carers under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.

The charter has been co-produced with members of the Unpaid Carers Ministerial Advisory Group, representatives from local authorities, the NHS and the third sector. Unpaid carers have also played an active role in drafting this document.

Drawing on the expertise of professionals and unpaid carers, a simple and practical guide has been created to support carers to understand and access their rights. The charter is also intended to help professionals to gain a better understanding of what is expected of them under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

What is the Ministerial Advisory Group?

The Welsh Government recognises that to deliver improved and sustainable outcomes for unpaid carers, it requires the support and commitment from statutory and third sector partners across sectors, and unpaid carers themselves. The Ministerial Advisory Group for Unpaid Carers provides a cross sector response to the challenges unpaid carers face and a national forum to target and monitor improvement under the four national priorities.

Over time priorities can and will change and this approach allows the flexibility to respond and adapt to meet the priorities. The Group supports this way of working by identifying new ideas and solutions in response to the different issues faced by unpaid carers so that the agenda is continually moving forward. The Operational Manager for Safeguarding and Service Outcomes, represents the Vale of Glamorgan at this forum.

£500 **Support Payment** for Unpaid Carers

In the Summer of 2022, unpaid carers who were receiving Carer's Allowance on March 31st 2022 were able to register with their local authority to receive a payment of £500 in recognition of the financial and emotional hardship many are experiencing. It was aimed to benefit thousands of the most vulnerable unpaid carers in Wales, who frequently care for the longest and are on the lowest incomes.

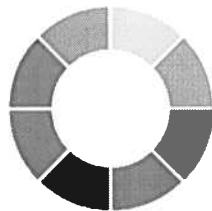
Carers Allowance is paid to people caring for at least 35 hours a week, who care for someone receiving certain benefits and who earn no more than £128 a week.

Between May and September 2022 the Vale of Glamorgan Council received 1949 applications for the payment and managed the process within existing resources and at very short notice. This would not have been possible without the cooperation of corporate colleagues from Policy and Business Transformation.

By the close of the scheme, 1233 unpaid carers received £500 after making a successful application, totalling £616,500.

Regional Picture

The Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board



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CARDIFF & VALE
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP
BOARD**

The Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board was established by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to ensure local health boards, local authorities and the third sector work together to deliver services, care and support, that meets the needs of people who live in Cardiff and Vale. They provide strategic direction, as a partnership, and interpretation of national policy. A regular Population Needs Assessments is carried out to make sure people **get the right support, at the right time, in the right place.**

A Population Needs Assessment is used to make sure care, support and preventative services across the region meet the needs of people living in Cardiff and the Vale;

The PNA consists of two sections:

- Assessing the extent to which there are people or their carers who need care and support and the extent to which they need support
- Assessing the range and level of services required for the care and support needs of the population and their carers, to prevent needs arising and escalating, and the actions required to provide services in Welsh

Focus groups and a public survey were available for people to complete and promoted by our partners and on social media. Findings were used to shine a light on the key challenges our population faces and what services and support they find useful. People told us what they would like to continue and what they would like to change in the future.

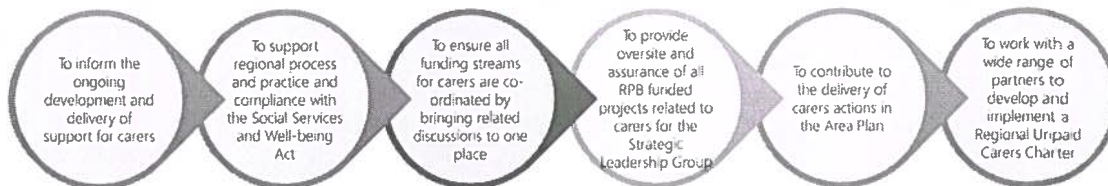
The work was overseen by representatives from Cardiff Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council, and Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board.

Detailed findings are presented in the report, along with cross-cutting findings. The report also describes the next steps in addressing the issues raised.

The Population Needs Assessment will be used to produce a joint area plan for 2023 - that describes the range and level of services that are needed to respond to the care and support needs that were identified.

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Unpaid Carers Board

One of the key programmes under the governance of the Regional Partnership Board is for unpaid carers. Its purpose is:



There are a number of key projects underway for 2022/23. Four are highlighted below

- a. Regional unpaid carers charter and delivery plan
- b. Carers Gateway
- c. Young carers identity card scheme
- d. Young Carers in School Programme

a. Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Unpaid Carers **Charter**

This is a regional Charter that pledges commitment of partners across the region including NHS, local authorities, voluntary and 3rd sector organisations and outlines how we will support unpaid carers over the next five years. It introduces eight clear commitments, which were developed locally from a regional review of national strategy and listening to findings from unpaid carers through consultation events and online surveys. Whilst the charter has been developed in response to regional identified needs and information this has also taken account of the national charter and the pledges and priorities that have been identified.

A Young Carers charter has been developed to ensure that this is relevant and appropriate to the communication and support needs of children and young people.

Both Charters aim to help people in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan understand if they, or someone they know, might be an unpaid carer and will be launched 23 February 2023.

b. Cardiff and Vale Carers Gateway



This service enables unpaid carers in the Vale, access to timely information, advice and assistance. It can signpost them to services and support available in the community to meet their needs or provide support while a referral for a statutory assessment is processed.

In November 2019, the Integrated Health and Social Care Partnership awarded funding for the creation of a Carers Gateway service for the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan area. Following a re-tender exercise the Cardiff and Vale Carers Gateway has secured further funding for 2 years from 01 June 2022, with an option for extending for a further 2 years at the commissioners' discretion.



A Referral Pathway provides for a proportionate response to unpaid carers needs for information, advice and assistance, where unpaid carers with needs that require statutory support progressed to a Carers Assessment by Social Services.

In the first three quarters of 2022/23, 255 Vale carers have received support, which is 69% of the total supported across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. In the same period 109 staff have received training to raise their awareness of unpaid carers and sources of help and support.

c. Young Carers **Identity Card**

2021 saw the launch of a Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Young Carers Identity card. Following a National template and funded by Welsh Government, a Regional card was launched during Carers Week in June 2021.

A Young Carers ID Card has been developed at the request of young carers themselves and can be obtained by any young carer in our County. Young Carers are encouraged to use the card as an ID card in any situation where one is required.

There are lots of reasons young carers have told us they would like an ID card, including:

- To raise awareness of their responsibilities and to give formal recognition to their role,
- To discreetly let people know about their caring responsibilities without having to share personal details over and over again,
- To give confidence to ask for help or understanding from professionals like teachers, doctors and pharmacists,
- School related: Explanation of school lateness/ absence due to caring role or being able to get an extension on homework/ assignment if caring role is an impact.

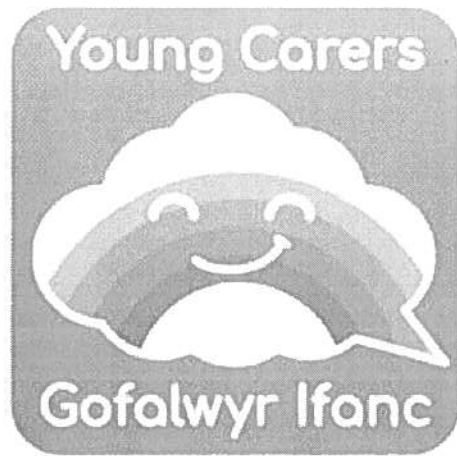
Awareness raising with young people and specific groups of professionals has been developed and continues to be delivered, for example to Pharmacists, Teachers, Social Workers.

Further funding has been secured to enable this work to be carried forward until April 2023 and to identify if 'benefits' can be secured with the card such as discounts in local shops and amenities etc.

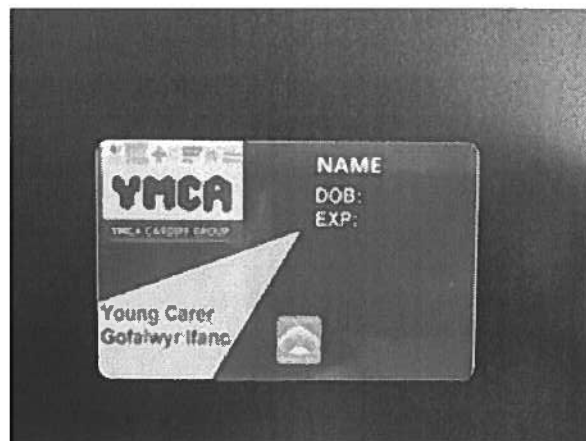
89 Vale Young Carers had requested and received a card at the September 2022 Monitoring point for reporting to Welsh Government.

We have focused on promoting the card to young people who are currently supported by the Young Carers Project and those who have been identified through the Carers Pathway. Therefore, most cardholders are currently known to services.

The form used to request a card includes a question inviting further contact about services and support for Young Carers. This will enable YMCA or Local Authority staff to contact any unknown carers and make an active offer of support and assessment.



1 - Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Young Carers ID Card



d. Young Carers in **School Programme** (YCISP)

The Young Carers in Schools Programme provides schools with the tools and resources to support young carers, giving them the same access to education, opportunities, and future life chances as their peers. Schools produce, collate, and submit evidence around five key themes, via a portfolio which is reviewed by the Peer Review Panel.

All eight Vale Secondary Schools are engaged in the programme along with two Primary schools (as a pilot).

This programme and the increased awareness in schools, is supported by the Vulnerable Groups Team in the Directorate of Learning and Skills.

To date seven Secondary Schools have achieved 'The Basics', three progressed to 'Beyond the Basics' and two reached the ultimate Best Practice level of award (most recent awarded in June 2022). The one remaining school is working towards 'The Basics' and 6 others are working towards their next level of achievement.

Two Primary schools have engaged in a pilot scheme and one has achieved the Basics and progressing towards Beyond the Basics and the second school is working towards the Basics.

Since the Pandemic much of the information and awareness raising has been online and, in many cases, this has proven to be an advantage in reaching more people. Staff training, for example, has been offered to all schools, even those not involved in the Programme, and made available in Welsh. Bespoke training for School Governors and Elected Members has been developed.

An Operational Lead Forum has been established to link young carer school leads across the Regions. This allows the operational leads the opportunity to share good practice and have an open discussion about the Young Carers in Schools Programme and its processes and resources which have been developed.

During the last year resources have been refreshed to promote the programme within schools



Primary poster CY14 HR



Primary poster ENG 14P



Secondary poster CY14 HR



Secondary poster ENG 14P



Staff poster CY14 HR



Staff poster ENG 14P

Local Picture - The Vale of Glamorgan

Changes to Unpaid Carers Services Team



- A dedicated management post has been created for the Unpaid Carers Services team, to support the increasing priorities and service need for unpaid carers in our area.
- A new full time post has been created to support Young Carers and Parent Carers. Based within the early help service in Children and Young People Services, this additional resource will facilitate an efficient response to referrals for carers assessments and provide a link between the various services and support available to young carers, helping to improve awareness, identification and support.

Identification of Unpaid Carers

Identification of unpaid carers, either by professionals or by carers themselves, is key to the ability of services to develop appropriate resources and for unpaid carers to access help available.

Awareness of the role and support provided by unpaid carers has been thrown into sharp focus during recent years and more recognition and value attached to the role has resulted organically.

To distinguish between the 'carers' our services are intended to support and as defined in The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, from other professional health and social care roles, the term 'Unpaid Carer' has been adopted both nationally and locally.

This is work in progress within the Vale and across our information resources.

Unpaid Carers are identified at our first point of contact (Contact OneVale or Families First Advice Line), or through case management of the person they are caring for and provided with a focused discussion on their own needs and ways to support their wellbeing.



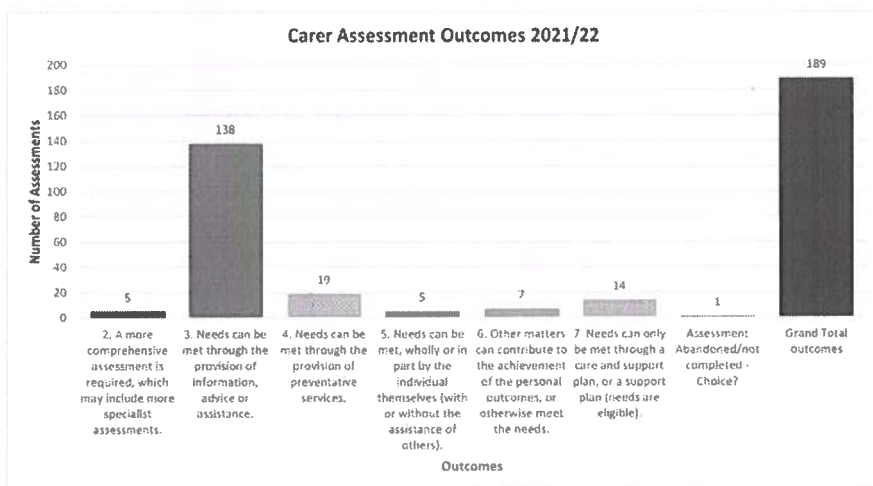
Carers Assessment

The establishment of the Carers Gateway, to provide an alternative source of information and advice to unpaid carers, along with move to conducting Carers Assessments via telephone or online during and since the Pandemic, has proved to be a positive development.

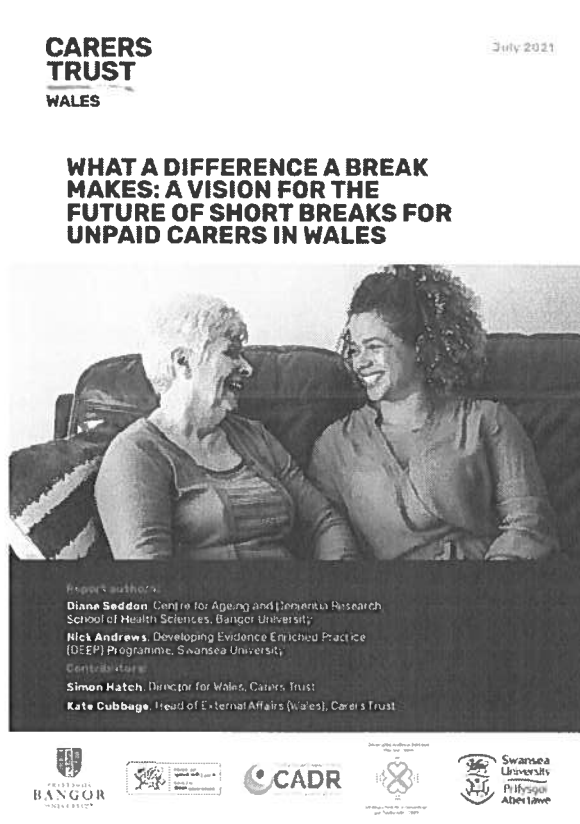
It has resulted in our Carers Support Officers being able to spend more time in one-to-one dialogue with the person they are assessing, to focus on higher/more complex needs and potentially provide support over a longer period more akin to case work.

For 2021/22 a total of 189 Carers assessments were recorded. In the first three quarters of 2022/23, 105 Carers Assessments have been completed and a range of needs identified from those that unpaid carers are able to resolve independently or with help from others, to higher level needs that require a social services support plan to be delivered. Outcomes range from providing additional information, advice and assistance, referrals to sources of help and support (including funding), and to receipt of statutory services.

The Outcomes from a Carer Assessment continue to show that the greatest number of Carers needs are met through the provision of information, advice and assistance, followed by the provision of preventative services.



Taking a break



A consistent call from unpaid carers over many years has been for increased opportunities and flexibility to take a break from their care giving role. Having a timely and appropriate break can make a significant difference to the wellbeing of both unpaid carer and the cared for, as well as helping ensure the sustainability of the care giving role.

Roadmap to Respite – Published by Carers Trust Wales in July 2021 identifies twelve key principles to inform future short break options and defines a short break as:

any break, which strengthens and/or sustains informal caring relationships and enhances the wellbeing of carers and the people they support.

This may be achieved through a service, an activity or an item.

The Vale continues to make budgetary provision for funding to provide a range of additional breaks from caring and valuable back up arrangements to be put in place for both carers of adults, parent carers and young carers.

Short breaks have been provided through assessment and care management processes and are individual to each person. Short stays at residential homes or increased Direct Payments have been arranged as well as funding for bookings for hotels and other holiday accommodation. Breaks can also be achieved through taking part in activities, including educational and physical, and payments have been made to facilitate participation via courses and purchase of equipment, for example.

Breaks will sometimes include the cared for person, where this is appropriate. Unpaid carers do not always want a break from the person they care for, but may be from work, the home, or wider family demands. This funding is particularly aimed at providing unpaid carers with breaks that are in addition to existing care and support packages and can be flexible and innovative, in accordance with the needs of the unpaid carer. Items such as gym kit and fishing gear have been purchased to enable carers to join in group activities in the community.

The additional funds enable us to demonstrate our recognition and appreciation of the role of unpaid carers, through providing them with the means to take a break that they otherwise would not have been able to. The respite expenditure for 2021/22 included £18801 made available directly to 48 unpaid carers to make their own arrangements for a break, while in 2022/23 to date the amount is £18524 for 47 unpaid carers.

The remainder of the £111k annual budget is spent on more traditional respite in the form of home care, residential care and direct payments via internal community care processes .

Unpaid Carers Story

Charlotte is 88 years old and the main carer for her son, who has a learning disability. Due to her own declining physical health and the loss of support from a friend who previously provided her with help after the death of her husband, Charlotte was finding her care giving role difficult to sustain.

A Carers Assessment provided for a 12-week trial package, enabling her Son to attend activities outside the home that Charlotte was unable to continue due to her having to give up driving.

During the review of the respite, Charlotte reported her health and wellbeing had improved, that she is able to rest more, and does not stress when she is unable to take her son out. The winter affects Charlotte's health more, but the extra respite has given her time to build up her strength and achieve more when her son is home.

Unpaid Carers Voucher Scheme

During 2022 Carers Services purchased 245 vouchers for a range of leisure activities. Vouchers were allocated on a first come first served basis and allowed unpaid carers to register three preferences from a list of eight options. Vouchers provided for access to leisure interests and activities such as Magazine subscriptions, National Trust Membership, Theatre tickets , Vouchers for meals and Garden Centre purchases. As we are aware offering unpaid carers time away from caring responsibilities is a significant issue and we have responded by developing these opportunities. This approach will be further revisited in 2023/24. Below is a snapshot of feedback from those who received vouchers.

"Oh wow! Thank you. That's great.

Best wishes"



"I can't believe this! I'd forgotten all about it (gift voucher for WMC) so what a lovely surprise!

Please pass my absolute appreciation onto the team".



"Thank you so much.

I really appreciate the vouchers".



The Vouchers enable recipients to undertake an activity of their choosing at the time of their choosing. They could be used to undertake that activity alongside the person they care for if they wish.

Most of the vouchers are activated when first used, so offer flexibility, and will enhance a carer's ability to take a break.

Introduction to **Complementary Therapy** Taster Sessions



This scheme is designed as an introductory 'taster' of one of the solutions which may help unpaid carers manage the stress and anxiety frequently associated within the caring role. The service is for unpaid carers who have been assessed by Social Services as having an eligible need.

A review of the one-off introduction to complementary therapy service provided to unpaid carers was undertaken between late May and early June 2022.

The aims of this review were: to find out the impact of the service; whether the four taster therapy sessions meet the identified need in the carer's assessment; the benefits of the service for the unpaid carer in the short and medium term.

All unpaid carers that referred for complementary therapies in the last two years (156 unpaid carers) were contacted. A total of 33 responses were received. Recipients were not required to provide any personal information, allowing the opportunity for them to be honest about their experience of the sessions.

Although there were a range of reasons why unpaid carers were referred for four sessions of complementary therapies, the main ones were improving wellbeing, 'having time for myself' and stress.

The review demonstrated that the therapy taster sessions did meet the identified need(s) in the carer's assessment and confirmed that a high proportion of unpaid carers never or rarely take time away from their caring responsibilities to look after their own wellbeing.

There are significant benefits for the unpaid carer, both in the short and medium term, following their therapy sessions. Providing this support had a huge impact on their wellbeing and enabling them to cope with their caring responsibilities.

As the result of the review, additional Therapists will be sought in 2023/24 to ensure we are able to provide a timely response and a range of locations from where unpaid carers can receive the introduction to complementary therapies.

"Excellent service wonderful environment. Thoroughly enjoyed my services."

"The sessions helped with stress and being overwhelmed"

"It was an opportunity to have some time for myself and switch off from what was going on at home."

"The conversations I had with the care coordinator (i.e., the therapist) were very helpful, when I was approached with other options"

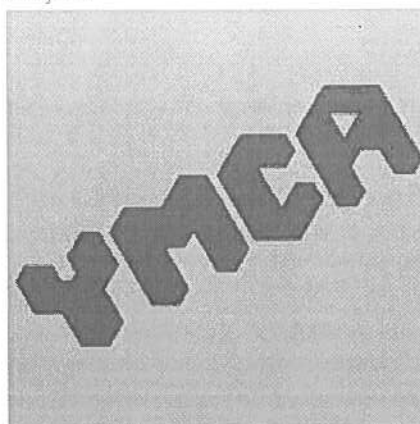
"Enjoyed time for myself at time had care package. So easy to leave husband with a carer."

"I really am pleased with my reflexology. I have loved my treatments so far. And very much look forward to my remaining sessions."

"The sessions were lovely and for that short time away from being a carer 24/7. It was much appreciated."

"I have day off from caring responsibility if kids are in school or if I am working."

Time for Me - Young Carers Project



The project provides a bespoke support and respite provision for young carers based on the needs they identify; it also raises awareness of young carers' issues.

To support young carers, the project provides 1-to-1 support in the home and respite activities (Carers Breaks) for young carers aged 7-18. Respite activities in the form of workshops, build confidence; improve motivation; encourage engagement; 1-to-1 and group work offer the family advice and guidance on educational achievement, training and/or employment opportunities.

There were 34 new referrals in the first 3 quarters in 2022/23 building on the 50 referrals during 2021/22. In quarter 3 of 2022 there were 92 young carers accessing the project. The continued increase in young carers accessing the service is evident every year and additional funds have been allocated to increase support for the young carers project. The service was re-tendered in 2022 and was won by the YMCA

The pandemic had a detrimental impact on the ability of the project to offer respite activities, the service adapted well to this undertaking more on-line activities and regular home visits. Annual data recorded in 2021/22 on the project reflects the return to the new normal of delivery.

- 20 Youth Club Sessions accessed by an average of 8 young people each session per quarter
- 35 Activities offered and accessed by up to 10 young people. The most popular activities offered were Cinema, Barry Youth Club and Musical
- 67 six-month evaluations completed

Outcomes:

- 61% of young carers improved their emotional/ mental wellbeing
- 76% of young carers improved their own resilience
- 82% of young carers improved family relationships
- 89% of young carers are happy with the service received

Ongoing work to help raise the profile of young carers, with targeted work through Carer's Collective, the YMCA and various other partners has helped improve awareness of young carers and their support needs. Subsequently increasing numbers recorded within schools and other partner agencies. This has contributed to a large increase in the number of young carers seeking to access the respite service. To accommodate the growing numbers at the youth club, the sessions are now split into junior and senior sessions allowing age-appropriate activities/workshops to be delivered, as well as equal and fair access.

Building on the work in the previous year, in the first three quarters of 2022/23:

- 25 Youth Club Sessions accessed by an average of 10 young people each session per quarter
- 33 Youth Club Sessions, 13 Buddy Sessions and 17 other trips/activities were offered with an average attendance of 5 young carers
- 92 six-month evaluations completed

'YMCA is the best, I can't wait to go to football fiesta'

'Today has been the best day ever'

'I made new friends and feel more confident'

'I really enjoy the activities in youth club'

'The support my child has received has really benefitted their self-esteem'

'I really enjoyed socialising and meeting new people'

'I enjoyed being able to be carefree and meet new people'

'The festival was a lot of fun'

'I would like to go to the festival again as it helps me relax and I loved it'

Arrangements with Third Sector Providers

During the past year the Letters of Understanding with third sector providers have been reviewed and updated. A range of services are available to unpaid carers to support them either through an assessment or directly accessed from the community

- **Care and Repair** Provide a Home Energy Check to assist unpaid carers help support the people that they care for. The older person being cared for must be aged 60 and over. The energy efficient project will involve providing practical help to assist older people to: draught proof their doors and windows install reflective foil radiator insulation to reduce heat loss install low energy light bulbs to minimise energy costs as well as other energy saving devices, such as energy saving switch off plugs
- **Adferiad** Provide a service for unpaid carers of people experiencing and recovering from serious mental illness. Adferiad will provide unpaid carers referred to them with one-to-one information and advice, emotional and practical support. This is identified through the carer's

assessment and the support is tailored to their individual needs. Carers Support meetings will take place on a monthly rota basis .

- **The Care Collective** provide 200 hours to carers to enable the prevention of carer breakdown during one off/emergency situations for carers of people with dementia, including mental health conditions. Referrals from Social Services take priority over other referrals.
- **Parents Federation** provide unpaid carers referred to them with one-to-one information and advice, advocacy, emotional and practical support. One event or training is provided per quarter as well as social support through informal meetings, information and other activities/ workshops.

Future Developments

We will continue to focus on the individual needs of unpaid carers and ensure services and support evolve and provide the variety and flexibility unpaid carers and the persons they care for require.

With the number of unpaid carers in our population forecast to continue to grow and our collection of data improving, our plans can be better informed. They will need to be adaptable and refocus periodically to make the best use of the resources available.

A number of work areas have already been identified, as follows:

- Regional Unpaid Carers Delivery Plan agreed and implementation commenced
- Opportunities for unpaid carers breaks extended to unpaid carers not known to statutory services, via third sector for example
- Review the Voucher Scheme as a means of improving access to a range of activities and events made available to Vale unpaid carers
- Further refine data recording and reporting on a suite of information relating to unpaid carers,
- Review the provision of bespoke training/skills development for unpaid carers to access.
- Identify ways to meet the new National Priority of supporting unpaid carers in the workplace.

Unpaid carers are a valued asset within our communities and without their continued support for those who are vulnerable and requiring assistance, our own health and social care services would be unable to cope.