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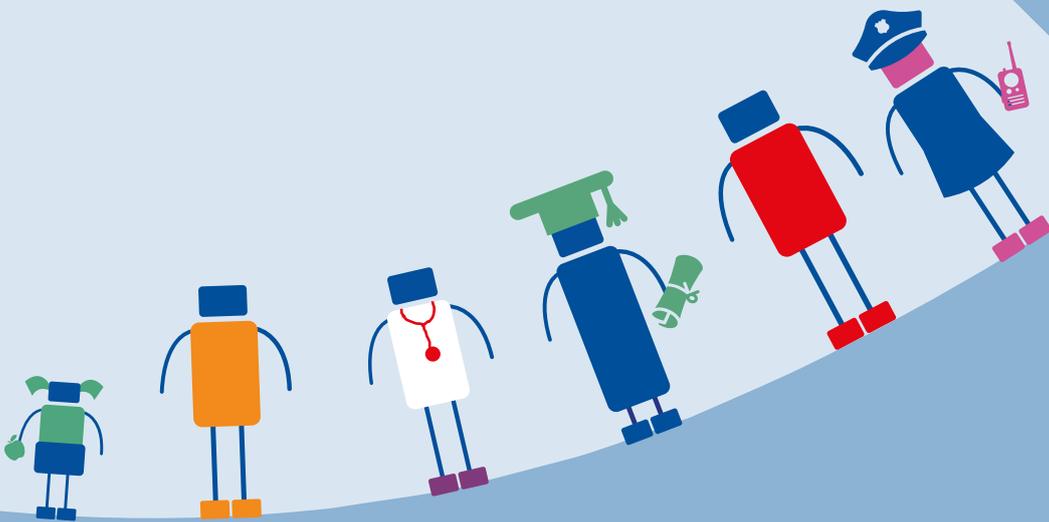


Department
of Health

Carer Passport



Your guide to Carer Passport schemes



In partnership:

carerpassport.uk



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A Carer Passport scheme

- » **Identifies carers**
- » **Connects carers with support**
- » **Provides a relevant service or offer to carers**
- » **Works for carers, for organisations and for the wider community too**

About this toolkit

The aim of this toolkit is to provide you with the know-how, insight and expertise to build your own Carer Passport scheme, wherever you are – to provide a clear offer to carers, as well as links to advice and information and a mechanism to improve identification and support.

Carer Passport schemes are often owned and developed locally, or by an employer, to suit their particular context. This guide combines the experience and knowledge of key leaders who have developed Carer Passport schemes as well as the experience of carers who have used them. As a whole, it contains all the insight and content needed to get a scheme going.

The work is being carried out by Carers UK and Carers Trust with funding from the Department of Health with the aim of increasing the number of Carer Passport schemes in England which seek to support carers. It is part of our broader work and drive to build Carer Friendly Communities.

What benefits can a Carer Passport bring?

Experience locally shows that a Carer Passport schemes can:

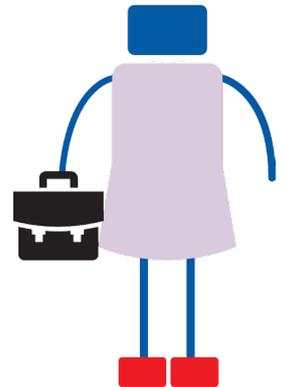
- Aid identification and support of carers.
- Raise awareness of caring.
- Provide a concrete, easily understandable offer of support.
- Provide a mechanism that makes carers feel valued.
- Provide help/assistance to managers or key professionals.
- Provide a short-cut to knowing what support is needed, without having to ask lots of questions.
- Help in local discussions and support.

Where are Carer Passports currently used?

- Employers use a Carer Passport to support carers in the workplace.
- Hospitals use a Carer Passport and similar schemes to identify, recognise and support carers on specific wards or across the whole hospital.
- Locality based community Carer Passport schemes look at whole a range of support and information as well as discounts for local services. They are often a popular way of engaging with carers who might not otherwise ask for help.
- Schools, colleges and Universities have a Carer Passport to support pupils and students who might need additional information and advice or adjustments because they are caring.
- Mental health trusts contain elements of Carer Passport schemes, in setting out a framework of standards and ways of working to strengthen carer involvement and recognition.

Carer Passport guide:

Employment



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Employment

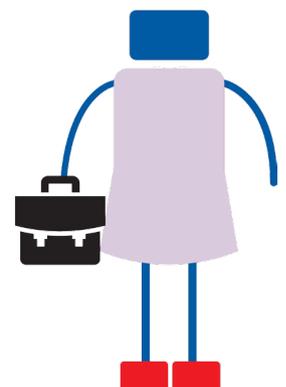
1. Key facts about carers



- Around three million people in the UK combine work with unpaid caring responsibilities, including two million who work full-time and one million part-time. ([Census, 2011](#))
- While part-time working is much more common amongst carers than non-carers, carers are also more likely to stop working altogether as they struggle to switch to part-time hours. Over two million people have given up work at some point to care for loved ones, and three million have reduced working hours. ([Caring and Family Finances Inquiry, Carers UK, 2014](#))
- The majority of carers are of working age and the peak age for caring (50–64) often coincides with the peak of an individual's career. One in five people in this age bracket are carers, including one in four women and one in six men. ([Census, 2011](#))
- The number of working age carers is set to increase as our population and workforce ages, with an estimated 40% rise in the number of carers needed by 2037, meaning the carer population in the UK will reach 9 million. ([It Could Be You, Carers UK, 2001](#))
- Younger carers in work aged 20–21 are more likely to be in lower skilled occupations than their peers. ([Hidden from View: The experiences of young carers in England, Children's Society, 2013](#))
- Out of a sample group of 77 carers, 32 young adult carers in work informed their managers of their caring role. Just under half of these reported that their managers were not supportive. ([Young Adult Carers and Employment, Sempik and Becker, Carers Trust, 2014](#)).

3million

Around three million people in the UK combine work with unpaid caring responsibilities





2. What is a Carer Passport in employment?

Today, one in nine people in any workplace are juggling work with caring for older, ill or disabled loved ones.

While employers in England are starting to realise the impact of caring on their own employees and their business, only a few are currently providing a Carer Passport as part of a wider package to identify and support carers and ultimately avoid losing carers from their workforce.

Many carers worry about their ability to continue to do their job for their employer, about the impact which caring has on them on a daily basis and on their career prospects. One explains, 'My employer is very supportive and subscribes to fair employment, but there have been times when I have had to let them down. Records of my attendance reflect on my employment history'.

Many carers have had to leave work altogether because of their caring role, with some being forced to choose between work and caring – and choosing to care for a parent to ensure that they have what they need. If their employer can support them and not view with suspicion the need to occasionally leave work early if they are called as the first point of contact in an emergency, then work can offer respite from their caring role. With support, it's something they are keen to continue to do.

A tool such as a Carer Passport can help to create a supportive working culture where staff feel that they have 'permission' to talk about their circumstances in a safe environment. It can also help communicate existing workplace support for carers and encourage managers to apply policies more consistently across the organisation.

A Carer Passport in an employment setting is essentially a conversation about the flexibility needed to combine work and care. This conversation involves balancing the needs of the individual with the needs of the business, within existing company policies.

The Carer Passport also provides a straightforward way to document flexibility and support so it can be carried into an employee's future roles, without having to repeat the same conversations.

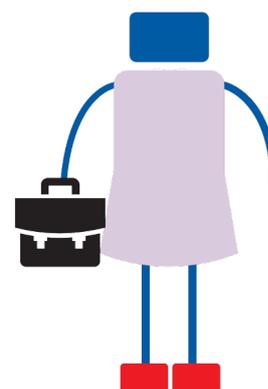
Consistency

One of the key issues for carer support in the workplace is that policies and provisions, where they do exist, are not always promoted to line managers and staff, or understood or applied consistently. This can have a particular impact when a staff member moves to a different team, or when a line manager changes.

Carers often report that having to explain their caring situation several times and/or to different people can make an often difficult situation even more challenging. A change of line manager can also make all the difference between a situation where carers feel supported to combine work and caring with one where they feel isolated,



My employer is very supportive and subscribes to fair employment, but there have been times when I have had to let them down. Records of my attendance reflect on my employment history



unsupported and potentially at risk of having to reduce hours or leave work.

Communication

We know that many carers struggle to communicate their caring role to their colleagues and line manager. They fear a negative response, worry about the person they care for being judged, and that they will miss out on promotions. They report low levels of awareness about caring, feeling unsure when they can talk about their caring role and any adjustments that may need to be made. If their employer cannot give them any flexibility to cope with the unpredictable nature of caring, they can feel unable to continue in their job.

Awareness

Carers report being unaware of their rights to request flexible working, or lack the confidence to approach the topic. They may face the daily pressure of needing to maintain a reasonable level of contact with the person they care for, but find this difficult to agree with their employer.

Carers may struggle to find out about a carers policy in the workplace, or indeed there may not be one. This can result in an employment history which has a number of short-term roles. For younger adult carers, there can be the added challenge of not being familiar with the world of work, how workplaces function and what workplace policies exist, and what they have to offer. If they receive careers advice, they may find themselves encouraged to enter low-paid 'caring professions' with little acknowledgement of the wider skills and knowledge they have developed as a carer.

The format of the Passport itself, and the approaches taken to its use, should enable supportive communications between employer and employee. This is a proactive activity which acknowledges the impact of caring and promotes understanding, not just a reactive activity which responds to crisis. The document itself should be designed in an engaging, user-friendly way.

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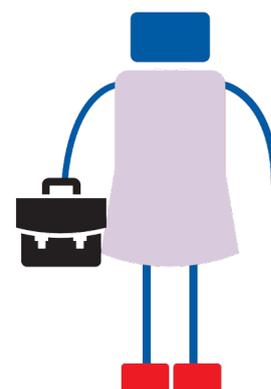
3. What examples are there?



The work of Employers for Carers highlights a number of models already in place within workplaces or currently being established.

One of the earliest models of a Carer Passport was developed by The Charity for Civil Servants to support all Civil Service employees in the workplace. The Charity has worked with many government departments to introduce it to senior and middle managers and since 2010 it has benefited thousands of employees.

A survey by the Charity in 2013 reported major improvements in wellbeing following the issue of a Carer Passport, such as reduced stress levels. In a follow-up survey in May 2017 of 848 people who had received a Carer Passport, in a 20% response rate (167), 65% reported their stress levels before receipt of the Passport as quite or very high,



reducing to 24% after receipt.

The Charity for Civil Servants feels that their impartial stance encourages people to apply. Part of the value is in the carer taking time to reflect on how their situation impacts their working life.

For current, former and retired civil servants, the Charity has developed a new initiative, the Carer's Statement. This sets out the carer's responsibilities outside the workplace, and is used to communicate to health and social care professionals the need for access to support and services, for example a GP diagnosis, a Care Needs Assessment or a Carer's Assessment.

Another early model was developed by BT, whose Carer Passport can be completed by any BT employee who has caring responsibilities which they believe could have an impact on their ability to work currently or in the future. It is supported by a factsheet produced by the Communication Workers Union.

Business in the Community (BITC) in Northern Ireland developed a model Carer Passport which has been used by a number of different employers.

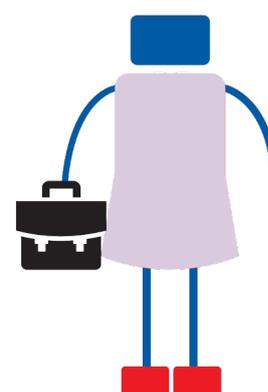
The Department for Transport (DfT) offers the Charity for Civil Servants' Carer Passport to its employees, reporting that staff turnover has been reduced from 11.1% to 9.3% due to the retention of older workers. The Passport allows employees to leave their workplace to carry out urgent caring responsibilities without the need to take annual leave and sick days. The Department reports that its policies around carers have significantly improved unplanned absenteeism.

Examples of Passports can also be found in several sectors, for example in national and local government, NHS Trusts and other health service providers, the police force, the voluntary sector, carers associations, and in the private sector. The Financial Ombudsman Service and Age UK are further examples of organisations which are developing policy and practice in this area.

These existing models are often presented as largely a communication tool, enabling an informal conversation between employee and employer. They may bring caring onto a manager's radar for the first time. The Passport allows the employee to explain their circumstances in their own words, the difficulties they experience, and any help they may require in the workplace. It provides the opportunity to share information about the individual's caring responsibilities, and to record any actions or adjustments agreed between carer and line manager. When an employee is suddenly thrown into a caring role, it can help people to find short-term solutions.

In some workplaces which are already using a Carer Passport, this is a more formal arrangement and there is a clear framework in place, overseen by the HR department. However, the employee is under no obligation to share information about their caring responsibilities, or for these to be formally recorded on their personal file.

Where this does take place, employer and employee may begin with an informal conversation, but there is a formal record of what has been agreed and this will be regularly reviewed if circumstances change. It seeks to be a robust system for employees already using it, and encouraging others to engage. However, some Passports make it explicit that they are not a legally binding or mandatory document. It is a 'statement of caring



circumstances and needs', but provides no guarantees.

One employer describes their policy document as 'a prompt' for carers and line managers to consider appropriate support, leading to specific conversations with individuals about what is best for their particular situations. The policy states that the senior management team and Board of Trustees are committed to supporting and championing it. Directors, heads of department and managers are responsible for ensuring that a culture of openness and support for carers is fostered and maintained, giving staff confidence that support will be provided wherever possible.

Line managers are seen to have a key role in creating a carer friendly culture, through developing an open and respectful relationship, and maintaining ongoing dialogue about the employee's caring circumstances and any changes to them. They can then maintain their caring responsibilities alongside their work commitments.

Where models are in place and working effectively, employers and employees recognise that they both benefit. The employee has been given 'permission' to talk about their caring role, and the result is an improved working relationship.

**“
The Passport has made a difficult conversation with managers easier, it has allowed me to be honest and start to talk about what I needed as a carer and employee
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4. What difference does it make?



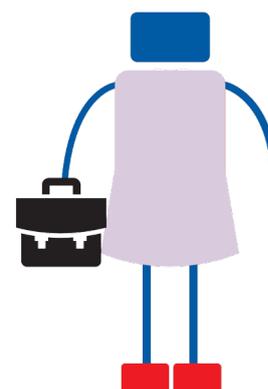
To carers?

'The Passport has made a difficult conversation with managers easier, it has allowed me to be honest and start to talk about what I needed as a carer and employee.'

To employers?

'If carers are willing to share information about their personal circumstances, the employer is on the road to becoming a high trust organisation with a good workplace culture. It's about valuing your workforce.' (Rachael Saunders, Age at Work Director, Business In The Community)

'Caring is a growing issue in the workplace and the business case for supporting employees who are juggling work and care is becoming ever more apparent. We know that several employers successfully use a Carer Passport to help as part of an overall support package for carers which counts towards improving health and well-being and employee resilience, productivity and retention.' Katherine Wilson, Head of Employers for Carers





5. Introducing a Carer Passport in employment

The benefits and business case

Employers currently using a Carer Passport scheme report the benefits of having a practical tool which values and recognises people. BITC describes the importance of clearly demonstrating support for carers, being open to making relatively small adjustments, and the loyalty which employers win back through this approach. Where a constructive conversation is held between employee and line manager, this is simply an efficient way of doing things. It avoids the pitfalls of delaying the conversation until a situation reaches crisis point, or multiple conversations being held with different managers. It makes business sense.

The introduction of a Carer Passport within the workplace may be integrated with wider initiatives around embracing the opportunities and challenges of an ageing workforce, and extending working life. It may link in to employee assistance programmes and initiatives around emotional resilience and wellbeing, and offer additional support if required through these routes. Thus, it reflects a wider cross-organisational approach to valuing the workforce. As such, if it is promoted at the highest levels within an organisation, this sends a clear message about its importance. As above, the Department for Transport, reports that its Carer Passport has contributed to reduction in staff turnover from 11.1% to 9.3% due to the retention of older workers.

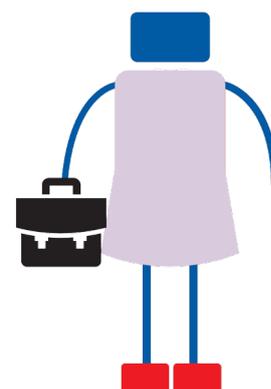
The establishment of good practice around the use of a Passport can also help to ensure that workplaces are not detrimentally affected by the reality of caring within their workforce, but that the employer has the opportunity to agree any working adjustments for an employee, resulting in no impact on essential business operations. Centrica plc has measured the benefits of a wider policy of supporting carers and found that £4.5 million was saved from reduced absenteeism and £2 million through retention costs.”

Seen overall, the scheme provides an opportunity to retain skills and knowledge within the workforce. It can help avoid the recruitment and other costs associated with high staff turnover and staff absence. Many employers now welcome the scheme. They see that it has an important part to play in maintaining team productivity and workplace stability.

Elements of success

The Carer Passport should be user-friendly and simple in content, minimising the number of personal questions asked. There should be an implicit (or even explicit) acknowledgement that some individuals will find it difficult to talk to their manager about personal issues, such as caring responsibilities. The use of a Passport can be a positive way of helping this discussion.

The employee usually controls the information recorded within the Passport, including the amount of personal information given. The Passport is a ‘living document’ which can be reviewed and amended



if the employee's caring responsibilities - and the impact these have upon them - changes. Even without changes to caring responsibilities, the Passport arrangements are usually reviewed on a regular basis (eg. through 1:1 meetings with the line manager).

The Passport also 'stays with' the employee so that, even if they move departments or their role changes, it remains in place. Any new line manager will be made aware of the Passport (if the employee wishes them to), and of the employee's caring responsibilities and any agreements which have been made. They are then immediately aware of the employee's situation, avoiding the need for it to be explained again, and can provide reassurances from the start of the working relationship.

The Passport prompts a conversation which the employee may find challenging and upsetting, but with the expressed intention of providing understanding and support. Its contents are confidential and treated accordingly. The employee and line manager both hold a copy, and a copy is usually kept in the employee's personal file within the HR department (though in some workplaces, it is simply held by employee and line manager). In the case of one major employer, for example, no one else has access to the contents – and, indeed, no one else is aware of who has a Passport.

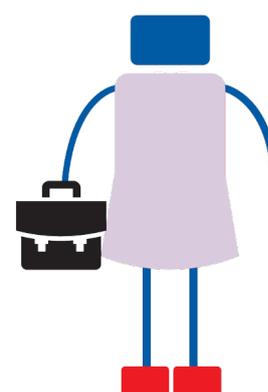
Models are often developed with the support of a Staff Carers Group or similar body. This means that those in caring roles are central to this process and can help design ways of working which are effective for - and sensitive to - the needs of carers. For many employees, revealing information about their caring role may be something they don't want to do. Employers should try to communicate from the start that this can have benefits for them, and can reduce the pressure to feel they have to cope alone.

Any challenges

If the Passport is kept as an informal document between employee and line manager, and not held or acknowledged elsewhere, this can weaken its potential. At times, there may be an organisational reluctance from the start and suspicions about what it represents – and about whether it is a change to the employee's contract or a request for flexible working. These concerns need answering, so as not to undermine the success of the initiative.

Employees do not always want to identify themselves as a carer, and they may fear it becoming a label. Many carers explain, understandably, that they want to be known for what they do in their job – and not known primarily as a carer. They may fear a 'glass ceiling' for those with caring responsibilities. The way in which the Passport is used within the workplace needs to respond to this valid concern by respecting the employee's wishes, and by offering a level of protection to choose the way in which they 'present' (or don't) their role as carer to colleagues.

Where workplaces have established a wider culture which is relatively inflexible, and quite formal in the management of staff (with managers perhaps having limited capacity to agree flexibility), the scheme can sit



less comfortably. However, that said, it can provide a mechanism for increased flexibility. Where there is more flexibility anyway, the scheme easily fits into conversations which are already happening, and perhaps even a wider approach to carers. This dynamic needs to be considered, as the scheme alone cannot provide a 'fix all' if it is done in isolation.

The Carer Passport can be difficult to organise internally, particularly when its status is unclear and it sits outside the HR department. Carers sometimes raise concerns about the informal status of Passports within their workplace, with one carer describing that 'in my organisation, managers seemed free to pay attention to it or not'. An adhoc approach can also result in unclear guidance around the paperwork to support it (eg. for one carer, their Passport was simply a copy of their application form, with no follow-on conversations held or support offered).

To be successful, the Passport needs its internal champions from across the workplace and ideally at the most senior level. This applies in other sectors too, where for example a senior clinician acting as champion on a hospital board can make all the difference. Within the workplace, there is a huge part to be played by senior level sponsorship and case studies to illustrate newly emerging practices. Whether this reflects a championing of carers more widely, or simply a championing of the Passport tool, advances are being made. The issue is given visibility and a mechanism. Managers need to be ready to follow through, responding to staff who respond to the raised profile of the initiative but currently feel unsupported.

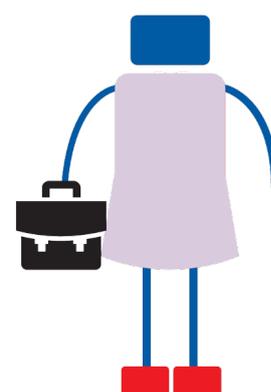
Promoting the Carer Passport in the workplace

The take-up of the Carer Passport by an employee is a voluntary process, which can be suggested by employee or employer. To have visibility and be known as an option across the workplace, it requires strong internal promotion.

The Passport should be championed by senior management and, in larger organisations, by departmental heads, the HR department, and the Staff Carers Group if there is one. Existing communications mechanisms (eg. the internal intranet, departmental noticeboards, staff briefing sessions) should be utilised. Where there are senior staff or Trustees who are carers, and who are willing to identify themselves as such, this can make a huge difference for other employees who fear the stigma of being seen as a carer.

The Passport can be promoted during all stages of the employee's journey within the organisation. While there seems to be little existing evidence of it being directly mentioned as part of an induction programme for new staff, there is clear potential for this. It can help to normalise the initiative. Also, where staff move within an organisation due to promotion, change of role or restructuring, the Passport can sit within a checklist for the transition – and there are examples of this already happening. Again, it leads to normalisation and these working practices becoming embedded across all departments.

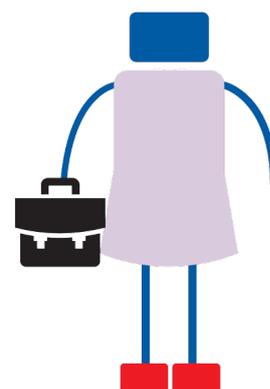
Other employees who are in caring roles can play an enormous part in promoting the scheme. Their knowledge and insights can be a real asset, and their involvement in the development of policy and practice around the Passport is highly recommended. They can play a significant part in helping to build employee confidence in the initiative.



Going ahead

[For Going Ahead section throughout, please assume a double-page, ideally with 'Going ahead' copy on LH side and 'Resources and templates' on RH side. Not a disaster if it's not a spread, but ideally would be.

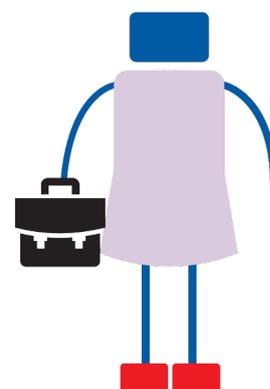
- Be informed by the expertise and insights of carers when developing this initiative, as the concept is one which clearly resonates with them.
- Clarify the status of the Carer Passport within the workplace, including whether it is a formal or informal arrangement.
- Generate a Carer Friendly environment within the workplace, one in which employees are able to identify themselves as carers and ask for support, and line managers are able to provide it.
- Acknowledge that not all employees will want to identify themselves as carers, and it will take time to build confidence around these policies and practices.
- Provide guidance on how the completion of personal information in the Passport should take place in a reassuring and supportive environment which respects confidentiality, and supports managers to be equipped for this.
- Use the Passport to link in to other forms of support, including Employee Assistance Plans, and trusted sources of information and advice.
- Recognise the experiences of younger carers in the workplace, who often struggle to build an employment history because of the pressures upon them and need more support to acknowledge the skills they have developed as a carer.
- Ensure that the Passport is championed by management and at the most senior levels of the organisation (for example, by having a Carer Lead in place at Director or Trustee level).
- Provide a supportive environment to encourage any senior staff, Board members or Trustees with caring responsibilities to consider identifying themselves, thus increasing visibility and sending the message that caring can affect any of us in the workplace.
- Ensure the Passport's visibility, using all internal communications tools (including the intranet and newsletters) to encourage staff to understand the issues involved and to motivate carers to identify themselves.
- Promote the existence of the Passport at all stages of the employee's journey - from the day they start, when it can be introduced as part of the induction programme and appear on the induction checklist.
- Consider recording the number of carers in the organisation and where they are located, helping to engage more effectively - while acknowledging that not all employees with caring responsibilities will wish to recognise themselves as carers, and that some will come in and out of caring situations. Hold all such information in confidence.



- With agreement from employees, record further information around carers' interest in training and other opportunities, and their willingness to provide guidance to others. Again, hold all such information in confidence.

Resources and templates

- [Template Carer Passport log >>>](#)
- [Leaflet to explain the scheme >>>](#)
- [Poster to promote the scheme >>>](#)
- [Sample letter from Director >>>](#)
- [Going Ahead summary >>>](#)



Carer Passport guide:

Hospitals



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Hospitals

1. Key facts about carers



- Our health and social care services rely heavily on support provided by carers, with the contribution they make currently estimated to be worth £132 billion a year.
- The Government's mandate to NHS England (2017/18) sets out a commitment to identify and support carers.
- In 2014, NHS England published its Commitment to Carers, which includes raising the profile of carers, person-centred coordinated care, and education and training.
- Over a third (36%) of carers rated hospitals as carer friendly, whilst almost a quarter (24%) said their hospital was not carer friendly and 13% found their hospital the least carer friendly service in their community. ([Building Carer Friendly Communities, Carers Week, 2015](#))
- Almost a quarter (21%) of carers said their hospital does not recognise their caring role. ([Building Carer Friendly Communities, Carers Week, 2016](#))
- Six out of ten carers (61%) said the lack of support for them had a negative impact on their health. ([Building Carer Friendly Communities, Carers Week, 2015](#))

£132bn

The estimated contribution that unpaid carers to health and social care services each year





2. What is a Carer Passport in a hospital?

Identification and recognition

A Carer Passport in a hospital is a simple tool which identifies someone as being in a caring role for one of the hospital's patients. Hospitals can be where the caring journey begins or intensifies, following a stroke, diagnosis of a serious illness, such as cancer, or the birth of a child with a disability.

Encouraging carers to self-identify can be one of the main challenges in supporting them. Information and advice is often hard to find and navigate, with a confusing pathway between the NHS, social care and a complex social security system. Providing support benefits the carer directly, the person they are caring for, and has clear benefits for health professionals as they work towards the best outcomes for their patients.

The Passport will usually take the form of a card, badge or booklet which is easily recognised by staff, and which names the person as a carer. It should contain the details of the Carer Support Worker or Carers Lead where there is one, and if not, should name a nominated member of staff such as a Dementia Lead or Head Nurse.

Involvement

It should explain what the carer can expect from hospital staff (the 'offer' to them), in accordance with the NHS Constitution commitment to carers being involved and consulted in the care and treatment of their family member or friend. This may include staff explaining treatments to the carer, and the carer being involved in planning the discharge of the patient. Information supporting the Passport should also contain details of any financial concessions offered to carers, as well as an offer or link to locally tailored information including Social Services contacts, information on Carers Assessments, and organisations which can provide further advice and information.

A Carer Passport scheme enables hospitals to become more aware of what it means to support someone who has identified themselves as a carer, and to accept them as an expert to involve in decision-making. With discharge planning, for example, this needs to involve carers from the start. Staff need to be absolutely clear about the situation at home and what carers can expect from the discharge (who is doing what, when, and what to do if things don't go ahead as planned). They provide recognition and respect for the carer as a partner in care.

Practical help

Passports in hospitals also tend to include offers to practically and financially assist carers, and these are welcomed. This includes concessions on the cost of hospital car parking (note that the



A Carer Passport scheme enables hospitals to become more aware of what it means to support someone who has identified themselves as a carer, and to accept them as an expert to involve in decision-making



Government updated its guidance to NHS Trusts in 2015 to include this expectation) and the offer of discounts in the staff canteen, inclusion in refreshments on the ward, access to washing facilities, etc.

It is not uncommon, for example, for carers to spend £100 per week on hospital parking when their total Carers Allowance is just £62 per week. These offers are of practical and financial help, but also send a clear message to carers that their role is acknowledged and valued.

Involving carers through all aspects of treatment and care and offering specific concessions to carers is effectively a way of saying to carers 'you are welcome and have a legitimate right to be here'.

3. What examples are there?



Many NHS Trusts are now doing more to value carers in the healthcare setting, and there are an exciting number of initiatives around carers.

Models are in place in many hospitals in England. These help to identify carers at an early stage (including new carers who need support from the start), and give carers confidence about what they can expect from hospital staff and that their caring role is recognised. They benefit from the carer's expertise on treatment and care issues, and ensure better understanding and coordination between the patient, carer and staff. The initiative will be implemented within the context of hospital guidelines around carers and the NHS Constitution.

During a pilot at the Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, which trialled open visiting as part of a Carer Passport, nearly two thirds (59%) of staff felt it had improved communication between staff, patients and their relatives. Prior to the pilot, only 23.5% of carers and patients thought that staff were available to discuss care and treatment, which rose to 100% at the end of the pilot. The pilot also saw a reduction in the number of falls compared to the same time in the previous year, which the Ward Manager felt was contributed to by open visiting.

John's Campaign has resulted in a drive to get hospitals and more recently residential care settings to sign up and implement measures so that carers of patients living with dementia can have the right to stay with them in hospital if they wish and to be treated as partners in care. Health service experts consulted as part of this project report the impact of this at local level. This was included as one of 29 indicators for the NHS England's Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) payment framework in 2016/17.

The expectation is that this would see a wider take-up of the principles which underpin John's Campaign, whereby hospitals will be implementing a policy on welcoming carers and family members according to patient need and not restricted by visiting hours. These policies can be extended to all carers in different settings across the UK.

In Surrey, through the use of Carer Prescriptions, Clinical Commissioning Groups are already implementing a joined-up approach between hospitals, GP practices and other healthcare services. Again,



this has been given extra leverage by the NHS England Commitment to Carers and the Carers Memorandum of Understanding toolkit. The Carer Prescription is a mechanism for identifying and referring carers for support. This started at primary care level in response to GP interest in offering more to carers (including referral for carers breaks). It was soon extended more widely and every provider in Surrey is now signed up. Once completed, a copy of the prescription is added to the patient notes – though some Trusts simply use a Carer Friendly sticker in recognition of the carer role.

This initiative sits alongside the use of Carer Passports in Surrey's hospitals, which are described as both 'permission to be involved in care' and an acknowledgement of the value of carers by providing specific concessions. The Passport is seen as fostering a culture of Carer Friendly practices in local hospitals, and a useful tool for hospital staff to recognise the Partnerships In Care model. In Surrey and Sussex NHS Healthcare Trust, the Passport is used throughout the Trust and aimed at in-patients. The wider package for the Passport includes instructions to staff (with a flowchart of what staff can do) and a poster signposting carers to Carers Support. Offers include staff discounts in the restaurant, use of refreshment rounds on the wards, and specific car parking arrangements. The Passport 'sanctions carers to get involved in all aspects of the patient's time in hospital', including involvement in washing, dressing and feeding the patient, attending team meetings and providing support for investigations.

At Pinderfields Hospital, part of Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust, a Carer Passport was introduced following feedback from carers of patients living with dementia, and recognition that involving carers in dementia patient care eases the anxiety felt by those living with the condition in a busy hospital setting. One of the most innovative features of the Passport is a special password which allows nurses to share detailed information about a patient over the phone. The hospital also built six family support suites to enable families to spend the night with their loved one. The Carer Passport has been given out to over 900 carers, with positive outcomes reported including carers feeling valued and able to communicate the patient's needs to hospital staff.

4. What difference does it make?



To carers?

'When my mum-in-law was in hospital, I felt that I was being overlooked by the staff and I approached the patients help system. I was then told about the Passport. Using it meant I could then go into the ward outside of visiting hours, so was there when doctors came round. I was also able to help with her personal care. It was extremely useful, but a shame that I only found out about it when I was distressed about how I was being side-lined.'

To hospital staff?

'Carer Passports ensure our patients and their carers have a seamless journey, from admission to discharge. It creates an identify which allows



carers to be part of care.’ (Deputy Director of Nursing, Lister Hospital)

‘This initiative has benefited in improved communication and access to consultants. Carers, family and friends are the experts and decision makers.’ (Divisional Chief Nurse, Medicine, Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust)

To the NHS Trust?

Quote pending

5. Introducing a Carer Passport in hospitals



The benefits and business case

Many carers currently struggle to have their role recognised by health and care professionals. This has a negative impact on the patient, but also on the carer’s own health and wellbeing, thus resulting in increased need for health service interventions. While there are a number of Carer Friendly initiatives across the NHS, there is little uniformity and support to carers can vary enormously. The Carer Passport can focus and articulate the support offer. Once this support is in place, it has clear benefit for carers, patients, staff and the NHS itself.

Carers will be better supported at an earlier stage, with positive consequences for their health, wellbeing and financial security. They will feel confident about what they can expect from hospital staff and more fully informed about what help is available. This is also to the benefit of patients, who have the expertise of their carer informing the treatment and care they receive, and better understanding and coordination between hospital staff and families. The practical and financial concessions often offered through the Passport (eg. hospital parking and staff canteen discounts, inclusion in refreshments on the ward) also serve as an important acknowledgement of the hardship often created when someone becomes a carer. The parking concession is now Government expectation in its guidance to NHS Trusts.

The part played by a patient’s carer on the ward can be of significant benefit to staff. For example, the carer of a patient with Alzheimer’s may be the one person who knows what food they will eat and can encourage them to eat it. Through offering flexible visiting times to carers, this can mean a patient eats their meals and doesn’t become malnourished. While this hands-on support should not be assumed, and should not replace the input of nursing and other staff, it can be enormously beneficial to the patient and something which the carer is willing to do. Carers report staff saying that this help relieves the pressure on them, even saving on their budget.



For many carers, the Passport can also help create the opportunity to be involved and consulted in securing the right treatment and care for their loved ones. While the involvement of carers is sometimes questioned by staff, there are clear benefits to it happening. A carer's knowledge and experience means they can often add important information regarding the patient, including what happens when the patient is at home and the side-effects of treatment. For example, involving a carer in decisions about drug changes can be hugely beneficial in gaining an overview of the impact of past changes. The Passport is also an acknowledgement that the carer is there to support the patient while in hospital but, unlike the hospital staff, their role also continues when they get home. This increases the chances of a successful return home for the patient, potentially reducing hospital readmissions.

At Lister Hospital in Hertfordshire, the benefits of their existing Passport scheme are clear. There are an estimated 100,000 unidentified carers in Hertfordshire. Reaching them is a priority, with this shaping the way in which the scheme is delivered. 'Keeping it simple' is the mantra, with carers issued with a bright yellow badge on a yellow lanyard which they can wear throughout the hospital. They are not named on the card, and can pass it to another family member where the caring role is being shared. The badge makes them easily recognisable as a carer to ward staff, and in the canteen and pharmacy where it entitles them to discounts. In the first 6 months of 2017, 135 carers were identified for the first time.

One of the key benefits of the Lister scheme is reported to be the culture change which it has brought about on the wards. Carers now have 24 hour access for visiting if appropriate and this is credited with contributing to more open communications with staff, less of a 'grid-lock' at peak visiting times, less staff time spent on phones, and a 'generally calmer atmosphere' which is widely welcomed. There is also early evidence of reduced falls when carers are present, with one of the scheme's pilot wards reporting 92 days of no falls. This is one of many initiatives introduced to reduce falls. Staff also see other benefits for patients, including improved eating and drinking, and the stimulation provided by the company of a loved one. A new computer system in the hospital help identify and share information about patients and carers, and should enable more data gathering around the differences made by the presence of carers.

Another initiative, the Carers Support Scheme, is delivered by North Bristol NHS Trust and University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust presents patients and carers with a Carers Charter signed by both Chief Executives, the Director of Nursing, and Chief Nurse. On admission, a patient is asked whether they have someone who supports them. If they do, staff will speak to the carer and consider a referral to the Hospital Liaison Worker. A conversation also takes place to see if the carer would like to be involved in providing care for the patient while in hospital. Carers are given a badge allowing open visiting, a swipe card enabling access to the staff canteen for low-cost meals, and significant car parking concessions. The value of the scheme has been calculated using Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodology and found to save the equivalent of £3.6million a year, including £239,000 in health services costs avoided. These gains have been attributed as £1.9m for the state and £1.7m for individuals.



Elements of success

Good practice is often new and evolving, but there are some common themes.

A Passport can enable a conversation, its very existence providing a practical prompt if you like. It needs to be a conversation which is careful in its use of language as carers and those they care for don't necessarily label themselves and their situation in this way. But time and again, carers report the importance of open communications with them. They welcome real clarity about what to expect at what can be a difficult and stressful time, and an avoidance of

over-complex and technical language to discuss (for example) discharge arrangements. Access to face-to-face, knowledgeable and calm support is also important – the chance to actually speak to someone who can give practical advice. It may be provided in a more informal setting, such as a drop-in cafe for carers. This ongoing dialogue is essential. Carers' circumstances will change over time, and the use of the Passport needs to embrace this.

At their most effective, Carer Passports are delivered as part of a package of Carer Friendly practices. These practices become a thread running through the hospital setting, which normalise the role of carers. Hospital-wide communications should ensure that all staff are aware of these policies and practices, and how to use them. Passports are often championed by Carers Leads, with evidence that these roles are now being funded by a small number of Clinical Commissioning Groups in some hospitals. At Board level, there could be a Carers Lead, in the same way that they exist within local authorities. So where the Passport and other carer initiatives are being championed within a hospital, they are proactively offered to carers by hospital staff who understand their purpose and value.

Health professionals should consider the whole family when identifying carers, recognising that children and young people may also undertake caring responsibilities. Young carers have specific needs as a vulnerable group. These include communications which are clearly aimed at them, availability of appointments to support their attendance at school or college, professionals being aware of them as a 'hidden' group, and the importance of recognising that they should be considered and consulted with regard to decision making. The approaches which are right for adult carers are not always appropriate for young carers.

Where Passports work effectively, they embrace Partnerships In Care principles, fostering the Carer Friendly practices of identifying, engaging and involving. The aims and principles of the Carer Passport in different hospitals across an NHS Trust will be similar, but the delivery mechanisms may differ. Where there is good practice in place, each hospital is adapting the Passport for its own purposes informed by an existing model or template which they have accessed.

Any challenges

In hospitals, the Passport clearly needs to be promoted and offered



consistently across all wards. So while it may be effectively championed by dementia nurses and patient experience staff, its reach needs to be wider. It should be seen as an issue for nurses, but also for administrative staff, therapists, doctors, clinicians, and for there to be management sign-up through governance. With hospitals affected by the use of agency and temporary staff, getting the message out there in a consistent way can be a challenge.

In terms of implementation and development, there is recognition that the systems are often not in place to record the take-up of Passports in hospitals, and to monitor how they are being used. Once a Carer Passport is completed by a carer, is it copied and filed? This may be unlikely because patient records are held, but not usually carer records. This raises a number of questions, including how to measure effectiveness, and if the reach and benefits to carers is fully known.

There are often barriers to young carers getting support within the NHS, partly through staff uncertainty about how to respond to them, including concerns about safeguarding and neglect. As a result, progress in this area is slow. In Surrey, a phased approach is being taken, starting in the community (eg. with a push for GPs to register young carers) and building to a planned Young Carers Pledge for hospitals. If this is indicative of what is happening elsewhere, the Carer Passport is unlikely to reach young carers in hospitals for some time, and yet they need to access support as much as adult carers do.

With Carer Passports increasingly recognised as a useful tool for supporting carers, there is the risk that they are developed in a number of different sectors within one community. A strategic, joined-up approach is required, as with the shaping of all Carer Friendly policies and practices. There may be some hesitation around the cost implications of taking a 'whole systems' approach - or of an offer which reaches a large and loosely defined number of individuals. Hospitals need to be clear about definitions, the offer they are making, and how they will resource it.

The majority of healthcare happens outside hospitals, and this needs to be acknowledged in improving support to carers via a model such as a Passport. If Carer Passports are to be part of a wider approach to delivering Carer Friendly practices, they become 'one tool in the box'. As such, the Passport is one mechanism of many and there needs to be a wider action plan connecting health and social care providers.

Finally, there may be a perception amongst NHS staff that an initiative such as this will lead to an increased workload. The benefits of Passports should be presented (based on experiences elsewhere), captured as they unfold, and clearly communicated to staff. Just some of the benefits we are already aware of include reduced hardship for carers and those they care for, smoother discharge and lower readmission levels.

Promoting Carer Passports in hospitals

Within hospitals themselves, Carer Passports need to be promoted and offered consistently across all wards. One carer has described in detail the difficulties she faced when she attempted to mention her husband's long-term mental health needs to ward staff. She was treated with hostility and repeatedly had to justify her presence. The hospital had a



carers policy, but staff would not recognise it. A Passport could have made a difference here, but the carer acknowledges that it could simply have been met with annoyance by staff if its purpose was not fully understood and embraced.

At Lister hospital, the scheme is promoted to all staff on the wards, to staff and visitors via an education stand staffed in public areas, through local carers organisations and Carer Champions in GP surgeries, and via local libraries. It is delivered by the Trust's designated Carers Lead, who is line managed by the Deputy Director of Nursing and has the active support of senior staff across the hospital. When championed at the highest levels of the hospital, staff are aware that this is the right thing for patients and their carers. The wider benefits of such a scheme are that they enable a shaping of services which respond to the needs of the patient and carer, improve their experiences, and reflect the Trust's values and NHS Constitution. This championing - from ward to Board - can make a real difference here.

So carers, and Carer Passports, need to be given status within the hospital setting. The policy to embed the use of Passports needs to be in place, with high levels of staff awareness of it, and training provided to ensure its effective implementation. Carers need to see the Passport more proactively promoted in hospitals, with clearer communications and information available. They report that it is of value once they have it, but that it sometimes takes a while to be offered.

Carers often acknowledge that a Passport will be most effective when it is used across the range of health and social care settings. For this to work, such schemes need to be introduced with the formal support and promotion from these statutory agencies.

Going ahead

- Be absolutely clear about who can access the Carer Passport (ie. what defines a carer), what its purpose is, and what it entitles the carer to.
- Ensure that Carer Passports have two key components - to foster the identification, engagement and involvement of carers, while also providing concessions to carers (eg. parking discounts and referrals on to the local Carers Centre).
- Clarify the essential elements of a Passport, perhaps that this includes (for example) the name of the carer, the name of the person being cared for, the offer from the hospital, the named staff member leading the initiative, and review or renewal dates, etc.
- Address questions around record-keeping (who holds a copy of the Carer Passport within the hospital), monitoring, measuring outcomes and evaluating the impact of the initiative.
- Make clear agreements to foster joint working, including those which adhere to confidentiality and data sharing considerations.
- Access the Passport templates and examples of good practice which are available, and which can be adapted by hospitals for their own purposes and according to their own governance in recognition that not one model fits all.
- Be informed by the expertise and insights of carers when developing



this initiative, as the concept is one which clearly resonates with them.

- Examine the experiences and needs of young carers with regards to the Carer Passport, and explore how a model could be developed to respond to these needs. Consider measures to identify young carers within hospitals.
- Ensure there is a senior operational lead for support to carers (eg. the Director of Nursing) who can take a whole-systems approach, as well as an influential clinician to champion the initiative at Board level.
- In addition to the hospital setting, look to extend support to carers across other areas of community provision (including primary care, emergency services, pharmacies, private care providers), thus reaching any services which carers might use.
- Champion a local provider level approach which is Carer Friendly in the development of services, and in which carers are regarded as 'everyone's business'.

The following templates are provided to assist hospitals in developing their own Carer Passports (probably based on Lister hospital badge/lanyard, Surrey and Sussex NHS Trust leaflet).

COMING SOON

Resources and templates

- Leaflet to explain the scheme >>>
- Poster to promote the scheme >>>
- ID card template >>>



Carer Passport guide:

Community



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Community

1. Key facts about carers



- 3 out of 4 carers don't feel their caring role is understood and valued by their community. (*Building Carer Friendly Communities: Research for Carers Week 2016, Carers Week, 2016*)
- 91% said they missed out on practical or financial support (or both) as a result of not being identified as a carer. (*Missing Out: The identification of carers, Carers UK, 2016*)
- 29% of carers said they were always able to maintain relationships with close friends and families, compared to just 9% of carers whose communities didn't value and understand them. (*Building Carer Friendly Communities: Research for Carers Week 2016, Carers Week, 2016*)
- Over half (53%) of carers stated that they were always able to get to essential shops or services, compared to a third (32%) of carers whose communities didn't value and understand them. (*Building Carer Friendly Communities: Research for Carers Week 2016, Carers Week, 2016*)
- 35% of carers without good social support experienced ill-health, compared to 15% of those with good support. (*Mental Health of Carers, Singleton, ONS, 2002*)

3 in 4

carers don't feel that their caring role is valued by society





2. What is a Carer Passport in the community?

There is a varied understanding of Carer Passport schemes within the wider context of local areas, and it is probably fair to say that no existing initiatives realise the full potential of a Passport for carers in their community.

Identification and recognition

Where models exist, they tend to include some form of identification, for example a card held by the carer and a sticker displayed by local businesses to show that they are part of the scheme. They usually provide written information to the carer (in the form of a leaflet) about services for carers in their area and other ways in which they can access support. They may also provide access to a directory of local services and businesses which have signed up to offer discounts or concessions in recognition of the role of carers.

Recognition is a strong theme amongst carers and, as part of this, community Passport schemes tend to have a physical tool (such as a plastic card) which easily identifies the carer. This can be for reasons of practicality, but also because it can help avoid the labelling of the person being cared for. One carer explains, 'I find it awkward to explain I'm a carer when my son is standing with me, like he's different to everyone else. It's soul-destroying, and I think it would make it more discreet ... rather than pulling out loads of proof at counters for discounts or special seating needed'. Another adds that 'in the community, it would be brilliant - total proof that you're a carer'.

A local offer

Local services and businesses are well placed to help identify carers and direct them to sources of advice and support. This may include carers who self-identify for the first time, having not accessed services previously and not necessarily wanting to label themselves as a carer. At this stage, they may simply welcome information in the form of a leaflet and awareness of benefits offered locally. Where carers become increasingly connected, the offer can be more comprehensive and include carers who are signed up to local carers services.

In some parts of the country, this already includes discounts in local shops and for professional services, eg. legal advice, complementary therapies, etc. Within Hertfordshire and Dorset, for example, carers can access a list of specific offers in their area (though this can be a challenge in rural areas where internet access may be limited), making it an offer which is genuinely relevant to where they live.

Engagement

There is also great potential for a local offer which meaningfully



My employer is very supportive and subscribes to fair employment, but there have been times when I have had to let them down. Records of my attendance reflect on my employment history



engages carers. Carers play a key role in community life, and should have an increasing say in feeding back on service responses to them and those they care for. Many carers would welcome the opportunity to have more involvement in decision-making around social care for the people they care for, as well as in relation to the wider support needs of carers. Working with the Carers Service, carers can help commissioners and service providers better understand the needs of carers locally, the gaps in provision and the ways in which local organisations could make a difference to their daily lives.

Carers communicate the challenges around navigating services, systems and people to ensure that they - and the person they care for - have access to available support. Resources and schemes which facilitate coordination and joined-up approaches would help carers to be more in control, would recognise their role and value, and would provide them with better and more effective access to support. The Carer Passport can be one tool for facilitating this.

3. What examples are there?

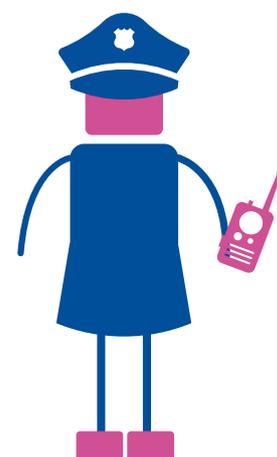


Within the wider community, beyond specific sectors such as the NHS or workplace, carers still require recognition and support. In all aspects of community life, the responsibilities and challenges of caring come into play and there is more that local services and businesses can do to respond to this. Where this is already happening, it is welcomed by carers as growing evidence of an appreciation of the crucial part they play in our communities – the beginnings of the realisation of Carer Friendly Communities.

In some areas, discount schemes have become well established and this has perhaps led to a perception that this is what a community-based Carer Passport is. This perception should not suggest that this is the extent of the offer which a Passport can make. The offer should be wider, even if some carers choose to use only the discount element. Indeed, another carer may have no interest in discounts or concessions offered locally, but find the Passport of real value in giving them a voice within a hospital setting.

The community-focused Passport offered by Carers In Hertfordshire does have a strong focus on discounts (hence it is often referred to as the Carers Discount card), while also having wider reach. It is currently held by 8,500 carers. Early engagement with carers by Carers In Hertfordshire begins a relationship which makes a broad offer and seeks to normalise the caring experience. In early 2017, over 3,500 additional carers registered for the card – with GPs referring 1,000 carers to the scheme. The card is valid for three years.

Elsewhere, one professional mentions carers at a local dementia partnership meeting who had made their own laminated ID cards to show they are carers. This arose simply because, when they tried to explain to the GP receptionist and others that they are a carer, the person they care for had become agitated or embarrassed. Having a card which they could show made this easier. These carers loved the idea of a credit card like card which would further legitimise their position as carer.



In Dorset, carers who registered with the Carers Information Service are offered a Carers Card which gives them access to discounts in a wide range of the businesses. The scheme is funded by Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council, and Borough of Poole and Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group. It provides free and easy sign-up and has the potential to reach 6,000 carers locally. Over 150 businesses are signed up, some with several branches across the county. In Bournemouth and Poole, carers were sent leaflets with their cards in order to urge local businesses of their choice to join the scheme. Interest from carers has also increased membership of the local Carers Information Service, which is open to all carers. Feedback from carers has been positive and staff delivering the scheme have seen its potential to widen to new settings, explaining that ‘as a concept, it’s almost limitless!’

In some local authorities, carers are signed up to a Carers Register and given a Carers Card which enables them to access certain services. Carer Support Services operate full and comprehensive services to carers throughout the country, proactively identifying carers, creating a record, assessing their needs, coordinating or navigating support and services with carers, and providing an offer of support directly to carers themselves. These services also have a range of branded literature, raise professional awareness and promote self-identification. However, while each service could be considered to be offering a local Passport to carers, they don’t currently identify their own services (or offers) with the Carer Passport concept.

4. What difference does it make?



To carers?

‘There are so many different organisations about that offer help/information ... often this only comes to light by word of mouth from a fellow carer. I also found that it’s so difficult to understand whether certain information can be supplied by local or county council, and where there’s an overlap... the Passport could possibly stop the infuriating need to be passed from pillar to post’.

To local services and businesses?

‘Generally, when we approach businesses with the offer to join the Carers Card scheme in Dorset, the response is very positive. Free marketing is not the over-riding factor in the decision to join. Instead, business owners genuinely understand the concept of the scheme, which is recognising carers and the sterling work that they do – so they want to contribute. We are often thanked for approaching them.’

To the community as a whole?

Quote pending.



5. Introducing a Carer Passport in the community



The benefits and business case

Within every community are carers and those they care for. The benefits for them of providing more support across every aspect of their lives are resoundingly clear. One carer describes living with her father for 15 years while he had dementia, and how they moved between home, hospital and a nursing home - explaining that 'a Carer Passport would have been useful in all three care settings'.

An important element of the Hertfordshire scheme is that it is designed to connect back into the core Carers In Hertfordshire provision for carers. When signing up, carers are linked to advice and information, carers support groups, newsletters, etc, to ensure they receive ongoing support if they wish to remain connected. Hence, the scheme offers more than simply a discount card. With the integrated offer, it can demonstrate sound health and wellbeing outcomes for carers.

The discount scheme is, in itself, an acknowledgement of the impact of caring on household budgets. The Hertfordshire model lists 350 offers, via a booklet. It is promoted via local libraries, for example, who sees the benefits for their service in terms of increased footfall. Local coffee shops display stickers on their doors. For local businesses, there are clear benefits attached. They are part of a positive strategic partnership initiative in their area, perhaps connected into the NHS and other essential services. One community-based scheme mentions the opportunity to perhaps seek sponsorship from local businesses. In Dorset, the scheme hopes to become self-sustaining after two years of initial work to encourage businesses to join.

More broadly, there are clearly enormous benefits for local commissioners and service providers when they listen to carers about how they can make services more effective in meeting their needs and the needs of those they care for.

Elements of success

There are three key features emerging when we look at good practice in this area.

Firstly, when carers are recognised and valued by the existence of a Carer Passport in their community, it normalises their role and goes some way towards removing some of the stigma attached to caring. The discount aspect of the Passport provides an important recognition of the challenges facing carers, but also of their need to live full lives – to promote their own wellbeing through use of local leisure services, to perhaps visit the local cinema in their time off, to pop into a local café. Through having that strong identity as something which directly benefits carers, there is also less risk that it will be seen as a bureaucratic tool.

Secondly, easy access to the scheme results in carers immediately seeing its benefits for them – and partner organisations (eg. high street businesses) seeing the benefits for them too. The signposting



of further information and advice to carers usually happens at the start of engagement, and in a way which is immediately supportive and practical. Carers repeatedly mention the value of personal, one-to-one contact with someone who listens,

avoids jargon, and takes time to help. Service providers sometimes recognise this too, and of the importance that staff in all settings realise that 'what carers often want is simply a person to actually speak to - someone who is calm, rational and knowledgeable'.

Thirdly, good practice demonstrates a joined-up, coordinated response from sectors of the community. The Passport is clearly more beneficial when access is across multiple organisations, so that carers are likely to be identified earlier and can experience better coordination and navigation between services. To have a positive impact on carers lives and enable them to get the tailored support they need, the scheme needs to be co-delivered between the local authority, Carers Service and other service providers. This ensures there is expert advice and support available, local 'buy-in', and that this is a truly local partnership. The experiences of many carers is a reminder of the complexities of navigating 'the system' and the need for a cross-community (and services) approach to carers.

Good practice examples are all developed alongside organisations that represent carers and/or carers themselves. Local Carers Services are embedded within their community and will have insight into the needs of the local population. Carers, who all have lived experience, are uniquely placed to help commissioners design a service that will have a positive impact on the ground. Those developing similar initiatives must ask their local carers what they want from the Passport, what support it should signpost them to, and what benefits would make a difference to their lives.

Any challenges

One of the biggest challenges is that carers aren't always aware of schemes, and from the start of their caring situation. Similarly, when schemes are operating in specific settings, there can be issues with professional awareness. Whatever the setting, the offer to the carer must be clear. It also needs to be clear what carers living in one area (of one local authority or borough), but caring for someone living elsewhere, can receive. This is likely to be the area in which the person they care for receives services, less so where they themselves live.

A Carer Passport scheme in the community is at risk of not realising its true potential if there is not effective coordination between the multiple organisations and agencies which come into contact with a carer's life. A joined-up response is essential - as it is across the NHS too – but with one organisation leading. It would need to become part of the package of support to carers in the various settings, and immediately offered by whoever they first come into contact with (including issuing the card, so the carer is not sent elsewhere for this). The reach of the scheme across sectors will be limited if a coordinated response and senior level buy-in is not built in from an early stage.

A number of schemes have grown from small beginnings, but have recognised their potential from the start and have had clarity of purpose. Establishing record-keeping systems, capturing data on



effectiveness, and setting useful KPIs (and tracking them) can all present administrative challenges for those organisations involved. A further challenge is recording carer information, including information-sharing protocols, data protection and ensuring that all the data is kept up-to-date. Sending carers the right information, and at the right time, can be a challenge when people's circumstances and needs change. The resourcing needs to be in place if the initiative is to be properly embedded and sustained.

With any Carer Passport which operates a discount element, there may be concerns about fraud. Mitigating this can include having expiry dates on the Passport (so there is a buffer zone for carers moving on from a caring role, for example), or asking carers to come in to the Carers Centre to renew it. However, from the evidence to date, there appears to be minimal experience of fraudulent use of the scheme – so this may be a perceived risk, rather than a real one. If the identity card contains a photograph, this can reassure businesses that the card user is the carer.

Finally, businesses and service providers need to see the benefits of their involvement. In rural areas, for example, they may not initially see the footfall back to them. Growth of the scheme needs to be relatively rapid to build confidence, and successes shared. Where there is investment, this confidence will build over time. Having clarity of purpose remains key, so that even when schemes start small, they can grow – realising the great potential which Passports can offer local communities.

Promoting the Carer Passport in the community

The most effective schemes appear to be those which have high visibility within communities, with Carer Friendly stickers displayed in shop windows and a recognition of carers via leaflets and posters at GP surgeries. Promotion and implementation needs to ensure that the caring experience is normalised, and the stigma currently attached to it reduced.

Having a clearly branded local offer aids promotion within specific settings and across multiple settings. This aids buy-in and improves carer awareness of a scheme. Ideally, the Carer Passport will have multiple agencies and services sign up to it, and multiple points of access for carers. It will be easily accessed by carers. It will have senior commitment from Principal Commissioners of the County Council, NHS and local voluntary sector organisations, and the endorsement of leading figures within the community.

One of the challenges facing those developing existing models is that not everyone has access to the internet, and hard copies of the list of local offers quickly goes out of date. However, local businesses usually display a sticker to indicate that they are members of the scheme and part of the offer. Again, personal one-to-one contact is key here, with one local initiative explaining that 'success depends on a conversation having been had'.

The Passport should be promoted through a number of channels to ensure it reaches far and wide, including to elderly and frail carers who may face heightened isolation. If the range of offers and geographical spread is broad, it can reach out to all carers and be relevant to their



lives. This includes making sure that the needs of young carers are being met - that an offer is made to them too, that they qualify for concessions and can access them.

Developing and promoting local schemes with the involvement of carers themselves can help to build a package of support which is tailored to what they need and will be championed by them amongst their own networks.

Going ahead

- Be informed by the expertise and insights of carers when developing this initiative, as the concept is one which clearly resonates with them.
- Define the purpose of the Carer Passport for use in the community, and how it will be described to carers and local services/businesses you are seeking to engage.
- Recognise that a discount scheme in itself is not a Carer Passport, while recognising the significance of discount schemes for many carers.
- Acknowledge that Carer Passports can achieve a high level of carer engagement at local level, provide an incentive to self-identify, and build community partnerships.
- Be clear about the scale and breadth of the offer to be made, including its reach beyond the discount scheme model to include (for example) carer involvement in decision-making around social care and the wider support needs of carers. Make it as meaningful as possible to carers.
- Build the offer for carers via the Passport, starting with local services and growing it from there to local businesses and beyond.
- Ensure broad eligibility for the Passport, making it available to as many people who identify as carers as possible, thus promoting a preventative approach which means that caring roles and responsibilities can be sustained.
- Understand the demographic of carers locally (eg. the amount who are young carers), and what any distinct groups may need from services and a discount scheme.
- Make sure that essential partners are in place from the start, including local authority representatives, health service providers, the local voluntary sector, carers services (or other organisations that support carers locally), and carers themselves. Identify a lead organisation, with senior buy-in from across the range of stakeholders.
- Build a joined-up, strategic approach which has the vision of Carer Friendly communities.
- Ensure that carers are at the heart of the design and development of the Carer Passport initiative.
- Seek a high profile for the Passport from the start, perhaps launching it with the involvement of carers, the local MP, businesses which have signed up.



- Be aware of other Carer Passport initiatives locally, including those in specific sectors (eg. the health service and amongst education providers) to build on good practice and avoid duplication from a carer perspective.
- Explore the opportunity to develop one Passport which carers use across all services and local businesses, but which can make clear offers across the range of sectors.
- Explore the potential for local Passports to include offers from national services and businesses, and how this would be managed and planned for in terms of potential future take-up when schemes expand.
- Consider the time period for validity of the card, as carers circumstances may change (eg. two or three years in the areas consulted).

COMING SOON

Resources and templates

- Leaflet to explain the scheme >>>
- Poster to promote the scheme >>>
- ID card template >>>



Carer Passport guide:

Mental health trusts



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Mental health trusts

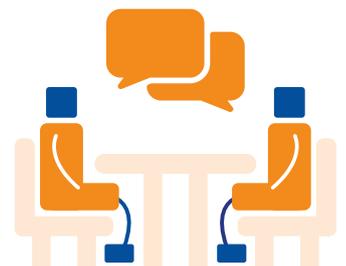
1. Key facts about carers



- 13% of carers in England are looking after someone with a mental health condition. (*Survey of Carers in Households 2009/10, NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care, 2010*)
- Our health and social care services rely heavily on support provided by carers, with the contribution they make currently estimated to be worth £132 billion a year.
- In 2014, NHS England published its Commitment to Carers, which includes raising the profile of carers, person-centred coordinated care, and education and training.
- The Government's mandate to NHS England (2017/18) sets out a commitment to identify and support carers.
- Principle 4 of the NHS Constitution, says that carers should be involved and consulted in decisions about the patient's care and treatment: "NHS services must reflect, and should be coordinated around and tailored to, the needs and preferences of patients, their families and their carers. Patients, with their families and carers, where appropriate, will be involved in and consulted on all decisions about their care and treatment." (*NHS Constitution, Department of Health, 2012*)
- There are approximately 1.5 million carers of people with mental health needs in the UK. They provide emotional support, practical help and coordination of care. Often, those with mental health needs are unknown to local services. As a result, their carers can be under-identified because the support they provide is 'invisible'.
- There are 50,000 children and young people looking after someone with mental ill health in the UK. (*Young Carers in the UK, Dearden and Becker, 2004*)

13%

of carers in England are looking after someone with a mental health condition





2. What is a Carer Passport in a mental health trust?

A 'Carer Passport' does not replace a model of carers support such as the Triangle of Care or a 'Carers Charter' which many trusts will already have in place.

The principle of a Carer Passport is that it is intended to be a mechanism for drawing together a range of support for carers and making explicit an 'offer' by the trust to a carer.

This 'offer' should communicate clearly what support a carer can expect and is likely to include information and advice, emotional support, a range of practical initiatives or 'privileges' to support the involvement and engagement of carers and a range of concessions or discounts that will help make life easier for them.

The diversity of a mental health trust will mean that the way a Carer Passport operates and what it offers is likely to differ across different services. So a Carer Passport operating in a CAMHS service may reflect a different response to carers than a Passport operating in for example a secure unit or a Community Learning Disability Service. The principle however of a Carer Passport would remain the same.

The visible form of a Carer Passport may be a card, wallet, booklet or perhaps a badge that is easily recognised by staff and will clearly identify and acknowledge someone as a carer.

Recognition and engagement of carers

A Carer Passport would help identify carers to staff and play a vital role in helping carers feel valued and recognised as knowledgeable partners in care. A Passport would also assist staff to involve and engage a carer where appropriate, in the care of their relative or friend.

Associated Passport would be information held by a trust about the carer and would include contact details about their own support needs as a carer and their involvement in the care of the person who they are supporting.

Key features

Early identification and information

The operation of a Passport scheme will support the identification of carers at the earliest opportunity. A timely introductory conversation would take place with a carer where they would be provided with key information to support them as a carer as well as information that introduces the Carer Passport scheme and how to acquire a Passport.

A Passport scheme should ensure that a carer is provided with timely information and contacts to support them with their interactions with the



My employer is very supportive and subscribes to fair employment, but there have been times when I have had to let them down. Records of my attendance reflect on my employment history



trust and the relevant service and also information about further support and services that they can access as a carer. A Passport should act as a gateway for carers to access a range of emotional support including opportunities to talk with staff, access to counselling, telephone support, or mutual support through a carer support group.

A range of provisions support

The Passport would also act to provide a carer with a range of provisions or entitlements that together could make a big difference to experience. Trusts have the opportunity to be creative in identifying potential provisions which might include flexible or extended visiting hours, family friendly visiting rooms, access to a staff canteen, discounted food and car parking and travel concessions. If supported by local businesses, a Passport might also give carers discounts on a range of local services and products.

3. What examples are there?



There are strong and diverse examples of support for carers within Mental Health Trusts although as yet this practice is not generally being brought together under a 'Carer Passport' scheme. The elements of a Passport scheme however do exist.

Mental Health Trusts in general are not currently offering 'Carer Passport' schemes and are not connected with other Passport schemes that may be operating in their local area. There are however many carer friendly initiatives taking place within mental health trusts which although not recognised as 'Carer Passports', do constitute important elements of Passport scheme. Across the country at present however these lack uniformity.

Creating the Triangle of Care

The Carers Trust's Triangle of Care model that many trusts are operating in England, sets out a framework of standards and ways of working that would provide a strong foundation for a Carer Passport scheme within a mental health trust. The model follows six key standards, as follows: Carers and the essential role they play are identified at first contact or as soon as possible thereafter; Staff are 'carer aware' and trained in carer engagement strategies; Policy and practice protocols regarding confidentiality and sharing information are in place; Defined post(s) responsible for carers are in place; A carer introduction to the service and staff is available, with a relevant range of information across the care pathway; A range of carer support services are available.

In total, 32 mental health [Sarah check] trusts operate the Triangle of Care model in England, and are part of the Triangle of Care Membership Scheme. In addition, the Triangle of Care for Dementia, developed in partnership with The Royal College of Nursing, provides an added resource to community hospitals through a framework to better identify and support carers of people with dementia across the care pathway. [Suggest cut and include TOC for Dementia in



resources]

Where a trust operates the Triangle of Care model, a Carer Passport would build on this foundation, translating the core aspects of the model into an offer for a carer. A Passport would then have the potential to offer additional and specific provision to carers.

Surrey & Borders Mental Health Trust

Surrey & Borders Mental Health Trust have made a serious commitment to recognise and support carers through their application of the Triangle of Care model which involves including carers in all workstreams of the service delivery. Two organisational Carers' Leads drive forward the agenda which includes implementing their organisational carers' action plan. This includes such initiatives as their 'Carers Charter'. Surrey and Borders were the top performing Surrey NHS provider for referring carers to support using the Surrey Carers Prescription service during 2016-

17. A total of 367 carers received support. The trust employs 13 Carer Practice Advisors who work across the system to ensure carers friendly practice and this includes a specific offer to young carers.

The Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

The Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation operates the Triangle of Care model and support carers through several key provisions that would be expected to be found within a Carer Passport offer. A Carer Lead manages the provision for carers and coordinates training for its Carer Champions, however it is recognised that the responsibility for supporting carers rests with all staff.

Carer Information Packs are given to carers within defined timescales according to the service. Each pack provides carers with vital information including; a guide to accessing health records, admissions information, information on care planning, customer care, confidentiality, discharge planning and information about what can be brought on to a ward.

An introductory letter accompanies the packs which introduces the service and the staff team to the carer and informs the carer about parking, visiting and staff shift times and details of local carer support groups.

Young carers and a whole family approach

A Carer Passport scheme must also respond to the needs of young carers and should therefore accommodate a 'whole family approach' to how a young carer is engaged and supported.

Mersey Care

Mersey Care NHS Trust in partnership with Barnardo's Keeping the Family in Mind (KFIM) provide 'Family Rooms' to provide a safe,



comfortable and homely environment for all families with children under the age of 18 who have a family member staying in a specialist mental health service. The 16 rooms designed by young carers are located at Mersey Care NHS Trust specialist mental health, learning disability and substance misuse inpatient services and are promoted to young carers and families by ward staff, clear signage and posters designed by young carers. The Jelly Baby Logo, designed by a young carer, is the kite mark awarded by young carers to Family Rooms which have met their standards.

Gloucestershire

In order to put in place a whole family approach for supporting young carers, 2gether NHS Foundation Trust have developed a Young Carers Charter and an audit system to record patients with dependent children in a consistent way. The hospital Discharge Policy includes specific reference of any children to ensure that that support is in place at discharge and a child does not become the principle carer.

4. What difference does it make?



To carers?

'If I had a Carer's Passport, I would at least have a physical manifestation of carer identification, which I would truly own and can carry anywhere with me. Ownership of identify can be a very powerful thing'.

'As a Carer having a Carer's Passport would make me feel more connected to services and more confident that they had my welfare at heart. In addition it would make for better communication between me and those who were caring for my loved one.'

To hospital staff?

'A Passport would enable staff to identify and engage with the carer from the outset. Early discussions could take place around care reviews and listening to the carer's story. Protocols can be explained and a positive relationship with the carer can be established.'

'If the carer knows more about what to expect from a Trust, they are less likely to remain voiceless in the background.' (Carer Lead, Mental Health Trust)

To the Mental Health Trust?

Carers would benefit from Carer Passports they would know what to expect from working with a trust like ours. Like our 'Carers Charter', it would set out our stall giving carers information around the importance of their role and the support available. It could also help enable carers to identify themselves at an earlier stage. Carer Passports could go



some way to increasing staff engagement with carers and encourage them involve carers. Some staff still seem to struggle with identifying carers and so a Carer Passport would assist with that. (Carer Lead, Mental Health Trust)

'Having a Carers' Passport will enable Trusts to embed Triangle of Care in their everyday practice. It provides a practical means of achieving Triangle of Care objectives and ensuring the carer is engaged on an equal footing to that of the staff and service user. This forms the basis of true partnership working. (Carer Lead)

5. Introducing a Carer Passport in Mental Health Trusts



The benefits and business case

The introduction of a Carer Passport scheme has the potential to benefit not only carers, but also those they care for and the service outcomes of the mental health trust itself. A Passport scheme will help embed and help systematise good practice within a trust and signify a further step towards and the realisation of a more 'carer friendly' NHS where carers are recognised, valued and supported.

They will feel more supported, more able to and they will know exactly what they can expect from the Trust.

For carers

Early identification, support and better outcomes

Carers for people with mental health needs, depending on the strength of individual care pathways may not be recognised for some time and they may not come across services other than the mental health trust itself. A Carer Passport scheme however will help the identification of carers and their navigation to further support at an early stage.

Recognised, valued and understood

Once identified and given a Carer Passport, carers will feel recognised, valued and understood by staff. Carers will feel more confident in communicating their own needs to staff and most importantly they will not have to keep repeating their stories at different points of contact. Used as a communication tool, a Passport will enable services to gain a fuller picture of a carer's situation and staff would have access to the information about carers that has been shared by the carers themselves.

Information for carers

A Passport scheme should trigger the provision of timely information



for carers which can lead to a very different experience for a carer and reduce a lot of the stress they might otherwise experience. Timely information about the support that is available will help carers feel more confident and informed and help carers to swiftly find and access further services and support which can play an important role in protecting their own health, wellbeing and opportunities. Information about the support being given to a relative or friend - if consent is in place – and even generalised information about a service, about conditions or about therapies available can be reassuring for carers and can help reduce anxiety.

Involvement of carers and better patient outcomes

A Carer Passport will make it easier for carers to identify themselves to staff and will improve the understanding and recognition that staff have of their role as a carer. This will help staff to actively engage carers in the care and treatment of their family member or friend and carers will feel more involved and able to participate as partners in care.

Patients themselves can benefit from having the expertise of their carer informing any treatment they receive. By improving the understanding and co-operation between staff and carers, a Carer Passport will not only help carers feel more reassured about the care provision, but should lead to improved patient care and better patient outcomes. Where a Passport triggers targeted information for carers about specific conditions and medicines and gives carers access to specific training to support their caring role, this should further benefit patient outcomes.

For a service

The implementation of a Carer Passports scheme to support carers will increase staff knowledge and understanding and is likely to build their confidence and job satisfaction. It should also improve the understanding that staff have of the individual circumstances and experiences of carers which should impact positively on the relationships between staff and carers. Where communications are developed, where engagement of carers is improved and where flexibility is offered with visiting times, these have the potential to reduce the pressure on staff time.

Elements of success

Development

For a scheme to be successful it is important for a mental health trust to acknowledge the specific needs of carers and the key role they play. There needs to be a framework for supporting carers that mirrors the standards encompassed within the 'Triangle of Care' model and where carers have a high profile and staff are 'carer aware' and trained in carer engagement strategies.

Informed by carers

When developing a Carer Passport mental health trusts should take time to ask carers their views. Their expertise and insights are crucial at all stages of the development, implementation and promotion of



the scheme. Learning from the feedback of carers about current carer initiatives within the trust and forming a carers' focus group to inform the Passport development will help ensure that the scheme is owned by and works for carers themselves.

Investment, profile and coordination

For Passports to be successful, a mental health trust needs to invest in them appropriately. There will need to be senior level commitment and Passports should be given a high profile in order to bring everyone on board. Policies and practices should be developed that highlight the benefits of a Carer Passport and clearly communicate them to all staff. Ensuring there is a strategic as well as an operational lead to take on the development, implementation and management of a Passport scheme will help drive its success.

Develop guidelines and administration procedures

Clear guidelines should be developed early on in the development of a Carer Passport scheme so that staff and carers understand its scope. Clarity needs to be established about the criteria for a Carer Passport, what it offers, where the scheme operates, how long a Passport lasts for and who is eligible for one. There is general acknowledgement that Passports need to be as open as possible and not based on local authority assessment criteria.

Before a scheme is implemented, systems for record keeping need to be established which ensure carer confidentiality is maintained. Consideration needs to be given about where information is stored, who manages the information and whether it's stored electronically. Measures for monitoring the success of the scheme should be developed in order to capture the breadth of the scheme and its outcomes for carers and for the Trust.

Health professionals should consider the whole family when identifying carers. They should recognise that children and young people may also undertake caring responsibilities and that young carers will have specific needs. Visiting times should be available that don't conflict with their education and comfortable facilities for them to visit family or friends made available.

Professionals should be aware of young carers as a potentially 'hidden' group and recognise the importance of communicating with them appropriately, providing them with age related information and considering and involving them in decision making. Approaches which are right for adult carers are not always appropriate for young carers.

Information

The information would take the form of a leaflet or information pack and might link to further information on a webpage and might include details about car parking, the complaints procedure, confidentiality, advocacy and the visiting times and staff shift times. Key contacts would be provided for the Carer Support Worker, or Carers Lead 1 where there is one and an emergency number for carers to call if required. Key information to assist a carer



Information should also be included about carers' assessments and contacts for social services and other organisations that can provide further advice, information and support. A scheme might also provide carers with more regular information through a physical newsletter, e-newsletter or text service.

Potential challenges and how to overcome them

Dovetailing and with existing schemes

One potential challenge for the development of a Carer Passport scheme within mental health trusts is ensuring that there is clarity around how a Passport sits in relation to an existing initiative. There are a range of carer initiatives across the country and some mental health trusts are still developing their own understanding of carer awareness. For example, some areas are operating the Triangle of Care model, some have 'Carer Charters' and others operate an emergency card scheme or discount scheme. Where a trust is already operating another carer initiative, it will be important that a Carer Passport scheme is assimilated appropriately and this will need to be managed carefully and communicated clearly to all.

Carer identification and uptake of a Carer Passport

Once a Carer Passport scheme has been established in a mental health trust, one of the challenges is likely to be the identification of those caring for people with mental health needs and the uptake of the Passport.

There remains stigma around accessing mental health services and this can be a barrier to the identification of carers for people with mental health needs. Services and professionals may not 'see' this group of carers or deal with them or involve them in the same way as they might deal with carer of someone with a physical disability. This group of carers may also not feel that they can approach or join carer groups themselves.

Since health services will possibly be the only agencies interacting with the carer around their caring role, they are vital to their identification. It is crucial therefore that there are strong procedures for identifying and engaging carers at an early point. This must also include young carers who may be particularly overlooked in regards to being identified as a carer within mental health trusts.

How a Carers Passport is perceived by staff

Staff working under pressure and with competing demands and initiatives may not necessarily see the support of a carer as a priority for them. They may not recognise the benefits to their patients of supporting the carer. Staff therefore will need to receive regular carer awareness training to ensure that they understand the importance of supporting carers of people with mental health needs.

There may be a perception that implementing a Carer Passport would be expensive and involve significant extra work. A scheme must therefore be easy for staff to use and its benefits and impact should clearly be communicated.



Confidentiality and information sharing

There is recognition that patient confidentiality restricts information sharing with carers however, a Carer Passport ought not to increase challenges related to confidentiality, but rather may help to mitigate such challenges by improving communication. 'No health without mental health: implementation framework' states 'Develop protocols for sharing information with carers including working with primary care to determine how best to act on information regarding potential crisis, as well as developing staff capability to agree appropriate confidentiality and information sharing agreements.'² The absence of a Carer Passport should not necessarily be a restriction for carers to receive information about a patient.

In relation to carer confidentiality, carers should be asked about who can have access to the information collected about them through the scheme.

Promoting the Carer Passport in Mental Health Trusts

Promotion and perception of the scheme

A coordinated launch of a Carer Passport scheme across the mental health trust and its active promotion by staff will help drive its success. The ongoing perception that staff have of the scheme will then play a key role in maintaining that success.

Promoting its value to staff and carer awareness training

For a Carer Passport scheme to be effective and to become embedded within a mental health trust, it needs to be championed and given status from a high level. Staff, including bank staff, need to recognise the value of a Carer Passport and support for carers in general. The value of the scheme therefore must be presented cogently and as a scheme develops, feedback from carers and the impact of the scheme should be communicated effectively.

To support the promotion of a Carer Passport, regular carer awareness training needs to be embedded across a trust. Several trusts are now involving carers in the design of new training for staff. At The Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust the Carer Lead coordinates training for the Carer Champions who disseminate this to their teams. Each hospital ward and Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) has at least one designated Carer Champion. The Carer Lead coordinates the training for Carer Champions who then disseminate this into their own teams.

Championing the Passport to carers

There is acknowledgement that in some trusts carers may not always be aware of schemes or may not receive the appropriate information fast enough. Staff should proactively promote the Carer Passport and its benefits to carers as soon as possible, so that carers are informed about what a Passport offers, who can access it and how to access it. Trusts are using a variety of promotional methods such as carers'



noticeboards, leaflets, webpages and dedicated carer areas where literature is placed.

Going ahead

- Involve carers from the outset in the design, implementation and monitoring of the scheme. Being informed by the expertise and insights of carers is vital and a scheme needs to be coproduced.
- Undertake an audit of existing support and initiatives for carers and plan how this is to be dovetailed with a Carer Passport scheme.
- Establish a scheme of achievable size, recognising that ‘starting small and growing more’ can work well. A larger more joined-up approach from the start may however work best.
- Ensure there is a senior operational lead for support to carers such as a Lead Nurse who can take a whole-systems approach, as well as someone to champion the initiative at board level.
- Be clear about who can access the Carer Passport (i.e. what defines a carer), what its purpose is, and what it entitles the carer to.
- Ensure that Carer Passports facilitate the identification of carers, information, support and entitlements and the engagement and involvement of carers.
- Consider the experiences and needs of young carers with regards to a Carer Passport and explore how a model could be developed to facilitate the identification of young carers and to respond to their specific needs.
- Consider how a Carer Passport scheme would accommodate the transition of people with care needs transitioning between services such as between CAMHS to an adult service.
- Explore developing a Carer Passport in collaboration with local carer services.
- Establish procedures for review and renewal of the Carer Passport.
- Address questions around record-keeping (who holds a copy of the Carer Passport within the trust), monitoring, measuring outcomes and evaluating the impact of the initiative.
- Access the Passport templates and examples of good practice which are available, and which can be adapted for mental health trusts according to their own governance in recognition that not one model fits all.
- Add confidentiality
- Make clear agreements to foster joint working, including those which adhere to confidentiality and data sharing considerations.



COMING SOON

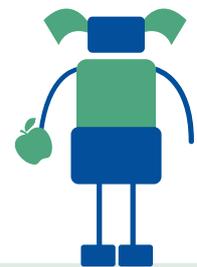
Resources and templates

- Leaflet to explain the scheme >>>
- Poster to promote the scheme >>>
- ID card template >>>



Carer Passport guide:

Schools



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Schools



A 'young carer' is the term used for children and young adults who have informal caring responsibilities, often for a family member. Legislation in England defines a 'Young Carer' as a 'person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person'.

A local authority in England must take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are young carers within their area who have needs for support. (HM Government, 2014)

1. Key facts about carers

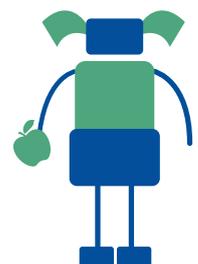
- Many young carers remain hidden, but we do know from the 2011 Census in England that there are 166,363 young carers aged under 18 years old. (Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census)
- In 2010, a survey by the BBC indicated that 1 in 12 secondary school students have moderate or high levels of caring responsibility, that's 700,000 young carers in the UK. (BBC, 2010¹)
- If not supported, young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers. (Hidden from View: The experiences of young carers in England, Children's Society, 2013)
- Young carers aged 11 to 17 were more likely to report being bullied than those without a caring role (16% compared to 3%). (The lives of young carers in England. TNS BMRB, 2016²)
- Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework: Education, Skills and Early Years (2015) states that inspectors will look at young carers' outcomes when making judgements. (Ofsted, 2015)

16%

of young carers aged 11-17 reported being bullied (compared to only 3% of those without a caring role)

¹ The BBC, with assistance from The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, surveyed 4,029 pupils in ten secondary schools and found 337 had caring responsibilities

² Aldridge, J., Clay, D., Connors C., Day, N., & Gzika, M. (2016) The lives of young carers in England. TNS BMRB





2. What is a Carer Passport in a school?

A Carer Passport in a school is a simple tool that will help schools to coordinate their support for young carers through a 'whole school approach'.

It supports the early identification of students who are young carers and improves staff understanding of their personal circumstances and individual needs. Once a student is identified, a Carer Passport will trigger an 'offer' of a range of personalised support within the school and can act as the gateway to appropriate support for their family. Schools need to create a safe environment where young carers and families feel understood, valued and supported. A Carer Passport scheme will help schools make this a reality.

The 'front end' or visible form of a Carer Passport may be a card, wallet, badge or perhaps a sticker within a student's school handbook. Linked to this will be information held by a school about the student and their individual circumstances and needs.

Once a student is identified, a Carer Passport will trigger an 'offer' of a range of personalised support within the school and can act as the gateway to appropriate support for their family.

The role of a Carer Passport in schools

Improves identification of young carers

Many schools do not know which of their students have caring responsibilities as young carers often do wish to self-identify. Schools however are ideally placed to identify young carers at an early point and before their family circumstances and caring roles begin to impact them.

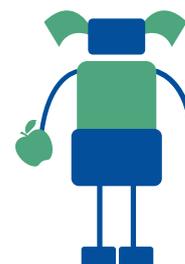
As a Passport demonstrates to young carers and their families that they are recognised, understood and supported by the school, and where the benefits of a Carer Passport are clearly communicated, young carers (and their families) will be encouraged to self-identify.

Once a student has been identified, the Carer Passport will signify to all staff, including supply staff, that the student is a young carer which will prevent them having to explain their circumstances multiple times. Where circumstances change, the Carer Passport will help students to explain things more easily to staff.

Sets out an offer of personalised support

Identification of a young carer should trigger an assessment of how the student's situation impacts on their school life and their learning needs. This should inform a personalised learning plan, or 'offer' of support that is clearly communicated to a student so they are clear what they can expect.

The offer is likely to include a range of practical support and dispensations including an offer of flexibility and extensions with homework, access to a phone, support with transport to school and with after school clubs and activities. A Carer Passport should also be



a gateway for young carers to access emotional support from pastoral staff, a school nurse, through counselling, or through peer support.

Improves understanding and communication with family

A Carer Passport scheme in a school will help to raise the awareness and understanding of all staff of the specific needs of students with caring responsibilities. Where an individual student holds a Carer Passport, this should advise staff of their circumstances. The information held should include how caring impacts on a student's education, the additional support that has been agreed for them by the school and monitoring information on their attainment and attendance. A Passport can also hold information to support accessible communication with the student's family and how to help the family to fully engage with their child's education.

Initiates and facilitates other services

A Carer Passport should also be the trigger for schools to provide information about further support that students and their families can access and to connect families with other services, such as a local young or young adult carer group. A directory of local young carers services can be found on the [Children's Society website](#).

Concessions and discounts

A Carers Passport that is recognised and supported across an area also has the potential of providing young carers with concessions on sport, leisure activities and travel, and other discounts.

3. What examples are there?

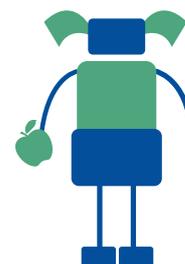


Awareness and good practice have increased in schools over the last ten years, aided by the inclusion of young carers in Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework (2015), the national Young Carers in Schools (YCiS) programme and many local young carer services working collaboratively with schools. This means that leading schools are now delivering an offer to young carers, some of which are already described as a 'Carer Passport.'

However, there are no offers or mechanisms in place across schools in England to ensure that young carers and young adult carers are routinely identified and supported consistently.

The Young Carers in School programme (YCiS)

[Young Carers in Schools](#) is a free programme that helps schools to support young carers and rewards and shares good practice. Run jointly by Carers Trust and The Children's Society, it works with schools across England and Wales to provide relevant tools and training, and to celebrate the great outcomes that many schools achieve for young carers. A comprehensive set of tools are available for schools to use and adapt for supporting students who are young carers, which could



also be used to create a Carer Passport, such as tools for assessing young carers.

Stockport School

Stockport School has identified 45 young carers out of 1150 students. A Young Carers Passport scheme is run which educates staff about how a student's caring role might affect their learning. Assessment tools are used with young carers to understand the impact of their caring role, and with the agreement of young carers, this information is fed into a 'One-Page Profile' which is stored electronically for staff to access easily. Young carers are reviewed on a termly basis to ensure their information is up to date.

Young carers, and their parents where appropriate, are regularly offered concessions or free school trips and other extracurricular opportunities that arise. The school, which is considering whether to introduce a physical card for students, also sees the potential for a similar Passport scheme to be delivered by its feeder primary schools. Caring has now become a 'comfortable topic' at the school where caring by young people is perceived as something that is common and normal.

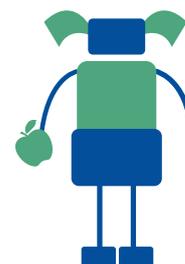
Calderdale

Calderdale Young Carers Service administer a Young Carers Passport by training schools to participate in the scheme and support the 173 young carers who hold a Passport. When a young carer starts receiving support from the service, they are given an application form for the Passport, which initiates a conversation between the family and the school. The school returns the application form to the young carer service who then allocate a Passport to the young carer.

The Carer Passport itself is a wallet holding plastic cards from Calderdale of their passport card] that set out three potential areas of support a young carer may require; flexibility with homework, 'time-out' from class, and access to a phone to call the person they care for. Crucially, the Passport prevents students having to explain anything in front of their class, which can be difficult and can act as a barrier for young carers requesting help. A member of staff signs the back of the Passport each time it is used.

Winchester & District

The Winchester and District Young Carers Project administer a 'Young Carers ID Card' in secondary schools. The credit card sized card gives students a range of 'personalised allowances' to support their learning and help them concentrate including extensions for homework, 'time-out' of a lesson and being able to phone the person they care for. If a young carer receives a detention, the Card will allow this to take place during a lunchtime rather than after school. The allowances are agreed between the young carer service and the school Heads of Year and are written on the reverse of the card, which students can show staff or place on their desk. Staff understand the reasons why students need particular support, so it is not necessary for students to have to explain



each time in front of peers..

York City

York Carers Centre and the City of York operate a [card](#) for schools and colleges across the city.

4. What difference does it make?



To young carers?

'As a young carer it's one of the best ideas I've seen yet, it should be in all schools to help young carers and make it less stressful and worrying for us every day, especially if things are particularly bad or my mum's got worse for example.' (Young carer)

'A young Carer Passport would help me because I get so frustrated when many teachers don't know my situation and I have to continually repeat myself. Sometimes I could use more support but don't like to ask, these Passports may help that.' (Young carer)

To people being cared for?

'For a child, it's important the school know they are a carer so they can get support.' (Parent)

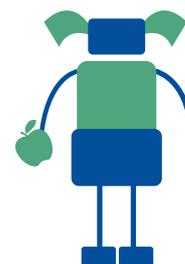
To teachers?

'Carer Passports would give a security and confidence to students, where normally they would be worried or anxious about explaining their situation. For current staff and any cover teachers, it would give the information that is needed immediately.' (Head of Pupil Support)

'At our school, we encourage our young carers to be proud of themselves and how they balance home and school life. These Passports will give them a belonging and a chance to stand up for who they are.' (Head of Pupil Support)

To the school as a whole?

'A Carer Passport would ensure that young carer's individual needs are met and understood. Individual allowances could be agreed with the Head of Year and then teaching staff informed so that the young person has the correct level of support in place to allow them to achieve in education. Allowances could be: Additional support and time to complete homework; having a mobile phone on silent; not having a detention when arriving to school late due to caring role; time out from a lesson if feeling stressed etc.' (Schools and Support Coordinator)



'Young Carers often tell us that the singular most important thing to them is that there is someone at school who knows that they care for someone and understands when and how this impacts on their time in school that they can talk to. They find it particularly frustrating to have to explain over and over again, and this is where Carer Passports could be key to supporting them.' (Carers Trust and The Children's Society)

5. Introducing a Carer Passport in schools



The benefits and business case

Impacts of supporting young carers in schools

A Carer Passport can help schools to implement the [Young Carer in Schools \(YCiS\) programme](#) by improving how students are identified and increase their own awareness of the support they can expect and how to access it. A Carer Passport scheme can be a positive way to support whole school working and can help to solidify and extend existing support within a school.

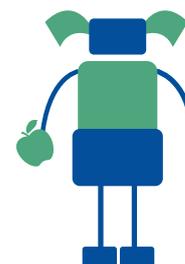
In order for a Carer Passport to have impact, support for young carers needs to be embedded. There is evidence from the YCiS programme that this support is improving the health and wellbeing of students, their engagement at schools and their attendance and achievement.

In a survey of schools awarded by the YCiS programme, 100% reported that staff members had a better understanding of the potential signs of pupils being young carers and what to do when a young carer is identified. 77% also reported an improvement in young carers' achievement and 94% said they had seen improvements in the wellbeing of young carers.

Facilitates identification in school

Many young carers remain unidentified by any service, including schools and all too often are only identified at crisis point when the impact of caring has already been significant on their health, wellbeing and education. Schools are ideally placed to identify young carers early and initiate timely support. A Carer Passport scheme will encourage young carers (and their families) to self-identify, and students will know what support is available and what to expect.

Early identification is pivotal in turning around a young carer's life and their caring situation, and will help prevent their circumstances from negatively impacting their own health, wellbeing and education. A Carer Passport can initiate crucial support from their school as well as a 'whole family approach' where families are given information and navigated to support from external agencies. This can transform the situation for a young carer. For example, young carers can be referred to a young carer service or referred to the local authority for a [Young Carers Needs Assessment](#).



Stopping young carers having to re-tell their story

A Carer Passport will reduce the necessity for young carers to have to explain their circumstances multiple times. By using a Carer Passport, young carers are more likely to access the support they need at critical points. It can be shown to staff to access specific dispensations or can help to initiate a conversation between a young carer and staff.

Facilitating financial incentives

Where Carer Passports are linked to concessions for leisure activities, sports and public transport, this will support young carers to socialise, relax and have fun which is vital in protecting their own health and wellbeing.

Schools gain a better understanding of students who are young carers

A Carer Passport can help improve a school's communication with a young carer and their family and develop a better understanding of a student's home situation and circumstances. Schools can then begin to address the barriers to their education that a young carer is facing. Examples of how schools share information between staff to aid this can be found in the Stockport School case study above.

A more consistent approach to supporting young carers

Carer Passport schemes will bring more consistency to how schools support their students who are young carers and where the same or a similar scheme is used across an area, this will bring about a more standardised approach so that students in different schools will receive more consistent support. This also will assist young carers to continue to access a similar level of support when they move between year groups, transition to secondary school and prevent support dropping off when young carers move between schools.

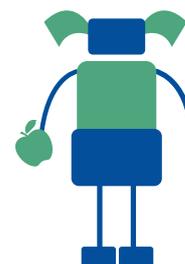
Elements of success

Buy-in from senior management

To facilitate the implementation of a whole school approach to support young carers and manage a Carer Passport scheme, the school's senior leadership team must be clear about the rationale of supporting these students, the benefits of a Carers Passport and give support for young carers, and the Passport scheme its backing. The wider provision of support for young carers must be embedded within policies and school action plans alongside a Passport and its monitoring procedures and indicators for its success should be developed.

A 'School Operational Lead'

A Carer Passport scheme will be most effective where schools have designated a 'School Operational Lead' to coordinate the scheme and the wider provision of support for young carers. In schools where provision for young carers is operating successfully, the School Operational Lead acts as a main contact for young carers and families



and is the contact point for external agencies and feeder or linked schools. Their role should also include championing and promoting the Passport scheme and the support for young carers, and to coordinate staff training on the use of the Passport and on young carer issues in general.

Consulting young carers

Schools should be informed by the expertise and insights of students known to be young carers within a school. A young carer steering group could be established to guide the development and implementation of the scheme. Consultation could take place with young carers from a local carer service which often have an established young person's participation group. Students themselves may wish to design the Passport and other materials for the scheme.

Organisational and area wide approach

It is vital that all staff across a school, including supply staff and other professionals working within the school, are aware of the Carer Passport and how it works. This can be communicated through staff training and through the development of a tool such as Calderdale Young Carers Service Carer Passport [guidelines](#).

Having a consistent approach within an area to Carer Passports and one that is backed by the local authority has several advantages. Firstly, young carers and their families will be familiar with the Passport scheme when students move between schools. Secondly, where a Carer Passport is transferable between schools, this will support a seamless transition and prevent the support for young carers being dropped. A consistent approach can be achieved where schools work collaboratively in developing a scheme or where it is coordinated and championed by a young carer service.

Implementation

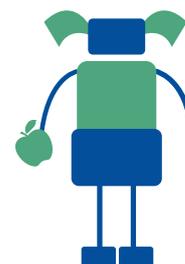
Clear guidance for how the scheme runs should be developed, and the scheme must be communicated clearly to all staff, students and parents. Individual students may prefer to have a choice about the form the Passport takes depending on how comfortable they are with being identified as carers by peers.

Potential challenges and how to overcome them

Schools not acknowledging young carers

There is a perception in some schools that they do not have students who are young carers. This is unlikely, as statistically there will be at least one young carer in each average-sized class room. Once a school sets up support and proactively seeks to identify young carers, it is common for a school to begin to identify significant numbers of students with caring responsibilities.

Conversely, some schools are nervous that they might unearth large numbers of young carers who would be difficult to support. However, not identifying young carers and establishing preventative support early



is likely to be more draining on schools and their pastoral resources. Without support, negative impacts of caring on students are more likely and students' mental or physical health or behaviour can be affected

Time and competing priorities

Young carers should not be held back because of their family circumstances, and the benefits of supporting them will help support other school priorities. Where young carers are identified and supported early, they are more likely to attain better grades and improve their attendance. Moreover, young carers are one of the specific groups that Ofsted pays particular attention to. Working with a local young carer service will increase the capacity of schools to support young carers with the Young Carers in Schools programme backed up by a Carer Passport scheme.

Uptake of the Carer Passport

As young carers and families are often fearful of self-identifying, the uptake by young carers of a Passport scheme could potentially be a challenge. This may be particularly so where students are caring for people with conditions that may be stigmatised such as mental-ill health and substance misuse. However this fear can be mitigated by schools developing sensitive and easy mechanisms for young carers and families to come forward and by ensuring that young carers can talk privately with staff.

The actual form of the Carer Passport and procedures must be well thought through to enable young carers to use them discretely. As support becomes embedded, and awareness of the support is well communicated, students and parents will increasingly feel understood, and see the school as a safe place to open up about their own situation. Again, a young carer service can play a supportive role in this. It can support and encourage young carers and families to inform the school and help facilitate a joined up approach.

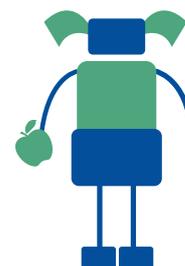
Funding

Some schools highlight that funding for a Carer Passport, would be challenging. However, many of the interventions that schools can initiate through a Carer Passport are cost free and can be built into existing pastoral systems. There are already numerous resources available to pick up for free through the Young Carers in Schools Programme and local young carer services. Furthermore, Carers Trust estimates that a significant proportion (60%) of young carers receive Pupil Premium, because of the number of their families likely to meet the free school meals criteria. This therefore could be used to fund a scheme.

Promoting the Carer Passport in schools

Good promotion, and accessibility, will result in prospective and current students (and their families) knowing what they can expect from the school and feeling recognised and supported.

All teaching staff including supply staff and other professionals working within the school need to be aware of the Carer Passport and how



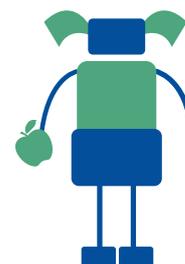
it works. Students and their families also need to be aware of the Passport and its benefits, and how to attain one. Both students and staff are transient, and therefore regular promotion of the Passport is important to ensure that it is seen as a current and relevant initiative.

It can be beneficial for the lead role to be responsible for the coordination of the promotion of the Passport and the wider support for young carers within the school. Staff training and a setting up a 'young carer' noticeboard in the staffroom are useful ways of keeping the information on the radar

The Carer Passport should be promoted within school literature, on the school website, in a school handbook and on a prominent noticeboard visible to students and parents. It is important that the Carer Passport is highlighted to parents and students during the admission's process and that opportunities are provided at an early stage for students or parents to request one.

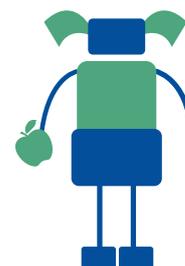
The annual 'Young Carers Awareness Day' provides an ideal opportunity to raise the awareness and understanding of young carers and the Passport, and schools can invite a local young carer service to deliver a lesson or assembly. Resources developed for the annual awareness day and those already developed by the Young Carers in Schools Programme are ideal for schools to adapt and use.

In promoting how they support young carers, schools should be mindful of the messages they give out. Young carers should be depicted neither as victims nor heroes. Young carers should be portrayed simply as being like any other pupil, except that they happen to have caring responsibilities in addition to the pressures that they are juggling as a young person. Schools need to take care how challenges that young carers may face due to their caring responsibilities are communicated, as it is important to not limit young carer aspiration.



Going ahead

- Gain senior management backing for the Carer Passport and establish a lead member of staff to coordinate the scheme.
- Establish whether there is a similar scheme already in place in other local schools.
- Allocate funding – perhaps from the Pupil Premium - for the coordination and management of the scheme.
- Be informed by the expertise and insights of students who are known to be young carers within the school and build their trust.
- Undertake an audit of existing support for young carers and other students in the school and consider how this other support might be linked into a Carer Passport offer.
- Discuss with a local young carer service about how a scheme might be delivered collaboratively. Some young carer services have taken on the coordination role for a Carer Passport across a local area.
- Try to establish a consistent approach and identity for the Carer Passport with other schools in your area.
- Develop clear guidelines and communicate clearly which students can access the Carer Passport.
- Promote clearly the purpose of a Carer Passport and what it offers the student.
- Make clear agreements around confidentiality and data sharing considerations.
- Develop a clear and simple mechanism for applying for a Carer Passport.
- Make use of the resources from the Young Carers in Schools programme and sign up to the newsletter.
- Consider carefully what information should and should not be visible on the Carer Passport in order to protect students.
- Establish a procedure for review and renewal of the Carer Passport.
- Establish procedures for recording and monitoring usage of the Carer Passport, measuring outcomes, and evaluating the impact of the initiative.
- Establish systems for recording young carers and with appropriate consent, feeding this into the local authority.
- Access the Carer Passport templates and examples of good practice which are available, and which can be adapted by schools and young carer services.



Resources and templates

Resources we've created for you

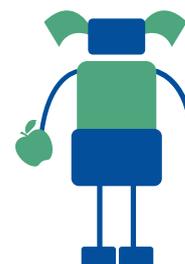
- Leaflet A5 >>>
- Poster >>>
- Application form >>>
- ID card template >>>
- Checklist of things to consider when implementing >>>

External resources and examples

- Winchester Action Checklist for teachers >>>
- Winchester Anonymous ID card >>>
- Winchester ID Pack >>>
- York card information >>>
- York final referral form >>>
- Calderdale Application Form >>>
- Calderdale Guidelines for young carers >>>
- Calderdale Carer Passport card >>>
- Winchester ID Schools Talk >>>
- Applemore College Family Support Questionnaire >>>

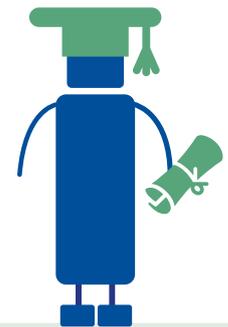
Other resources

- Young Carers in Schools Programme
 - The Young Carers in School Award
 - Supporting Young Carers in School: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff
 - Toolkit for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Providers (Can also be used in schools)
- Young Carer Assessment Tools
- Protecting Young Carers from Bullying: A Guide for Schools, Community Groups and Policy Makers
- A structured course to identify and support young carers affected by the stresses and challenges of caring



Carer Passport guide:

Colleges & universities



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Colleges & universities

1. Key facts about carers



- Students with caring responsibilities are included in the [National Strategy for Access and Student Success in Higher Education](#) in relation to making more flexible and accessible provision for learners from under-represented groups.
- There are more than 375,000 known young adult carers in the UK aged 14–25, who are providing support and assistance to their families and friends.
- [National Union of Students \(NUS\) Research](#)¹ shows a lack of co-ordinated, systematic support for student carers. The study revealed that only 36% of student carers felt able to balance their commitments, compared with 53% of students who did not have caring responsibilities.
- [Carers Trust Research](#)² has found that young adult carers were four times more likely to drop out of college or university than students who were not young adult carers.
- From 2018 UCAS will be providing the opportunity for students to identify themselves as [carers on UCAS applications](#).
- The Office for Fair Access (OFFA) recognise carers as an [OFFA-countable target group](#) and encourages universities to consider the services they provide to support carers and how these might align with or be strengthened through Access Agreements³.

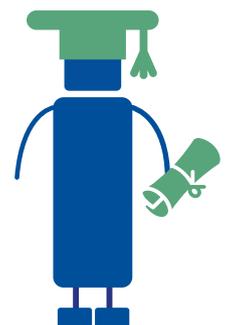
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Research shows that young adult carers are four times more likely to drop out of college or university than students without caring responsibilities.

¹ Learning with Care, Experiences of student carers in the UK, NUS, 2013

² Time to be Heard: A Call for Recognition and Support for Young Adult Carers, Carers Trust, 2014

³ The duties and functions of HEFCE and OFFA will transfer to the Office for Students (OfS) on 1 April 2018.





2. What is a Carer Passport in a college or university?

A Carer Passport in a college or university is a simple tool to help coordinate and connect up the support for student carers through an 'organisation-wide' approach.

It supports the early identification of students who are carers and improves staff understanding of their personal circumstances and individual needs. Once a student is identified, a Passport will trigger an 'offer' of a range of personalised support. A Carers Passport should reflect the specific needs and circumstances of all student carers - both young adult carers and mature students with caring responsibilities.

The visible form of Passport may be a card, wallet, badge or perhaps a sticker within a student's handbook. Linked to this will be information held by a college or university about the student and how caring impacts on their learning, the additional support they need and monitoring information on their attainment and attendance.

A Carer Passport should also be a gateway for student carers to access emotional support from pastoral staff, through counselling, or through peer support.

The role of a Carer Passport in colleges and universities

Improves identification of student carers

A Carer Passport will improve the identification of student carers and the understanding that staff have of the circumstances and individual learning needs of student carers.

Sets out an offer of personalised support

A Carer Passport will also trigger an assessment of a student's learning needs that should feed into a clearly documented personal learning plan and include flexibility with assignments and perhaps more flexible and extended opportunities for support from a Personal Tutor.

A Carer Passport will trigger targeted information being given to a student about further support for themselves as carers and their families, including information about how to receive a Young Carers Needs Assessment under the Children and Families Act 2014, or a Young Carers Assessment (Transition Assessment), or [Carers Assessment](#) under the Care Act 2014, depending on the age of the child, young person or young adult.

Carer Passports can support student carers in a number of creative ways. These could include flexibility with entry requirements and priority with car parking arrangements and accommodation to help save student carers time. A Carer Passport might also be the gateway for priority and flexible access to study skills support, counselling services, having a mentor and equipment to support their studies.

A Carer Passport can also support student carers financially by



providing information on benefits that they may be entitled to as a carer and enabling them to access funds, bursaries or scholarships available to students and which are also specific to student carers. A Passport could also act as a discount card for student carers on a university or college campus and give reduced rates for college or university activities.

3. What examples are there?



Support for student carers in colleges and universities in England is growing. Although these developments are inconsistent and do not currently constitute a comprehensive Carer Passport, there is good practice taking place. The following practice examples could be brought together by colleges and universities and incorporated into a Carer Passport scheme.

York City card

A [Young Carers Card](#) initiated by York Carers Centre and the Youth Council in the City of York operates in schools and colleges across the city. At enrolment, students are able to tick a box on an induction form to identify themselves as a young adult carer. This is then flagged on the College system for staff to see. Support teams are then able to contact them and issue the card which provides them with a range of dispensations such as 'Time-Out' of a class and being able to phone the person they care for. Student carers are offered pastoral support, free access to a confidential counselling service and practical support as needed.

Financial support at York College

The College has a strong focus on supporting carers, recognising that they often need additional financial support in order to attend and succeed on their chosen course. College policies have been updated to formally recognise student carers as a priority group and ensure that student carers have an explicit entitlement to funding.

The Funding Team are able to allocate an enhanced bursary package of full travel funding, meal vouchers and full funding for equipment costs to student carers, even if their household income is above the standard threshold. A flexible approach means that additional, individual needs can be met as they arise, such as funding a more expensive form of transport if a student needs to get somewhere quickly in an emergency.

A separate card scheme is run by York Carers Centre that local businesses are signed up to and which provides all carers with a range of discounts across the City. A separate emergency carers card also provides support in an emergency, such as a carer being involved in an accident.

Liverpool John Moores University

[Liverpool John Moores University](#) offers young carers opportunities



to visit the university and to get in touch with the dedicated member of staff for Young Adult Carers within student advice and wellbeing services before they apply.

When students arrive, the University works with them to develop a personalised package of support which is reviewed when appropriate to reflect in personal circumstances. Student carers are provided with support applying for student funding, advocacy with academic issues and staff act as a link between students, the University and external support agencies. In particular, the University is working in partnership with Liverpool City Council and Barnardo's Action with Young Carers Service to ensure that carers receive a full assessment of their individual needs by appropriate agencies.

The University of Salford

The University of Salford has well-developed links with local carer centres and a dedicated [website](#) that sets out how it supports student carers. A specific policy for students with caring responsibilities has been developed which indicates how students can be supported through counselling and financial support and the procedures to be followed in case of personal mitigating circumstances and interruption of studies.

Students can register themselves as a carer. There is a designated Student Life Carer Coordinator who will set up an individual Carer Support Plan with students. This can provide flexibility in relation to assignment deadlines, contact with Tutors and with attendance. Students can support each other through an online [Carers Forum](#).

The University of Winchester

The University of Winchester's Compact Scheme with local colleges and sixth forms, specifically includes student carers, and provides them with special consideration at application stage. Outreach activities include residential events and taster days that are aimed at young carers to increase their aspirations of further education and are run in partnership with local young adult carer services. Student carers are a targeted recruitment group for the Student Ambassadors Scheme, which provides them with opportunities to act as role models to other student carers and earn some money.

A named contact in Student Services for young adult carers signposts students to other University services and external agencies. Student carers up to 25 years are able to access a £500 annual bursary and can join a 'Student Parents and Carers Group' which provides opportunities to find mutual support.

As an acknowledged priority group in the University Access Agreement, student carers can access a number of progression initiatives including an employability fund to support them financially with internships and work experience, driving lessons and a test and resitting core GCSE subjects.

De Montfort University Leicester



De Montfort University Leicester has a dedicated [webpage](#) that provides student carers with key contacts and information about the support they can access within and outside of the university. The University has designated staff for student carers and provides students with an [electronic information booklet](#) to connect with local and national support.

Sheffield Hallam University

At Sheffield Hallam University, support for students with caring responsibilities is promoted through a dedicated [webpage](#) and film. This includes financial support through a Carers Emergency Travel fund for small grants towards the cost of travelling home at short notice or in an emergency to provide care.

4. What difference does it make?



To carers?

'I would hope that a Carer Passport would ensure that I could expect additional understanding and flexibility throughout the duration of my study, without me having to provide additional detail at the time when I am asking for help, which by default will be when I am already struggling to juggle the demands of studying and my caring responsibilities.' (Student carer)

'Student Services at Winchester have been amazing! Since being recognised as a young adult carer, I have had support with amending deadlines when needed. I also have access to bursaries, counselling and other welfare support that they offer, if I need it.' (Student Carer)

To college or university staff?

'We already provide bespoke support for student carers however most awareness of their needs sits within Student Services and Widening Participation. A Passport will help the whole institution to better identify, understand and support student carers, particularly staff in teaching roles.' (University staff)

To the college or university as a whole?

'When we work to remove the barriers to education that student carers face (for example through our enhanced bursary package), carers are able to stay on, be successful and achieve. Research into our carers population at college has shown that student carers are more likely to attend and achieve if they are registered with their local carers centre and teaching staff are aware of their caring responsibilities, making identifying and supporting student carers a top priority.' (College Student Advisor in Welfare and Funding)

'A Carer Passport will help bring together all the different support into one place. It will certainly assist in identifying students with caring



responsibilities and will bring clarity to students and staff about support carers can expect from the university and help students access that support at the point that they need to.' (University staff)

The Carer Passport offers an opportunity for students to be easily identified, or to identify themselves, and to ensure that they are aware of all the additional opportunities and support that may be available to them. It can remove the stigma of having to come forward to be 'assessed', and instead brings with it the expectation of having a right to an inclusive learning experience. (University staff)

5. Introducing a Carer Passport in colleges and universities



The benefits and business case

Students know what to expect

A Carer Passport will be of huge benefit even before students arrive at college or university. In fact, knowing that a college or university operates a Passport scheme and seeing clearly what support will be offered to them, might well make all the difference to students in deciding whether or not they can go on to study in the first place. Many student carers will make compromises because of their caring responsibilities about where to study, which course to do and whether to study part time. Where a college or university runs a Carer Passport scheme, this is likely therefore to influence their decisions.

Identification and accessing support

A Carer Passport scheme will encourage student to self-identify as carers and staff will subsequently be able to identify holders of a Passport as student carers. Students will not have to keep explaining their circumstances to staff and knowing what support to expect and how to access it, they will feel more able to request support when they require it.

Student carers need particular recognition and support

Student carers can have specific needs and face unique challenges in order to succeed at college or university. A Carer Passport has the potential to trigger and ensure that students know about, vital support within and outside of the college or university that could make the difference between remaining and succeeding on their course and dropping out.

Support student carers health and wellbeing

Student Carers face additional pressures on their time and on their finances and [research](#)¹ has found that many student carers report experiencing poor mental health.

¹ Sempik, J and Becker, S (2014a) Young Adult Carers at College and University (Carers Trust)



Staff may not always be aware of these added pressures. Having a Passport will not only help identify students to staff who may then make adjustments for them if they are struggling, but will help facilitate and expedite targeted support for a student to help protect their health and wellbeing. A Carer Passport that provides concessions for sports and leisure activities would help student carers access these and also support the health and wellbeing of students.

Support with finances and leisure and social activities

A Carer Passport can be a gateway for targeted bursaries and funds for student carers as in Sheffield and Winchester and could be used to offer discounts or concessions for carers that would support their education. Support with finances triggered by a Carer Passport would help students with additional travel expenses and help them take part in extra-curricular activities and social activities which can be difficult for student carers financially. Where Carer Passport schemes facilitate student carers meeting up with each other, socialisation and mutual support for carers would also be improved. Sheffield Hallam University for example have set up a Facebook group where students can connect with other carers.

Benefits for colleges and universities

There are likely to be significant numbers of students with caring responsibilities within a college or university and therefore supporting these students makes sense. Moreover, having a clear and well communicated Carer Passport scheme is likely to attract more students to a particular college or university. A scheme will help strengthen provision to student carers, support equality and diversity and improve the understanding that colleges and universities have of the specific needs of student carers. This will help ensure that each student carer is given the best possible chance of successfully completing their course and support attainment and retention rates.

Carer Passport schemes will assist colleges and universities to cooperate with local authorities and contribute to support plans for young adult carers that arise out of Transition Assessments under the Care Act 2014. A Passport could also act as a trigger for assisting colleges and universities - perhaps in partnership with a local carer service - to ensure that Young Adult Carers and those they are caring for receive a full assessment of their individual needs.

Elements of success

Organisation wide approach

A Carer Passport scheme will be most effective where it is coordinated by a designated staff member or team who have oversight of the full range of support available for student carers. It is important that a college or university-wide approach is developed and teams work closely together. At the University of Winchester for example, The Widening Participation team connect student carers to Student Services and Student Services connect students to the Bursary scheme as well



as the Student Ambassador Scheme run by the Widening Participation Team. From 2019 universities will be aware of student carers who have disclosed this through the application process. This information should be used to inform appropriate staff and trigger communication to students about the Carer Passport.

Collaborative working

A Carer Passport scheme can be enhanced by strong partnership working between the University its Student Union, the local authority, health services, carer services and other local services. Liverpool John Moores University for example is working in partnership with Liverpool City Council and Barnardos' Action with Young Carers Service, to ensure that young adult carers and those they are caring for receive a full assessment of their individual needs by appropriate agencies. A local carer service or young adult carer service can bring a wealth of expertise and add capacity to supporting student carers, and a Carer Passport can act as a gateway for students to access wider support.

Information for students

A Passport can facilitate a conversation between Student Services and student carers which should trigger the provision of essential information that is needed by carers. Information would include how students can request an assessment of their needs and how to access additional support for them and their families. This conversation and information for students may be best delivered in partnership with a specialist carer service.

Saving time for student carers

Student carers can be particularly time-pressured due to their caring role and the additional travel that comes with that. Supporting student carers therefore with time saving initiatives can be particularly helpful. Even small changes such as providing more flexibility with returning books to the library can help relieve the pressure for students. Moreover, where a Passport gives priority or flexibility with parking, professional placements and accommodation for example, this could make a significant difference. Many carers will commute rather than live on campus, so access to commuter lounges and benefits can help.

Potential challenges and how to overcome them

Organisational wide awareness

One of the biggest challenges for a college or university in developing and implementing a successful Carer Passport will be organisation-wide awareness and accurate understanding of the scheme. There will be key staff such as Student Support Advisors and Tutors for whom it is vital to be aware of and understand the Carer Passport. A scheme however will work most effectively where as many staff as possible are aware of the scheme and can inform students about it.

In a busy environment such as a college or university there will be numerous support initiatives for different student groups. Ensuring therefore that the key messages about the scheme are promoted



effectively will be important to ensure that staff understand clearly who the scheme is for, what the main benefits are for students, and how the scheme is accessed.

Promotion and communication to students

Ensuring that all students are aware of and have clarity about the scheme and how to access it will be key. Promotion of a Carer Passport needs to be proactive especially when students first arrive.

However during the first few weeks at college or university students will be faced with huge amounts of new information and they will likely be prioritising meeting others and establishing a peer group. Moreover, some students will only become carers or identify themselves as carers at a later point in their studies. Promotion of a scheme therefore should be ongoing and extend beyond enrolment, fresher's fayres and inductions. Students may be reluctant to self-identify as carers, so it is important to emphasise the benefits and the confidential nature of the scheme.

Universities and colleges with mature students should ensure that a Carer Passport meets the needs of student carers of all ages and circumstances and that promotion of the scheme makes this clear.

Criteria for a Carer Passport and wider interventions

Colleges and universities may be unsure of what criteria to use for a Carer Passport and for any targeted support for students such as eligibility for a bursary. They may also struggle with how they verify whether a student meets the criteria, and may be concerned that students might try and access a Carer Passport illegitimately.

Many student carers will not have had a formal assessment as a carer from their local authority, however this should not indicate that they are not a carer. Colleges and universities should therefore be flexible with what they require as proof of being a carer. They may wish to accept a variety of evidence such as a reference or letter from a GP, or from a carer service that has previously supported the student.

Promoting the Carer Passport in colleges and universities

Promotion of a Carer Passport scheme across a large college or university can be challenging. However, since a student might mention something that could trigger their identification as a carer at any point, it is vital that as many staff as possible are made aware of the Passport through communications, staff training and induction. Several universities including The Universities of Salford and De Montfort University, have established a dedicated webpage for student carers that sets out key contacts for students and the support available. The University of Manchester Student's Union has developed an information e-booklet for student carers and Sheffield Hallam University has created a short film to promote its support for student carers.

Some students base their choice of university on their understanding of the support that will be available to them as student carers. Promoting a Passport before students arrive through widening participation activities



in secondary schools, in college or university promotional literature and communications would therefore be productive. Promoting a scheme on websites where students will be visiting whilst applying to college or university, through carer organisations and on local authority websites, will help encourage students and give them confidence that with support, studying is a viable option for them.

Students applying to university from 2018 will have the opportunity to state that they are a carer and so universities will be in a better position to target new student carers. Making new students aware of the Carer Passport at enrolment, through course inductions, registration and at Fresher's Fayres would be valuable, perhaps with by providing students with a welcome pack for carers.

It is important that not only key staff such as Personal Tutors are aware of a Carer Passport scheme, but also staff in general. This increases the chances of student carers being informed about and connected to a scheme.

Posters and awareness days

Promotion through intranet announcements and posters placed strategically in canteens, counselling areas, student unions and GP surgeries are useful for drawing the attention of students to a Passport scheme. Dedicated awareness days including [Young Carers Awareness Day](#), [Carers Week](#), [Carers Rights Day](#) and other more generic student wellbeing events provide ideal opportunities for highlighting a Carer Passport to both students and staff.



Going ahead

- Be informed by the expertise and insights of students who are known to be student carers and work with them to develop and promote the scheme.
- Undertake an audit of existing support for student carers in your college or university and consider how other support might be linked into to a Carer Passport offer.
- Gain senior management backing for the Passport and establish a lead member of staff to coordinate the scheme. Include the Carer Passport in policies.
- Develop and promote a '[Commitment to Student Carers](#)' as detailed in the Carers Trust University toolkit
- Establish a way of identifying student carers on the student record and on their student ID card, so staff can immediately see which students are carers.
- Try to establish a consistent approach for the Carer Passport with further education colleges in your area and other universities.
- Work in collaboration with local carer services.
- Develop a clear and simple mechanism for applying for a Carer Passport.
- Promote clearly the purpose of a Carer Passport, what it offers students. Develop clear guidelines and communicate clearly which students can access the Passport.
- Establish a procedure for review and renewal of the Passport.
- Establish procedures for recording and monitoring usage of the Passport, measuring outcomes and evaluating the impact of the initiative.
- Access the Passport templates and examples of good practice which are available, and which can be adapted by schools and carer services.
- Promote how you support student carers on a dedicated webpage. Include essential information for student carers and key contacts.
- Establish a bursary, scholarship or fund that student carers can access for example purchase essential equipment or to support travel and accessing extra-curricular activities.

Universities

- Ensure student carers are included in your university Access Agreement and Compact Schemes.
- Ensure admissions (UCAS) information about which students are carers is disseminated appropriately to staff and linked to the Carer Passport scheme.



COMING SOON

Resources and templates

Resources we've created for you

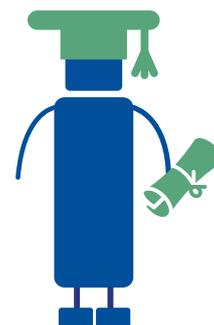
- Leaflet A5 >>>
- Poster >>>
- Application form >>>
- ID card template >>>
- Checklist of things to consider when implementing >>>

External resources and examples

- University of Winchester Bursary Application Form >>>
- Salford University Policy >>>
- York Young Carers Card >>>
- Application form for York Young Carers Card >>>

Other resources

- Young Carers in Schools Programme
 - The Young Carers in School Award
 - Supporting Young Carers in School: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff
 - Toolkit for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Providers (Can also be used in schools)
- Young Carer Assessment Tools
- Protecting Young Carers from Bullying: A Guide for Schools, Community Groups and Policy Makers
- A structured course to identify and support young carers affected by the stresses and challenges of caring



Other resources

- Phelps, D and Warren, S (2015), Supporting Students with Caring Responsibilities: Ideas and Practice for Universities to Help Student Carers Access and Succeed in Higher Education England version (Carers Trust).
- Phelps, D, Aylward, N, Robey, C (2015), Supporting Students with Caring Responsibilities: A Resource for Colleges and Services to Help Young Adult Carers Succeed in Further Education (Carers Trust and NIACE).
- Know Your Rights: Support for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in England for more information about getting an assessment.
- The University of Oxford's Compass Programme Toolkit including interactive activities, quizzes, lesson plans, information and links
- NUS (2013), Learning with Care, Experiences of Student Carers in the UK (NUS).
- Sempik, J and Becker, S (2014a) Young Adult Carers at College and University (Carers Trust).
- The Really Useful Book of Learning and Earning (RUBLE): This resource by Learning and Work Institute was developed specifically for young adult carers.
- This website by Learning and Work Institute brings together a range of information, research and resources which will help you support young adult carers into learning and work.
- Initiatives supporting young adult carers at universities (Carers Trust Website)

