Identifying and supporting unpaid carers in England to improve integrated system working

A resource for health and social care professionals

19 February 2025





Dominic Carter Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Carers Trust

Introduction and welcome

| Agenda item: | Facilitator: |
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| Introduction and welcome | Dominic Carter, Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Carers Trust |
| Why supporting unpaid carers across health and social care matters – an unpaid carers perspective | Dame Philippa Russell DBE, Vice President, Carers UK |
| A local carers organisations perspective | Vicky Keeley, CEO, Sefton Carers Centre |
| A different approach to supporting unpaid carers – 10-year plan for the NHS | Neil Churchill OBE, Director for People and Communities, NHS England |
| Existing legal responsibilities to unpaid carers across health and social care | Emily Holzhausen CBE, Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Carers UK |
| About the new resource Carers Partnership has developed for health and care professionals | Rachel Garton, Experience of Care Senior Manager, NHS England John Perryman, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Carers UK Chloe Rollings, Policy and External Affairs Officer, Carers Trust |
| Update from NHS E re. upcoming resources in 2025 | Ellie Coulbeck / Jim Smith, Experience of Care Managers, NHS England |
| Audience Q+A | Dominic Carter , Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Carers Trust Emily Holzhausen CBE , Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Carers UK |
| Thanks and close | Emily Holzhausen CBE, Director of Policy and Public Affairs, Carers UK |

About the VCSE Health & Wellbeing Alliance

VCSE

health & wellbeing alliance

The Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Health and Wellbeing Alliance (HW Alliance) is a partnership between voluntary sector representative and the health and care system.

The Alliance is jointly managed by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and NHS England, and is made up of 18 VCSE Members that represent communities who share protected characteristics or that experience health inequalities.

Carers UK and Carers Trust collaborate through the Alliance as the Carers Partnership. Our work aims to:

Improve knowledge of barriers and enablers regarding unpaid carers' access to services amongst health and social care professionals, commissioners and policy makers.

Increase uptake of resources by unpaid carers and the professionals who support them, across both health and social care, helping to improve carers' access to support and their understanding of local support available. Support providers and policy makers to include and systematically think about unpaid carers when it comes to service design and improvement – at both national and local levels.

Increase sharing of knowledge about 'what works' when it comes to supporting unpaid carers across both health and social care.

Dame Phillipa Russell DBE Vice President, Carers UK

An unpaid carers' perspective: Why supporting unpaid carers across health and social care really matters



Vicky Keeley Chief Executive, Sefton Carers Centre

A local perspective: Supporting unpaid carers across health and social care



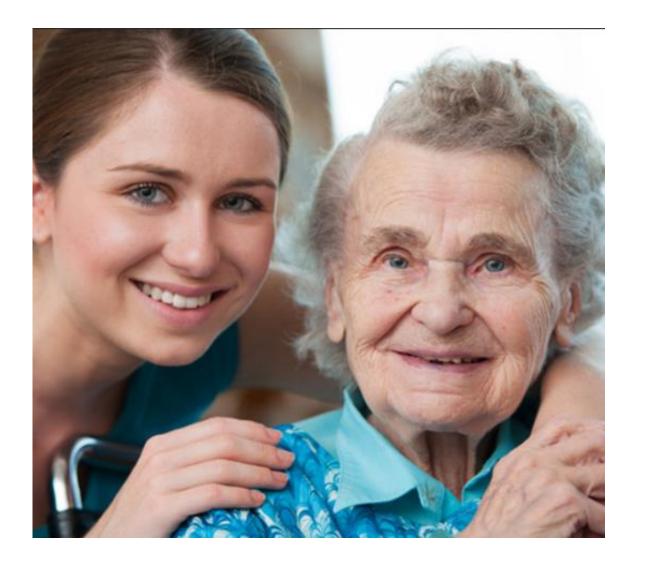
"In the middle"... Advocating for unpaid carers

In the middle can be challenging

We work with both Local Authority and Health

Both have different pressures, targets and measures

We sit on a variety of improvement projects and boards and although there is an understanding of the need to support unpaid carers, and acknowledgement of legislation to ensure this happens.....the reality of putting into day-to-day practice is the challenge.



Recognising the value of partnership

Some examples of areas we have impact:

- ✓ Hospital Discharge project
- ✓ Virtual wards / Home First
- ✓ One off PHBs
- ✓ Carers Assessments
- ✓ Direct Payments
- ✓ Personal Health Budgets
- ✓ Living Well Sefton



Personal Assistants & Hospital Discharge

- Our partnership enables skills and knowledge to be exchanged. This example shows the importance of this process.
- Sefton Carers Centre also delivers Direct Payments for Social Care. SCC knowledge of liability insurance identified that PAs may not be insured on virtual wards.
- Meetings brokered with Hospital Trust, SCC & Lead insurance broker.
- Agreement made to refer to SCC identified patients for VW who employ a PA via a Direct Payment to review if insurance endorsements are required.

Background

A gentleman in his 80s was referred by the social worker at Southport Hospital. He had had a fall in the grounds of his sheltered accommodation.

Barrier to discharge

There was a need for assistance with purchasing a microwave as the gas had been disconnected in the flat as a safety precaution. The patient also needed to purchase new bedding as his double bed was being replaced with a single hospital bed.

What we did

The gentleman's neighbour and unpaid carers agreed that the card could be made in his name and that he would go and purchase the items. The social worker calculated that £165 would be sufficient for everything that was needed. Within 24 hours of us receiving the referral we had issued the card and the unpaid carer had bought the microwave and bedding. Support was also given to the unpaid carer from the hospital discharge team at SCC and a carers assessment provided.

One-off PHBs Hospital Discharge Case Study

Neil Churchill OBE Director for People and Communities NHS England

A different approach to supporting unpaid carers: the 10-year health plan for the NHS in England

Emily Holzhausen CBE Director of Policy and Public Affairs Carers UK

Existing legal responsibilities to unpaid carers across health and social care

Legal duties to unpaid carers across health and social care

Legal responsibilities towards unpaid carers across health and social care

There are several statutory duties (or legal responsibilities) to support unpaid carers that are placed on public health and social care bodies, like local authorities and Integrated Care Bodies (IGBs). Legislation is often supported by statutory policy guidance which also nelps set out expectations to explain parts of the law. This has the equivalent of the force of law. These legal responsibilities are outlined on pages 7 and 8, and we provide more detailed information in Annex 1.

Carer-specific legislation The Health and Care Act 2022 contains four key provisions in relation to carers: Section 10: Places a duty on NHS England to consult carers and other repress news a wery we was a regiment to consort areas and were regression and delivery. Section 25: Places a duty on Integrated Care Boards to promote the Involvement of unpaid cares, ning a way we measure was e wards to premier we inversion of uppart wate, in relation to decisions about prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care. Health and Care Act Places a duty on Integrated Care Boards to consult carers in commissioning o 2022 on 91: Places a duty on NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts to involve carers, w ning for hospital discharge as soon as is feasible. ires local councils to assess unpaid carers, provide support to meet 4 requires local councils to assess unpaid carers, provide support to meet romote carer-wellbeing. Duties also include providing information, advice, and present from doubledge butter remeat exacts. Least councils are house a suptheir needs, and promote carer-weatbeing. Duties also include providing information, advice, and support to prevent carers from developing further support needs. Local councils also have a duty the female support and a support free the device of section of the effective section. אטקטירו זע הופיפורו עשופה חטוח טביצעקאות נערופר אטקטיר הפסט. to involve unpaid carers in the design of services that affect them. and Families Act 2014 protects children, as well as offering specific protection to young The Children and Families Act 2014 protects children, as well as offering specific protection to young carers, young adult carers moving into adulthood, and parent-carers of disabled children (including those with a long-term condition). It specifies that local authorities must meet their duties to identify access and cannot usuary easier usuare and carere and usuar toward. Care Act 2014 assess and support young carers, young adult carers and their families. The Carer's Leave Act 2023 makes provision for employees who balance work with unpaid caring a company of the second caring the second care of the The Carer's Leave Act 2023 makes provision for employees who balance work with unpaid cariny responsibilities to take up to one week of unpaid carer's leave per year, it providing or arranging carer for someone with a long-term care need. There are other workplace rights which support carer in employment which are ear out have Children and Families Act 2014 Carer's Leave Act 2023 care in sumeone with a long-term care need. carers in employment, which are set out here.

The National Institute for Health and Care (NICE) guideline<u>, **'Supporting adult**</u> <u>carers' (NG150)</u>, also includes information and guidance for health and social care practitioners.

In practice, what does this mean for health and social care professionals?

- 1. Proactively identifying and recognising carers
- 2. Offering carers timely and relevant information
- 3. Connecting carers to local or relevant support services
- 4. Supporting carers to access a carer's assessment
- 5. Providing support following the outcomes of a carer's assessment
- 6. Involving carers in relevant decisions about health and social care services
- 7. Involving carers in any strategic planning or delivery of services

Our new resource for health and social care professionals

Our new resource has been codesigned with the input of unpaid carers, professionals working in health and social care, virtual wards leaders, local carers' organisations and local authorities, colleagues at NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care. Identifying and supporting unpaid carers in England to improve integrated system working

A resource for health and social care professionals

February 2025





VCSE health & wellbeing alliance

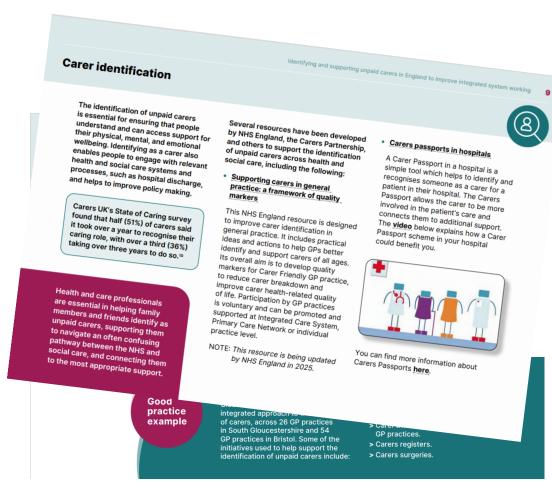
Carer identification

Health and care professionals are essential in helping family members and friends identify as unpaid carers, supporting them to navigate an often-confusing pathway between the NHS and social care, and connecting them to the most appropriate support.

Several resources have been developed by NHS England, the Carers Partnership, and others to support the identification of unpaid carers across health and social care, including the following:

- <u>Supporting carers in general practice: a framework of</u> <u>quality markers</u>
- <u>SNOMED CT codes coding unpaid carers</u>
- <u>Carers passports in hospitals</u>
- <u>Carers UK webpage on identification</u>

Includes <u>Good Practice Example</u> from Carers Support Bristol and South Gloucestershire 51% of carers take over a year to recognise their caring role; 36% take over three years to do so.



Hospital discharge and unpaid carers



Hospital discharge and unpaid carers

When supporting someone to be discharged from hospital, local authorities and NHS Trusts have a legal requirement to consider what support people are going to need at home, and who will provide that care.

Deciding to care, or continue caring, for someone leaving hospital can be challenging, especially for new carers or those whose caring responsibilities have increased or changed. A needs assessment for unpaid carers should therefore be undertaken to determine if they are willing and able to provide care, ensuring carers have a choice. Carers are entitled to support, ranging from advice and personal budgets to additional services for the person they care for.

Legal responsibilities regarding carers at hospital discharge

As health and care professionals, you will be delivering your organisation's statutory duty under Section 91 of the Health and Care Act 2022 to *involve carers* where appropriate, in planning for hospital discharge as soon as is feasible.

This is supported by statutory guidance which specifies that NHS bodies and local authorities should ensure that, where appropriate, unpaid carers and family members are involved in discharge decisions.

Includes Good Practice Example from Camden Carers

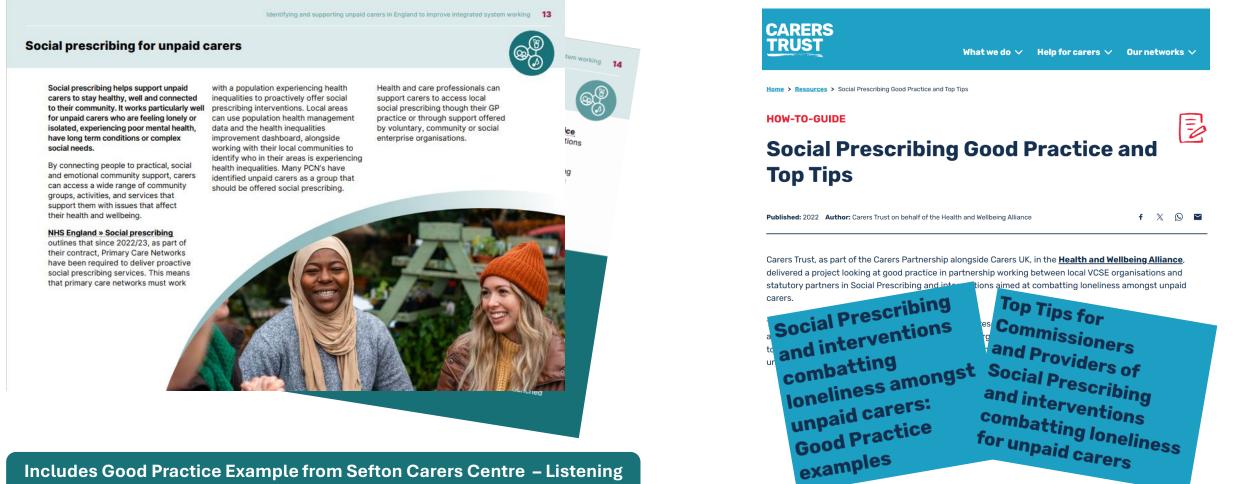
Resources:

- NHS London has developed a Carers and Hospital Discharge Toolkit to improve the experiences of carers and the people they care for during hospital discharge.
- Carers UK has produced a <u>'Coming out of hospital</u> <u>checklist'</u> and a comprehensive <u>'Coming out of</u> <u>hospital factsheet'</u> to support unpaid carers at hospital discharge.



Social prescribing for unpaid carers

Health and care professionals can support carers to access local social prescribing though their GP practice or through support offered by voluntary, community or social enterprise organisations.



Includes Good Practice Example from Sefton Carers Centre – Listening **Ear Service**

Carer contingency planning

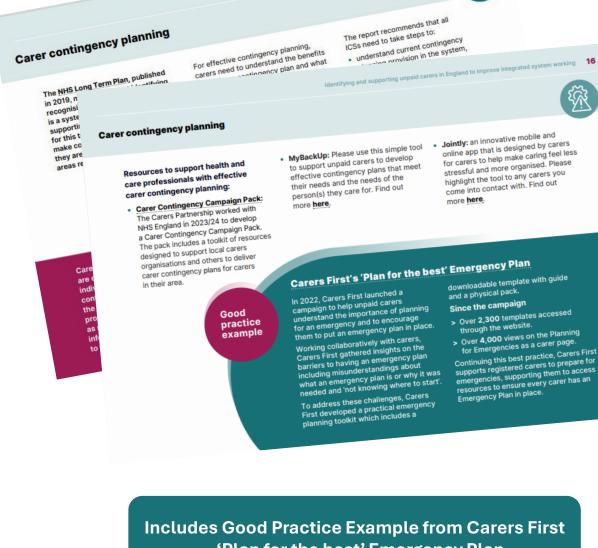
For effective contingency planning, carers need to understand the benefits of making a contingency plan and what support is available. It is also essential that health and care teams are aware of how to find existing plans, know how to activate them promptly when required, and feel confident to have meaningful conversations with carers.

<u>Resources to support effective carer contingency</u> planning:





MyBackUp



Identifying and supporting unpaid carers in England to improve integrated system

- 'Plan for the best' Emergency Plan

Supporting carers through virtual wards

Identifying and supporting unpaid carers in England to improve integrated system working Supporting carers through virtual wards The NHS England operational In practice terms this means: framev Virtual wards (also known as Hospital Ensuring that the contributions of (publis carers are properly acknowledged and at Home) allow patients to get hospitalunpaid level care safely at home and in familiar valued when it comes to planning and equal surroundings. The staff, equipment, vital in providing care. technologies, medication, and skills Being proactive in communicating with care a usually provided in hospital are carers, ensuring that they are kept delivered in people's own homes. The f that t

Legal requirements to involve and support unpaid carers through virtual wards

- Under the Health and Care Act 2022 (Section 25, amending Health Act 2006), each Integrated Care Board (ICB) has a duty to promote the involvement of patients and their carers in any decisions which relate to the prevention or diagnosis of illness in the patients, or their care or treatment.
- well informed throughout the process from planning care, to implementation, and ensuring that there is correct follow-up after the use of a virtual ward ceases.
- Training and information should be provided for staff involved in the delivery of the virtual ward so that they can better understand the needs of unpaid carers, and ensure they fulfil their duties towards them.

| ramework for virtual wards | |
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| amework for virtual variables published August 2024) highlights that inpaid carers should be recognised as equal partners in care who can provide vital information about the person with care and support needs. The framework makes clear (appendix 2) that to support carers, virtual wards must be designed in such a way that enables | a t they (pect he or list or |
| professionals to: | nd |
| identify unpaid carers, signpost carers to carers' assessments and further support, such as advocacy and respite care, involve carers as equal and expert partners in care, | ire, nd |
| point the second s | |

 be aware of carer rights under the Care Act and young carer rights under the Children and Families Act,

Resources to support carers through virtual wards:

The Carers Partnership has worked with the virtual wards team at NHS England to develop a suite of resources to support the delivery of virtual wards in England, ensuring they consider and engage with unpaid carers.

These resources are brought together in a **co-produced** toolkit aimed at professionals, local carer organisations, local authorities and unpaid carers.

The toolkit includes:

- (1)a professional's checklist;
- a carer pathway through virtual wards;
- a checklist and advocacy guide for carers;
- a policy briefing on what virtual wards are; and (4)
- carer information leaflet for local carers organisations. (5)

Training and information should be provided for staff involved in the delivery of the virtual ward so that they can better understand the needs of unpaid carers, and ensure they fulfil their statutory duties towards them.

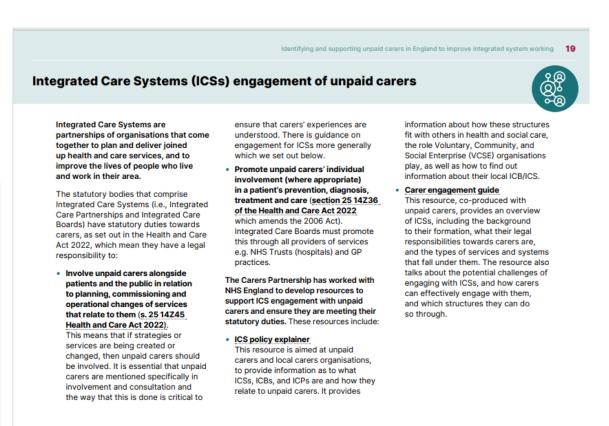
ICS engagement of unpaid carers

The statutory bodies that comprise Integrated Care Systems (i.e., Integrated Care Partnerships and Integrated Care Boards) have statutory duties towards carers, as set out in the Health and Care Act 2022, which mean they have a legal responsibility to:

- 1. Involve unpaid carers alongside patients and the public in relation to planning, commissioning and operational changes of services that relate to them.
- 2. Promote unpaid carers' individual involvement (where appropriate) in a patient's prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care.

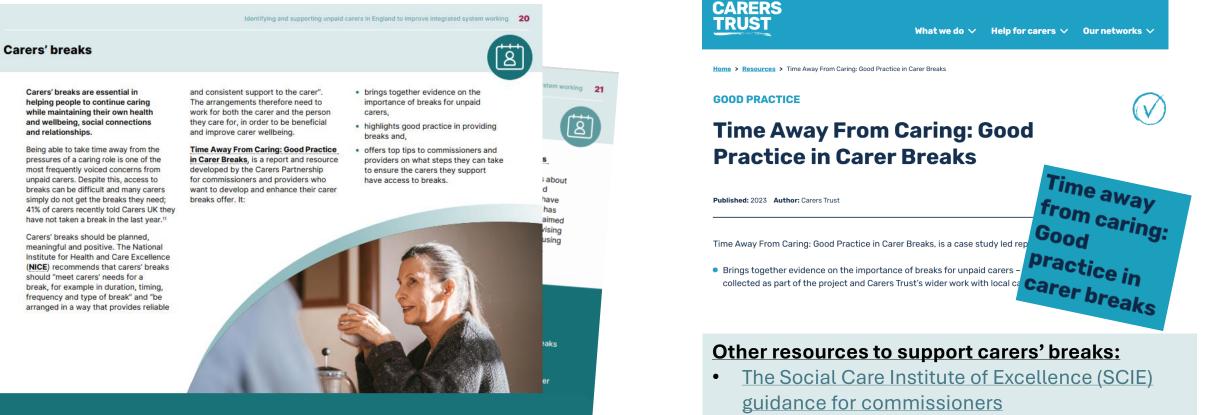
Resources to support ICS engagement with unpaid carers:

- ICS policy explainer: This resource provides information on what ICSs, ICBs, and ICPs are and how they relate to unpaid carers.
- Carer engagement guide: This resource, co-produced with unpaid carers, provides an overview of ICSs, including what their legal responsibilities towards carers are, and the types of services and systems that fall under them. It highlights the potential challenges of engaging with ICSs, and how carers can effectively engage with them, and which structures they can do so through.



Carers' breaks

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends that carers' breaks should "meet carers' needs for a break...in duration, timing, frequency and type of break" and "be arranged in a way that provides reliable and consistent support to the carer".



Carers UK's Taking a break factsheet

video series

Carers UK's Supporting carers to take a break

Includes Good Practice Example from Wandsworth Carers Centre – partnership working with local organisations

Carers' assessments

Health and social care professionals have a key role in helping carers access and engage with these assessments. This includes informing carers of their rights, explaining the purpose of the assessment, and providing clear guidance on the process.

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Carers' assessments

Under Section 10 of the Care Act 2014, local authorities must assess unpaid carers to identify their personal outcomes, current and potential needs, and the impact of their caring role on their wellbeing.

Health and social care professionals have a key role in helping carers access and engage with these assessments. This includes informing carers of their rights, explaining the purpose of the assessment, and providing clear guidance on the process.

Professionals conducting the assessment must create a supportive environment, empowering carers to share their needs and priorities. Using strengths-based approaches, they can facilitate meaningful conversations and explore the carer's existing resources and challenges. Assessments should evaluate whether carers are willing and able to continue their role and determine the support required to sustain it. They must also account for the fluctuating nature of carers' needs, considering both present circumstances and potential future changes.

Once completed, the assessment should provide a comprehensive understanding of the carer's situation, ensuring appropriate support is identified. Where eligible needs are found, professionals should work to secure support that makes the carer's role both sustainable and aligned with their wellbeing and personal outcomes.

Carers' assessments – developments, digital, diversity, co-production and good practice

This resource is aimed at local authorities and local carer organisations and is intended to increase awareness around what carers' assessments entail from a carer's perspective. It also highlights what further support can be offered in terms of accessing assessments and the support that follows. It also includes good practice examples of innovative delivery regarding carers' assessments.

Legislation and further resources

You can access further information about the importance of carers' assessments using the resources below.

Care Act: Legal duties and impact on individuals (SCIE, 2024)

NICE guideline: Supporting adult carers (NICE, 2020)

Advice for unpaid carers on carers' assessments (Carers UK)

Resources to support carers' assessments:

Carers' assessments – developments, digital, diversity, co-production and good practice: Aimed at local authorities and local carer organisations, this resource is designed to increase awareness around what carers' assessments highlight what support can be offered and good practice examples of innovative delivery regarding carers' assessments.

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Carers' assessments: developments, digital, diversity, co-production and good practice



- <u>Care Act: Legal duties and impact on individuals (SCIE, 2024)</u>
- NICE guideline: Supporting adult carers (NICE, 2020)
- Advice for unpaid carers on carers' assessments (Carers UK)

Ellie Coulbeck and Jim Smith Experience of Care Managers NHS England

Update on upcoming NHS England resources in 2025

Any questions?

Download the new resource using the links below:

- Carers UK website
- Carers Trust website

For further information, please contact

- policy@carers.org
- policy@carersuk.org

