



Carers Trust Wales response to the Finance Committee call for information – Welsh Government draft budget proposals for 2017-18

About Carers Trust Wales

Carers Trust Wales is part of Carers Trust, a major charity for, with and about carers. We work to improve support, services and recognition for the 370,000 people in Wales living with the challenges of caring, **unpaid**, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems.

Our Mission is to identify, support and involve Wales' unpaid carers through the provision of action, help and advice.

Together with our locally-based network partners, we provide access to desperately-needed breaks, information and advice, education, training and employment opportunities – working with 20,000 carers a year in Wales. Our network partners benefit from the provision of grants, advice documents and reports to improve carers' services. We give carers and young carers opportunities to speak to someone and make their voices heard, offline via our carers' services and young carers' schemes, and via our online communities.

Our Strategic aims are

1. Championing carers – ensuring their voices heard and carers have a high profile across Wales including in the media, government
2. Delivering services for carers in Wales – researching and promoting solutions for carers across Wales
3. Building partnerships and delivering change – working meaningfully across sectors to reach more carers in all spheres of life

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4. A strong Carers Trust Wales network – working closely with our network partners to increase sustainability and impact across Wales

Our Vision is a Caring Wales – where unpaid carers are recognised and able to get the support they need

Overview

1. A carer is anyone caring, unpaid, for a friend or family member who without their support would not be able to cope.
2. Wales is a uniquely caring country with the highest proportion of carers in the UK. Carers in Wales are also, on average, caring for more hours a week than carers elsewhere in the UK.
3. Carers Trust Wales recognises the Welsh Government is operating within a finite budget and the difficult decisions that this environment engenders.
4. There is a large evidence base, some of it detailed in this response, that shows the positive impact that support for carers has on reducing hospital admissions, speeding up transfers in care, maintaining the health and well-being of both carer and those they are caring for.
5. There has been ongoing significant pressure on services for carers across Wales for a number of years. The downwards trajectory of local authority budgets has meant that many local carers' services have had to deliver more for less and, as a result, their long term sustainability is at risk.
6. Replacement care and short breaks are two of the most frequently raised issues by carers. Carers Trust Wales is calling for the introduction of a Carers Well-being Fund – a national fund to provide breaks and replacement care to carers in Wales. There is a clear moral and economic case for providing such a fund.
7. This fund could be modelled on the Scottish Short Breaks Fund, which has been in place since 2010, but take into account the lessons learned from it.
8. There is at least one young or young adult carer in every class in Wales. Young and young adult carers face significant challenges in accessing and succeeding in education. Putting in place support for these vulnerable groups, for example through

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the Pupil Deprivation Grant, would help reduce poverty in Wales and support the health and well-being of these children and young people

9. **Carers Trust Wales would welcome the opportunity to expand upon this response in an oral evidence session with the Finance Committee.**

Response

- 1.1. A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who would not cope without their support.
- 1.2. Wales is a uniquely caring country, according to the 2011 census we have the highest proportion of carers in the UK. The 2011 census also found that carers in Wales care for longer on average than carers anywhere else in the UK¹.
- 1.3. Officially, 370,000 people in Wales, or 12% of the population, provide unpaid care to a friend or family member who would not cope without their support. In reality, this figure is likely to be much higher.
- 1.4. Among young carers alone, of which there are officially around 12,000 in Wales, research suggests the true figure may be four times higher².
- 1.5. Carers contribute £8.1 billion worth of care in Wales every year, more than the entire Welsh NHS budget and the equivalent of £21,892 per carer every year³.

1. **What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the Welsh Government's 2016-17 budgets**

- 1.1 The services carers receive and require are diverse and include a wide range of local and national services. Services include information, advice and support,

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<http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthcaresystem/articles/2011censusanalysisunpaidcareinenglandandwales2011andcomparisonwith2001/2013-02-15>

² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-11757907>

³ <http://www.sociology.leeds.ac.uk/assets/files/research/cuk-valuing-carers-2015-web.pdf>

short breaks, replacement care, palliative care, employment support, training and benefit support.

- 1.2 The preventative value of these services, both in securing the well-being of individuals, and in avoiding additional costs to local authorities and local health boards, is well-established. For example:

- A longitudinal study of 100 people with dementia found a 20-fold protective effect of having a co-resident carer when it comes to preventing or delaying residential care admissions⁴

- Carers providing more than 50 hours of care per week are twice as likely to report ill health as those not providing care⁵. Wales has the highest proportion of carers providing more than 50 hours of care per week in the UK

- One study found that problems associated with the carer contributed to readmission in 62% of cases⁶

- 1.3 In our responses to draft budget proposals in previous years, we have consistently flagged up our concerns about the impact that continuing pressure on local authority budgets would have on services for carers. Unfortunately, the situation has worsened. Many local authorities are reducing the rate they are funding regulated care to a point where the provision of quality, third-sector, care is no longer sustainable. Similarly, other services for carers across Wales including services for young carers have had their funded cut or removed entirely.

- 1.4 Based on a sample collected from local authorities by the UKHCA in September 2014, the average rate paid by councils in Wales for care was £14.05 an hour⁷. The UKHCA calculates that to adequately cover National Living Wage, backend costs, travel time etc. a minimum of £16.70 is required⁸.

⁴ Banerjee, S, Murray, J, Foley, B, Atkins, L, Schneider, J, Mann, A (2003) Predictors of institutionalisation in people with dementia, *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry* 2003, 74,1315–1316.

⁵ 19 Census (2011) Office for National Statistics

⁶ Williams, E, Fitton, F (1991) Survey of Carers of elderly patients discharged from hospital, *British Journal of General Practice*, 41, 105 –108.

⁷ <http://www.ukhca.co.uk/rates/>

⁸ http://www.ukhca.co.uk/pdfs/AMPFHC_150719.pdf

- 1.5 Given this funding environment, it is likely that a number of dedicated carers services in Wales will have to close in the next year as a result of budgetary pressures.
- 1.6 While this monetary pressure puts support for carers at risk, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 has introduced new rights for carers and new duties on local authorities to promote the third sector and preventative services. Although too early to evaluate the implementation of this legislation, it appears that the financial pressure on local authorities has made progress in implementing the Act and delivering upon the spirit of the Act slow.
- 1.7 That said, we were pleased to see the Welsh Government provide £2 million transitional funding to local health boards and local authorities across two years as a follow-up to the ending of the funding for Carers Strategies which had provided around £3.3 million between 2013 and 2016. We would welcome further accountability of this funding including publication of what work the transition has funded and evaluation of the impact of this funding.

2. What expectations do you have for the 2017-18 draft budget proposals?

- 2.1 Unfortunately, we anticipate that there will be a further real-terms cut to local authority budgets which will have a knock on effect on services for carers as outlined above. The funding environment for services for carers is rapidly nearing crisis point.
- 2.2 It also seems likely that there will be a reduction in funding for lifelong learning, higher education and adult community learning. We outline below the reasons why flexible education is important for protecting the health and well-being of carers and should be protected.

3. How financially prepared is your organisation for the 2017-18 financial year, and how robust is your ability to plan for future years?

4. The Committee would like to focus on a number of specific areas in the scrutiny of the budget, do you have any specific comments on the areas identified below?

- Approach to preventative spending and how is this represented in resource

allocation (Preventative spending = spending which focuses on preventing problems and eases future demand on services by intervening early)

- Welsh Government policies to reduce poverty, mitigate welfare reform and prepare for an aging population
- Sustainability of public services, innovation and service transformation
- Local health board financial arrangements
- Preparation for the UK to leave the EU
- Low carbon budgeting and preparing for the Future Generations Act
- Preparation for the impact of further devolution included with the Wales Bill
- Impact of the Welsh Government's legislative programme and whether its implementation is sufficiently resourced
- Scrutiny of Welsh language, equalities and sustainability

- 4.1 Preventative Spending:** As it currently stands we do not feel the ethos of preventative spending is wholly reflected in funding on the ground when it comes to carers. We know the role that carers play in protecting health and social services from unmeetable demand. We also know that for every £1 invested in carers services, around £4 is saved⁹. But our Network Partners, local charities supporting over 20,000 carers a year, are facing some of the most hostile, difficult and pressured funding circumstances of their decade long history.
- 4.2** There have been reductions both in respite services and day centres offered by local authorities – the Welsh Government's figures show a sizeable decline in individuals accessing both these services since 2012¹⁰.
- 4.3 Reducing Poverty:** A key part of reducing poverty must be reaching young carers in Wales. Being a young carer impacts on school performance, attendance, and presents increased risk of mental health problems. Yet of the 11,500 carers under the age of 18 in Wales, only 782 young carers are known to social services¹¹.
- 4.4** Young carers and young adult carers are twice as likely to not be in education, employment or training and are four times more likely to drop out of college or

⁹ Conochie, G (2011) *Supporting Carers: The Case for Change*; London: The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Crossroads Care.

¹⁰ <http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2015/150902-assessments-social-services-adults-2014-15-en.pdf>

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https://carers.org/sites/files/carerstrust/related_documents/timetobeheardcampaign_english.pdf

university¹². One way that this could be supported would be through including funding for young carers in the pupil deprivation grant.

- 4.5 Many carers are unaware of the extra financial support they are entitled to. In 2010, a working paper by the Department for Work and Pensions estimated that uptake of Carer's Allowance across the UK was around 65%. We believe that a small funded campaign by the Welsh Government to encourage uptake of Carer's Allowance, and raise awareness of eligibility for Carer's Allowance, could improve the well-being of many carers across Wales and help reduce poverty.
- 5. The previous Welsh Government have highlighted that the Draft budget 2017-18 will be aligned with national indicators for Wales. - What, if any, additional national and local indicators would you like to see as a means of supporting the shift towards a greater focus on preventative spending? - What, if any, additional national and local indicators would you like to see as a means of supporting the shift towards a greater focus on reduction or eradication of poverty?**
- 6. What spending commitments and priorities would you like to see in the 2017-18 draft budget in order to ensure that progress is being made on preventative spending and, in particular, the area of health and social services?**
- 6.1 In the past year, Carers Trust Wales has been calling for the introduction of a national Carer Well-being Fund. The purpose of the fund would be to increase the availability of breaks to carers across Wales, easing pressure on health and social services. Welsh Labour made a manifesto commitment to investigate the benefits of such a scheme.
- 6.2 A Carer Well-being Fund would take into account the lessons of Scotland's Short Breaks Fund which has delivered over £11 million worth of breaks to carers in Scotland since 2010¹³.
- 6.3 A modest annual investment of £1.4 million in Wales would deliver around 53,000 hours of care at home at the new National Living Wage or provide 31,000 days of care at day centres across Wales. Alternatively, the same fund would secure 2,040 weeks of respite. These calculations include the cost of administering the

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¹³ <http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/publications/short-breaks-fund-round-2-evaluation-report/>

fund¹⁴.

- 6.4 Carers Trust Wales believes that there needs to be national investment into breaks for carers. A modest investment in this area would help ensure progress on preventative spending and has a proven impact on the sustainability of health and social services.

7. What spending commitments and priorities would you like to see in the 2017-18 draft budget in order to ensure that progress is being made on reducing poverty and preparing for an aging population?

- 7.1 As outlined above, young and young adult carers face multiple barriers and challenging in accessing education and employment. By the time they reach 16, a young carer is more than twice as likely as their peer to be out of education, employment or training¹⁵.
- 7.2 One way to reduce poverty in Wales would be to put in place support mechanisms for young and young adult carers to ensure that they are able to not only access education and employment, but to succeed in education and employment.
- 7.3 Interventions that would help do this could include extending the pupil deprivation grant to include young and young adult carers and putting in place funding for schools to implement support for carers and training for teachers.
- 7.4 Similarly, we know that for many carers, part-time study is the best option that most effectively meets their needs and provides the flexibility they require¹⁶. Part-time education can play a vital role in shoring up the well-being of carers, helping alleviate loneliness and isolation, and enabling unpaid carers to pursue both personal and career development.
- 7.5 Previous budgets has seen reductions to funding for part-time learning, including both Adult Community Learning and reductions to the higher education budget that in turn led to reductions in funding for part-time higher education. Carers

¹⁴ Full proposal is available upon request

¹⁵ Audit Commission (July 2010), *Against the Odds: Re-engaging young people in education, employment and training*. Available online: <http://socialwelfare.bl.uk/subject-areas/services-client-groups/children-young-people/auditcommission/13593720100707-characteristicsofyoungpeopleetforagainsttheodds.pdf>

¹⁶ NUS Wales & The OU in Wales, 'It's About Time'

<http://www.open.ac.uk/wales/sites/www.open.ac.uk.wales/files/files/ecms/wales-pa/web-content/It's-About-Time-2014-English.pdf>

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Trust Wales would welcome a commitment to protecting and extending funding for flexible learning in Wales.

- 7.6 Similarly, putting in place increased funding for breaks and other kinds of carers' services, including through a Carer Well-being Fund, would help protect the health and well-being of carers and in doing so prepare Wales for an aging population.
8. **Do you feel that allocations made by the Welsh Government are sufficiently evidence based?**
9. **What changes to allocations and priorities do you feel need to be reflected in the draft budget 2017-18 and subsequent years as a result of the vote to leave the EU?**
10. **What long term planning is carried out to fully deliver on preventative spending strategies and how do you plan for this within short term budget periods?**
11. **What baseline evidence is used to measure preventative outcomes?**
12. **How can good examples of service transformation and innovation be encouraged and shared nationally across key agencies and what is the role for the Welsh Government?**

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