

SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS

**A GUIDE FOR
PHARMACISTS
AND PHARMACY
STAFF**

Carers Trust Wales is part of Carers Trust, an ambitious national charity committed to improving support and services for unpaid carers by:

- **Recognising and celebrating the essential contributions carers make**
- **Raising awareness of the barriers faced by carers of all ages**
- **Working with decision-makers to ensure that appropriate support is available to empower carers to live happy and fulfilling lives**

We work with Network Partners - local services that deliver direct support to carers - making the most of our collective experience, expertise and innovations.

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is for pharmacists and pharmacy staff to support growing understanding of the challenges children and young people who have caring responsibilities face and how they can best be supported in a pharmacy environment. It will also introduce the national Young Carers ID card model and what this may mean for your practice.

WHO ARE YOUNG CARERS?

Young carers are children and young people up to the age of 18 who provide unpaid care to a family member or friend who has a physical or mental health condition, disability or addiction.

Young carers undertake a range of activities which might include:

- **Cooking, cleaning and other domestic tasks**
- **Emotional support**
- **Manual handling and physical support of others (sometimes including personal care)**
- **Storing and giving medicines**
- **Managing family finances**

There are thousands of young people across Wales who provide care for family members, neighbours or friends. According to the 2011 census there are 21,611 young adult carers (aged 16-24) and 7,544 young carers (aged under 16) in Wales. More recently, the School Health Research Network survey found that almost 1 in 6 pupils in secondary schools have caring responsibilities.

YOUNG CARERS' RIGHTS

All carers have the right to information, advice and assistance under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, which defines a carer as:

“A person who provides or intends to provide care for an adult or disabled child”.

Carers do not have to live with the person they care for, or care for a minimum number of hours to be considered a carer.

If a local authority believes that a young carer might have a need for support they have a duty to offer a Carers Needs Assessment and to meet any eligible needs for support identified through it.

THE NATIONAL YOUNG CARER ID CARD MODEL

Young carers have voiced many reasons for wanting an ID card, including:

- **To raise awareness of their responsibilities and to give formal recognition to their role**
- **To discreetly let people know about their caring responsibilities without having to share personal details repeatedly**
- **To give confidence to ask for help or understanding from professionals**

All local authorities across Wales have committed to making an ID card available for young carers by the end of financial year 2021/22. Many local authorities will look to launch the card or transition their existing scheme to the national model sooner than this. Some local authorities are early adopters of the scheme meaning they will make the card available in late 2020.

The ID cards may look different depending on which area the young carer lives in. However, all cards will have the national ID card logo which was designed by two young carers:

It will also include:

- **A photo of the young carer**
- **Their full name**
- **Their date of birth**
- **Details about the issuing local authority**



You can find up to date information about which local authorities have an ID card in place and how to contact them by visiting carers.org/YCID

It is important to remember that not all young carers will have an ID card. They are voluntary, not compulsory. Therefore, whilst they can be a useful tool for pharmacists and pharmacy staff, policies and procedures should not demand that young carers wishing to collect prescriptions must have an ID card.

RECOGNISING AND SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS WITHIN A PHARMACY CONTEXT

Pharmacies are in a unique position to recognise children who may be young carers. Local pharmacies are at the heart of the community and pharmacists and pharmacy staff often develop supportive relationships with regular customers.

Community pharmacies already provide a range of vital advice and healthcare services for existing carers, but can also play a role in:

- **Identifying children who are young carers**
- **Explaining the range of pharmacy services available to the patient and young carer**
- **Referring young carers to their local authority or carers services for additional support**

Checklist for pharmacies and pharmacy staff:



Ensure you are familiar with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's guide for '*Children Collecting Medicines From A Pharmacy*' <https://www.rpharms.com/resources/quick-reference-guides/children-collecting-medicines-from-a-pharmacy> and your own internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)



If you have identified a young carer or a patient who is supported by a young carer, log this information on your patient medication record (PMR), for yourself and colleagues



Let families with young carers know about all services that may help them:

- Multi-compartment compliance aids (MCAs) (where they are clinically appropriate)
- Prescription delivery
- Patient consultation
- Flu vaccine



Remember some young people are the sole carers in the family and have a good understanding of medicine management. If new medications are being collected make sure you proactively offer them the opportunity to ask any questions they might have



Appoint a 'Carers Lead' or 'Carers Champion' to take responsibility for making sure your pharmacy is carer aware and that your policies and procedures recognise and support the unique challenges facing young carers



Promote carer awareness in your pharmacy by displaying posters and relevant information



Get in touch with your local carers service and local health board. They have tools, tips and advice to support your pharmacy to be more carer aware. Many local services will provide training, resources or outreach support to work with either your staff or directly with patients



