

Carers Rights Day: Welsh Government unveil new plans to improve the lives of carers

To mark Carers Rights Day, the Minister for Children and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies, has reaffirmed the Welsh Government commitment to carers with £1m to address three new national priorities to further improve the support available to carers by focusing on the issues that matter most to them.

There are 370,000 carers in Wales – around 12% of the population. They provide 96% of the care in the communities across Wales and contribute more than £8.1bn to the Welsh economy every year.

In Wales, under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act, which came into force in 2016, carers have an equal right to have their needs assessment as those they care for. If carers have eligible needs, the local authority must meet those needs through a carers support plan.

The three national priorities are:

- Supporting life alongside caring – All carers must have reasonable breaks from their caring role to enable them to maintain their capacity to care, and to have a life beyond caring.
- Identifying and recognising carers – Carers deserve to be recognised and supported so that they can continue to care. It is vital that carers identify themselves as carers.
- Providing information, advice and assistance – It is important that carers receive the right information and advice when they need it and in an appropriate format.

Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“To mark Carers rights day, I want to say thank you to the thousands of unpaid carers of all ages across Wales for their ongoing dedication, contribution and the invaluable difference they make to those they care for, their families, and the wider community.

“We know that making the difference sometimes means a carers’ own health and wellbeing can become neglected and we cannot let this happen.

“The Welsh Government is firmly committed to ensuring the rights of all unpaid carers are enhanced and protected. Our vision for carers in Wales is one where communities foster a carer friendly approach, identifying and supporting carers so that they are not disadvantaged or discriminated as a result of their caring role.

“For every carer, no matter how many hours of care they provide, caring must be a positive experience where carers feel confident in their caring role and supported to maintain a normal life as possible.”