



Carers (Scotland) Act 2016

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 comes into effect as of 1st April 2018. It gives unpaid carers new rights.

It is estimated that there are 759,000 adults and 29,000 young people in Scotland who provide unpaid care to relatives and friends. This can be for a variety of reasons. The cared-for person may be physically and/or terminally ill, frail, have a physical or learning disability, mental illness (including dementia) or an addiction to alcohol or drugs.

Unpaid carers are now the largest provider of care in the UK. The care they provide saves health and social care services over £10 billion each year.

The act of caring, however, can impact the carers life. Their physical and emotional health and wellbeing can suffer; their opportunities to work or study or even to make and maintain friendships or to have a social life can be limited. They may have financial worries or have to compromise on where they live in order that they can continue to carry out their caring role.

The Act: -

- Defines a carer i.e. an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual
- Requires the Scottish Government to publish a Carers Charter, outlining the rights of Carers
- Introduces the right of carers to have an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carers Statements which must consider: -
 - the nature of the caring role
 - the extent to which carers are able and willing to continue in that role
 - their desired personal outcomes
 - their identified needs
 - the impact their caring role has on them
 - the support (if any) to be provided to meet the identified needs and fulfil the personal outcomes
 - any emergency and future planning requirements
- Requires Local Authorities to: -
 - set Eligibility Criteria for Carers
 - provide support to meet carer's eligible needs
 - establish and maintain an information and advice service for carers
 - prepare and publish a statement in relation to Short Breaks for carers
 - prepare and publish a local Carer's StrategyThe local Carer's Strategy should describe how the Local Authority: -
 - will identify relevant carers and obtain information about the care they provide
 - assesses the demand for carer's support and whether this is currently being met
 - currently supports carers
 - intends to support carers in future

- Places a duty on Local Authorities to: -
 - involve carers in services that are currently being provided and those that might be provided in future
 - to take account of the views of carers in the assessment and care planning for the person they care for
 - involve carers in the setting of local Eligibility Criteria
 - involve carers in the hospital discharge of the person they care for; involve carers in the development of the local Carer's Strategy

- Requires the Scottish government to involve carers in the development of the Carer's Charter.