

PRESS RELEASE

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Carers Rights Day poll:

Welsh unpaid carers missing out on vital support as ‘public unable to recognise friends and family that care’

Half (50%) believe they ‘don’t know’ a single friend or, family member looking after a loved one, despite 1 in 10¹ Welsh people being carers.

The Welsh public remains ‘in the dark’, as half drastically underestimate the number of carers in their own family, friendship groups and places of work, according to new research by Carers UK released for Carers Rights Day (**24 November**).

The research shows that half (50%) believe they don’t know a ‘single family member or friend’ who cares, whilst almost 1 in 4 (22%) know a work colleague looking after a loved one. In reality, 1 in 10 (12%) Welsh residents are carers and 1 in 9 people in the UK workforce juggle a paid job with unpaid caring².

The findings come one year after Carers UK’s *Missing Out* report showed the impact of carers not being identified quickly enough. Amongst carers who ‘struggled’ to recognise their roles, half saw their finances (50%) and mental health (76%) negatively affected as a result.

Amongst all of those polled, including those that had not recognised carers in their social circles or at work, 7 in 10 (70%) said they would feel confident providing ‘emotional support’ to a new carer. Yet, less than half (45%) would feel confident pointing people in the direction of information about caring. Carers Wales is asking the public to equip themselves with more knowledge and understanding of how to support carers, to improve confidence in reaching out to carers.

Across the UK, the findings also revealed differences amongst men and women, carers and non-carers, and those of different ages:

¹ Census 2011

² Census 2011

- **Gender:** Women are more likely to say they know a friend or family member who is a carer (43%) compared with men (34%). Women (27%) are also more likely than men (17%) to say they know a colleague who is caring.

Among those that know carers, women were more likely (41%) than men (34%) to have suggested sources of information to friends and family and significantly more likely to have suggested information to colleagues with caring roles (35%) than men (27%).

- **Age:** Despite being at the peak age of caring themselves, those aged 45-54 are only slightly more likely (40%) to say they have any family or friends that are carers compared with 39% of the wider public.

- **Carers and non-carers:** Unsurprisingly, those who have never had an unpaid caring role are more likely (58%) to say they don't have any friends or family who care. Only 17% of current carers say they don't have any friends or family that are caring.

To coincide with Carers Rights Day, Carers Wales is holding an All Wales Carers Assembly where it will launch findings from research undertaken earlier this year. The State of Caring report shows that almost three quarters (72%) of carers in Wales felt that their contribution is not understood or valued by society. 40% said they have not had a day off from caring in a year and as many as 83% have not having had a week off for over a year.

Almost half of the carers in Wales who responded to the State of Caring Survey (47%) said that they had given up work to care. Having to work at the same time as providing care also showed a significant impact on carers' health. Carers in paid work were more likely to have suffered mental ill-health, with 78% reporting they were more stressed and 67% reporting they were more anxious.

Claire Morgan, Director of Carers Wales said:

“More and more of us are stepping into caring roles, yet carers all-too-often remain hidden in plain sight at work, in friendships, and even in the families. Often, it takes somebody else to tell us that we are a carer before we recognise ourselves as such.

This year, we are encouraging every member of the public to learn more about caring and where to go for advice and assistance. It is only through our concerted efforts to identify and support carers that we can alleviate some of the emotional and practical challenges facing the 370,000 carers in Wales looking after an ill, older or disabled loved one.”

Every year, Carers Wales uses Carers Rights Day (**24 November**) to reach carers with crucial information about the rights, financial support, and practical help they are entitled to; including benefits such as Carer's Allowance, access to breaks, equipment and technology.

This year, under the theme of 'Make Connections, Get Support', Carers Wales is reaching out beyond the 1 in 10 of us who care, calling on the general public to equip themselves with enough knowledge to feel confident identifying and directing carers towards support.

Working with Carers UK, Carers Wales has developed a range of tools in time for Carers Rights Day, to help both the general public and carers early in their caring journey get the information and support they need:

- **Looking after someone**, the annual guide to carers' rights and the practical and financial support available: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/get-resources/looking-after-someone
- **Carers UK's local directory**, which allows carers to find support hubs, services, respite, and charities near you: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/get-support/local-support
- **Upfront**, the first online guide of its kind gives tailored financial and practical information to those who are new to caring: www.carersuk.org/upfront
- **Online factsheets and guides** on financial and practical support available for carers: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice

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Media contact

Case studies and spokespeople are available upon request. **Please contact Carers Wales on:**

- Beth.evans@carerswales.org
- 029 2081 1370 (Mon-Fri)

Or Carers UK on:

- media@carersuk.org
- 020 7378 4972 / 020 7378 4924 (Mon-Fri)
- 07534 487 027 / 07941 273 108 (out of hours)

Notes to editors

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 4511 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 30th October - 7th November 2017. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

All figures from Wales State of Caring are from a sample size of 400 respondents who responded to the online State of Caring survey undertaken between March and May 2017.

The All Wales Carers Assembly, which is kindly sponsored by David Melding AM will take place on Friday 24th November 2017 in the National Assembly for Wales, Ty Hywel, Cardiff

Bay. More information can be found here: www.carersuk.org/wales/news-campaigns/carers-assembly

About Carers Wales

Carers Wales is part of Carers UK, a charity led by carers, for carers – our mission is to make life better for carers.

- We give expert advice, information and support
- We connect carers so no-one has to care alone
- We campaign together for lasting change
- We innovate to find new ways to reach and support carers

www.carersuk.org / www.carerswales.org
