

# A guide for supporting, identifying and signposting young carers in your practice

**How can you identify through your practice situations and families where there might be young carers? Ask the following questions:**

1. Who helps to care for the person at home?
2. What effect does their condition and personal care needs have on the family?
3. Is there a child/young person in the family who helps to provide care?
4. How does this affect the child/young person physically, emotionally or educationally?
5. Is there any direct help that would support the young carer?
6. Does the parent need support in their parenting role?
7. What can be offered to help the whole family?
8. When prescribing medication for your client, consider whether a young carer may be administering it. Is this appropriate? Do they need support?

## Young carers services

Information to help you find the nearest young carers service can be found at [www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)

## Assessments

The Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014 brought in new rights for young carers and their families. Local authorities must now offer an assessment where it appears that a child is involved in providing care. If you believe a child is taking on a caring role you can request an assessment of their needs from the local authority – this assessment should consider the needs of the young person alongside the needs of the person cared for and the whole family.

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance asserts that 'local authorities must carry out their care and support responsibilities with the aim of joining-up the services provided, or other actions taken, with those provided by the NHS and other health-related services.'

Care and support statutory guidance (issued under the Care Act 2014).

NHS England and its partners have developed a toolkit to help health and social care organisations work together in identifying, assessing and supporting the wellbeing of carers and their families.

[www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/commitment-to-carers/carers-toolkit/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/commitment-to-carers/carers-toolkit/)

This toolkit covers new duties for NHS organisations as a result of the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014, and includes numerous examples of positive practice that are already making a difference to carers and their families.

## School

Is the child's school involved or aware of what is happening? Do they, or could they, offer sensitive support? Discuss this with the young carer and their family. Contact the school nurse for help or find out if the child's school has a named teacher to support young carers.

Signpost them to:

- [www.youngcarersinschools.com](http://www.youngcarersinschools.com)
- School Nurse Pathway – [www.youngcarer.com/resources/schools-resources/school-nurses](http://www.youngcarer.com/resources/schools-resources/school-nurses)

## Resources

The Whole Family Pathway is a tool for all adults and children's services, education, health and other agencies who have contact with young carers and their families. This online resource will support you to implement changes in legislation for young carers and their families, including identifying them and providing effective responses and support. It is also a useful map for families to follow to inform their choices.

You can access it at [www.youngcarer.com/wholefamilypathway](http://www.youngcarer.com/wholefamilypathway)

### **An Integrated Approach to Identifying and Assessing Carer Health and Well-Being Toolkit**

This toolkit covers new duties on NHS organisations brought about by the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014. It includes numerous examples of positive practice that are already making a difference to carers, including young carers, and their families.

[www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/commitment-to-carers/carers-toolkit/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/commitment-to-carers/carers-toolkit/)

### **Queens Nursing Institute Carers Resource Project**

The QNI has developed three free online resources to support nurses who work with carers, including one specifically developed for nurses working in general practice, to enable them to work effectively with carers who are supporting friends or family.

[www.qni.org.uk/practice\\_nurses\\_learning\\_resource/index.html](http://www.qni.org.uk/practice_nurses_learning_resource/index.html)

## Supporting Carers in General Practice

Royal College of General Practitioners have also created a useful e-learning module. This module provides information and guidance for GPs and other community healthcare professionals to enable them to build carer involvement and support into their everyday practice.

[www.elearning.rcgp.org.uk/mod/page/view.php?id=3948](http://www.elearning.rcgp.org.uk/mod/page/view.php?id=3948)

### **Sharing information with families**

Encourage your client to explain their health condition to their child (or allow you to do it). Explain that lack of knowledge may be more difficult to the child than age-appropriate information.

### **Issue specific resources**

The Children's Society's Stars National Initiative provides information for children and young people caring for someone with substance misuse issues. Materials include resources for professionals.

[www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk/content/children-and-young-people-0](http://www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk/content/children-and-young-people-0)

Minds, myths and me – a fact pack for young people who live with someone with a mental illness  
[www.glosyoungcarers.org.uk](http://www.glosyoungcarers.org.uk)

Parents, pints and pills – a fact pack for young people who live with a parent with substance misuse issues  
[www.glosyoungcarers.org.uk](http://www.glosyoungcarers.org.uk)

[www.riprap.org.uk](http://www.riprap.org.uk) – a national website aimed at 12–16 year olds to help a young person cope when a parent has cancer.

[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk) – an interactive site for children and young people to find out more about cancer and share their experiences with others in their situation.

[www.hopeagain.org.uk](http://www.hopeagain.org.uk) – A website designed for young people by young people, offering support to people after the death of someone close.

When a sibling with a disability is being cared for, the following may be useful:

**www.sibs.org.uk** – has information for children growing up with a sibling who has special needs, a disability or chronic illness.

**www.cafamily.org.uk** (t: 0800 808 3555) – contact a family, a charity which has local contacts, for families with disabled children.

**www.refugeetoolkit.org.uk** A Children's Society resource for professionals working with young carers in refugee and asylum seeking families.

**www.rethink.org** – Directly helping millions of people affected by mental illness by challenging attitudes and changing lives. The website contains information about support for young carers.

**www.youngcarer.com/resources/families-affected-hiv/health-care** – Toolkit providing information, resources and good practice guidance about supporting young carers affected by HIV, including specific information for health care professionals.

**www.winstonswish.org.uk** – Offering practical support and guidance to bereaved children, their families and professionals.

## About Include

The Children's Society is a national charity that runs local services. Include service is home to the national Young Carers Initiative supporting children and young people who care for family members who suffer from chronic illness or disability.

We work with voluntary and statutory services across the country to support young carers. We campaign for change and promote best practice with central and local government, and work hand in hand with young carers to make sure their voices are heard to raise awareness about the issues they face.

**t: 01962 711 511**

**e: [include@childrenssociety.org.uk](mailto:include@childrenssociety.org.uk)**

**Further resources and information are available from [youngcarer.com](http://youngcarer.com)**

Please note that the above organisations and resources are listed for your information. The Children's Society does not necessarily endorse them.