



North Ayrshire Carer's Eligibility Criteria

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Carers Act: Statement of Intent

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 (fully implemented 1st April 2018) is intended to better support Scotland's adult and young carers on a more consistent basis so that they can continue to care, if they so wish, in good health, allowing them to have a life alongside caring. (See appendix one for meaning of carer)

Specifically for young carers, they should have a childhood similar to their non-carer peers and should be enabled to be children first and foremost, relieved of any inappropriate caring roles, allowing them to have a quality of life.

Carers Act: Provisions

The Act introduces the right to an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) or Young Carer Statement (YCS) which encourage meaningful conversations with people to understand their personal needs and outcomes in their caring role and the provision of support to meet those needs. Until now these have only been offered and completed by Social Work Services (for adults and young carers) and North Ayrshire Council Education Services (for young carers). This was enhanced with the introduction of a Carer Support Worker role within the carers team to support any carers who were not known to services or were aged 16 to 18 years and not in school. In terms of access to funding this was formerly only available through the budget for the cared-for person, but the Carer Support Worker has access to an overarching fund for all carer support requests as well as an Education Fund specifically for young carers and their families.

The Act looks to improve access to support at all levels without any requirement for carers to provide care on a substantial or regular basis. Unity - North Ayrshire Carers Gateway was the successful incumbent supplier in the recommissioning of the carer service in early 2023, and as North Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership's (NAHSCP) strategic partner for carer information and support, are well placed to help the delivery of lower levels of support including accessible information and advice, guidance and signposting, breaks from caring, amongst other carer priorities, across the 6 localities with the shift away from centre-based support to outreach models. The new Carers Gateway Service will also in their plans for expansion and improving reach to carers, be offering the opportunity to complete a lighter touch ACSP or YCS opening the options for carers to access the right support, in the right way at the right time.

Engaging effectively with carers as equal partners helps to shift the power balance, gives a voice to carers and provides carers and professionals with more useful information about the support that may be available and most beneficial in our communities. The new Gateway service will improve the longstanding Carers Advisory Group to establish a North Ayrshire Carers Collaborative, a network for carers,

professionals, organisations and volunteers to come together to share information, ideas and to find opportunities to work better together with carers to improve carer support.

This is also reflected in the duty applied to health boards to involve carers in hospital discharge processes, ensuring support is relevant, appropriately timed and delivered in a cohesive way. A pan Ayrshire approach to identifying and supporting carers in acute settings was established in the Summer of 2022 and led by East Ayrshire Carer Centre. This learning has been brought forth to North Ayrshire sites beginning with Woodland View and will continue to our Island hospitals supported by dedicated locality carers workers.

Effective delivery of support to carers improves the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of carers in turn benefitting those being cared for and can help to sustain good caring relationships.

The North Ayrshire Carers Strategy has been reviewed and launched in October 2023 entitled [‘Building Caring Communities: 2023 – 2025’](#), to coincide with the expansion and remodel of the Carers Gateway Service.

There is also a requirement to prepare, publish and review a [Short Breaks Service Statement](#) to inform and advise young and adult carers, staff and the wider community of planned, short break (often referred to as respite) opportunities for carers who care for someone living in North Ayrshire. The Statement provides useful links and ideas, what is available regardless of eligibility and level of support needed, and how to access a break from caring.

A framework for Eligibility Criteria is required to be set locally, published and reviewed after 3 years of implementation. Local criteria help NAHSCP to determine whether it is required to provide support to carers to meet identified carers needs as well as to agree levels of support based on assessed/ identified need and impact/ risk of the caring role on the carer. NAHSCP set the eligibility levels at substantial and critical to coincide with those required for the cared-for person to access social care support. The criteria for young and adult carers were reviewed in June 2022 and through agreement at Integrated Joint Board the eligibility thresholds have been extended to include those carers with low and moderate carer needs. This will extend the parameters of support to include early and effective support in line with the Strategic Commissioning Plan ambitions meaning lower levels of support will be provided for carers with a view to supporting carers at an earlier stage and preventing the breakdown of caring relationships and maintaining carer emotional, physical and mental wellbeing. This will include a resource implication from widening the eligibility criteria and will be kept under review to ensure demand for carer services can be accommodated within agreed budget allocation.

Eligibility Criteria Framework: Why and What Does it Achieve?

Eligibility criteria ensures we have a fair and consistent system for determining how the NAHSCP targets finite public resources. It is the local authority's duty to set and apply the criteria alongside the ACSP or YCS to exchange information about caring. It means that carers with different needs will be treated equally in accessing the right level of information, advice, support and services.

The Framework covers two aspects:

1. Levels and types of need for support.
2. The thresholds to be met for varying levels of support.

Eligibility Criteria Framework: Process

The process can be broken down into four phases:

Phase One – A carer who wishes to access support can request an ACSP/ YCS from Social Work Services, NAC Education and the HSCP Carer Support Officer. It is also the duty of NAC staff to offer an ACSP/ YCS on identification of someone carrying out a caring role. This leads to a joint conversation to consider their caring situation and needs, their health and general wellbeing and how they can best achieve their own outcomes. The ACSP/ YCS is completed to identify and record fully each carer's individual needs, outcomes and support to meet their needs. All carers have access to information, advice, guidance, and universal preventative services.

Phase Two – The plan or statement will identify what matters to the carer as well as the impact of caring on their life. As the conversation continues the carer and professional will consider how to achieve the things that matter to the carer.

Phase Three – The eligibility criteria framework is applied here to identify the level of support from the impact or risk of them caring on areas of their life. If there are outcomes that require formal support, a break from caring or a level of funding, it is our duty to offer and explain the four options of Self-directed Support to consider how the carer may have their support delivered along with all options of available resources.

Phase Four – When the level of support has been agreed, and the carer fully informed of all options and resources, the carer will decide how they wish their support to be arranged from the four options of Self-directed Support. The carer will be involved in each stage of the process and in all decision making. A review date will be set and recorded at this point.

Adult Carer Support Plan: Purpose & Preparation

The ACSP will identify and record each adult carer's individual needs, personal outcomes and support to be considered to meet those needs. The plan helps to find out what impact caring responsibilities are having on an adult's life. Adult carers can request a plan to be carried out. The Local Authority must offer and prepare the ACSP on identification of an adult carer, if accepted. Consideration should be given to who is best placed to support the adult carer to prepare their plan. The carer can start to complete their ACSP on their own or with the help of a person or organisation of their choice. However, it is the duty of the Local Authority to accurately capture the carers identified needs and come to a view on the carer's eligibility for support.

In all cases, the Local Authority must inform the carer of their eligibility and why it has reached that decision. When a carer is identified as having any needs for support, the Local Authority must discuss what these needs are and outline how these might be met via the four options of Self-directed Support. The responsible authority is North Ayrshire Council except for (Section 28) the duty for each Health Board to involve the carer before the cared-for person is discharged. This duty applies in situations where:

- The identified carer is an adult carer or a young carer
- An individual is identified who intends to provide care to a patient post discharge
- An individual is providing or intends to provide care but does not self-identify as a carer
- Professionals consider it likely that the patient will require care from a carer following discharge
- A formal discharge process takes place

Young Carer Statement: Purpose & Preparation

The YCS will identify and record each young carer's individual needs, personal outcomes and support to be considered to meet those needs. The statement helps to ensure young carers do not take on inappropriate caring tasks or caring that is inconsistent with their age and maturity. The statement further ensures there is effective planning in place to support young carers in transition to adulthood.

The responsible authority is NHS Ayrshire & Arran for pre-school age, and the NAHSCP via the Named Person Service for school age up to the age of 18 years, or having reached 18 and still in school. Young carers can request a statement to be carried out and we must offer the YCS on identification of a young carer. The YCS should link to the Child's Plan if there is one in place. Consideration has been given to who is best placed to support the young carer to prepare their statement. The NAHSCP and Education & Early Years have an agreement for Head Teachers/ Pastoral or guidance staff until the young carer meets the eligibility thresholds of substantial or critical for one or more of their

outcomes. The YCS will then be referred to the Named Person Service for tracking and passed to the appropriate Social Work Team for action. The outcomes follow the SHANARRI indicators of wellbeing: Safe/Health/Achieving/Nurtured/Active/Respected/Responsible/Included.

Where the young carer is identified and is aged 16 – 18 years and not in school the carers team Carer Support Worker will support the young carer to prepare, complete or review a YCS and provide access to levels of information and support.

Eligibility Risk Indicators

Eligibility for services is decided in terms of risk to an individual carer. There are five categories below. **Eligibility Thresholds:** shows where eligibility sits in relation to carer support in practice and how NAHSCP can support carers at all levels. This includes examples of services, which are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive (individual and local circumstances will determine services).

Impact	Description	Eligibility Thresholds
No Impact	Indicates no quality-of-life issues as a result of their caring role. There is no risk to the carer's health & wellbeing, and they are able to experience a good life balance. There is no current need for information, guidance or support.	Integrated Authority supports Information and advice services for carers and other universal community supports.
Low Impact	Indicates there may be some quality-of-life issues but they are low in risk to the carer's health and wellbeing and opportunities for independence. Some need for universal and/or preventative information, guidance or support.	Integrated Authority supports Information and advice services for carers and other universal community supports. This may include access to a local carers centre, peer support, training and signposting to social and leisure opportunities.
Moderate Impact	Indicates there is some quality-of-life issues and they are causing enough risk to impact on the carer's health, wellbeing and potential for independent living. Some provision of health & social care services may be appropriate.	Integrated Authority commissions community supports and carer services which are provided on a preventative basis. Services are developed according to local need. This may include services such as breaks from caring, advocacy and counselling.

Impact	Description	Eligibility Thresholds
Substantial Impact	Indicates there is a considerable risk to a carer's health, wellbeing, and capacity for independent living. Urgent provision of health & social care services is likely.	Local authority duty to support eligible carers. Integrated Authority provides for eligible need/ carer chooses from the four self-directed support options.
Critical Impact	Indicates there is a significant risk to a carer's health, wellbeing, and capacity for independent living. Immediate provision of health and social care services is likely.	Local authority duty to support eligible carers. Integrated Authority provides for eligible need/ carer chooses from the four self-directed support options.

Table of Indicators – Adult Carer Support Plan

Wellbeing indicators are set out below for both adult and young carers and these reflect those identified through the ACSP and YCS. Carers needs and personal outcomes are assessed against the five criteria categories also as part of the ACSP or YCS. Carers may move across the thresholds for different outcomes and at different stages of their caring journey. It must be noted the criteria are a guide for staff in recording the level of support required and carers do not need to fulfil all sections in each indicator to receive a level of support. Any support offered should be the result of the carers needs recorded through the ACSP or YCS.

Universal support - commissioned service/ support (local authority 'power to support' but in North Ayrshire support is offered at all levels)

Indicators	Caring has no impact/no risk	Caring has low Impact/risk prevention	Caring has clear impact/small, moderate risk. Response needed
Health	Carer in good health	Carer's health beginning to be affected	Carer's health at risk without intervention
Emotional	Carer has good emotional wellbeing Good relationship with cared-for-person	Caring role beginning to have an impact on emotional wellbeing Risk of detrimental impact on relationship with cared-for person	Some impact on carer's emotional wellbeing is evident Some detrimental impact on relationship with cared-for person

Indicators	Caring has no impact/no risk	Caring has low Impact/risk prevention	Caring has clear impact/small, moderate risk. Response needed
Finance	Caring is not causing financial hardship - carer can afford housing cost/utilities/food/clothing	Caring is causing a risk of financial hardship - some difficulty meeting housing cost/utilities/food/ clothing	Caring is causing some detrimental impact on finances - difficulty meeting housing cost/ utilities/food/ clothing
Life balance	Carer has regular opportunities to achieve the life balance they want They have a broad choice of breaks/activities promoting physical, mental and emotional wellbeing	Carer has some opportunities to achieve the life balance they want They have access to a choice of breaks/ activities promoting physical, mental and emotional wellbeing	Carer has limited opportunities to achieve the life balance they want due to caring They have access to few breaks/activities promoting physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
Feeling valued	Carer feels their knowledge and expertise is always valued by health, social care and other professionals. Consequently, they feel included and empowered	Carer feels their knowledge and expertise is sometimes valued and consequently they generally feel included and empowered	Carer increasingly feels their knowledge and expertise is not valued by health, social care and other professionals. Consequently, they sometimes feel excluded and disempowered
Future planning	Carer is confident about the future and has no concerns	Carer is largely confident about the future but has minor concerns	Carer is not confident about the future and has some concerns
Employment	Carer has no difficulty managing caring and employment/education Carer does not want to be in paid work or education	Carer has some difficulty managing caring and employment/education. There is a risk to sustaining this in the long term. Carer is not in paid work or education - long term	Carer has difficulty managing caring and employment/education. There is a risk to sustaining this in the short term Carer is not in paid work or education but would like to be - medium term
Living environment	Carer's living environment is suitable, posing no risk to the physical health	Carer's living environment is mostly suitable but could pose a risk to the	Carer's living environment is unsuitable but poses no immediate risk

Indicators	Caring has no impact/no risk	Caring has low Impact/risk prevention	Caring has clear impact/small, moderate risk. Response needed
	and safety of the carer and cared-for person	health and safety of the carer and cared-for person in the longer term	

More targeted commissioned services & support (local authority 'duty to support')

Indicators	Caring has considerable impact/high risk	Evidence of critical impact/crisis
Health	Carer's health requires attention	Carer's health is breaking/broken down
Emotional	Significant impact on carer's emotional wellbeing. Relationship with cared for person is significantly affected	Carer's emotional wellbeing is breaking/broken down. Relationship with cared-for person is breaking/broken down
Finance	Caring is having a significant impact on finances e.g., difficulty meeting housing cost/utilities/food/ clothing	Caring is causing severe financial hardship e.g., carer cannot afford housing cost/utilities/food/clothing
Life balance	Carer has few, irregular opportunities to achieve the life balance they want due to caring They have little access to breaks/activities promoting physical, mental and emotional wellbeing	Carer has no opportunity to achieve the life balance they want due to caring They have no access to breaks/activities promoting physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
Feeling valued	Carer often feels their knowledge and expertise is not valued by health, social care and other professionals. Consequently, they often feel excluded and disempowered	Carer feels their knowledge and expertise is never valued by health, social care and other professionals. Consequently, they always feel excluded and disempowered
Future planning	Carer is anxious about the future and has significant concerns	Carer is very anxious about the future and has severe concerns
Employment	Carer has significant difficulty managing caring and employment/education. There is a risk to sustaining this in the short term Carer is not in paid work or education but would like to be soon	Carer has significant difficulty managing caring and employment /education. There is an imminent risk of giving up work or education Carer is not in paid work or education but would like to be now

Indicators	Caring has considerable impact/high risk	Evidence of critical impact/crisis
Living environment	Carer's living environment is unsuitable and poses an immediate risk to the health and safety of the carer and cared-for person	Carer's living environment is unsuitable. There are immediate and critical risks to the health and safety of the carer and cared for person

Table of Indicators – Young Carer Statement

Universal support - commissioned service/ support (local authority 'power to support' but in North Ayrshire support is offered at all levels)

Indicators	Caring has no impact/no risk	Caring has low Impact/risk prevention	Caring has clear impact/small, moderate risk. Response needed
Safe/Living Environment	Young Carer free from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in their community.	Young carers situation at home, at school and in their community is currently stable and manageable.	Young carers situation at home, school or in their community is not ideal and potential risk to young carer and cared for person is evident.
Health	Young carer is in good physical and mental health with no identified medical needs.	Young carer is able to manage some aspects of their caring/family/social roles and responsibilities. There is a possibility of the young carer's health being affected.	Young carer is able to manage some aspects of their caring/family/social roles and responsibilities. It is evident the young carers health is being affected.
Achieving/ Education	Young Carer continues to access education/training and has no difficulty in managing caring role alongside	Young carer has some difficulty managing caring alongside education/training There is a small risk to sustaining education/training in the long term.	Young Carer has difficulty managing caring alongside education/training. There is a risk to sustaining education/training in the medium term.
Nurtured/ Relationships	Young carer displays positive emotional wellbeing. They have a nurturing place to live and a positive relationship with the cared for person.	Young carer role beginning to have an impact on emotional wellbeing and may require additional help when needed.	Some impact on the young carers emotional wellbeing and on their relationship with the cared for person resulting in a strained relationship.

Indicators	Caring has no impact/no risk	Caring has low Impact/risk prevention	Caring has clear impact/small, moderate risk. Response needed
	Young carer feels acknowledged by professionals and does not require additional help.		Additional help needed where possible, in a suitable care setting.
Active/Life Balance	Young Carer has opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport at home, in school and in their community.	Young Carer has some opportunity to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport at home, in school and in their community.	Young Carer has limited opportunity to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport at home, in school and in their community.
Respect/ Responsible	Young Carer has regular opportunities to be heard and involved in decisions. They have an active and responsible role to be involved in decisions that affect them.	Young Carer has some opportunities to be heard and involved in decisions and has an active and responsible role to be involved in decisions that affect them.	Young Carer has limited opportunity to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them due to their caring role.
Included/ Finance	Young Carer feels accepted in the community where they live and learn. Young carer has time to take part in community activities. Free from financial stress.	Young Carer feels some acceptance in the community where they live and learn but is unsure how to take part in community activities. [Young Carer has limited acceptance in the community where they live and learn, due to their caring role. There is a risk of financial pressure.

Targeted service/ support (local authority 'duty to support' but in North Ayrshire support is offered at all levels)

Indicators	Caring has considerable impact/high risk	Evidence of critical impact/crisis
Safe/Living Environment	Young carers situation at home, school or in their community is not ideal and there are safety risks which cannot be remedied in the short term.	Young carers situation at home, school or in their community is unsuitable and there are safety risks for the young carer and the cared for person
Health	Young carer is having difficulty in managing aspects of the caring/family/ social roles and responsibilities. Young carer's mental and physical health is affected as a result.	Young carer has significant physical/mental difficulties due to the impact of their role as a carer which may cause life threatening or long-term harm.

Indicators	Caring has considerable impact/high risk	Evidence of critical impact/crisis
Achieving Education	The Young Carer is missing out on education/training and there is a risk of this ending in the near future due to their caring role.	The Young Carer is at significant risk or has had to give up education/training due to their caring role.
Nurtured/ Relationships	<p>Major impact on a daily basis to the young carer's emotional wellbeing and therefore impacts on the cared-for person.</p> <p>Young carer is unable to sustain many aspects of their caring role.</p>	<p>Relationship between the young carer and the cared-for person is broken. The young carer is unable to continue caring or has difficulty sustaining vital or most aspects of their caring role.</p> <p>Input is needed immediately for the young carer. The young carer never feels acknowledged and therefore feels excluded.</p>
Active/Life Balance	Young Carer has few and irregular opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport at home, in school and in their community. May have a negative effect on healthy growth/development.	Young Carer has no opportunity to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport at home in school and in their community. This has a negative effect on their healthy growth/development.
Respect/ Responsible	Young Carer has few and irregular opportunities to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them due to their caring role.	Young carer has no opportunities to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them due to their caring role.
Included/ Finance	Carer Young carer feels isolated and not confident in the community where they live and learn. Need for financial support.	<p>Young carer does not feel accepted in the community where they live and learn.</p> <p>Young carer's financial position is severe and there is financial hardship.</p>

Documents and Policies Related to Carer Eligibility Criteria

- [Carers \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#)
- [Getting it right for every child - GIRFEC](#)
- [Self-Directed Support Policy](#)
- [North Ayrshire Health & Social Care Carers Strategy](#)

Appendix One

Meaning of Carer

- 1) In this Act 'carer' means an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual (the 'cared-for person')
- 2) But 1) does not apply –
 - a) In the case of a cared-for person under 18 years old, to the extent that the care is or would be provided because of the person's age, or
 - b) In any case to the extent that care is or would be provided, under or by virtue of a contract or as voluntary work.
- 3) The Scottish Ministers may by regulations –
 - a) Provide that 'contract' in 2) b) does or, as the case may be, does not include agreements of a kind specified in the regulations,
 - b) Permit a relevant authority to disregard 2) where the authority considers the relationship between the carer and cared-for person is such that it would be appropriate to do so.
- 4) In this part relevant authority means a responsible local authority or responsible authority (See section 41 (1) of the Act).

Meaning of Young Carer

- 1) In this Act 'young carer' means a carer who –
 - a) Is under 18 years old, or
 - b) Has attained the age of 18 years while a pupil at a school and has since attaining that age remained a pupil at that or another school.

Meaning of Adult Carer

- 1) In this Act 'adult carer' means a carer who is at least 18 years old but is not a young carer.