

No Wrong Doors for Young Carers

Briefing note

What is 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers'?

"No Wrong Doors for Young Carers" is a template Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) designed to improve joint working between adult and children's social care services, integrated care boards and other key organisations in respect of identification and support for young carers and their families.

It covers a range of areas such as approaches to identification, whole-family support and transitions from children's to adult services.

'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers' is a national template which is designed to be adapted and adopted at a local level to ensure it meets the specific needs of local young carers and young adult carers.

Why is 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers' needed?

There are currently believed to be over one million young carers aged under 18 across the UK, with a further 600,000 young adult carers aged 18-24, all providing caring for someone because of a long-term illness, disability or addiction.

There are almost 15,000 children caring for over 50 hours each week; this includes over 3000 5 to 9 year olds.

Surveys have found that currently it takes on average three years for a young carer to be identified and linked into support, with some caring for over 10 years without any help. Young carers are most commonly identified by schools, followed by children's social care. Currently, very few young carers are identified within adult social care or health settings.

This lack of support can have a huge impact on the education, health and wellbeing and life opportunities for young carers:

- Research has found the absence rates, and rates of persistent absence for young carers to be twice as high as other pupils
- Young carers are 38% less likely to achieve a university-level degree; those caring for 35 or more hours a week are 86% less likely.
- Young carers are also less likely than their peers to gain employment
- Young carers are significantly more likely to report severe psychological distress, self-harm and make attempts on their own lives.
- Young carers have also been identified as a theme in Child Safeguarding Practice reviews.

Both the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers and the Care Quality Commission have identified the need to improve transitions for young carers from children's to adult services.

Implementing 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers' will also help to ensure that local authorities, integrated care boards and other system partners are compliant with their various legal obligations towards young carers.

Both the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted have added young carers to their respective assurance frameworks, and CQC have specifically listed 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers' as an example of best practice.

Who is 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers' aimed at?

As a minimum, it is expected that the following will sign up to the 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers' MoU:

- Director of Adult Social Services
- Director of Children's Services
- Chair/Chief Executive of the Integrated Care Board

Local systems are actively encouraged to link in other relevant organisations across health, social care, education and the voluntary sector, as is relevant to their local context. This could include (but is not limited to):

- Carer support organisations
- Drug and alcohol services
- Education providers
- Hospitals
- Local carer organisations
- Mental health trust
- Primary Care

What support is available to help the implementation of 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers'?

Carers Trust have produced a variety of resources to support the effective implementation of 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers' including specific implementation guidance, which contains case studies and links to resources and relevant legislation/guidance. There is also a 'Suggested to-do list' to enable local systems to identify potential actions to include in their local plans. These are all available from www.carers.org/nowrongdoors.

To find out more

If you have any questions relating to 'No Wrong Doors for Young Carers', contact the Policy Team at Carers Trust on policy@carers.org.