

# Juggling paid employment and unpaid care

A State of Caring in Scotland Report

*'Caring is a second full-time job'*

January 2024



# About this research

This report, produced by Carers Scotland, explores the key findings from the State of Caring Scotland survey 2023 on unpaid carers in paid employment. It is the third of three reports: the first two focusing on the [finances](#) and [health and social care](#).

Carers Scotland's annual State of Caring survey has been undertaken for over a decade and is Scotland's most comprehensive research into the lives and experiences of unpaid carers. This year's survey was carried out between June and August 2023 and completed by 1,771 unpaid carers in Scotland. A full demographic breakdown of the carers who took part in the survey can be found in Appendix 1.

Of the 1771 unpaid carers who responded to State of Caring 2023, 1251 respondents told us about their employment situation. A quarter (24%) of these carers are now retired and of the remaining 955 carers of working age, just over half (59%) were in employment. 29% were not working because of their caring role, 10% were unable to work because of sickness or disability, 1% are looking for work, and 1% are in full-time education.

The majority of the information in this report is on carers in paid employment and contains the responses from 572 carers currently in paid employment, with some limited exceptions where we refer to carers of working age where responses are from those 955 carers. These are clearly indicated in the relevant sections.

We have interspersed this report with the voices of carers. These are highlighted in red, and we thank those quoted for sharing their experiences. Note: not all respondents completed every question in the survey, and some questions offered the ability to select more than one option.

## About unpaid carers

An unpaid carer is a family member, partner, friend or neighbour who helps a person with daily activities that they would not be able to manage if they did not have help. This could be a partner, family member or friend who has a long term or terminal illness, someone who is disabled, has a mental health condition, is affected by addiction or who needs extra help as they grow older. There are approximately 800,000 people in Scotland providing such unpaid care<sup>1</sup>. It would cost an estimated £13.1 billion<sup>2</sup> every year to replace the care they provide.

## Working carers in State of Caring

The demographic breakdown of working carers responding to State of Caring 2023 is as follows:

- 84% of respondents are female, 15% male with the remaining 1% preferring to self-identify as either non-binary or transgender.

<sup>1</sup> Scotland's Carers update release, Scottish Government 2022

<sup>2</sup> National Care Service Financial Memorandum, Scottish Parliament 2022

- 4% are aged 18-24, 17% are aged 35-44, 35% are aged 45-54, 40% are aged 55-64, and 4% are aged 65+.
- 23% have a disability<sup>3</sup>
- 98% of respondents are white Scottish, Irish or other white; 2% of respondents are black, Asian or minority ethnic.
- 91% of respondents are heterosexual, 6% are gay, lesbian or bisexual, the remainder preferred not to say or skipped this question.
- 26% also have parental responsibility for a non-disabled child under 18.
- 3% have been caring for less than a year, 8% for between 1-2 years, 21% 2-4 years, 26% 5-9 years, 15% 10-14 years, 13% 15-20 years and 13% for more than 20 years.
- 29% care for up to 0-19 hours, 15% for 20-34 hours, 15% for 35-49 hours, 12% for 50-89 hours and 29% for 90 hours or more.
- 66% care for one person, 24% for two people and 10% for three or more people

## The people working carers care for

Carers responding to State of Caring 2023 provided information about who they care for and the conditions the person(s) live with:

- 47% are caring for a parent/parent-in-law, 24% were caring for a spouse or partner, 37% for a son/daughter/in-law), 16% for another relative and 2% for someone else eg. a friend or neighbour.
- 22% care for someone under 18, 50% care for someone aged 18-64, 60% care for someone aged 65 and over.
- Respondents were caring for people with a range of health conditions and/or disabilities including: 32% from needs arising from being older, 31% mental health conditions, 30% Autism, ADHD or another neurodiversity, 27% physical disabilities, 27% neurological conditions such as MS, 23% Dementia, 22% learning disability, 19% arthritis, 18% sensory impairment, 17% heart disease, 13% diabetes, 9% cancer, 8% lung disease, 5% kidney disease, 5% bowel disease or disorders, 5% alcohol or substance misuse, 4% ME or CFS, 3% liver disease, 3% eating disorder, 3% palliative or end of life care, 2% a blood disease and 2% long covid.

## Thanks

Carers Scotland would like to thank every carer who contributed to this survey, from those who helped us develop and test the survey to every person who took the time to tell us about their experiences. Your experiences will be used to help build a society that recognises and supports carers more.

<sup>3</sup> As described under the Equality Act 2019: this defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities

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# Introduction

Around 270,000 people in Scotland juggle paid employment with unpaid care. This is one in 7 of the working age population<sup>4</sup> and represents one in 10 of those currently in employment<sup>5</sup>.

Research by the Centre for Care found that every year in Scotland between 2010-2020, more than 150,000 people in paid employment become unpaid carers – 6% of the population who are in employment and equating to nearly 3,000 people every week.<sup>6</sup> With the Scottish population projected to both age and to decline<sup>7</sup>, more and more people are likely to be combining caring with paid employment now and in the future.

Having the opportunity to work is an important part of life, and one that most of us take for granted. In addition to providing financial stability, it is recognised that employment brings wider benefits in terms of a fulfilling career, positive mental health and social interaction. Being able to access and sustain employment enables carers to subsequently be in a better position to provide care for their cared for person.

However, unpaid care, particularly without the right support, can have a fundamental impact on a carers' ability to maintain employment. Juggling paid work and caring responsibilities can be both challenging and stressful, with impacts on finances and physical and mental health. This balancing act also often leaves many carers unable to sustain full-time employment, faced with reducing hours, turning down opportunities or indeed being forced to give up work entirely to care. Evidence already shows that carers are less likely to work full-time (34% v 47%) and are more likely to be in part-time work (16% v 12%) than non-carers<sup>8</sup>. It is clear therefore that carers are still lacking the right support – both at work and in their caring role.

This State of Caring report sets out just some of the challenges and impacts unpaid carers in employment face and makes recommendations for government, the public sector and employers on what can be done to better support carers.

<sup>4</sup> Projected Population of Scotland (Interim) 2020-based, National Records of Scotland (2022) gives an estimated working age population of 3,550,000 people in Scotland

<sup>5</sup> Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions – Protected Characteristics. Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2021, Scottish Government (2022) - 2,601,800 people (aged 16 and over) were estimated to be in employment in Scotland.

<sup>6</sup> Petrillo, Bennett and Pryce (2022) Cycles of caring: transitions in and out of unpaid care.

<https://www.carersuk.org/media/bgolg5u2/cuk-carers-rights-dayresearch-report-2022-web.pdf>

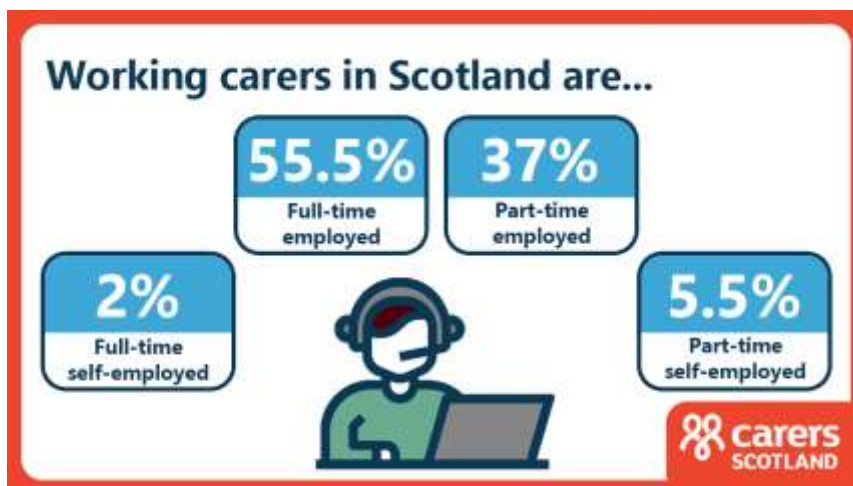
<sup>7</sup> Projected Population of Scotland (Interim) 2020-based, National Records of Scotland (2022)

<sup>8</sup> Department for Work & Pensions (DWP), released 23 March 2023, GOV.UK website, statistical release, Family Resources Survey: financial year 2021 to 2022.



## Working carers in Scotland

The largest proportion of respondents were in paid full-time employment (55.5%) or were self-employed full-time (2%), and a total of 42.5% were working part-time hours either as an employee (37%) or self-employed (5.5%).



51% of respondents work for 30-39 hours, 12% 40-49 hours and 3% for more than 50 hours each week. For those working part-time, 17% work 20-29 hours, 13% 10-19 hours and 5% less than 10 hours each week.

## Experiences of support to balance work and care

A range of support for carers to balance work and care is critical. Without this, carers often face unenviable choices and, in this year's State of Caring, nearly a third of working age carers (32%) that responded to this survey told us that they had had to give up work to care, 27% had reduced their hours, and 17% had taken on a less qualified job or turned down promotion because of their caring role.

Given the criticality of the right support, we asked carers in employment what currently helps them balance work and care – and what they would like to have available. Carers were able to select some or all of the options and the percentage relates to all respondents to this question rather than solely to those who felt this support was relevant.



Nearly a quarter of those who had given up work to care (24%) and a similar proportion who had reduced their hours, did so because of a lack of suitable services to provide replacement care to enable them to work. Therefore, it is little wonder that the most important support identified to better help carers balance work and care was more reliable health and social care services (62%) followed by affordable and accessible care (50%). Very few carers – only 6% - said that they had reliable health and social care support that helps them with juggling work and care.

*“Having been Mum’s carer for many years I was naïve in having her move in with me, given the dementia diagnosis. The support networks for carers aren’t beneficial for workers as they are very often during the day. It wasn’t until I was at breaking point that I was referred to the local authority support worker who did my carer’s assessment and worked out the respite hours I could have. There was no response to why this only happened in a crisis.”*

On 6 April 2024, new law<sup>9</sup> will come into place that offers unpaid carers the right to take up to five unpaid days of carer’s leave from work alongside a new right to request flexible working from the first day of working with an employer.

It is clear from the responses from working carers, that such flexibility and support from employers is, and will be in future, critical to helping balance work and care.

Flexible working helps more than half (55%) of working carers balance employment and care. A significant number (46%) said that working from home some or all of the time helps them. And half (50%) of working carers who do not currently benefit from flexible working said that having it would

<sup>9</sup> Carer’s Leave Act 2023 and the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023

help them better balance work and care, with 47% saying that being able to work from home some or all of the time would help.

Reducing hours can for some carers be a positive and flexible choice to help manage their many responsibilities. However, this must be a real choice and not one based on a lack of support from either employers and/or health and social care services. A quarter (27%) of working age carers<sup>10</sup> responding to this survey (and 40% of those carers currently in employment) said that they had reduced hours to manage their caring role. For one in five (18%) carers currently in employment, reduced hours helped them to juggle work and care. A quarter (26%) of working carers who did not currently work reduced hours, said that they would like to have this option available to them.

An unsupportive employer can mean that carers have little choice but to give up work to care, reduce hours or turn down promotions. Indeed, 20% of those who had given up work to care and one in seven (15%) of those who had reduced hours gave this as one of the reasons for leaving paid employment or reducing their hours. One in 10 (11%) carers currently in employment responding to this survey said that they had been treated unfairly by an employer because of their caring responsibilities.

*"I feel that if someone has children, they seem to have a lot more benefits, both financially and in the workplace and also appear to have more rights. It seems to me that if someone needs to change their hours or take time off due to childcare this is acceptable but if it is due to caring for an adult that is not given the same weight."*

Having an understanding line manager was seen as an important support in helping balance the demands of work and care for half (55%) of working carers, alongside a peer support network (25%) and recognition of their caring role by their employer (37%). Many carers that responded were not getting such support at work and clearly desired it. Over half (57%) of these carers said having an understanding line manager would help them better juggle work and care, with 69% stating that recognition from their employer would help, and 44% suggesting a peer support network would help. Few carers (just 6%) had a working carer passport – a record that identifies you as a carer and sets out what support will be provided in the workplace – two thirds (66%) said that this could help them.

One in five (20%) working carers reported that they receive unpaid carer's leave, which helps them and 32% of working carers said that they would like unpaid carer's leave as it would help them better balance work and care. For those who already have unpaid carer's leave, 45% have taken less than five days and 17% 5-10 days.

A quarter of working carers (25%) reported that they are entitled to paid carer's leave from their employer to help them manage employment alongside their caring role. For those who already have paid carer's leave, 79% have taken less than five days, with 12% taking 5-10 days. Whilst there is a proportion of carers who reported taking longer paid leave, comments from carers refer to using holiday leave, flexitime and sabbaticals indicating that such leave may not have been dedicated "carers leave".

<sup>10</sup> Based on 955 carers of working age



However, when asked about either paid or unpaid carer's leave, one in four (40%) said that they did not know if it was available from their employer and one in five (18%) said that their employer does not currently offer paid carer's leave and a similar proportion (13%), paid carer's leave. One in 10 (10%) said that, in advance of the new rights becoming law, they knew that their employer was looking at introducing a new policy on unpaid carer's leave and 8% a policy on paid carer's leave.

*"I would like my needs to be taken into account when I work very long shifts as a Staff Nurse. I am away from home for about 15 hours when I am on duty. Nobody is around other than me and the person I care for and I get very worried about it. I do not want formal intervention, but a check in service would be very useful for me."*

There is a range of other support carers also say would be valuable including good information and advice (52%), digital/remote monitoring to reassure that the person they care for is safe (40%), and a change in eligibility criteria for Carer's Allowance/new Carer Support Payment (61%).

*"The world has changed in past few years, more people are working full time and caring for family. Please don't make them feel they have to make a choice between the two. With all the legislation in place and costs if we never cared, please understand and support. Many of us carers need our jobs financially and mentally. Most importantly feel we do a job in both."*



## Health and social care support

Many carers in employment provide high levels of care alongside their paid work, with nearly three quarters (71%) of working carers providing 20 hours or more of care, and more than half (56%) of working carers providing 35 hours or more, care. 34% of working carers also provided care for at least two people. A large proportion of working carers reported they had long term caring responsibilities, with 41% having cared for 10 years or more.

Finding the right replacement services to balance work and care is vital. However, only a third (37%) of working carers responding to this survey said that they were receiving any support from a statutory service, with most (54%) getting help with caring from family and friends. However, even for those who do receive statutory support, just a quarter (25%) of them said that this support met their needs and the needs of the person they care for, with only 27% saying that the support they receive enables them to take a break from caring, crucial for their health and wellbeing.

A third (30%) of working carers responding to this survey told us they had not been able to take a break from their caring role in the last 12 months. Less than one in 10 (9%) got support from health and social care services to get this break. It is, therefore, unsurprising, that half (48%) said one of their main needs as a carer (and 58% said it was one of their biggest challenges) was to be able to have more breaks or time off from their caring role.

Given that, as noted above, more than half (56%) of working carers responding to this survey care for 35 hours or more each week – equivalent to a full-time job – alongside paid employment, it is crucial

to both carers' health and wellbeing and their ability to sustain employment that such breaks are prioritised.

The need for the right support to protect working carers' health and wellbeing is evidenced within State of Caring 2023 with high levels of poor physical health. More than half (52%) of working carers that responded to the survey said their physical health had suffered because of caring, with 18% experiencing an injury from caring. 40% have put off health treatment because of their caring role and 46% have waited six months or more for specialist NHS treatment.

Nearly a quarter (22%) of working carers that responded to State of Caring 2023, said their mental health is bad or very bad. One in four (44%) reported being depressed and a very high proportion (80%) reported feeling stressed and anxious. Nearly half (45%) said they were lonely, a quarter (24%) of whom reported that they felt this way often or always. Two thirds (64%) said that they are tired at work, with 67% struggling to get a good night's sleep and half (51%) anxious at work because of their caring role. Given the challenges of juggling, often intense, caring with paid work, it can come as little surprise that four in 10 (39%) have had to take time off paid employment because of their mental health and one in five (19%) have had to reduce working hours.

*"I no longer can go out long walks, go to the gym or go swimming. I am always exhausted. I am up numerous times during the night with my mum and then have to get up and go to work. I have taken time off due to exhaustion and stress."*

*"Juggling work and care is very draining on you as you never switch off fully from a caring role. Trying to focus on work completely is not always possible due to the fact that at any moment you can get a call and be presented with a situation which needs urgent attention or discussion to ensure your loved one is getting the appropriate care they deserve. Your own needs are not priority when working and caring. Your priorities split into 3 and you become the 3rd in line. 1. Caring 2. Work 3. Me (usually no spare time to have any me time)."*

Conversely, being in paid employment brings positive benefits for carers, with nearly two thirds (61%) of working carers reporting that employment improved their health and wellbeing and nearly half (48%) said that employment gave them a break from caring. Significantly more attention must be given by those planning and delivering social care services to the health benefits of employment to carers and to support that enables carers to juggle work and care effectively as well as remain in employment if they want to.

*"No-one professional prepared us for or acknowledged that the move from five day a week school provision within child services to day care provision in adult services would impact our ability to work, earn and provide for our family. I was forced to go part time to plug the care gaps, with all the implications that had financially and emotionally. My mental health is strongest when I have a work/care/life balance and I struggle most when my ability to work and provide for my family is restricted by inadequate care provision. I can feel deep sadness that I haven't been able to meet my potential at work or provide better for my daughters due to the limitations of my caring role."*



## Finances and working carers

Both juggling work and care and caring itself can have significant impacts on carers' financial security. For those currently working, despite being in paid employment, many still face real financial difficulties.

A quarter (23%) of working carers responding to this survey reported struggling to make ends meet, with one in 10 (11%) saying they cannot afford utility bills such as electricity and gas. One in six full-time working carers (16%), rising to one in five (21%) of part-time workers said they were struggling to afford the cost of food. A third (30%) were cutting back on essentials like food and heating.

One in 10 (9%) have cut back as far as they can and nearly two thirds (60%) are worried about living costs and whether they can manage in the future.

*"Our mortgage payments have increased by £500 and I am unsure where we will be able to find the additional funds. I need to cut back on my hours at work because of my caring responsibilities and we are not entitled to any additional benefits to help."*

Alongside the impact of caring and working, the ongoing cost of living increases are having a negative impact on the physical and/or mental health of over two thirds (69%) of working carers.

Over a third (37%) of working carers said that they are finding it more difficult to afford care services – as noted in earlier sections, vital to maintaining employment. Given that 15% of those carers who gave up work to care, 16% of those who reduced hours, and 23% of those who took a less qualified job or

turned down promotion cited being unable to afford care services as a contributory factor in these decisions, this is of real concern – and must give impetus to increasing the pace of removing care charging across Scotland’s local authorities.

Carer’s Allowance and its new replacement in Scotland, the Carer Support Payment includes an eligibility criterion that stipulates that applicants cannot earn more than £139 per week after deductions. This means that many carers in employment do not qualify, despite providing 35 hours or more of care each week. Two thirds of full time (62%) and part-time (67%) working carers reported that increasing the threshold would better support them to balance work and caring.

With limited options to increase their incomes, including a lack of appropriate replacement care, there is a pressing need to make changes to the new Carer Support Payment to improve carers financial security – for both those in paid work and those who are not.

*“I can only work part time so as to allow me to care but because I work 20 hours a week, I do not qualify for carers benefit... I feel I am being penalised.”*



## Planning for retirement

There are significant and often long-term financial impacts of caring. Giving up work, reducing hours and taking on less well-paid opportunities means sacrificing financial security. For those carers responding to this survey who gave up work or reduced hours, 13% reported that they had lost out on £2000 or more each month, nearly a third (31%) reported that they had lost between £1,000-£1,999 per month, 30% reported that they had lost between £500-999 per month and 26% reported that they had lost up to £499 per month. These are significant losses that impact on their current spending power but also reverberate into retirement.

*"One day you're a 'just managing' working couple with full time jobs, 24 hrs later you're a carer and a disabled person. Who saw that coming! I can't believe the guilt I felt at having to give up full time employment and try to negotiate a life on benefits."*

Over a third (38%) of the working carers responding to this survey said they may need to retire later than planned because of the impact of their caring role. Three in 10 (31%) said that they were saving less for their retirement because they had reduced their working hours to care and 14% were saving less because of the cost of care. A quarter (22%) were worried they will end up in debt in retirement and 16% said they plan to retire early to provide care. Concerningly, 14% of working carers in this survey reported being worried that they won't have a complete NI record thus affecting their pension payments. This rose to 26% of those carers in part-time work. One in six working carers have not thought about their retirement.

*"I had to resign due to the pressure of looking after my parents and my husband as my own health was suffering enormously. As a consequence, my private pension is not what it could have been and I do not know if my NI contributions are fully paid up."*

The majority of working carers (82%) responding to this survey expect to use the State Pension, with 76% also using an occupational pension and 20% a private pension. Around a quarter (27%) have personal savings and a similar proportion (24%) a main home to sell/downsize/release money from. However, 7% will rely on benefits such as Pension Credit and 12% on their partner or spouse to fund retirement.

However, there are significant differences between those working age carers who responded to this survey who can remain in full-time work and those who are part-time employment. Eight in 10 (84%) of those carers in full-time employment will fund retirement with an occupation pension whereas only 65% of those part-time will be able to do so. There are also differences in private pensions (23% for full-time v 14% for part-time) albeit smaller. Those in part-time employment are ten percentage points more likely to say they will rely on a partner or spouse (18% v 8%).

*"[I will have] only small private pension due to part-time work."*

There are also gender differences. Whilst reliance on state and occupational pensions are broadly similar, working male carers were 10 percentage points more likely to have a private pension (27% v 17%). Working female carers were much more likely to say that they were saving less because they had to reduce their working hours for their caring role (47% v 23%) and that they were far more worried they had an incomplete NI record (15% v 5%). Male carers were more likely to say they were saving less for retirement because of the cost of care (38% v 27%) and that they may need to retire later because of their caring role (62% v 55%).

*"Can't afford to retire because of cost of caring throughout my life has left me with poor private pension provision."*

There are also differences for those working carers who are also in receipt of Carer's Allowance. They are significantly less likely to say they would fund their retirement from an occupational pension (at just 45% v 76%) and significantly more likely to say that they would fund it from state benefits (18% v 7%). Half (53%) of all working carers who were currently on Carer's Allowance said that their retirement savings had reduced because they had to cut their working hours and nearly a third (30%) said they were worried they had an incomplete NI record. More than half (53%) said that they were likely to have to retire later because of their caring role.

*"The thought of retiring into poverty is so frightening it makes me feel sick. I have lost the financial security I worked hard to achieve thanks to my caring responsibilities. It is deeply unfair and very scary."*



## Support to return to work or increase hours

Being in paid employment whilst caring must be a choice and, as outlined in the preceding sections, with the right support carers can and do manage to balance work and care. However, without this support, from both employers and services, for too many carers there is little choice but to reduce hours or leave the workplace altogether.

Given the challenges and the intensity and complexity of caring, a significant proportion (30%) of the 264 carers of working age who are not currently employed who responded to this part of the survey<sup>11</sup> and 31% of those working age carers (211 respondents) currently in paid work who responded to this part of the survey said they cannot/do not wish to increase their hours or return to the workplace.

However, four in 10 (43%) carers in paid employment and one in four (28%) carers not in paid work said that they would like to increase their hours or return to the workplace. However, that the right environment must be created by service providers and employers to enable these carers to be able to do this.

Working age carers were asked what might help. For some carers, particularly for those who have been out of paid employment for some time, employability support may be needed to help them increase hours or return to employment.

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<sup>11</sup> Based on 264 carers not in paid work who completed this question



	Carers in work to help them increase hours	Carers not in paid work to help enter employment
Support with retraining and learning new skills	15%	26%
Support in building confidence	19%	26%
Support with CV writing and interviewing	10%	19%

However, for many, it is clear that the right employer, with the right support and the right flexibility is a vital part of enabling carers to enter employment or increase their hours.

	Carers in work to help them increase hours	Carers not in paid work to help enter employment
Paid carer's leave	46%	39%
More flexibility, including part-time work that matches my skills and experience	30%	33%
Ability to work from home	28%	40%
A supportive employer that understands caring	25%	32%
Unpaid carer's leave	23%	20%
An employer who demonstrated this by being Carer Positive	19%	27%
More information about an employer's policies related to carers before applying	12%	16%

And alongside this, the right social care services that carers **can rely on** would be vital for 37% of those in paid work and 36% of those not in paid work. Changes to eligibility for the new Carer Support Payment (replacing Carer's Allowance in Scotland) better enable carers in employment to benefit is important for four in 10 (44%) of carers in paid work and a third (34%) of carers not in paid work.

# Conclusion

It is clear from this report that working age carers – in paid employment or not – are not receiving the support they need either from employers, from social services or from government. However, there are positive signs from some carers in employment responding to this survey that their employers do recognise them and do support them. But there remains much more to do. From national and local government prioritising service provision and financial support to enable carers to remain in or return to work if they wish to – to employers driving forward change – becoming Carer Positive, developing and delivering flexible working (including home and hybrid working), rolling out carer’s leave (including paid leave) and fostering the right environment where carers are supported visibly from day one.

# Recommendations

To support carers to remain in and return to employment, whilst protecting their own health and wellbeing:

1. All employers should raise awareness of unpaid caring within the workplace and promote a positive culture of understanding and support.
2. All managers should be trained on carer recognition and how to support employees within their workplace who are unpaid carers.
3. Employers across Scotland should aim to become Carer Positive to gain knowledge and expertise and to show their commitment to supporting employees who are unpaid carers. This would support and enable points one and two above.
4. Employers should consider being “early adopters” of the new legislation to provide unpaid Carer’s Leave and to go one step further and introduce the leave as paid Carer’s Leave, making it even more accessible to employees.
5. The Scottish Government should require all public bodies and those in receipt of public contracts to become Carer Positive, in a similar way to requirements to pay the real living wage.
6. The Scottish Government must ensure funding in the short and long term for sufficient social care services and accessible health services to ensure carers’ ability to juggle work and care is supported effectively.
7. Local authorities and health and social care partnerships should ensure that their Carer Strategies and practice guidance on the delivery of Adult Social Care Plans and care planning includes actions to enable carers to remain in or return to employment. This should include ensuring that guidance and delivery of self-directed support provides the greatest flexibility possible to enable carers to be in employment should they wish this.

8. The Scottish Government should move at pace to deliver changes to eligibility and increase the earnings limit for the new Carer Support Payment to ensure that it does not detriment carers' employment choices. The UK Government should introduce a dedicated Work Allowance for carers in receipt of Universal Credit.
9. The Scottish Government with partners including local government and health and social care partnerships should seek to deliver an improved range of flexible short breaks for carers who are in employment.
10. Local councils in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Government should seek to introduce dedicated employability support for unpaid carers to enable those who wish to return to employment to build confidence and update skills to help them take steps towards paid employment. These services should liaise closely with both child and adult social care services to deliver wraparound support.



Carer Positive is a Scottish Government initiative, developed with the support of a strong partnership between private, public and voluntary sector organisations in Scotland. Carers Scotland have been running the Carer Positive awards and supporting employers since it was launched during Carers Week in June 2014. Nearly half a million employees in Scotland work for a Carer Positive employer.

Carer Positive raises awareness of the challenges facing working carers, and encourage employers to understand the business benefits of supporting those staff. Our team provides free information, support and advice to organisations across Scotland who want to develop support for staff with caring responsibilities. We can:

- Provide face to face or telephone support
- Take you through the awards framework and criteria
- Provide resources and best practice examples
- Come to your workplace to talk to you and your staff
- Put you in touch with other employers to learn and share experiences
- Share knowledge and information at events, exhibitions and focus group discussions
- Contribute articles, blogs and discussion pieces

Find out more about how your workplace can become Carer Positive visit [www.carerpositive.org](http://www.carerpositive.org)

# Appendix 1: Carers in State of Caring 2023

The demographic breakdown of carers responding to State of Caring 2023 is as follows:

- 81% of respondents are female, 18% male with the remaining 1% preferring to self-identify as either non-binary or transgender.
- 3% are aged 18-34, 13% are aged 35-44, 25% are aged 45-54, 36% are aged 55-64, and 23% are aged 65+.
- 29% have a disability<sup>[1]</sup>
- 98% of respondents are white Scottish, Irish or other white; 2% of respondents are black, Asian or minority ethnic.
- 92% of respondents are heterosexual, 4% are gay, lesbian or bisexual, the remainder preferred not to say or skipped this question.
- 45% are in some form of employment and 24% are retired.
- 20% also have parental responsibility for a non-disabled child under 18.
- 3% have been caring for less than 1 year, 25% for 1-4 years, 25% for 5-9 years, 27% for 10-20 years and 20% for more than 20 years.
- 19% provide 1-19 hours of care per week, 10% provide 20-34 hours of care pre week, 15% for 35-49 hours and 14% for 50-89 hours, 42% provide 90 or more hours of care per week.
- 71% care for one person, 21% care for two people, 6% care for three people and 2% care for four or more people.

## The people carers care for

Carers responding to State of Caring 2023 provided information about who they care for and the conditions the person(s) live with:

- 35% are caring for a parent/parent-in-law, 34% were caring for a spouse or partner, 38% for a son/daughter/in-law), 11% for another relative and 3% for someone else eg. a friend or neighbour.
- 18% care for someone aged under 18, 22% for someone aged 18-34 years, 30% for someone aged 35-64 and 58% for someone 65 or over
- Respondents were caring for people with a range of health conditions and/or disabilities:
  - o 90% said that the person(s) they care for has a long-term health condition or illness such as arthritis, diabetes, kidney disease
  - o 34% a mental health condition
  - o 29% autism, ADHD or another neurodiversity
  - o 26% a physical disability
  - o 25% needs that arise from being older
  - o 24% a neurological condition such as multiple sclerosis
  - o 24% dementia
  - o 22% a learning disability
  - o 18% a sensory impairment
  - o 4% alcohol or substance misuse.

<sup>[1]</sup> As described under the Equality Act 2019: this defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities



**Carers Scotland** is Scotland's membership charity for unpaid carers. We work to represent and support the approximately 800,000 people in Scotland who provide unpaid care for ill, older or disabled family members or friends – fighting for increased recognition and support for all carers and to ensure they have a voice in the issues that affect them.

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