

The effects of caring on mental health

What does the link between caring and mental health look like?

Why is Carers' mental health impacted?

Because I feel alone

Because it never ends. Always living with stress

Because I am unsure I will get help

Loneliness, isolation, constantly being in demand, stress

Lack of understanding of pressures and frustrations

Destroys my own personal life

Loss of our dreams and futures

Being over-stretched, under-supported, stressed about lack of money because Carers Allowance is so low

When their loved ones does not get the care they need. Not aware of what support is out there for Carers. Isolation and loneliness. Loss of roles for themselves. Fear of what would happen if they were not there

Because we have to constantly think for our cared for and put that above our self, it is very tiring

It's when processes should work and don't that the effects start to creep in

Been a Carer for over 45 years - no change - still always having to fight for everything - the fighting is exhausting

Very little support and no social life, confusion as to what help is available and what support

Decline of my health

The feeling of not being listened to

We Care Campaign Video



<https://wecarecampaign.org.uk/>

Terror, tears and ambulances: This is what it's like to be a Carer



Caring and mental health

- More than 4.6million Carers are concerned about their physical and mental health (Carers UK, 2022)
- Almost a third of Carers rated their mental health as bad or very bad
- 34% of Carers said they often or always felt lonely
- Over half of Carers feel anxious or stressed about their finances (State of Caring Survey 2021, Carers UK)

Losing Carers Allowance at retirement is unfair

Top 3 things that would help Carers:

1. More money
2. Better support for person they care for
3. A break from providing care (Pushed to the Edge, Carers Trust, 2022)

Cost of living crisis

Young Carers and mental health

- More than 1 in 3 Young Carers have a mental health issue of their own **(Sempik, J., & Becker, S. (2013))**
- 3 in 10 adolescent Young Carers think about self-harming and 1 in 10 contemplate harming others **(The first cross-national study of adolescent Young Carers aged 15-17 in six European countries)**
- At least a third of Young Carers said their caring role resulted in them either 'always' or 'usually' feeling 'worried' (36%), 'lonely' (33%) or 'stressed' (42%) **(Carers Trust, 2022)**



Parent Carers and mental health

- 81% say their own mental health is negatively affected
- 79% feel lonely/isolated
- 44% don't feel able to cope

Caring Together survey, April 2021

Carers and the Covid-19 Pandemic

Young Carers (Caring Together Survey March 2021)

- 74% said their ability to cope with their caring role has deteriorated since the COVID-19 pandemic
- 71% say their mental health has been negatively impacted

Adult carers (including parent carers) (Caring Together Survey June 2020)

- 83% feel more stressed
- 68% feel more lonely/isolated
- 61% said their mental health has been negatively affected

I can say a lot of adult Carers feel that way too

Being extremely vulnerable due to Covid makes things more difficult

Who will provide the support when I am no longer here

Emergency Planning

Health professionals should be asking Carers if they have an Emergency Plan in place

- [Adult Carer Emergency Plan](#)
- [Young Carer Emergency Plan](#)
- Work ongoing to develop an Emergency Planning Tool for Parent Carers

This is where recognising Carers is important. You have someone that relies on you

If the person you are looking after was getting the correct support that would help the Carer - no life of my own - not expecting it

Carers shared experiences of their caring role, not being recognised as a Carer and the exhaustion they are feeling . Carers constantly have to fight

It wasn't the caring that was the problem for me. It was struggling with the system all the time

Carers have to make a difficult decisions about what is right for the person they are caring for

Carers need to be recognised, identified and valued in the new Integrated Care System

Respect and communication

Why is action needed?

- 3 in 5 people will be Carers
- Around a third of NHS staff in Norfolk are Carers
- Adult Carers save the economy over £130 billion a year
- Failing to support children of parents with mental illness could cost as much as £2billion
- Many Carers are at breaking point - #RealCarersWeek

Change needs to happen

What needs to be done to help?

- Early identification and good support for the Carer (joined-up services)
- Carer awareness for professionals
- Better support for the person they care for
- Whole-family approach
- Carer-friendly communities (Carer Friendly Tick Award)
- www.caringtogether.org/professionals/carers-friendly-tick-award
- Carer flag on systems

