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**Carers Week 2022: Rising pressures on unpaid carers as public backing for greater support grows**

* 4.68 million unpaid carers concerned for physical and mental health
* 2:2 million carers worried about ability to cope financially
* More care is being provided than ever before – even more than during the height of the pandemic
* Overwhelming public support for more Government action to help unpaid carers

Carers Week charities are calling for an urgent 12-month plan of targeted support for unpaid carers, as many struggle with the ongoing impact, as well as the legacy, of the pandemic, together with the strain of the social care and cost of living crises.

For the first time, the impact of caring on their own physical and mental health has topped carer’s concerns, closely followed by money worries.

The research[[1]](#endnote-2), released for Carers Week 2022 (6-12 June), reveals that 84% of the general public think that the UK governments should provide additional support to unpaid carers including increased financial support and investment in care and support services so that unpaid carers can have a break. Only 3% disagreed.

The report also shows that the number of unpaid carers remains higher than before the pandemic with one in five of the UK’s adults (approximately 10.58 million people) now supporting a relative, close friend or neighbour because of chronic illness, including mental ill-health, dementia, disability, or older age.

The intensity of care they are providing has grown since earlier in the pandemic, with several factors possibly having an impact: Many services remain reduced or closed, vulnerable people continue to shield, pressures on primary health care and the chronic shortage of social care. The numbers of people providing over 50 hours per week has risen by 30%.

At the same time, carers with lower household incomes were much more likely to be providing significant amounts of care (i.e, over 20 hours per week). Providing more care also reduces the chance to cope financially as carers are less likely to be able to juggle work and care.

The seven charities supporting Carers Week 2022; Carers UK, Age UK, Carers Trust, MND Association, Rethink Mental Illness, Oxfam GB and The Lewy Body Society are calling for a recovery and respite plan dedicated to the needs of carers including: specific investment in their mental health support, carers leave a priority, help with food and energy costs and ahead of the winter, prioritisation in the vaccination programme.

Commenting on behalf of Carers Week charities, Helen Walker, Chief Executive of Carers UK said:

*“Clearly, whilst society has opened up for many people, it’s a very different picture for significant numbers of carers.*

*“So many have sacrificed their physical and mental health caring for their loved ones over the last two years and as this report clearly shows, it is absolutely essential that carers get the support they need to stay well to be able to continue to care for their loved ones, that working carers are helped to stay in employment and that all carers can feel visible, valued and supported.”*

-Ends-

**Media contact**

For media enquiries, please contact Carers UK who are handling media queries for Carers Week:

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**About Carers Week:**

Carers Week, established by Carers UK 27 years ago, is an annual awareness campaign which takes place recognise the vital contribution made by the UK’s 6.5 million carers. It is also a time of intensive local activity with hundreds of virtual events planned for carers across the UK.

We all have a role to play in helping make caring **Visible, Valued and Supported**, whether it's by providing support to a member of your local community group or connecting with a family member or friend who is caring for someone.

You can find out more about Carers Week and how to get involved here: [www.carersweek.org](https://carersuk-news.org/t/15AY-7D3E6-W6KAMK-4FO6ST-1/c.aspx)

*Carers Week is led by Carers UK, with the support of six other national charities in 2022: Age UK, Carers Trust, MND Association, Rethink Mental Illness, Oxfam GB and The Lewy Body Society.*

Website: [www.carersweek.org](http://www.carersweek.org)

Twitter: @CarersWeek #carersweek

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CarersWeek](http://www.facebook.com/CarersWeek)

**What is a carer?**

A carer is someone who provides unpaid care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability, illness, mental health condition or who needs extra help as they grow older.

[1] **About this survey:**

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size. across the UK, was 4317 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 29th April - 4th May 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

Numbers of carers are calculated by Carers UK, based on 2020 ONS population estimates

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