



# CARERS COMMUNITY CHRONICLE

Edition: January - February 2025

Edinburgh

## Welcome to Our Newsletter for Carers



**NEW!**

Each edition will provide the latest **carer updates** from The Action Group, news on **benefit changes** that may impact you or your loved-one, and highlights of upcoming **carer events and training opportunities** in **Edinburgh**.



**Carer Support  
Payment**

### Did you know?

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 provides measures to support unpaid carers, including assessing their needs through an Adult Carer Support Plan.



Carer Involvement Officer - Alisa Jaakkola  
[carer@actiongroup.org.uk](mailto:carer@actiongroup.org.uk)

# In this edition

Carer Advice -  
Parent Carewell and BEMAS

Welfare Rights Updates

Understanding Adult Carer  
Support Plan (ACSP)

New e-Learning Courses from  
VOCAL

Carer Events and Resources



## Alisa Jaakkola's Corner Carer Involvement Officer

### Greetings from Alisa, our new Carer Involvement Officer!

Hello and Happy New Year 2025 our amazing carers!

I'm Alisa, your new Carer Involvement Officer at The Action Group! I enter the new role with experience as a Carer Advice Worker at the Black and Ethnic Minority Advice Service (BEMAS), where I've had the privilege to support unpaid parent/carers from diverse communities since 2021. My journey so far has deepened my understanding of the challenges carers face, and I'm excited to bring this experience into my new role.

We want to make sure that:

- *Your insights are at the heart of our organisation*
- *You know about all the ways we can support you as a carer*
- *You are connected to the information and resources you need*
- *Your voice is heard at a local and national level*

I'm available for any questions or to discuss ideas each week from Wednesday afternoon to Friday. I'm looking forward to working with all the carers involved with The Action Group and to help foster a stronger, more inclusive network for everyone we support.

For updates and more information join our Facebook Group for carers by clicking the button below

[FOLLOW US](#)



## Carer Advice for Parent/Carers in Edinburgh

*Did you know that The Action Group's Carer Advice provides advice and support for parent/carers at all stages of their caring journey?*

**The Parent Carewell Service** is a collaborative initiative delivered by four partner organizations: The Action Group, Edinburgh Development Group, FAIR, and VOCAL.

This service provides comprehensive information, welfare rights advice, and holistic wellbeing support for parent/carers of children with additional support needs (ASN).

We're part of the  
**Parents Carewell  
Partnership**



### **The Black and Ethnic Minority Advice Service (BEMAS)**

is a service providing advice for parent/carers of children with disabilities or additional support needs living in Edinburgh who come from diverse communities.

### **Carer Advice is there for you to:**

**Help** you think through what support you need in your own right as a carer

**Help** you complete Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP)

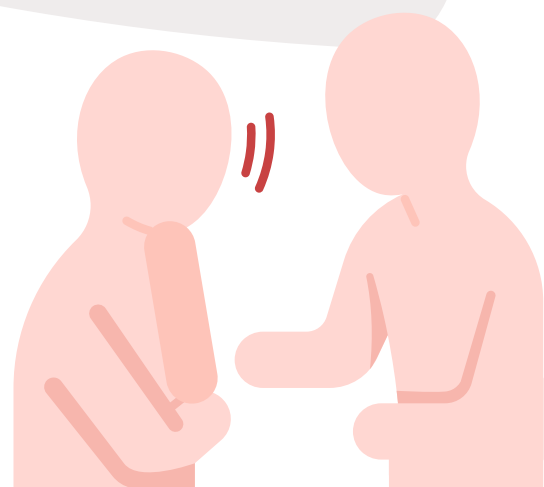
**Help** you apply for grants where needed

**Connect** you to essential services like Housing, Education, and Social Work.

**Monthly Carer events** for parent/carers from Black and Ethnic Minority communities

**Information sessions and workshops** for parent/carers

**Family days** for parent/carers and their loved-ones



**Whether you're new to caring and looking for guidance or have years of experience and need extra support, our friendly team is here to help.**

**Email us at [careradvice@actiongroup.org.uk](mailto:careradvice@actiongroup.org.uk) or call 0131 285 5207** to request a call back from our carer advice team.

Please let us know if there's anything we can do to make our service feel safe and accessible for you.



# Welfare Rights Advice and Updates

## Carer's Allowance and Carer Support Payment

If you receive **Carer's Allowance**, your claim will be transferred to the **new Scottish benefit called Carer Support Payment**. Social Security Scotland expects to have transferred all claims by Spring 2025. You don't need to claim the new benefit; this will be done automatically. The amount of benefit will be the same and you will continue to receive 2 carer's allowance supplement payments a year.

If you are caring for a disabled person and claiming a carer benefit for the first time, you should claim Carer Support Payment if you live in Scotland.

**To learn more and submit an application, click on the button below**



**For advice or help with applying - contact Carer Advice** by emailing [careradvice@actiongroup.org.uk](mailto:careradvice@actiongroup.org.uk) or call **0131 285 5207** and ask to speak with a member of the Carer Advice team



**Carer Support Payment**



## Welfare Rights Advice and Updates



### Universal Credit Migration



**Universal Credit is replacing 6 benefits:** Income Support; Income-related Employment and Support Allowance; Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit; Child Tax Credit.

If you or someone you care for receives one or more of these benefits, you will receive a '**Migration Notice**'; this is a letter asking you to claim Universal Credit. The letter gives a deadline for making the claim.

You don't need to do anything about this until you receive a Migration Notice.

The Government aims to complete this process for everyone affected by the end of 2025.

It is a good idea to get advice before claiming, including help to check that the existing benefits being paid are correct, as this may affect the Universal Credit amount.



Social Security  
Scotland

### Adult Disability Payment

If you or an adult you care for is receiving **Personal Independence Payment** or **Disability Living Allowance**, your benefit will be moved to Scottish disability benefits. You will receive a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions and Social Security Scotland when this is about to happen.

You don't need to do anything, as the transfer is automatic and you will continue to receive the same amount of money on the same day. After the transfer has taken place, some people will get a review form to complete; get advice if you would like help with this process.

## Understanding the Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP)


An **Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP)** is an opportunity for you, as a carer, to discuss your unique needs and circumstances. Through this process, you'll be able to outline the support or services you may require to help you in your caring role. An ACSP is designed to look at how caring impacts various aspects of your life—your physical health, mental and emotional well-being, and whether you feel able and willing to continue in your caring role.


Our **Carer Advice Advisors** are here to assist you through this process and are available to help you complete your ACSP if you'd like. ACSP is for any carer who needs it, regardless of the type or amount of care you provide, your financial situation, or whether you live with the person you care for. Even if you're managing both work and caregiving responsibilities, which can be especially challenging, you are entitled to an ACSP.





# What the Adult Carer Support Plan Should Cover?


The ACSP takes a holistic approach, covering a range of areas to ensure your needs are fully understood and supported:

 **About You:** This includes details about your personal circumstances, such as your caregiving responsibilities, finances, work, and other commitments.

 **Your Well-being:** Discuss how caring affects your daily life and overall well-being.

 **Your Health:** This includes any physical, mental, or emotional health needs you may have.

 **Your Feelings and Choices:** Consider whether you are able and willing to continue providing care.

 **Planning for Emergencies:** If desired, the ACSP can help you create a plan for your loved one's care in case of emergencies.



**Planning for the Future:**

Discuss and record plans for your loved one's future care.



**Your Goals:** Identify your “personal outcomes,” including opportunities for work, study, hobbies, and social activities alongside your caring role.



**Your Needs:** Outline the specific support you require to continue your caregiving role comfortably. Your honest feedback is essential here to ensure you receive meaningful support.



## How will the local council determine my eligibility for support?

If you choose to share your ACSP with social work, they can decide if you qualify for services and/or direct payments based on their eligibility criteria, which are designed to identify what are known as "eligible needs." In general, you will meet these criteria if your health, well-being, or ability to continue providing care is significantly impacted, or is likely to be. For example, you may have eligible needs in specific areas, such as the risk of losing paid employment, while other aspects of your life may not be as heavily affected by your caring responsibilities.



### If you do have eligible needs

If social work determines that you have eligible needs, they are legally required to address them, provided you want them to. They must create a support plan outlining how these needs will be met.

It may be decided that the best way to support you as a carer is by providing services directly to you, by providing services to the person you are caring for, or a combination of both.



### If your needs do not meet the eligibility threshold

If social work determines that your needs do not meet the required threshold for them to provide services directly, they are still obligated to offer support in other ways.

This may include:

- Providing advice and information, or referring you to your local carers' information service
- Assisting you with claiming any benefits you may be entitled to
- Helping you create an emergency plan for your caring role
- Connecting you to local resources, such as your local carers' centre, community, leisure, or health services that could be helpful



## Additional Information and Support Available

If you're sharing care responsibilities with other family members, each of you can have an individual ACSP tailored to your needs.

### **Our Carer Advice Advisors are here to support you through each step.**

Please reach out if you have questions or would like assistance in completing your Adult Carer Support Plan. We're here to help make this process as comfortable and beneficial as possible for yourself.

Your ACSP will be conducted in a private, convenient location, at your pace. You choose whether to have the person you care for with you for the appointment, or if you would prefer, to bring a friend or family member. Depending on what is convenient for you, the ACSP can also be completed over the phone if that suits you better.



**Want to complete an Adult Carer Support Plan?  
Contact Carer Advice by emailing  
[careradvice@actiongroup.org.uk](mailto:careradvice@actiongroup.org.uk) or call us on **0131 285 5207**  
(and ask for a member of the Carer advice service)**

## VOCAL's New E-learning Course on Carers Rights, Entitlements and Information on Navigating Health and Social Care.



**Understanding your rights as a carer is at the centre when looking at accessing the support you are entitled to** and strengthening your confidence in situations where your rights may not be fully recognized, whether this is in the workplace, education, healthcare, social services, or personal interactions.

VOCAL's new eLearning sessions cover carers' rights and entitlements, along with guidance on navigating health and social care systems.

### Their course focuses on four key areas

**Your Rights as an Unpaid Carer:** Learn about your rights, including your entitlement to an adult carer support plan, involvement in services, and participation in hospital discharge decisions.

**Rights of the Person You Care For:** Understand the rights of the person you care for, including their right to dignity, independence, and access to quality care.

**Getting Your Voice Heard:** Gain skills in advocating for yourself and the person you care for, and learn how to effectively express your needs.

**Support Available to You:** Discover the practical support options available, such as advocacy, financial assistance, respite care, local support groups, and mental



For more information and how to access the eLearning sessions

**CLICK HERE** 

## Carer Events and Resources

### Carer Training programme by VOCAL

VOCAL in partnership with other training providers run an extensive programme of weekly courses, trainings and one-day seminars with expert speakers and professionals. These sessions are focused upon providing resources and training for unpaid carers across Edinburgh and Midlothian

For more information [CLICK HERE](#) 



### The Eric Liddell Community

The Eric Liddell Community Carers Programme offers meaningful support, educational and fun activities for unpaid and informal carers. wide range of free health and wellbeing classes along with a range of free courses and activities offer carers the chance to meet and talk with others in a relaxed and informal setting. The programme also provides vital opportunities for carers to take a short break from their caring role as well as opportunities for carers and the person they care for to jointly take part in activities that help revive and sustain their relationship.

For more information [CLICK HERE](#) 



### Parent and Carer Support Group by Salvesen Mindroom Centre

Salvesen Mindroom Centre's Edinburgh Parent and Carer Peer Support Group offers a safe and understanding space for parents and carers of neurodivergent children to share experiences and support each other.

The group values everyone's experiences equally and encourages mutual support. We hold monthly online meetings on Microsoft Teams focused on specific topics.

For more information [CLICK HERE](#) 



## Carer Events and Resources



### Carer Programme by MECOPP

MECOPP offers a range of activities designed to support carers and Black and Minority Ethnic communities to improve their own health, well-being and resilience. Their activities include mental health and well-being support, nutritional, physical and recreational activities either in groups or individually.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)



### Carer Programme by MILAN SWO

Milan Senior Welfare Organisation is a registered charitable organisation providing services in Edinburgh and Lothian for older people and unpaid carers from South Asian communities. MILAN are dedicated to meeting their social, cultural, recreational, language, and care needs. They offer a diverse programme of activities for unpaid carers to have a quality break away from their demanding caring roles and connect with others with similar responsibilities.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)



Supporting Families of Autistic Adults.

### Carer Programme by PASDA

PASDA offers support to parents, partners, siblings and carers of autistic adults (over 16) who live in Edinburgh and the Lothians. Their programme includes carer information meetings, coffee mornings and walking groups.

For more information

[CLICK HERE](#)



THANK  
YOU

*Thank You for  
Reading the First  
Edition of Carers  
Community  
Chronicle!*

## We want to hear from you!



We're thrilled to share this journey with you as part of our carer community. As this is our very first edition, **we'd love to hear your thoughts, suggestions, and ideas for future newsletters.**




Is there something specific you'd like to see included? Perhaps a topic you're curious about, a story you'd like shared, or resources you'd like us to explore?



Your input is invaluable in shaping this newsletter into something that truly supports and inspires you.



Additionally, we'd greatly appreciate it if you could take a few moments to complete our **Carer Survey**.  This will help us better understand the needs of the carers we reach and ensure we're providing the most meaningful content and resources.



Thank you for being a vital part of Carers Community Chronicle! Together, we can create a newsletter that uplifts and supports everyone in our caring community.