

South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board



Report by Young Carers Strategy Lead Officer, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership, to Community Planning Partnership Board Meeting of 27th October 2022

Subject: Carer Positive Award

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.2 To provide a summary of the Carer Positive Award and to encourage partners to become a Carer Positive organisation.

2 The Board is recommended to:

2.1 Consider the content of this report.

3 Background

- 3.1 Carer Positive is a Scottish Government funded initiative, developed with the support of a strong partnership between private, public and voluntary sector organisations in Scotland.
- 3.2 It is estimated that there are 759,000 unpaid carers in Scotland, with 3 in 5 people expected to care for someone at one point in their lives. There are around 270,000 people in Scotland who juggle caring with holding down a job. Juggling work and caring responsibilities can be challenging and extremely stressful, with many carers unable to sustain their careers. This can lead to financial hardship and move carers and their families onto a dependence on benefits. Without support and understanding at work, carers can suffer from high levels of stress and exhaustion. The effects of this can be damaging both in the workplace and at home.
- 3.3 Caring for a sick or disabled person is different from caring for children. It can happen overnight, without any or much warning; it can be hard to plan and cope with emotionally; and can involve a series of milestones which result in the need for varying intensities and levels of caring. Carers represent a significant part of the working age population, both in the workplace, and in the wider labour market. They are likely to represent 1 in 8 of your workforce as well being a valuable source of recruitment.

4 Benefits

- 4.1 Evidence has shown that supportive policies and working practices:
- attracts and retains staff;
 - reduces stress and sickness absence;

- reduces recruitment and training costs;
- increases resilience and productivity;
- improves service delivery;
- produces cost savings; and
- improves people management and staff morale.

4.2 The Carer Positive initiative fits with Scottish Government aspirations to promote fairer working practices across Scotland. You will enhance your reputation as an 'employer of choice' for the growing numbers of people in the workforce and wider labour market who might need to work in a more flexible manner, thereby recruiting from a wider pool of people with valuable skills and experience.

4.3 Becoming a Carer Positive employer not only contributes to workforce management and employee engagement considerations, but also to wider corporate and community social responsibility aims. It can also help an organisation demonstrate where they meet certain criteria linked to funding applications, and to other employer award programmes such as Healthy Working Lives award and the 'see me' Employer Pledge.

5 The Award

5.1 The award incorporates 3 levels or stages, from 'engaged' to 'established' through to 'exemplary'. These stages are cumulative, with employers only able to move to the next level once the required criterion at each stage is achieved and maintained. Carer Positive status is award to employers who can provide evidence that they meet criteria in 5 areas:

- Identification of carers (There is good understanding of what the term 'carer' means, and a system is in place to enable carers to identify themselves);
- Policy (Carers are recognised within HR policies or procedures);
- Workplace support (Carers can access practical workplace support or can access information about external support and services);
- Communication, awareness raising & training (Policies and available support are communicated to all members of staff); and
- Peer support (Carers are supported to engage with other carers)

More information and application forms can be found at <https://carerpositive.org/apply>