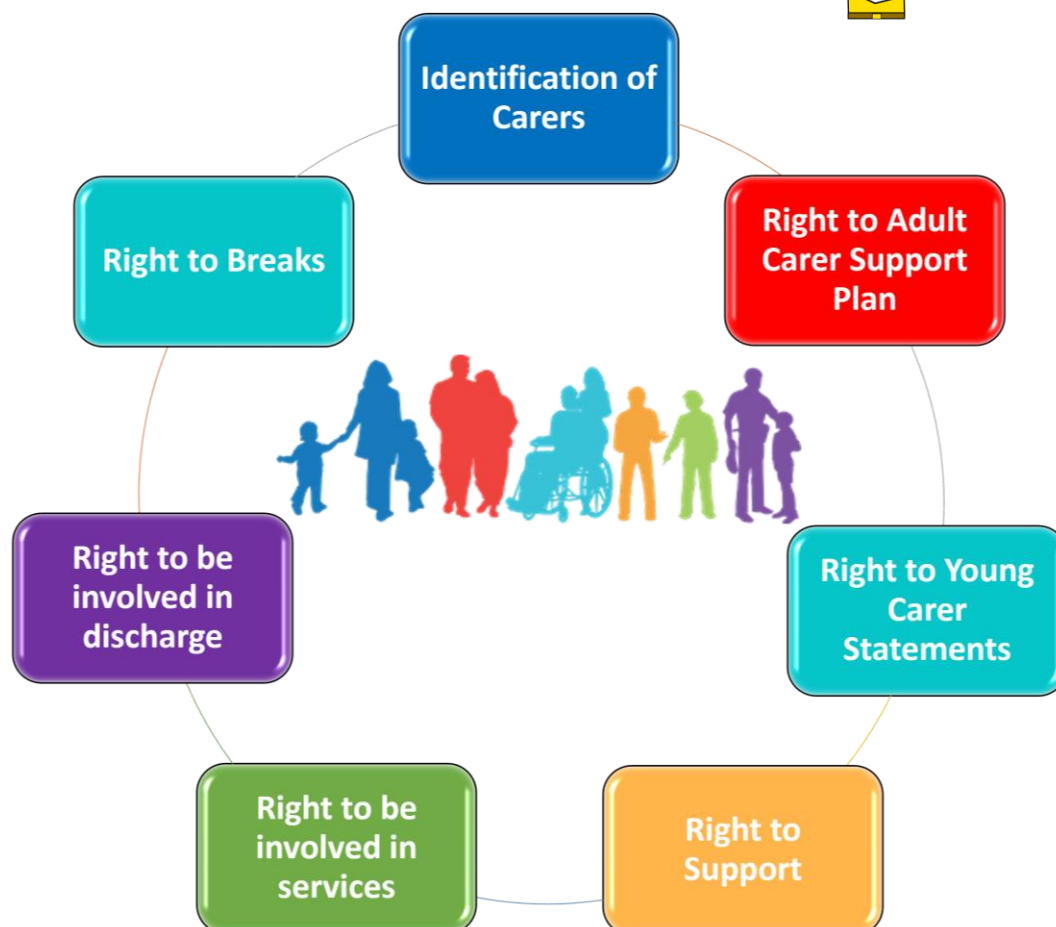


‘More of the same won’t do’

Carers Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway 2025-2028

Easy Read





Translations



Easy read



BSL



Audio



Large print



Braille

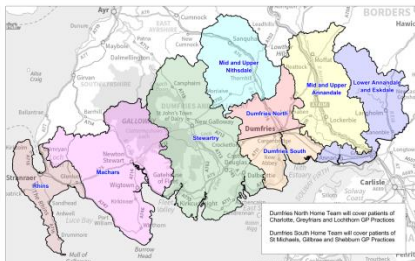
If you need this information in a different language or format, please contact Patient Services via email

dg.patient-information@nhs.scot

Words or terms that may be unfamiliar are in **bold** in **blue** and explained in the **Glossary**. Useful links to documents and online information in this plan are in **bold**, black and **underlined**.

1. Introduction

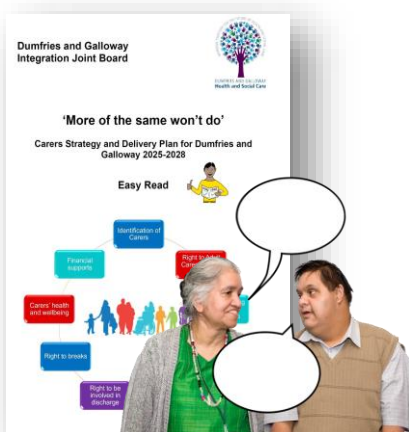
1.1 Who is a Carer?



A Carer with a capital C is 'a person of any age who provides unpaid help and support to a relative, friend or neighbour who cannot manage to live independently without the Carer's help due to frailty, illness, disability or addiction' (Scottish Government 2016).

Carers live in every community in Dumfries and Galloway.

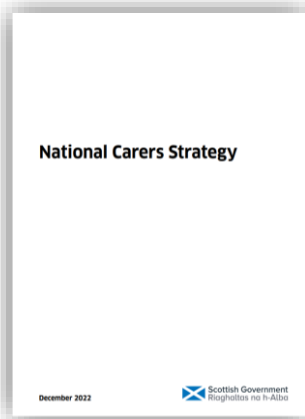
1.2 What is a Carers Strategy?



A Carers Strategy is a plan for unpaid Carers that

- Takes into account what Carers and Carer support services have told us is important
- Shows how much care Carers provide and how caring affects their lives
- Highlights Carers Rights and the range of **legislation** set out to support and protect them.

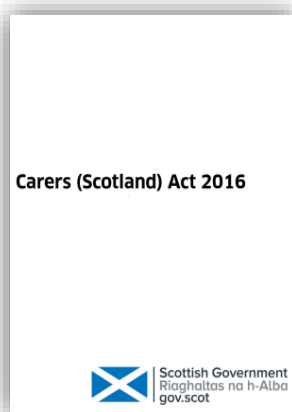
This strategy will also have a Delivery Plan that will explain what the **Health and Social Care Partnership** (HSCP) is going to do to support Carers.



The local Carers Strategy links to the **National Carers Strategy** and explains what we will do to achieve **National Outcomes**.

- the delivery plan will give details about how Carers will be supported locally and how their rights will be met
- Sets out how we will be able to tell if the plan is helping

1.3 Why do we need a Carers Strategy?



The Carers (Scotland) Act (2016) means the local authority (Council) and health boards (NHS) have to have a joint unpaid Carers Strategy.

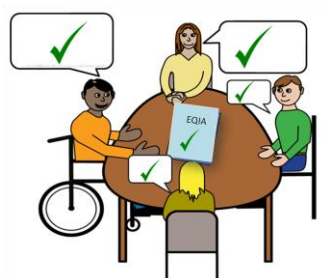
The strategy will show how these partners plan to work together to

- support Carers
- ensure Carers' rights are met
- identify Carers who are not currently getting support



The **Integration Joint Board (IJB)** is committed to making sure that “People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and well-being, including reducing any negative impact of their caring role on their own well-being”.

1.4 Carers and protected characteristics



As shown in section 1.1 Carers can be anyone and this includes people in **protected characteristic groups**. In Dumfries and Galloway being a Carer is a protected characteristic.

The **Equality Act (2010)** states that public authorities in Scotland (Council and NHS) have a duty to stop unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

An **Equality Impact Assessment** (EQIA) has been carried out. Checks will be carried out to make sure if any actions from the plan are having a negative impact, they are reduced or avoided.

1.5 Carers and the Carer they provide

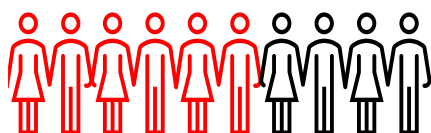


Photo by Nathan Anderson on Unsplash



The National Carers Strategy says 'Unpaid care is vital to how social care is provided in Scotland, and the value of the dedication and expertise of Carers cannot be overstated'

Carers in Dumfries and Galloway provide over **560,000** hours of unpaid care per week.



More than half of Carers (63%) provide over 50 hours of unpaid care per week. Their experience and knowledge should be respected. It is important in the planning of care and support for the cared for person.

1.6 The Vision for Carers in Dumfries and Galloway

The vision for the Carers Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway is



Carers are valued, their rights are upheld and respected, and their own health and wellbeing acknowledged and supported.

This takes into account the National Carers Strategy, what local Carers, Carer support organisations and other stakeholders have told us is important. It sets out what the IJB hopes to achieve through this plan.

2. Identification of Carers and why it is important.

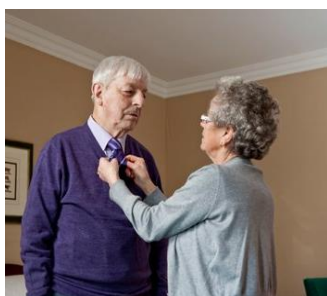
2.1 Identification of Carers



Lots of different people in Dumfries and Galloway provide unpaid care or support to someone. Many of these people do not think of themselves as a Carer. For many people caring is just a part of life.

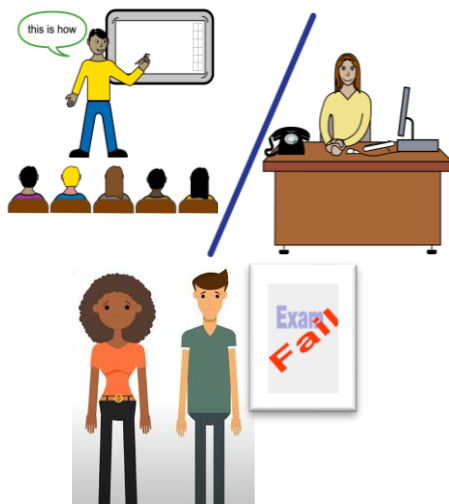


Some people do not see themselves as a Carer until they are struggling to manage other aspects of their life along with caring. This could be managing their available time, money, bills or their own health and wellbeing.



The earlier someone identifies as being a Carer the sooner they can access a range of support which may avoid a crisis.

2.2 Impact of caring



Caring can have a negative impact on Carers, affecting their

- ability to do the things they want to do
- physical health
- mental health
- relationship with the cared for person(s) cared for
- relationships with friends and family
- feelings of loneliness or isolation

What people told us in the Carers' survey showed that Carers' 'relationship with the cared for person/people', had positive and negative impacts.

Carers of any age may not feel they have a choice in respect of their caring role. They may feel they have fewer choices for education or job opportunities because of their caring responsibilities.

The impact on Young Carers will be looked at in a separate Plan.

Ensuring Carers have the support to continue in their caring role (if they wish to) is very important. Unpaid Carers provide a huge amount of care and support in our communities. They are vital to the sustainability of the health and social care system.

3. Carers Rights



It is important that Carers know and understand their rights and can access the support they need for their own wellbeing.

The **Carers (Scotland) Act 2016** aims to ensure that Carers have choice and control and can access support to enable them to keep caring if they want to do so.

The rights as set out in the Act are

1. Adult Carers have a right to an **'Adult Carer Support Plan'**
2. Young Carers have a right to a **'Young Carer Statement'**
3. Carers have a right to support to meet any 'eligible needs'
4. Carers have a right to be involved in services
5. Carers have a right to be involved in the hospital discharge process of the person they are or are going to be caring for



Young Carer Statement



The rights are designed to make sure

- Carers voices are heard
- Support is consistent and problems are avoided
- Caring relationships are sustained
- Carers' health and wellbeing is protected



In the National Carers Strategy, 2022, and **Carers' Charter**, the Scottish Government set out plans to add

- Carers' right to information and advice
- Rights for Carers of people with terminal illness

The [Care Reform \(Scotland\) Bill](#) 2025, now means unpaid Carers in Scotland have a legal right to a break from their caring role.

3.1 Right to an Adult Carer Support Plan

Adult Support Plans are used to help services understand the needs, preferences and support requirements of Carers.

Support for Carer respite and ensuring people have a life outside their caring role is particularly important.

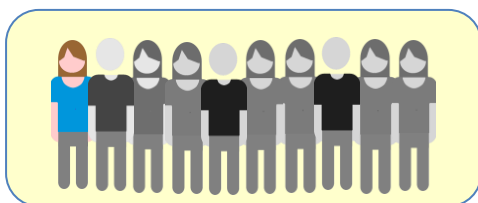
Getting this support right involves all services working together, including the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Not all Carers feel they need or want an Adult Carer Support Plan. Only around 10% of the estimated number of adult Carers in Dumfries and Galloway have completed one (February 2024). They still have access to and get support from Carer Support Organisations.

To find out more or request an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) follow this link **Adult Carer Support Plan (D & G Carers Centre)**



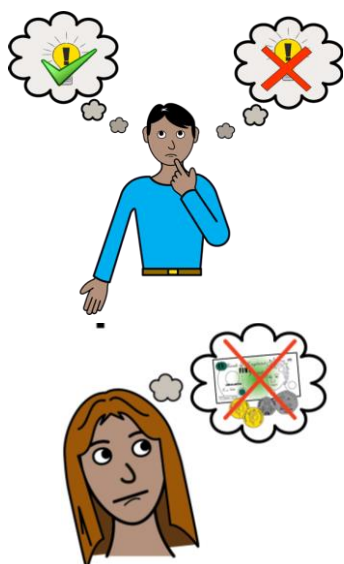
3.2 Right to a Young Carer Statements



Just under 1 in 10 of the estimated number of Young Carers in Dumfries and Galloway have completed a Young Carer Statement.



That means we need to do more to understand the needs, preferences and outcomes of Young Carers. If you want to find out more about Young Carer Statements follow this link [**Young Carers Statement \(D & G Carers Centre\).**](#)



Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements help to identify how much caring is impacting on

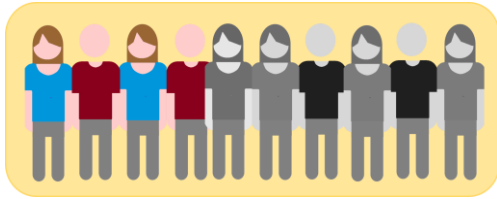
- how Adult and Young Carers feel
- time they have for themselves
- their health
- how they are managing at home
- their finances
- their caring role
- their work



They also help Carers to identify what they need and agree personal outcomes. These forms help them to recognise the level of support needed to achieve those outcomes.



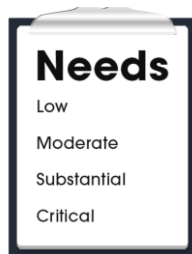
In 2022 the [**Care Inspectorate**](#) asked Carers about their experiences of adult social work and social care services. Carers from across Scotland were invited to complete a survey.



98 Adult Carers from Dumfries and Galloway completed the survey.

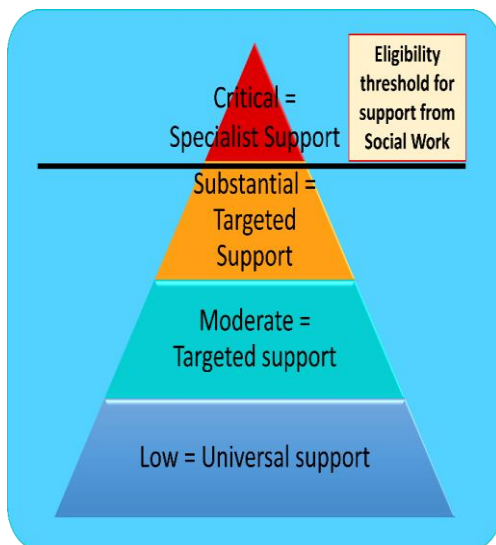
- 4 in 10 people said that they were not offered an ACSP
- nearly 4 in 10 said they had been offered one
 - of those people 16% said they didn't want one
- some people didn't know or could not remember.

3.3 Right to Support



The Guidance on Eligibility for Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 sets four levels of support need, Low, Moderate, Substantial and Critical.

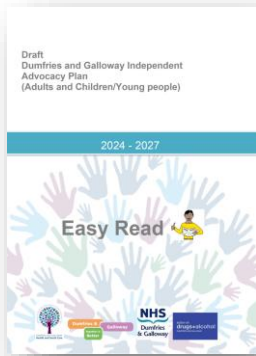
All Carers are eligible to access a basic level of support (known as **Universal Support**) in their caring role. This support includes information and advice and community activities. It is usually provided by third sector organisations, GPs and Education Services.



Where a Carer's needs are identified as being higher (Moderate or Substantial), then Targeted Support will be available in addition to Universal Support.

Targeted Support includes

- support groups
- 1:1 support
- training (such as moving and handling)
- health and wellbeing sessions



This support is delivered by organisations who are commissioned to provide services to Carers.

Carers may also need independent advocacy support which is only available through independent advocacy services, see **Joint-Independent-Advocacy-Plan-2024-2027.**



It is only when the caring role is having a critical impact on Carers only receive the highest levels of Specialist Support involving Social Work Services.



Support could be

- short breaks
- Self-Directed Support (SDS) packages
- support for the person they care for



The Health and Social Care Partnership directly commissions Carer Support Services from 5 third sector (voluntary) organisations



- Alzheimer Scotland
- Change Mental Health
- DG Carers Centre
- Relationships Scotland
- Quarriers



The Partnership works closely with these organisations to ensure appropriate support is in place for Carers and ensure their rights are met.





Carers Act Funding is also used to provide grants to other organisations to provide specific areas of support including training through companies including Care Training and Consultancy CIC



The Health and Social Care Partnership established a 'Carers Hub' within Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary in 2022.

The Hub is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and provides information, advice and a listening ear.

There are estimated to be at least **20,000** Carers in Dumfries and Galloway. We are currently only supporting between **10%** and **30%** of those Carers each year.

3.4 Right to be involved in services



The Health and Social Care Partnership must involve Carers or Carers representatives in the planning and evaluation of services that support Carers. This includes

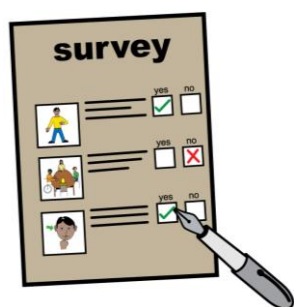
- the development of this strategy
- the planning of services for people being cared
- where services relate to the care that Carers provide



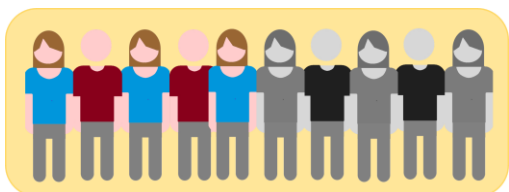
In Dumfries and Galloway Carers are involved in the services through

- Carers representation on the Strategic Planning Group.
- Carers representation on the Integration Joint Board
- Carers being an important **stakeholder** group.

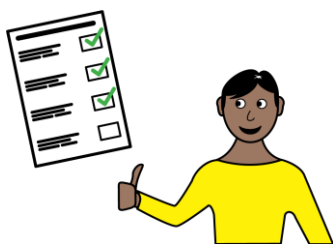
All engagement and consultation must include Carers.



In the Dumfries and Galloway survey, Carers were asked a range of questions about different aspects of their role as a Carer. It was clear people had a mix of positive and negative experiences.



Nearly half (49%) of the Carers that responded said they did not receive the support they needed from services to continue in their caring role.



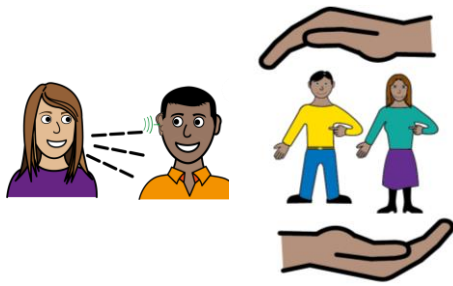
Others felt that specific services

- had been very supportive
- helped with paperwork and fund finding



Carer experiences of both local third sector and health and social care services, received an average rating of less than three stars (out of five).

3.5 Right to be involved in the hospital discharge process



When asked about hospital discharge people said Carers should be listened to and involved more.

The needs of the cared for person and the Carer needs to be taken to protect the health and wellbeing of both.

Carers have a right to be involved in the hospital discharge process of the person they are or are going to be caring for.

The Health and Social Care Partnership must make sure that, before a person is discharged from hospital, their Carer is involved.

3.6 Right to breaks

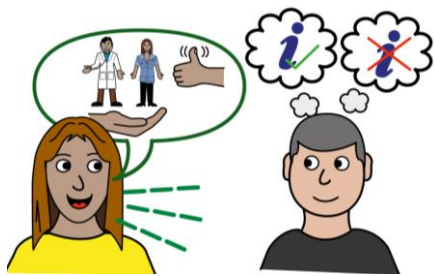


Short Breaks or breaks from caring can provide a release from the demands of caring. They can improve the wellbeing of both Carers and the people they care for which can help to strengthen the caring relationship. They can also reduce the likelihood of people reaching crisis.

Carers highlighted

- that they were not aware respite and short breaks might be available
- that they did not know how respite or short breaks might work for them
- their frustration that when they tried to access them, they were often unavailable





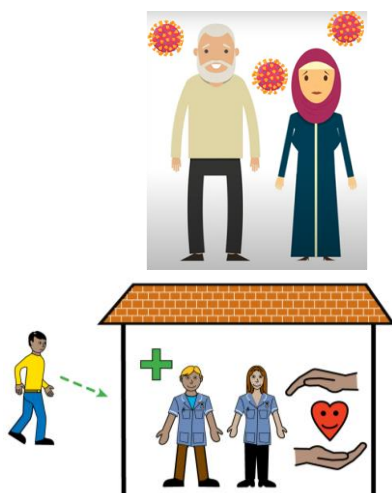
People were asked how respite and short breaks for Carers could be improved. Suggestions included

- Increase availability
- Making the application process much simpler
- Different types of respite to fit people's needs
- More flexibility with Self Directed Support
- Respite for Young Carers
- Increase awareness of their availability
- Address staffing issues – more flexibility around qualifications
- More funding opportunities



The Care Inspectorate Inquiry into Carers' experiences of adult social work and social care services in Dumfries and Galloway pointed out that

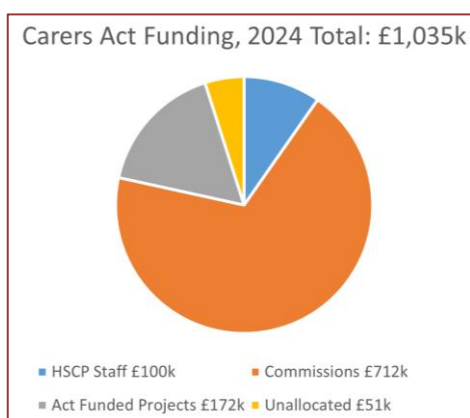
- The pandemic made caring even more challenging. This impacted on Carers and people who were being cared for.
- Most Carers physical and mental health and well being is negatively impacted by their caring role.
- Carers do not feel like 'equal partners in care'





- Carers are concerned about the sustainability of their own role.
- Social work staff need the Confidence, knowledge and understanding to work more closely and support Carers more effectively.
- Where Carers receive the right support at the right time, it helps them keep caring for longer.

4. Delivering this Strategy

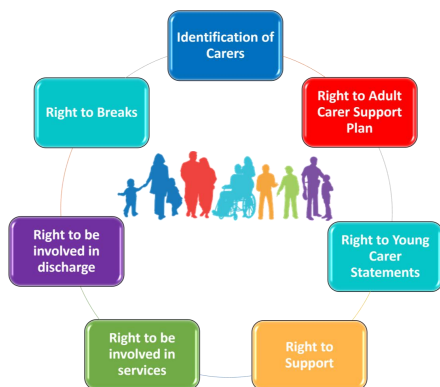


The Scottish Government give funding to local authorities each year to support delivery of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. Dumfries and Galloway Council receive just over one million pounds per year.

A separate Delivery Plan is being developed. It includes details of how The Health and Social Care Partnership plan to use the funding to deliver on the IJB Vision for Carers.

The Delivery Plan includes actions and activities under 7 priorities identified in the Carers Strategy.

These are the identification of Carers and the current and expected Carers Rights.



The actions have been developed from what Carers and Carer Support Organisations have told us. They are what Carers said will have the most positive impact for them and their caring role.

The Delivery Plan will be presented to IJB in March 2025 for approval.

Glossary

Care and support - is the phrase used to describe all aspects of health and social care and support. It includes diagnosis, treatment, personal care, practical, financial and/or emotional or social supports and can take place in a person's home, community or bed based setting such as hospital or residential care.

Care Inspectorate - The Care Inspectorate is a Government department which supports improvement. They look at the quality of care in Scotland to make sure it meets high standards. If they find that improvement is needed, they support services to make positive changes.

Their vision is that everyone experiences safe, high-quality care that meets their needs, rights and choices.

Carer - When we use Carer (with a capital C) in this document we are talking about people who provide unpaid care and support to a family member, neighbour or friend. There are **Adult Carers**, **Young Carers** aged under 18 and **Young Adult Carers** aged 16 – 29.

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) – Is a process used to make sure that policies, behaviours, and decisions are fair and do not discriminate against any protected groups. An EQIA is carried out to ensure protected characteristic groups have been considered and anything that might have a negative impact on them is minimised or avoided.

Health and social care inequalities - unfair and avoidable differences in access to health, social care and support that can negatively impact on people's health and wellbeing.

Health and Social Care Partnership – is a partnership between NHS Dumfries and Galloway and Dumfries and Galloway Council, that provides health and social care and support as decided by the IJB.

Integration Joint Board (IJB) - is a partnership between the Local Authority and Health Board that has shared/joint responsibilities for the planning and oversight of the delivery of functions delegated to them by the Scottish Government through the Scheme of Delegation.

Legislation – is a word used to describe laws and Acts of parliament. Legislation forms the basis of the law and helps set out rights and obligations for individual people and organisations.

National Outcomes - In this plan the National Outcomes are what the Scottish Government wants to achieve. They are usually things that are quite complicated.

They need people to work together to achieve them. This could be changing and/or improving the way things are delivered by services or putting in more support for a particular group of people, in this case Carers.

Protected characteristics - The Equality Act 2010 describes age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment as **Protected characteristics | EHRC (equalityhumanrights.com)**.

Respitality - Is where unpaid Carers can access a short break through local hospitality, tourism or leisure businesses. Providers supply families with accommodation (sometimes including a meal, and entertainment) while respite care is provided for the cared for person in their own home or in an out-of-home setting.

Wellbeing - is a combination of spiritual, mental, emotional, physical and social health. Wellbeing is strongly linked to happiness and must include a person having a sense of control, hope, optimism, and satisfaction in life.