

GUIDELINES FOR REFERRERS

These Guidelines are intended for any person wishing to make a referral to West Cumbria Carers on behalf of any young person who has significant caring responsibilities. If you are unsure whether to proceed or require further clarification, please contact the Young Carers Project Manager for an informal discussion.

1. Definition of a Young Carer

Young Carers are young people of 18 years or under, who provide regular and substantial support to a family member who is in need of additional care. This may be due to an illness, disability, mental health need, learning disability or substance misuse issue. The young person may be supporting a parent, sibling or another extended family member.

2. Eligibility criteria:

To meet eligibility for a service provided by West Cumbria Carers, children and young people must:

- meet the above definition of a young carer
- be actively engaged in caring (practical and/or emotional)
- be negatively impacted as a result of their care role, in any of the following areas:

Physical/Mental wellbeing
Education attainment
Emotional and Behavioural Development
Family and Social/Peer relationships

Children and young people will NOT BE ELIGIBLE if:

Their lives are adversely affected by living with a family member with poor health (as outlined above) but are not providing any practical or emotional care for that person.

3. Who can make a referral?

Anyone can make a referral to West Cumbria Carers on behalf of a young carer but please obtain their consent and parental consent beforehand.

Young people can refer themselves by contacting the office. Alternatively, the young person may prefer if someone else makes the initial contact and asks us to get in touch with them at a convenient time. If this is the case please pass their contact number to us with their consent and parents' consent.

4. Who can you make a referral for?

West Cumbria Carers accepts referrals for young carers aged between 5 and 18 years who live within Copeland or Allerdale areas.

The young person does not necessarily have to be the main carer within the family. They may be a secondary carer or be supporting indirectly, for example by caring for a sibling when another family member is unwell.

5. What will happen next

If we think this may be an appropriate referral we will contact the family to arrange to carry out an assessment. Following completion, we will use the outcome of the assessment to make a decision on whether it is appropriate for the young person to access our service, and whether we have sufficient capacity. Timescales are as follows: We aim to allocate a new referral to a support worker within two weeks of receipt, the support worker will aim to contact the family within one month of being allocated the referral and they will aim to complete a Young Carers assessment within one month from the first contact with the family. During our first visit we will introduce our service and seek parental consent for working with the young person.

We will offer the young person a specialised initial assessment of need, the outcome of which will determine whether an individual support plan is drawn up and put in place.

6. Services provided

Filling in the referral form does not guarantee access to our services, the outcome of the assessment will be used to make the decision on appropriateness for our services. If appropriate, we will decide on which services to offer the young person according to their needs and the type of care that they are providing.

Some – or all – of the following services may be offered as a result of the individual assessment:

No Services
Inclusion on mailing list to receive newsletter
Information and sign posting to further sources of support
Support groups
Outings
Residential trips
Training and specific projects
1:1 support

We work in partnership with other organisations to support young people in an integrated way, and work with the whole family for short periods when this is of direct benefit to the young person.