****

**Carers Rights Day 2024**

VOCAL Partnership Toolkit

**Introduction**

Carers Rights Day is a UK-wide annual campaign which aims to:

• Raise awareness of unpaid carers’ rights and entitlements

• Help carers get the support they need and recognition they deserve

Carers Rights Day is on Thursday 21 November and 2024’s theme is **‘Recognising your rights’.** We are offering our partners the opportunity to get involved with VOCAL’s Carers Rights Day!

In this toolkit, you will find VOCAL’s:

* communications channels
* planned events and activities
* resources and information that you can share with your networks

We would greatly appreciate you sharing these messages across your internal and external channels. It doesn’t need to be daily social media posts or a big campaign, but sharing a few Carers Rights messages will help increase the impact.

**Our channels**

**Websites**

VOCAL has four websites:

1. [www.vocal.org.uk](http://www.vocal.org.uk)

2. [www.carerstraining.co.uk](http://www.carerstraining.co.uk)

3. [www.weebreaks.com](http://www.weebreaks.com)

4. [www.supportfinder.vocal.org.uk/](http://www.supportfinder.vocal.org.uk/)

**Social Media**

Facebook Pages:

**•** VOCAL Edinburgh: [VOCAL Edinburgh | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/VOCALEdinburgh)

• VOCAL Midlothian: [VOCAL Midlothian | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/VOCALMidlothian)

Facebook Groups:

• Carers@Work Facebook group - [(20+) Carers@Work | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1448223741915432)

Twitter / X

• VOCAL Edinburgh - [VOCAL Edinburgh (@VOCALEdinburgh) / Twitter](https://twitter.com/VOCALEdinburgh)

• VOCAL Midlothian - [VOCAL Midlothian (@VOCALMidlothian) / Twitter](https://twitter.com/VOCALMidlothian)

LinkedIn

• VOCAL - [VOCAL Voice of Carers Across Lothian | LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/vocalcarers)

**Get involved**

**Carers Rights Day Employers Event with VOCAL**

Calling all employers in Edinburgh and Midlothian!

VOCAL's Carers Rights Day event for employers will take place at Phoenix Group’s offices on Lothian Road, from 9:30am to 12pm on Thursday 21 November.

The event is open to all employers with offices in Edinburgh and Midlothian, who want to learn more about how to support their staff who are juggling employment with unpaid caring responsibilities.

We will have some fantastic speakers at the free event, including:
• Lynn Forrest from [Phoenix Group](https://www.linkedin.com/company/phoenixgroup-uk/)
• Sue McLintock from [Carer Positive](https://www.linkedin.com/company/carer-positive/)
• David Leslie from [The Scottish Government](https://www.linkedin.com/company/thescottishgovernment/) Carers Policy Branch
• Anna Savage from [Business In The Community Scotland](https://www.linkedin.com/company/business-in-the-community-scotland/)

If you have any questions, contact VOCAL’s employer team at employers@vocal.org.uk.

You can book your free space on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/vocal-employer-event-for-carers-rights-day-2024-tickets-1042007080227>

**Think Carer Training**

**Edinburgh**

For Carers Rights Day, we are running a session for all HSCP staff which has been organised by Edinburgh Council. The session will focus on the important rights available to carers in our communities and learn how helping carers exercise their rights can lead to better outcomes and improved care for everyone.

To book a tailored Think Carer session for your team, please email us at thinkcarer@vocal.org.uk, or join one of our open sessions here:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=JKkGUVb2JE6jR931oLzMgx1qvqCsO1lJkk_eMhxpu9lUQVdYMDFPVjlXWTMxN0FXSTRGUkFBT0xXWSQlQCN0PWcu&wdLOR=c6A50442D-9B85-4DD8-B8A6-DD84259AB88A>

**Midlothian**

To mark Carers Rights Day at the end of November, VOCAL Midlothian is partnering with Midlothian Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) to deliver a "Think Carer" session specifically for social work professionals.

Midlothian HSCP recognises the importance of a carer's right to be offered an Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP). In this bespoke session, we will explore:

* The impacts of caring
* The legal rights that carers are entitled to uphold
* The legal duties placed on health & social care practitioners

We will focus on best practice guidance for social work staff on how to facilitate high-quality caring conversations with unpaid carers, using a solution-focused and asset-based approach.

To book a tailored Think Carer session for your team, please email us at thinkcarer@vocal.org.uk, or join one of our open sessions here:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=JKkGUVb2JE6jR931oLzMgx1qvqCsO1lJkk_eMhxpu9lUQVdYMDFPVjlXWTMxN0FXSTRGUkFBT0xXWSQlQCN0PWcu&wdLOR=c6A50442D-9B85-4DD8-B8A6-DD84259AB88A>

Events and activities for carers

* An introduction to Self-directed Support on Monday 18 November | 5:30pm - 7pm | On Zoom
* Working carers workshop on Tuesday 19 November | 7pm - 8pm | On Zoom
* Carer cuppa: Edinburgh Wednesday 20 November| 11am - 1pm | Edinburgh Carers’ Hub

Carers can book on our Carer Training website: [Carer Events & Training - courses, events and activities for unpaid carers](https://www.carerstraining.co.uk/)

**eLearning resource**

We've learned that while many carers are interested in our training sessions, the timing isn’t always convenient for them.

We have created a new eLearning resource that carers can watch at their own convenience on our YouTube channel. This is perfect for carers who can't attend live sessions or want to re-watch the content.

We currently have the following videos available:

* Basic benefits
* Adult Carer Support Plans (ACSP)
* Emergency planning
* Hospital discharge

You can view the videos here:  [https://www.youtube.com/@VOCAL813](https://www.youtube.com/%40VOCAL813)

Please share with carers who would benefit.

**Social media content**

* Today is #CarersRightsDay! Many carers are unaware of their rights and entitlements and could be missing out on financial, practical, and emotional support. To support carers, @VOCAL has launched a new e-learning session designed to boost knowledge and confidence. The session covers key rights and entitlements, along with guidance on navigating health and social care systems both for carers and the person they care for. To find out more visit their website: [www.vocal.org.uk](http://www.vocal.org.uk)
* Do you know your rights? It’s good to know your rights wherever you are in your caring journey, whether you are in the workplace, in a healthcare setting, or when interacting with professionals or at home. Finding out the correct information can be hard and time-consuming. @VOCAL has created a short blog for Carers Rights Day on the rights that carers are entitled to. You can read more on their website: <https://www.vocal.org.uk/news/do-you-know-your-rights-2/>

**National campaign**

The National Carer Organisations are preparing communications for the upcoming Carers Rights Day national campaign. You can stay updated by visiting the Coalition of Carers in Scotland website here: [Coalition of Carers in Scotland - Carers Rights in Scotland](https://www.carersnet.org/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGe-u9leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHWlslN3SlWC4mBg3ja20nSpXX1OHoEKERlny3NdjATljpPDlotHIKCLBZg_aem_mnR6ZS_R_Cvwq79a93C9Hw) or let us know if you’d like us to share the information with you once it's available.

Blog article

Do you know your rights?

Carers Rights Day is an opportunity to ensure carers are informed to access their rights and support services. As a carer, it’s essential to understand the laws designed to protect your role, help you balance responsibilities, and support your wellbeing.

**The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016**

The Carers (Scotland) Act protects carers’ rights and was created to:

* Encourage health and social care workers to take unpaid carers’ views into account
* Improve support for carers
* Help with caring relationships
* Protect unpaid carers’ health and wellbeing

The rights for carers include:

* An Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) or a Young Carer Statement (YCS) to identify the carer’s needs and personal outcomes
* Carers’ views being taken into account when assessing the needs of the person being cared for and in decisions about the cared-for person being discharged from hospital

Councils must:

* Provide support to carers, based on the carer’s needs and the local eligibility criteria
* Have an information and advice service for carers where they can learn about things like emergency and future care planning, advocacy, income maximisation and carers’ rights

**Work and Families Act 2006**

Balancing work with caring responsibilities can be challenging, and the Work and Families Act offers protections to support working carers. This act entitles carers to:

* Flexible Working Requests: Carers have the right to request flexible working arrangements, such as adjusted hours or remote work, to balance work with caring responsibilities.
* Parental Leave: If you are a working carer of a disabled child under 18, you are entitled to additional unpaid leave to manage your caring responsibilities.

**Mental Health Act 2003**

The Mental Health Act states that the rights and views of carers must be taken into consideration as much as possible when any decision about a cared-for person’s care and treatment is made.

* Carers have the right to be informed and consulted in treatment decisions when the individual they care for is receiving mental health treatment.

**Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

* Under this act, it is illegal to discriminate against a carer because of their responsibilities as a carer, or because of the individual(s) they care for.
* Employers must ensure carers are treated fairly, offering adjustments where necessary to support carers' needs.

**The Carers Leave Act 2023**

The most recent addition to carers' rights, the Carer's Leave Act 2023, focuses on giving carers flexibility and time off from their roles. Under this new act:

• Employees are entitled to up to one week’s unpaid leave per year if providing or arranging care for someone with a long-term care need.

• This leave can be taken flexibly (in half or full days) for planned and foreseen caring commitments.

• It is available from the first day of employment.

On Carers Rights Day, take the time to ask yourself:

* Do I know what support is available from my local authority?
* Am I accessing all entitled breaks and services?
* Do I know my rights to flexible work and fair treatment?
* Am I protected from discrimination in my work and community?

For advice or more information on how VOCAL can support you, get in contact on 0808 196 6666 or email centre@vocal.org.uk.