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Convener
Social Security Committee
The Scottish Parliament
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17 March 2021

Dear Convener,

I am pleased to share with you the enclosed discussion paper on the future of Scottish Carer's Assistance, our replacement benefit for Carer's Allowance.

We are committed to improving support for Scotland's unpaid carers, in recognition of the immense contribution they make to our communities, and the vital support they provide for those they care for. Since the agreement to devolve some powers over carer benefits to the Scottish Parliament, we have been working with carers and stakeholders to consider how Scottish Carer's Assistance can work better for the people of Scotland.

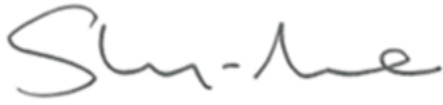
As I have set out previously, we are consulting at this stage on the overall strategic direction for this new support. This paper brings together the evidence we have heard from our work to date and sets out three proposed aims for Scottish Carer's Assistance. It has been developed to share what we have learned to date, and to support consultation with carers and stakeholders on these draft aims, so that the final aims can be shaped by their feedback. This consultation will take the form of roundtable events and workshops as well as research with our Experience Panels.

Our intention is for the final aims to be used as part of an options assessment process to guide decision making on proposals for Scottish Carer's Assistance, which would be the subject of a further consultation. We recognise that the next steps in this process will be a matter for a future administration. However, given the importance of continuing the work to develop Scottish Carer's Assistance, we are sharing this document to set out what we have learned and allow discussions on the future of this support to progress.

As highlighted in the document, the impacts of coronavirus on the overall programme of devolving social security, and on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) who are integral to the delivery of Scottish Carer's Assistance, has meant we are having to rework our timescales for this, and the additional support for those caring for more than one disabled child, currently known as the Carer's Additional Child Payment. We are now exploring whether this additional support can be delivered as part of Scottish Carer's Assistance, rather than as a separate benefit.

This is being considered as part of the complex re-planning work currently underway and a further update can be provided once this is complete.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shirley-Anne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a horizontal line through the middle of the letters.

SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

Scottish Carer's Assistance –

Discussion Paper

March 2021

Scottish Carer's Assistance: Discussion paper

Introduction

Unpaid carers make a huge contribution to their communities as well as providing vital support to those they care for. Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, Carers UK estimated the value of unpaid care in Scotland to be £10.8 billion each year¹.

Caring can be a rewarding and positive experience for both carers and the cared-for person. However, it is also associated with poor mental wellbeing and physical health. Carers are at a higher risk of poverty, and their caring role can restrict opportunities to participate fully in society, including employment and education. This can be particularly challenging for those with more intensive caring roles².

The Scottish Government's vision for unpaid carers, as set out in the draft Carers Strategic Policy Statement, is that all unpaid carers are supported on a consistent basis to allow them to continue caring, if that is their wish, in good health and wellbeing, allowing for a life of their own outside of caring³. Scottish Carer's Assistance, our replacement for Carer's Allowance, will be a vital element in delivering this vision.

Section 1: What is this discussion paper about?

This government is committed to improving support for Scotland's carers and designing a replacement for Carer's Allowance which works better for the people of Scotland. We have listened to the views of carers, support organisations and the public, and have heard about a number of things people would like to change about the existing benefit. As the delivery function of Social Security Scotland has developed, there are also now opportunities to link Scottish Carer's Assistance into wider carer support in a way that was not possible under previous arrangements.

At the same time, we know Carer's Allowance is one of the most complex benefits being devolved, in terms of its links to support which will remain reserved to the UK Government. It is really important that we take the time to get the design right, and continue to work with carers, and those who support them, to shape Scottish Carer's Assistance.

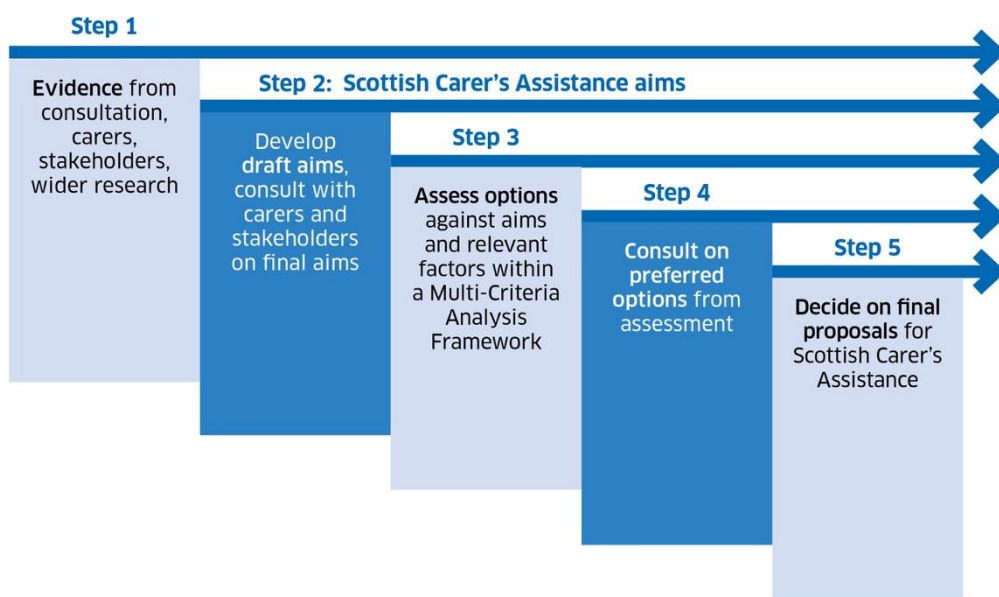
This paper is a key part of that work and we have set out our intended process for developing Scottish Carer's Assistance in Diagram 1. We recognise that the next steps in this process will be a matter for a future administration. However, we are sharing our proposed aims for Scottish Carer's Assistance based on what we have learned so far, so that discussions can continue to progress. This will maintain momentum towards delivery of Scottish Carer's Assistance within the next parliamentary term.

It is expected that the feedback from the discussions on this paper would be used to finalise the aims for Scottish Carer’s Assistance. A number of proposals for Scottish Carer’s Assistance have been identified in our work to date. The refined aims and other relevant factors would be used to develop these proposals further and to assess priorities, using an analytical process known as a Multi Criteria Analysis.

The factors in this analysis would be those used previously in key decisions about Scottish social security: dignity and respect; equality and poverty; efficiency and alignment; implementation and risk; and economy and society⁴. The analysis would also help identify which proposals are capable of being put in place from the launch of the new assistance. Others would be able to be taken forward once the transfer to Scottish Carer’s Assistance for carers currently in receipt of Carer’s Allowance has been completed, or over the longer term.

We would plan to consult later this year on the preferred proposals for Scottish Carer’s Assistance identified through the assessment process, making clear when they could be delivered.

Diagram 1. Process for developing Scottish Carer’s Assistance



Section 2: The story so far

The Scottish Government is committed to improving support for Scotland’s carers. This has been a key part of our work in social security since agreement was reached in 2015 to devolve some powers over carer benefits to the Scottish Parliament.

These powers, set out in the Scotland Act 2016⁵, allow the Scottish Government to pay benefits to people providing ‘regular and substantial care’ to ‘a person to whom a disability benefit is normally payable’⁶. They do not extend to carer elements of benefits provided by the UK Government, and do not allow benefits to be paid to those caring for someone who is not getting a disability benefit.

Increasing the support available to carers through the Carer’s Allowance Supplement was one of our first priorities with these new powers. Responsibility for Carer’s Allowance transferred to the Scottish Government in September 2018 so we could provide this extra money to carers through Social Security Scotland. The Supplement increases Carer’s Allowance by around 13%, and so far has paid out an extra £129.8 million to carers in Scotland⁷. Carer’s Allowance is now provided to carers in Scotland on behalf of Scottish Ministers by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through an Agency Agreement⁸. The independent evaluation of Carer’s Allowance Supplement demonstrates its positive impact on recipients of Carer’s Allowance⁹, who typically have some of the most intensive caring roles and are often on some of the lowest incomes.

In October 2019, we opened applications for our Young Carer Grant, the first support of its kind in the UK, providing annual grants of £305.10 (2020/21 rate) to Scotland’s young carers, and linking them to wider support, to help them access opportunities which are the norm for other young people. We are also committed to providing extra support to people caring for more than one disabled child, in light of the impact we know these multiple caring roles can have on carers’ health, wellbeing, and opportunities.

Developing Scottish Carer’s Assistance

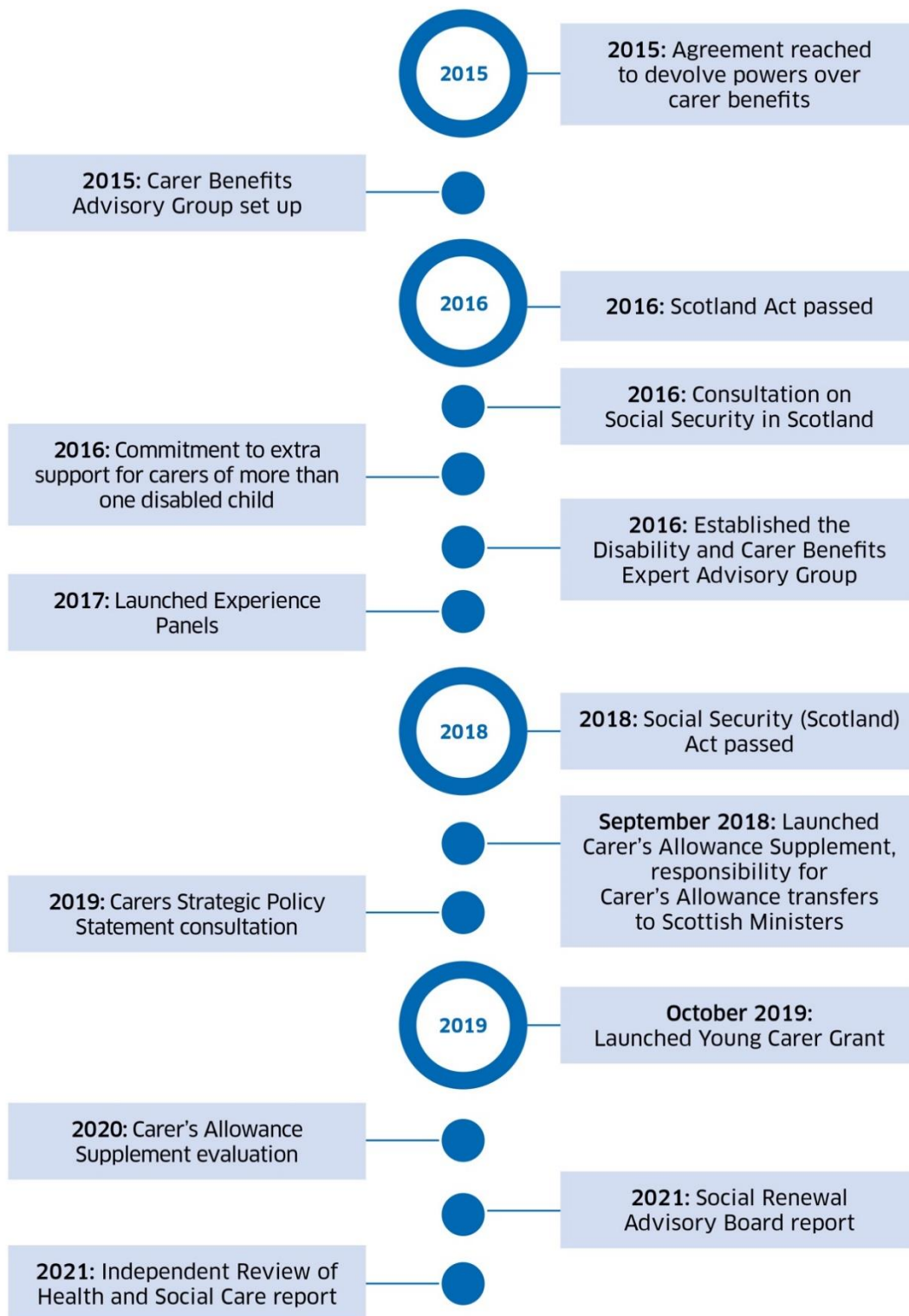
This discussion paper has been informed by a range of work since 2015, as well as wider research relevant to support for carers. More information on the evidence we have considered is included in **Annex B**, but we have highlighted the key elements below, and in Diagram 2.

- In November 2015, we set up the Carer Benefits Advisory Group¹⁰ to work on the development of policy for devolved carer benefits. The group comprises representatives from the National Carer Organisations¹¹, carer services, health and social care, local authorities and welfare advice organisations, and has carried out a range of research and wider work to inform the development of options for Scottish Carer’s Assistance.
- In 2016, our Consultation on Social Security in Scotland asked for views from the public on the overall approach to Scottish carer benefits, including increasing the level of Carer’s Allowance, and proposals for new support for young carers¹², as well as inviting comments on ideas for change.
- In October 2016, we established the Disability and Carer Benefits Expert Advisory Group¹³, to provide independent expert advice on the development of our disability and carer benefits. To date, the group’s advice has included recommendations on

the development of Carer's Allowance Supplement, Young Carer Grant, the proposal to provide additional support to those caring for more than one disabled child, and the overall aims for Scottish Carer's Assistance.

- We have also worked with the Experience Panels¹⁴, which were set up in 2017 and involve volunteers with experience of the current benefits system in the development and design of devolved benefits. We have taken views from the panels on the existing Carer's Allowance benefit, as well as Carer's Allowance Supplement and the proposed additional support for carers of multiple children.
- In 2019, we consulted with stakeholders and the public on our draft Carers Strategic Policy Statement.¹⁵ The Statement sets out Scottish Government's overall vision for unpaid carers, as set out above, brings together outcomes for carers across government and includes key principles for how policies should be developed and delivered.
- In 2020, as part of our evaluation of Carer's Allowance Supplement¹⁶ we heard directly from carers in receipt of this support about their experience of this and their views on Carer's Allowance.
- In June 2020, Scottish Ministers set up the Social Renewal Advisory Board¹⁷, to discuss and plan a way forward for Scotland following the coronavirus pandemic. The Board's work was informed by a range of engagement with members of the public, community groups and third sector organisations and its report, published in January 2021, includes calls for improvements to support for unpaid carers¹⁸.
- The Independent Review of Adult Social Care¹⁹, which published its recommendations in February 2021, took in a range of evidence from individuals, groups, and discussions with organisations supporting those in receipt of social care and their carers. The review highlighted the importance of unpaid carers and the challenges they face.

Diagram 2: Timeline showing key points in the development of Scottish Carer's Assistance



Section 3: Current support for carers

The current Carer's Allowance benefit is just one part of a much wider system of support available for carers in Scotland from the Scottish and UK Governments and others. It is important that we consider this in designing Scottish Carer's Assistance.

Carer support

Before the coronavirus outbreak, it was estimated that there were around 690,000 unpaid carers in Scotland, of whom 29,000 were aged 18 or younger²⁰. According to Carers Scotland, the number of carers in Scotland may have risen by around 400,000 at the height of the pandemic²¹.

Through the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016, every carer²² in Scotland is entitled to an adult carer support plan or young carer statement which sets out their needs as a carer, and the support they can get from their local authority. Local authorities also have to consider whether the support provided for carers should include short breaks from caring, and have a duty under the Carers Act to provide information and advice services for carers, including advice on income maximisation. Short breaks for carers are funded by the Scottish Government through support for voluntary sector providers, and funding is also provided for targeted support for young carers. Much of the support is provided by a network of local carer centres, which play a vital role giving practical and emotional support to carers.²³

Policies are also in place for carers who want to combine caring and employment, including through the Carer Positive accreditation scheme²⁴, which encourages employers to support carers to stay in work, and wider employability programmes.

Social security support for carers

Carer's Allowance is the main social security support available specifically for carers. The rate is £67.25 a week in 2020/21. To get Carer's Allowance, carers need to be 16 or over, spend 35 or more hours a week caring for someone in receipt of a specified disability benefit, and not be in full-time education or earning over £128 a week (after deductions).²⁵ There are no work requirements for carers receiving Carer's Allowance.

The benefit's eligibility criteria mean that those eligible for this support are a small proportion of Scotland's caring population, but will usually be those with some of the most intensive caring roles, the most restricted opportunities, and most commonly, with below average incomes. At the end of August 2020, around 83,000 people in Scotland were getting Carer's Allowance²⁶. The number of people receiving Carer's Allowance is rising steadily and this is expected to continue.²⁷

Carer's Allowance Supplement, which is unique to Scotland, increases the value of Carer's Allowance by around 13% and is paid in June and December. The rate in 2020/21 is

£230.10. Carer's Allowance Supplement is taxable but is not counted as income in calculations of entitlement to reserved benefits or Tax Credits²⁸.

Young Carer Grant is an annual payment for 16, 17 and 18 year olds in Scotland who provide care for 16 hours or more weekly and don't get Carer's Allowance. The rate in 2020/21 is £305.10²⁹.

Section 4: Aims

Our overall vision for unpaid carers, that Scottish Carer's Assistance will help deliver, is that 'they are supported on a consistent basis to allow them to continue caring, if that is their wish, in good health and wellbeing, allowing for a life of their own outside of caring'³⁰.

The aims below have been identified following a review of our work to date with carers and the organisations that represent and support them, in the context of the draft Carers Strategic Policy Statement. As set out above, these aims will be used in the process of deciding on final proposals for change through Scottish Carer's Assistance.

And, as highlighted, we intend for these aims to drive how Scottish Carer's Assistance should develop from launch, and in the years immediately after carers in Scotland are no longer receiving Carer's Allowance from the DWP.

Aim 1. Scottish Carer's Assistance is designed to maximise take-up and ensure carers have a positive experience of the social security system

Carers already have busy and demanding lives. In line with Our Charter³¹, applying for and getting support should be simple and stress free. Carers should be treated with patience and kindness, with consideration for how they may feel. The system should also understand carers' needs and the challenges they face, and offer flexibility in the range of ways they can engage with the system, to fit around their other priorities.

Our work to date has found that carers tend to view the current application process for Carer's Allowance fairly positively as it is relatively straightforward and trust-based, and it is important that this is protected. Consideration will need to be given to this in relation to any changes to eligibility criteria which could add complexity to the process of applying for Scottish Carer's Assistance.

Take-up of Carer's Allowance is difficult to measure accurately as the criteria mean it is challenging to work out the number of people who are eligible but do not apply. In designing and delivering Scottish Carer's Assistance we will need to consider how we can remove key barriers to take-up, as identified by our first Benefit Take-up Strategy³² and look particularly into where there may be barriers for particular equality groups³³ and how these can be addressed.

Aim 2. Scottish Carer's Assistance provides stability and supports carers to pursue goals outside of caring, where they wish to

We recognise that carers face a number of pressures in their daily lives. Concerns about how relatively minor changes in their circumstances may affect their own support should not be one of these pressures, and Scottish Carer's Assistance should provide some stability through these changes, whether this is to their work, their health, or the situation of the person they care for.

The importance of supporting carers at key points in their lives has been highlighted in a number of areas in our work to date. This could be at the beginning of a caring role, the change from being a young carer to an adult carer, moving into or out of education, or when a caring role comes to an end. The design and delivery of Scottish Carer's Assistance should do more to connect with wider services to help carers through these changes and to get the support they need.

We have also heard about the value to carers' health and wellbeing of the ability to take advantage of opportunities outside of their caring role, which could be learning, training, employment, or wider participation in their community or society, such as through voluntary work. Scottish Carer's Assistance should not be a barrier to this, and we have heard concerns that elements of the current system relating to education and employment in particular may be confusing, complex to navigate and may restrict opportunities.

Aim 3. Scottish Carer's Assistance recognises the role of unpaid carers, that different carers have different needs, and that different caring situations have different impacts

We know that carers value the acknowledgement that Carer's Allowance provides of their caring role and the importance of this, and want to retain this aspect of the support. Scottish Carer's Assistance should provide support to carers, with no requirement to work outside of caring, in recognition of the value of what carers do, as well as the impact of this on their lives and opportunities.

But no two carers or caring roles are the same, and it is important that as far as practically possible Scottish Carer's Assistance is designed in a way that works for the diversity of Scotland's carers. Our research has also highlighted concerns that the current support does not recognise the variety of caring situations, or differences in caring roles, and the impact of this on carers. However, we are also aware of the need to balance the aim of recognising differences in caring with what carers have told us about the importance of clear eligibility criteria and simple processes for receiving support.

We have heard in particular that support should provide greater recognition of the impacts of multiple caring roles, on carers' health, wellbeing and ability to access other

opportunities. In light of this we are already committed to providing additional support to people in receipt of Carer's Allowance who are caring for more than one disabled child. We also introduced our Young Carer Grant in recognition of the need to support young carers, and designed this to reflect the different roles and needs of young carers compared to older carers, providing support to access life opportunities which are the norm for their non-caring peers.

As part of our engagement work on this discussion paper we will be seeking views on the aims set out above, in particular whether these capture what we should be seeking to achieve through Scottish Carer's Assistance and whether there are other key areas which are not covered.

Section 5: Replacing Carer's Allowance with Scottish Carer's Assistance

Scottish Carer's Assistance will replace Carer's Allowance. We know from listening to carers already getting Carer's Allowance how important it is that when we launch Scottish Carer's Assistance, we protect their income and they don't face disruptions to support. We also need to make sure that all carers in Scotland are treated equally and fairly, whether they are receiving Carer's Allowance from the DWP or Scottish Carer's Assistance from Social Security Scotland.

This means that when Scottish Carer's Assistance is first launched for new applicants, and carers in Scotland are still receiving Carer's Allowance from the DWP, we will not be making changes to the eligibility criteria for Scottish Carer's Assistance.

This is the same approach we have taken for the disability benefits. But this doesn't stop us from making improvements, and we can make changes which will have a real impact in delivering against the proposed aims, including our commitment to provide additional support to those caring for more than one disabled child.

Changes from launch

From launch, we will provide a service for carers that is different to the service Carer's Allowance recipients currently receive. Through our range of ways of engaging with clients and potential clients, we have the opportunity to reach more carers and help carers to access the support they are entitled to, through social security and beyond.

Social Security Scotland services will be co-located with existing services in local areas, including through agreements already in place with third sector organisations. This will make them more visible and help to join up social security with wider services more effectively. Social Security Scotland are already working with a range of partners to ensure clients are provided with the best advice possible, and can be referred to organisations who can help them further if they need it. Social Security Scotland's local delivery team have built up networks with local organisations across the country, including carers groups, which will allow us to reach more carers and raise awareness of the support available.

We will also be working with carers to design our Scottish Carer's Assistance application processes and systems to better suit their needs. Our communications will be digital by choice, and not by default, offering a range of options that allow carers to communicate with us, and to apply for support, in a way that suits them, including with face to face support.

Scottish Carer's Assistance can also help carers to access the wider support they need at key points in their lives, whether this is taking on an intensive caring role for the first time, or at the end of a caring role. We know that access to education, training and employment is important to carers and we can work to improve the communications and advice provided to carers on how Scottish Carer's Assistance interacts with these areas, as well as linking them to relevant support services. It will also be important to ensure carers can easily access the range of services which are available when a caring role ends due to the loss of a cared for person.

Joining up services will be a priority in delivering Scottish Carer's Assistance, given the wide range of support available, and the importance of ensuring carers can get the help they need. We will work with carers and stakeholders to agree how we can work with partners, including, as part of the discussions which this document will support, to identify priority areas to have in place in time for launch.

Changes once we have completed the transfer of eligible carers from Carer's Allowance to Scottish Carer's Assistance

Once Scottish Carer's Assistance has opened for new applications, we will begin the process of transferring information so that carers in Scotland who are getting Carer's Allowance from DWP can get Scottish Carer's Assistance from Social Security Scotland instead. This process is known as 'case transfer'. When this is complete, all eligible carers in Scotland will be getting Scottish Carer's Assistance from Social Security Scotland instead of Carer's Allowance from DWP.

From this point we will be able to begin making changes to eligibility. However, as carers will still be supported by other benefits provided by DWP, and many will rely on these to cover basic living costs, this will need to be done in a way which protects their existing support.

In particular, we need to consider that if the criteria for our benefit were to become very different from Carer's Allowance, we would need to reach agreements with DWP about how our benefit would be treated by their systems. Many carers receive extra amounts in means-tested benefits because they are in receipt of Carer's Allowance. This includes benefits relied on for basic living costs, like Housing Benefit.

It is vital we are able to make sure that DWP would continue to pay carers in receipt of Scottish Carer's Assistance any support which is linked to the existing Carer's Allowance

benefit. This would need to be agreed with DWP as this linked support is reserved. Any costs of providing this linked support to newly eligible carers would need to be met from the Scottish budget, and if we were to expand eligibility for Scottish Carer's Assistance significantly, that could have implications for DWP payments. We also need to ensure that carers will be better off as a result of changes we make and that any extra support we provide is not taken away from them elsewhere in the system.

Overlapping benefits and 'underlying entitlement'

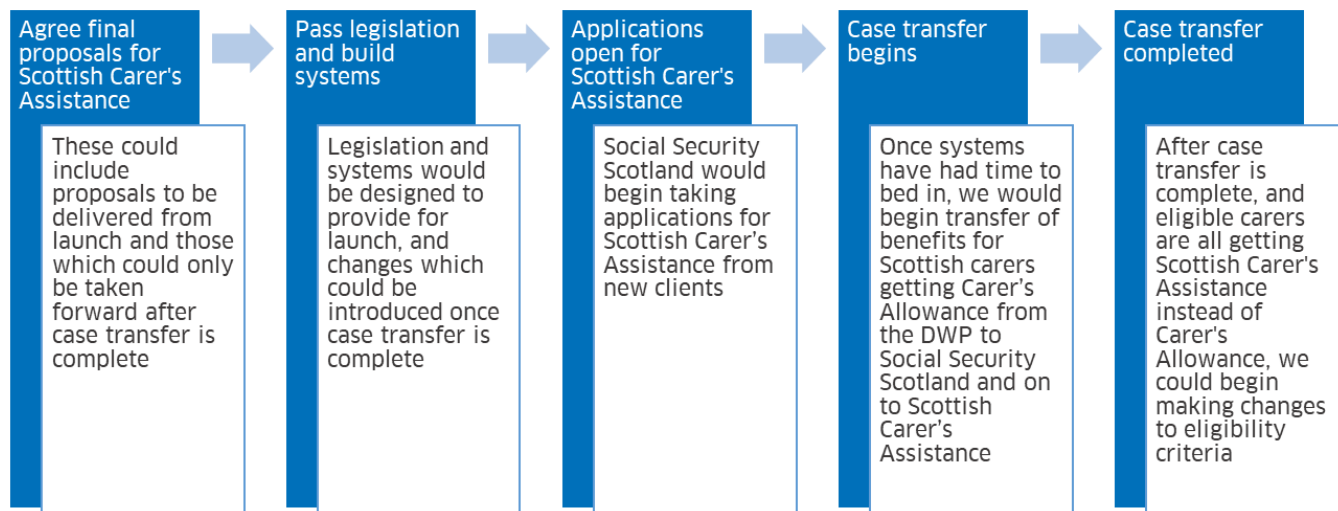
Carer's Allowance is an 'income replacement' benefit. It is designed to provide support to unpaid carers in recognition of their role and the impact this has on their ability to take on paid work. This means that carers cannot get Carer's Allowance and other income replacement benefits at the same time, as they are provided for the same purpose. These are called 'overlapping benefits'³⁴. Carers who get these benefits instead of Carer's Allowance are said to have 'underlying entitlement'. These overlapping benefits include contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance and the State Pension, and are typically paid at a higher rate than Carer's Allowance.

Almost 39,000 carers in Scotland had 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance at the end of August 2020. Some 85% of these carers were 65 or over and are likely to be getting State Pension instead.³⁵ These carers may get extra amounts in means-tested benefits such as Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance. Being eligible for, or getting, Carer's Allowance will also usually reduce any work requirements for reserved benefits.

Most respondents to our 2016 consultation on social security were in favour of Scottish Carer's Assistance being designed to fulfil the same role as Carer's Allowance³⁶. This means it would remain an income replacement benefit that will overlap with other benefits provided for the same purpose, such as the State Pension.

If we extend eligibility for Scottish Carer's Assistance we will also increase the number of carers with 'underlying entitlement' to this support. This will be an important consideration in decisions about as the costs of any extra support paid to these carers by DWP will need to be met from the Scottish budget, in the same way as carers who are newly eligible for Scottish Carer's Assistance as highlighted above. It may also be the case that significant increases in the number of carers eligible for this extra support may mean DWP could reconsider providing this support to carers in Scotland.

Diagram 3: The stages of replacing Carer's Allowance with Scottish Carer's Assistance



UK Government funding for devolved benefits

The funding transferred from the UK Government to pay devolved benefits is based on current benefit rates and criteria. This means that in considering changes which would mean more carers are eligible for support, or more support is provided to eligible carers, we will also need to take into account that extra funding would need to be found from within the Scottish budget, in addition to the funding already provided to pay Carer's Allowance Supplement and Young Carer Grant.

Section 6: Next steps

We are publishing this paper as the beginning of a process of engagement to develop the final aims for Scottish Carer's Assistance. This will include discussion events with stakeholders and research with carers, including members of our Experience Panels. If you would like to take part in a discussion event, or if you would like to find out more, please get in touch with us by emailing ScottishCarersAssistance@gov.scot for more information.

This engagement work will feed into the final aims which will then be used in our options assessment as set out in section 3. This assessment process will be used to identify the final proposals for Scottish Carer's Assistance. Some of the proposals will be capable of being put in place from the launch of the new assistance. Others will be able to be taken forward once we have completed the transfer to Scottish Carer's Assistance for carers currently in receipt of Carer's Allowance. We will then consult on these proposals, making clear when they can be delivered, and use the outcomes of that consultation to draft the regulations for Scottish Carer's Assistance, and build the systems to deliver this support.

The impacts of coronavirus on the overall social security programme, and on the DWP who are integral to our work on devolving benefits, has meant we are having to rework our timescales for delivery of Scottish Carer's Assistance. As highlighted, the existing Carer's Allowance benefit has some of the most complex links with UK Government benefits of all the support being devolved. We are working with the DWP on revised timings for introducing Scottish Carer's Assistance, and the extra support for carers of multiple disabled children, and will be able to share updated timings when this work is complete.

Annex A: How the aims link to the Carers Strategic Policy Statement and National Outcomes

Our vision, set out in the draft Carers Strategic Policy Statement is that carers 'are supported on a consistent basis to allow them to continue caring, if that is their wish, in good health and wellbeing, allowing for a life of their own outside of caring.' In line with the Statement, we will also make sure in developing Scottish Carer's Assistance, that 'carers' needs are understood, and they are not excluded or discriminated against by virtue of their caring role.'

The three aims we are proposing in this consultation are based on evidence and designed to contribute particularly to four of the six draft outcomes in the Statement. These outcomes are:

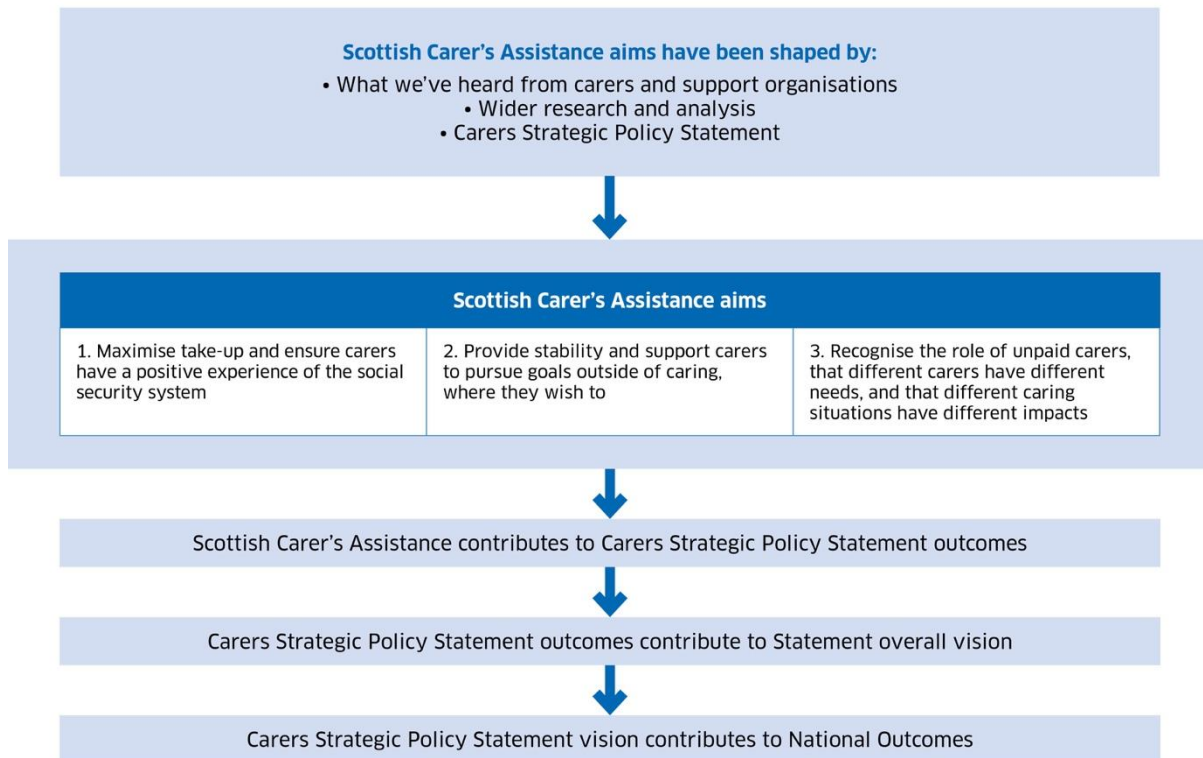
1. People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and wellbeing.
2. Carers access the financial support and assistance they are entitled to.
3. Carers are able to take up or maintain meaningful employment alongside caring.
4. Carers can participate in and are valued by their community and wider society.

Work to develop, deliver and improve Scottish Carer's Assistance will also contribute to a fifth outcome from the Statement, that 'carers' voices are heard and their views and experiences are taken into account in decisions which affect them'.

The Carers Strategic Policy Statement vision and draft outcomes will also contribute to the following National Outcomes as set out in the National Performance Framework³⁷:

- We are healthy and active.
- We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.
- We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination.
- We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential.
- We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society.
- We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally.
- We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone.

Diagram 4: How the draft aims link to the Carers Strategic Policy Statement vision and National Outcomes



Scottish Carer’s Assistance will also be designed and delivered in line with our social security principles as set out in the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 and Our Charter, as well as the principles set out in the Carers Strategic Policy Statement. These are set out below.

Social Security principles	Carers Strategic Policy Statement: Principles
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social security is an investment in the people of Scotland 2. Social security is itself a human right and essential to the realisation of other human rights 3. The delivery of social security is a public service 4. Respect for the dignity of individuals is to be at the heart of the Scottish social security system 5. The Scottish social security system is to contribute to reducing poverty in Scotland 6. The Scottish social security system is to be designed with the people of Scotland on the basis of evidence 7. Opportunities are to be sought to continuously improve the Scottish social security system in ways which — (i) put the needs of those who require assistance first, and (ii) advance equality and non-discrimination, 8. The Scottish social security system is to be efficient and deliver value for money. 	<p>We should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise preventative support to help prevent problems developing • Enable choice and control so that support can be personalised. <p>Responsibility for delivering policies to support carers is shared with partners, across the statutory and third sector. Close collaboration and partnership working, with the same overall vision, outcomes and approach in mind, is vital to ensure carers receive the support they rightly deserve.</p>

Annex B: Key evidence

The three proposed aims have been developed through a range of work with carers and stakeholders as well as wider research and evidence. Some of the key sources are provided below. These are presented in order of publication.

- **The take-up of Carer's Allowance: a feasibility study**, Berthoud, R, 2010
<https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/publications/working-papers/iser/2010-38.pdf>
- **Ethnic minority customers of the Pension, Disability and Carers Service: An evidence synthesis**. Allmark, P et al. 2010
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214455/rrep684.pdf
- **Securing women's futures: using Scotland's new social security powers to close the gender equality gap**, Engender, June 2016.
<https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/Securing-Womens-Futures---using-Scotlands-new-social-security-powers-to-close-the-gender-equality-gap.pdf>
- **Young People Caring OUT There: Experiences of LGBT young adult carers in Scotland**, Carers Trust Scotland, 2016. <http://www.ep-yc.org/wp-content/uploads/participants-database/sc7.pdf>
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²⁶ Carer's Allowance Supplement, October eligibility date 2020 and Carer's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Severe Disablement Allowance at August 2020: statistics, Scottish Government, February 2021 Carer's Allowance <https://www.gov.scot/publications/carers-allowance->

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²⁷ Scottish Fiscal Commission forecasts of Carer's Allowance caseloads published January 2021 are available here <https://www.fiscalcommission.scot/forecast/scotlands-economic-and-fiscal-forecasts-january-2021/> Chapter 5 – Social Security – Supplementary Tables – S5.1. Numbers receiving Carer's Allowance are expected to increase based on data showing past increases, as a result of population changes and more people being in receipt of qualifying disability benefits.

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³⁰ Draft Carers Strategic Policy Statement, Scottish Government, September 2019

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³⁷ Scotland's National Performance Framework <https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>



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The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80004-794-5 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, March 2021

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS830587 (03/21)

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