



Women's Equality Party Conference

26 November 2022

Title: **Provide Immediate Support for people in receipt of Carers Allowance and create a long term carer strategy**

Proposed by: **Deborah Mason**

Seconder: Rebecca Manson Jones

Signatories:

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Proposer: **Deborah Mason**

Type of motion: **Emergency policy motion**

Motion text:

- 1 WE adopt the following long-term policies and call on the UK Government (and devolved governments
2 where their powers cover these areas) to take immediate action in the short term and to adopt these
3 policies in the longer term:
- 4 • Immediately provide a catch-up payment to carers with an entitlement to Carer's Allowance to
5 support them through the winter in recognition of the additional costs they are facing.
 - 6 • Immediately uprate all benefits, including Carer's Allowance and the Carer Element of Universal
7 Credit, in line with current levels of inflation to ensure that vulnerable groups can survive the
8 winter months.
 - 9 • Continue to increase those benefits in line with inflation on a yearly basis.
 - 10 • Raise the earnings limit for Carer's Allowance to the value of 21 hours work a week at the National
11 Living Wage rate, to allow carers to work more hours a week where they wish to do so, without
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- 12 • losing their entitlement.
 - 13 • Develop a long term dedicated National Carers Strategy which will include measures to support
 - 14 carers to continue and return to paid work, as well as review the level and eligibility rules for
 - 15 carers' benefits and examine other means to support carers.
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Motion rationale:

16 WE need to support all women who care – not just parents – women also make up the majority of the
17 unpaid workforce of carers for other adults. Carers UK(1) has calculated that the economic value of
18 the unpaid care provided by women in the UK is estimated to be £77 bn per year.

19 Female carers are more likely to be:

- 20 • providing 'round the clock' care, with 60% of those caring for over 50 hours a week;
- 21 • 'sandwich' carers - caring for young children and elderly parents at the same time;
- 22 • in their 40s, 50s and 60s, with 1 in 4 women aged 50-64 having caring responsibilities for older
- 23 or disabled family members and loved ones.

24 Women aged 45-54 are more than twice as likely as other carers to have reduced working hours as
25 a result of caring responsibilities.

26 Women make up over 70 per cent of carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance in the UK.(1)

27 Carers UK report of 18 October 2022 (2) revealed that:

- 28 • 1 in 6 carers are in debt as a result of their caring role, increasing to 2 in 5 for carers in receipt of
- 29 Carer's Allowance.
- 30 • The proportion of carers unable to afford their utility bills has more than doubled since last year
- 31 to 14%.
- 32 • Carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance are more likely to be cutting back on food and heating.
- 33 • Nearly all carers who are struggling to make ends meet (93%) agreed that the increase in the
- 34 cost of living was having a negative impact on their mental and physical health.
- 35 • There are 10.6m carers in the UK of whom only 1.3m are entitled to, and just under 1m are in
- 36 receipt of, Carer's Allowance.
- 37 • Carer's allowance is currently £69.50 per week/£3,624 per year with an earnings limit of £132 per
- 38 week (2022/23) allowing them a maximum income of £10,488.
- 39 • The number of carers in receipt of Carer Element of Universal Credit was 451,714 in May 2022,
- 40 rising from 262,279 in May 2020 across Great Britain

41 In 2020, conference passed a motion on Social Care which included the following points:

- 42 • Make carer's allowance equal to living wage and on an equal basis regardless of local authority.
 - 43 • Make Eligibility for carer's allowance universal and not means-tested. It must have no impact on
 - 44 other benefits and must be paid regardless of employment status or age.
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References:

1. <https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/features/10-facts-about-women-and-caring-in-the-uk-on-international-women-s-day>
2. https://www.carersuk.org/images/Research/Heading_for_crisis_report_Oct_2022.pdf

Emergency Motion Rationale – the report by Carer's UK was released after the motions deadline of 7th October, as was the change of Government policy on energy crisis support and a return to austerity measures.
