

RBWM Young Carers 2022/23 Impact Report

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Welcome to our annual impact report. This issue provides a roundup of the service we have provided throughout the year to young carers and their families living in RBWM, from Young Carer Assessments through to our partnership approach to supporting young carers within the community where barriers to a referral for specialist support remain. We have had some wonderful contact time with Young Carers and their families throughout the year, which you can read more about and hear the wonderful feedback from our service users. I am pleased to share our good practice of partnership work with external colleagues to reach and support Young Carers within RBWM, working towards making the borough a Young Carer Friendly Community.

There have been some significant reports published over the year which highlight the need for further outreach and support for young carers. The NHS long term commitment to identifying young carers in October 2022 and the inclusion of young carers in School Census data collection from Spring 2023 will make a big difference to the lives of young carers, as more professionals take responsibility to seek and get alongside them and enable them to thrive as they continue to care for loved ones. Family Action is committed to making sure that caring is a positive experience for young carers. While they continue to provide care, young carers should be able to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

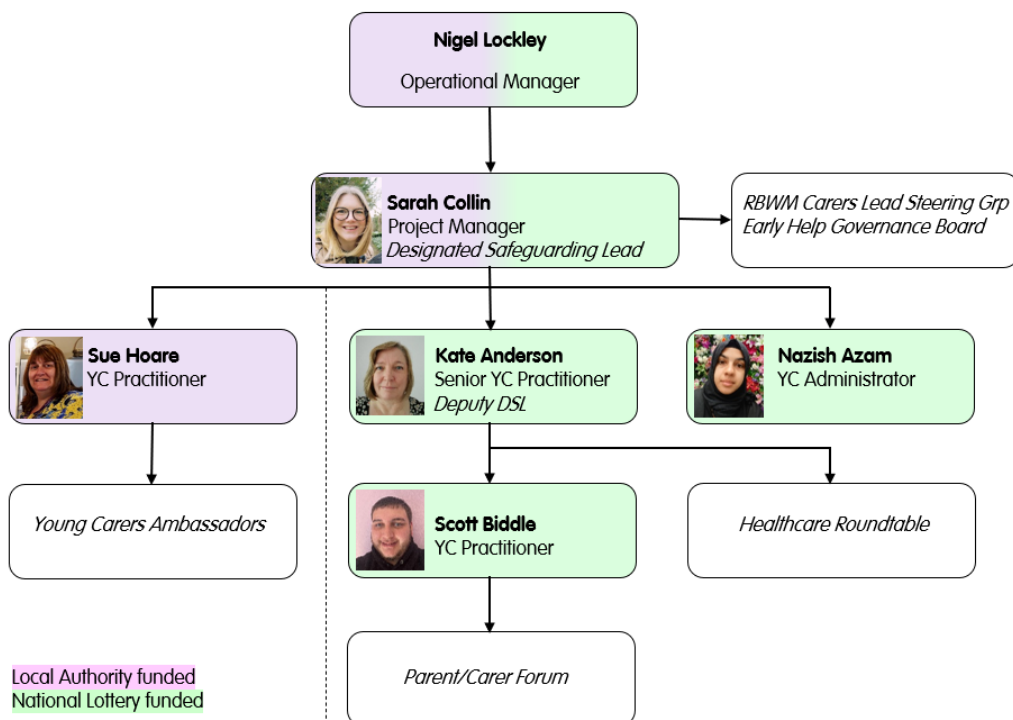
Best regards,

Sarah Collin, Service Manager

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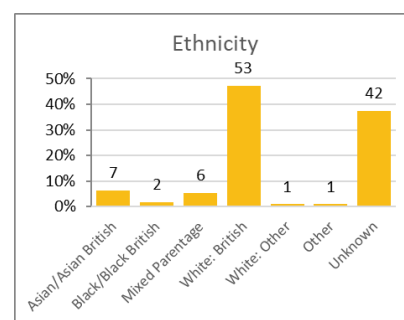
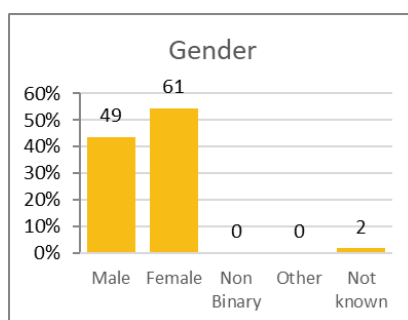
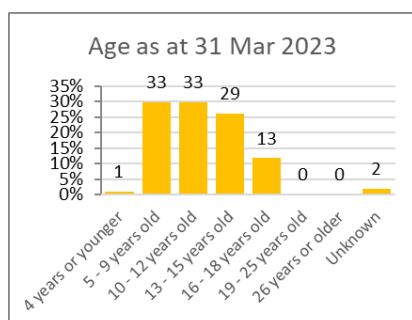
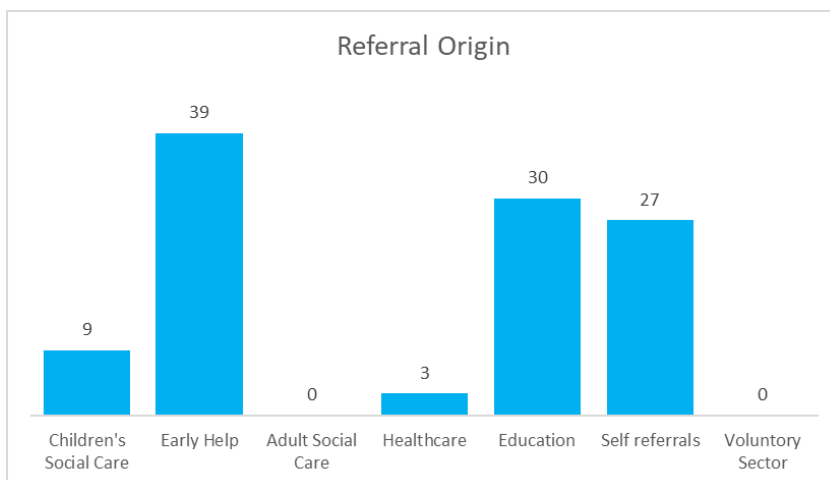
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Meet the team

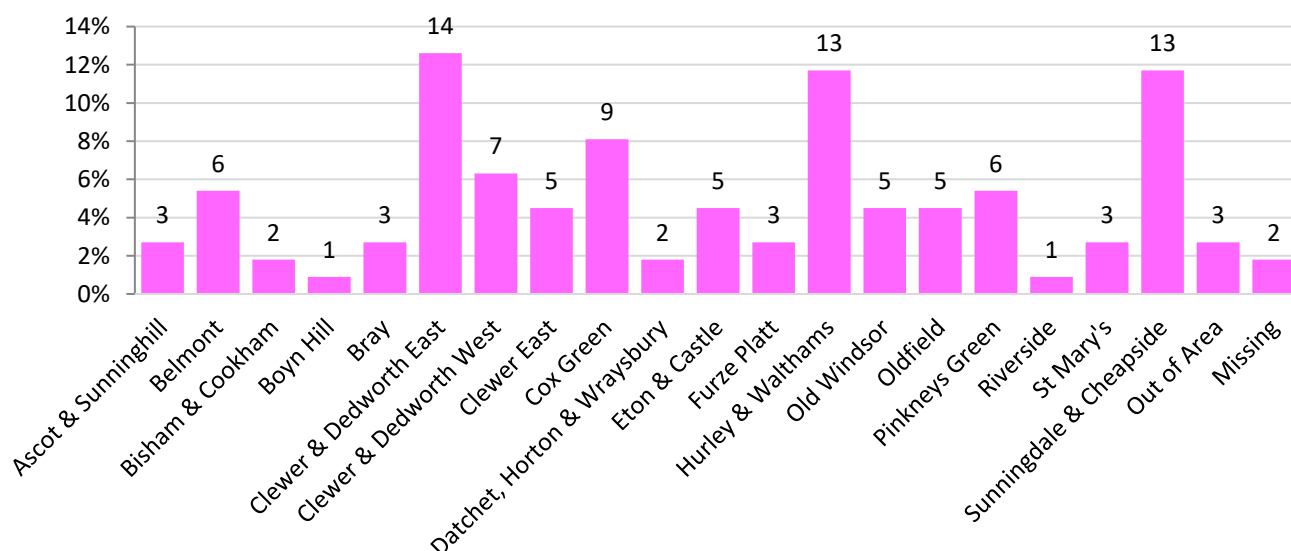


Referrals

Family Action Young Carers Service has maintained a steady flow through of referrals and closures. This year, our service has registered **111 young carers**, of which 85 were new referrals, to work towards positive outcomes. Additional support for Young Carers and their families have enabled caring roles and responsibilities to be reduced and young carers wellbeing and development to improve. Our service has an open referral system; the 111 young carers we have supported over this year have been received from a variety of routes.



Families accessing our service are well dispersed across the borough.

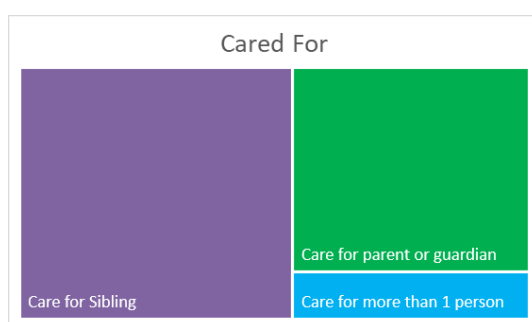


Family Action offer confidential consultations prior to making a referral to our service. For more information and to make a referral, please get in touch at rbwm.referrals@family-action.org.uk

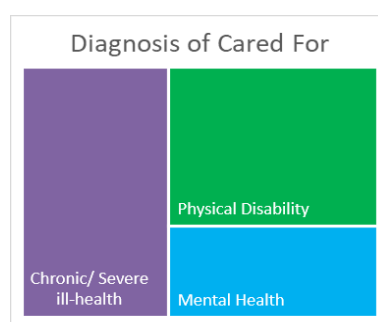
Young Carers Assessments

According to the [Caring Together](#) (2022) report, young carers are caring for 3 years on average before receiving any support, and there were some caring for more than 10 years. During 2022/23, the average waiting time between referral to Young Carers assessment was **9 weeks**. When meeting with Young Carers and their families, we employ a 2-stage assessment process.

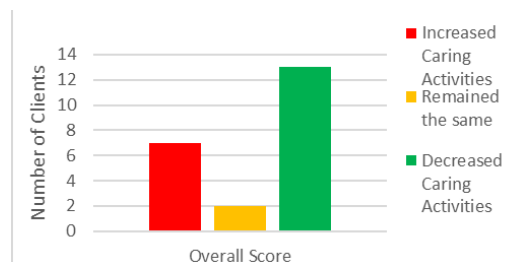
1. **Initial Assessment** to discuss caring roles and responsibilities and its impact on the young carer's wellbeing and development in order to identify immediate support needs and co-create an initial Support Action Plan.
2. **Review** within a month to identify a longer-term offer of support from our service.



19% of Young Carers are the primary carer.

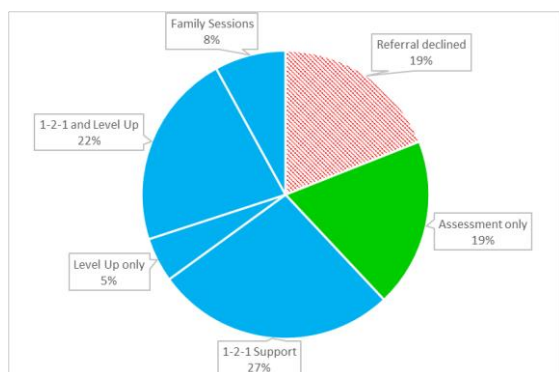


Family Action Young Carers uses the **Multidimensional Assessment of Caring Activities** (MACA) to monitor an effective reduction in caring roles being taken on by minors, and it is encouraging to see that on completion of support from Family Action, a significant amount of young carers report a decrease in caring activities undertaken.



Young Carer Intervention Support

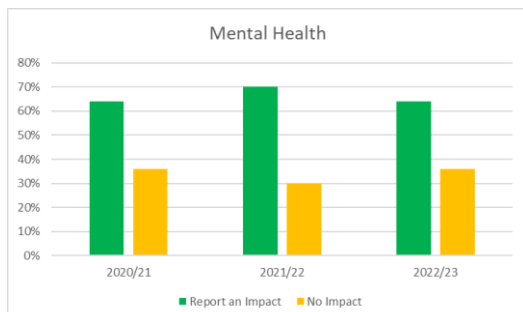
Our intervention period is between 3 – 6 months, on average **20 weeks**.



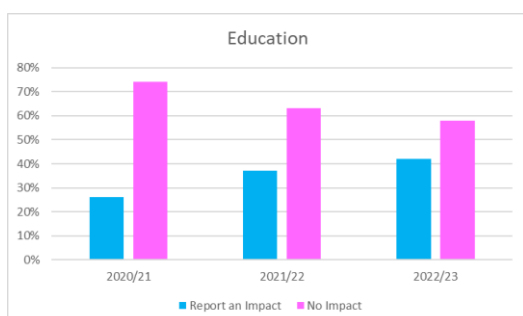
For 19% of referrals to our service, a Young Carer Assessment and review of initial support was sufficient to enable a family to overcome their immediate needs. The process allowed families the opportunity to reflect upon and make necessary changes to lessen inappropriate caring roles or remove the negative impact of caring. 62% of Young Carers referred to our service went on to receive a more in depth support offer.

Our support can include; up to 6 one-to-one sessions, 3 family sessions, 6-session wellbeing programme 'Level Up', signposting and referring to external services and representation at meetings. Families are able to re-refer to our service should circumstances change until their child is 18 years old, as long as there continues to be a caring role within the family.

The Impact of caring



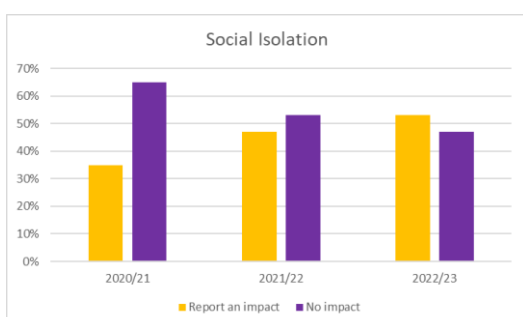
In 2022/23, 64% of Young Carers in RBWM reported that their caring role impacted their own mental health, of which 20% were accessing formal support via CAMHS, Number 22 counsellors or the Wellbeing Team. Family Action's partnership with Number 22 continues, providing up to 20 sessions of counselling where trauma resulting from a caring role is identified.



42% of Young Carers reported an impact on their education. Schools continue to actively engage with our service by allowing our team on site to complete assessments, reviews and one to one sessions, also working with us to recognise and understand caring roles and establish individualised young carer support at school. Since June 2020, 25% of schools in RBWM have trained Young Carer Champions, working in partnership with Family Action to support Young Carers in situ. Through this scheme, our service supports hundreds more young carers within community.

The Children's Commissioner's [Voices Of England's Missing Children Report](#) (2022), recommended that every school has Young Carers Champions so that every young carer has a trusted adult in school they can go to if things are difficult or they need more support.

From Spring 2023, Young Carers were included on the school census return. This will enable a much better picture of the number of young carers in schools, but also provides opportunities to use this data to monitor attendance and attainment of young carers. Family Action has developed a 45-minute training session about young carers and the school census, which will be delivered prior to each census data collection. We are delivering two training sessions on Wed 26th April, click the time to register to attend: [09:15AM](#) / [11:00AM](#)



53% of Young Carers reported feeling socially isolated, increasing year on year as we have emerged out of COVID restrictions. Prior to COVID, 60% reported feeling socially isolated. Family Action works with families to explore positive activities for young carers to participate in. We are able to provide Carer Time Out Cards to Leisure Focus and Young Carers are eligible to access the FUEL programme provided by Family Hubs during school holidays.

Many of our young carers access an annual residential at Honeypot House in the New Forest, and Norden Farm regularly and generously donates family tickets and meal deals to our service.

A 6- Stage Wellbeing Programme for Young Carers

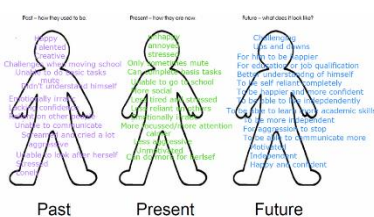


As part of one of the activities, young carers created a Wellbeing First Aid Kit; it included taking time for yourself, having a distraction when things get hard, comfort, and remaining positive with a motivational quote.

Feedback from young carers was overwhelmingly positive:

"It's nice to know you're not the only one. Other people have someone at home with an illness or is disabled. It has helped me to be grateful for my brother and to be confident" – young carer

"It's really fun because you meet other young carers who are going through the same thing and you do fun activities together. I thought I was the only one" – young carer



In August 2022, our young carers enjoyed a residential trip to Honeypot House in the New Forest! They had a great time, making new friends and exploring the outdoors. One of the parents commented that her daughter *"really enjoyed herself and she made lots of new friends, she loved the activities she had lots of fun and she can't wait to go again next year"*.



Norden Farm visited our young carers and created a banner to display at their community event. Young Carers chose to use the symbol of a tree to represent growth, and branches to display their skills and interests. It was wonderful to see it on display alongside other banners during the jubilee weekend.



Christmas Hampers

Each year, Family Action runs a Christmas Toy Appeal. RBWM Young Carers matched with the company LV=, who generously donated gifts for young carers and their siblings. With contributions from The Baby Bank pyjama appeal and craft sets from Norden Farm, our team were able to deliver hampers to all families accessing our service during the Autumn Term.

"A huge surprise came to us today! Presents for the kids! How amazing that is! The kids are so over the moon! This Christmas is a special one from last year! So so happy! Many thanks again!" – parent



LV=



THE BABY BANK

Norden Farm

AbbVie donates new bicycles

Local pharmaceutical company AbbVie, chose to include social action into their staff Christmas get together. Working in partnership with the national charity team building company o3e, they built and donated brand new bicycles for 4 of our young carers.

"My child was blown away by his new bike and accessories, we are so so grateful for such a generous donation! It is absolutely fantastic and it'll be good for many years to come as the size is great. I am really proud of his confidence that has grown so much with the help of young carers, it's something he's becoming very passionate about." – parent



Carers Rights Day Celebration

Family Action Service Manager, Sarah Collin, continues to chair the Carers Lead steering group in RBWM on a bi-monthly basis, which consists of representatives from Optalis, Community Mental Health Team, Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Frimley ICB, East Berks PCN, RBWM, Crossroads for Carers and Family Action. The group is committed to promoting an integrated and coordinated provision of services to ensure carers of all ages living in RBWM are connected to appropriate support.



In November 2022, The RBWM Carers Steering Group hosted an event to celebrate Carers living in RBWM. 65 individuals attended, and were treated to various activities, including facials/back massages, Tai Chi taster sessions, school choirs singing Christmas carols and an interactive workshop with Natures Haven

"I had some wonderful chats with carers, and they all valued the event – one person's feedback on what they enjoyed most about the day was the 'friendliness'!"

The Carers Lead steering group looks forward to continuing their close partnership approach to supporting carers of all ages, with plans already in place for Carers Week in June 2023.

Young Carer Ambassadors

We have 4 Young Carers Ambassadors who meet on a monthly basis. Sue Hoare, Young Carers Practitioner, leads the programme over an academic year, where they receive leadership development training and represent Young Carers locally and on a national level.

Our Ambassadors produced a short video, sharing their thoughts and feelings about what it is like to be a Young Carer and the support they would like to have in place for them at home, school and GP surgeries. The video has been shared at our training sessions for Young Carer Champions and a local Rotary Club. They also sit on the Young Carer National Voice, and one of our Ambassadors participated in an All Party Parliamentary Group discussion with the Children's Commissioner!



"My child has now become a Young Carers Ambassador which is fantastic as being part of it all has really helped his confidence and he sees how important carers roles are. I couldn't be prouder of him!" – Parent

Young Carers Action Day 2023

March 2023 celebrated National Young Carers Action Day. This year's theme was: **Making Time for Young Carers**



Our Young Carer Ambassadors took over the service for the day. They delivered a presentation to the Early Help Hub, eloquently sharing their experiences of being young carers and what support they find helpful, or not. They also wrote and facilitated an online workshop for young carers across our Family Action services.

Parent Carer Forum

Family Action is committed to co-production in order reflect on our service delivery, improve our offering and ensure better outcomes for Young Carers and their families. The overarching aim of the Parent Carer Forum is to enable positive collaboration with parents/carers of young carers supported by our service. One of our parents has since joined the Carers Lead steering group and has worked alongside Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to develop a new Carers Checklist of key information to consider when first identified as a family carer.

To celebrate Young Carers Action Day, we hosted a parent/carer coffee morning, where together we explored how different sectors can Make Time for Young Carers, as well as making time for them at home.



Promoting a Young Carer Friendly Community

This year, we delivered 3 DHSE Train the Trainer courses in the Identification and Support of Young Carers, bringing our total to 58 YC Champions across statutory services, community services, healthcare and educational providers. New champions valued the training, and identified ways in which they could immediately put their learning into practice.

"Best course I have been on for ages. Thank you." Eleanor Jerrard, Pastoral Manager, Dedworth Middle School

"The training was very helpful and delivered in a formal manner that was inspiring and interesting. I will share the excellent resources with colleagues so we can all work together to help identify students who are in caring roles." Estella Roberts, BCA college

In June 2022, it was our great pleasure to host our Young Carers Appreciation and Awards event in person, for the first time in 3 years! The morning celebrated the value of partnership work to reach out and support as many young carers in RBWM as possible.



3 of our Young Carer Champions extended their role to earn Gold and Silver Star awards for their workplace through disseminating their training, ratifying Young Carer policies, implementing ways in which to identify young carers within their duty of care and setting up young carers groups. We would like to say a huge and heartfelt **CONGRATULATIONS** to Holyport College and Larchfield School for achieving their Gold Star award, and Achieving for Children for achieving their Silver Star award! We are gearing up for this years event, with even more Champions working towards award status!



Within our Young Carers group we are able to provide support and the opportunity for young people to talk to other Young Carers who have shared or have similar experiences, receive emotional support from a Welfare Officer and just have the opportunity to have an hour for themselves to do what they want! The young people are really enjoying the group. We meet every other week and the group is very much young person led.

Claire Druce, Student Welfare Officer, Holyport College

Young Carers in Healthcare

7 of 10 carers start their caring journey in an NHS setting ([Carers and Hospital Discharge](#)). The [NHS Long Term Plan](#) (LTP) makes a clear commitment to identify and support unpaid carers.

In April 2022, we welcomed Kate Anderson, Nazish Azam and Scott Biddle to our team, employed through a 3-year National Lottery grant to collaborate with the healthcare sector to provide direct interventions to Young Carers and their families at Care Planning rather than crisis stage.



We have facilitated a series of 'Young Carers in Healthcare' Roundtable Forums, which comprise of professionals from organisations with an interest in supporting Young Carers including; NHS Berkshire Foundation Trust, Frimley NHS ICB, Public Health, Healthwatch, CAMHS, Children's Statutory Services, Adult Statutory Services, GP Services. Through this Forum, members have identified specific barriers to YCs being identified within their organisations/the wider Healthcare sector, and we have discussed solutions and actions that can be taken together to overcome these.

Our next Young Carers in Healthcare Roundtable Forum is on **Thurs 4th May, 09.15 – 10.30AM**, discussing the topic '*Involving Young Carers in Care-planning conversations*'. Click [here](#) to register to attend.

Updates to the Health and Care Act 2022 and Mental Health Bill 2022 make it clear that, as the NHS is an all-age service, the term carer includes young carers. There are 3 clear rights/duties in relation to young carers:

1. The right to be involved in discharge planning conversations
2. A duty on Integrated Care Boards to consult with young carers around services provided to the adult they care for
3. A duty on Integrated Care Boards to be consulted around planning and commissioning of services

The NHS Commitment to Carers team identified 5 Young Carer top tips:

1. Recognise that young carers have **individual needs** and shouldn't all be treated the same.
2. Think about the **support and understanding** a young carer may need.
3. **Listen and hear** what young carers are saying.
4. **Avoid relying** on young carers interpreting for the person they care for.
5. Think about how you can make appointments more **accessible**; after school, double appointments etc.

Our team have worked closely with colleagues from NHS England and the national Young Carers Alliance, as well as local healthcare colleagues to develop a 45-minute training session on Young Carers and the NHS Long Term Plan. Our aim is to promote a partnership approach where young carers' needs are recognised as well as those of the patient. We must help them look after their health and wellbeing to enable them to sustain their vital caring role.

Family Action have included gaining parental consent at Young Carer Assessments to inform the family GP of a caring role and request they be coded accordingly on their Patient Record as a family carer. To date, every family has welcomed this additional piece of support.

This year, 15 young carers have been referred to Family Action from healthcare services, compared to 9 referrals total from the previous 4 years.

Please note, the data within this Report does not include referrals from the National Lottery Healthcare project.

To finish, we would like to share some wonderful feedback from the young carers and families we have had the privilege to support over the year:

"Thank you all so much for all you do. YC1 has flourished in the last few months, and it's been so amazing for him to have something that's his and not about his sister." – parent

"This service is so awesome! Phew! I am taking a huge breath! Thank you so much Kate, you really do so so well for families in need. One day when things get better on my side, I will surely put something in the bank!!! That is my wish, for I know it will go on a good cause!" – parent

"The highlight has been having YC3 be able to speak about how she feels. She felt supported in all areas, it looked at all things. A positive change has been a settled feeling within our family, less friction. I really appreciated your support." – parent

"We asked for help and along came an angel called Sue. YC4 enjoyed having someone outside the family to talk to about her concerns. YC4 has a better understanding of her brother's mental health." – parent

"Communication was good, prompt and helpful, and support was flexible. We were impressed with the variety of options on offer to support our child. It was really helpful having visits to the home. Sarah was so easy to talk to. YC5 is communicating more honestly and asking for help from others." – parent

"Family Action went above and beyond to make sure YC6 feels like she was worthy of attention. YC6 I think feels more open to talk to/tell me how she really feels. YC6 always looked forward to her support and was always happy, I think she feels more comfortable expressing feelings now. We had communication issues with the school, but Family Action dealt with it great." – parent

"I have noticed a definite change in YC7's ability to 'cope' with certain circumstances due to being able to be open about how she's feeling now. Family Action were always there to listen and advise great coping strategies. It has been invaluable support. YC7 is more open now than she has been and in being open we are able to discuss things we may not have touched upon previously." – parent

"It has been really good doing young carers, I am proud to be a Young Carer! I am looking forward to the wellbeing group." – Young Carer, 9 years old

"You have made a difference - I feel more stronger and will work towards feeling less guilty and not blame everything on the illness." – Young Carer, 12 years old

"It has been really helpful, I have learnt it is ok to talk. I think other young carers should get the chance to do this." – Young Carer, 11 years old

"This has been validating, that my experiences matter and others go through similar things. It's very hard as a Young Carer to realise your issues also need help. You grow up quickly and you get used to it being normal. You put your own needs on the back burner and look after them last." – Young Carer, 16 years old

"The term young carers is quite new to me still. This helped me to learn about it, which will help other people too. A lot of young carers don't stop to see how much they do and how great they are. It gives you a place to talk about stuff with people who understand and sharing ways with how to deal with things, and help you understand or cope with things better. It has helped me cope with who I am, and not feeling alone. This is what my life is and that's not a bad thing. I have a more positive view on what I do." – Young Carer, 17 years old