



Dear Julie Lennard (Chief Executive Officer of DVLA)

The National Carer Organisations are contacting you in relation to unpaid carers getting access to driving theory and practical tests. An unpaid carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

Unpaid carers have highlighted that they have been experiencing difficulty and long waiting times to book their driving theory and practical tests.

For many unpaid carers being able to drive is extremely important as it enables them to carry out their caring responsibilities. This could include, but not limited to, taking their cared for person to medical appointments, hospital visits, undertaking essential shopping errands and provides them with more freedom for vital respite and short breaks from caring responsibilities. This issue is even more urgent for rural unpaid carers where there is less or limited access to public transport, resulting in them spending even more time travelling to undertake their unpaid caring responsibilities. Also, many unpaid carers could be caring for someone that has mobility issues and alternative forms of transport, outside of driving, may not be accessible for that individual.

One young sibling carer recently reported to us that they are having extreme difficulty applying and getting an available slot to book their driving theory test. This young carer needs to have the opportunity to sit their test as they are responsible for taking their disabled brother to and from the school they attend.

We hope that you would support the introduction of ringfenced driving theory and practical test slots for unpaid carers to help combat this issue that many unpaid carers, including young adult carers have experienced. We would be happy to facilitate a meeting for further discussion if this would be welcomed.

Thank you for giving this your attention and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Traynor

On behalf of the National Carer Organisations in Scotland

Contacts for further information

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The National Carer Organisations in Scotland are Carers Scotland, Carers Trust Scotland, the Coalition of Carers in Scotland, MECOPP, Shared Care Scotland, and the Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance.

Together we have a shared vision that all Scotland's unpaid carers will feel valued, included and supported as equal partners in the provision of care. The NCOs aim to achieve this through the representation of unpaid carers and giving them a voice at a national level.

We believe we can deliver more for unpaid carers by working together to share our knowledge and experience, and by focusing our collective efforts on achieving improvements in areas of policy and practice that are of greatest concern to unpaid carers.