WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL RESPITE FUND FOR CARERS

After working closely with Carers Trust as Chair of the National Garden Scheme for several years, I have always been inspired and delighted by all the work that is done to provide support for unpaid carers around the UK. When Carers Trust decided to mark the 70th birthday of our President Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal by setting up a new fund to provide respite for unpaid carers, I was delighted to be offered the opportunity to Chair this initiative.

With many lifelines shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic it has become so much more vital that unpaid carers are able to take time out to relax, reflect, and recharge their batteries. The public has also gained a huge understanding of how important respite is over the last 18 months. It is therefore so fitting that we launched Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal Respite Fund for Carers in May 2021. It has truly resonated with the public who can clearly identify with the need.

Six months since Her Royal Highness launched the fund, we are delighted to have raised over £150,000. This money has already provided much-needed grants to give unpaid carers respite from their caring roles. 100% of donations to the Respite Fund go directly to pay for unpaid carers to enjoy some respite. We still have a huge target ahead of us though. We aim to raise £3m over the next three years which will provide respite for 30,000 unpaid carers.

Please do join me as we reflect in our success so far, and our ambitions for the future.

Martin McMillan, OBE
Appeal Chair,
Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal Respite Fund for Carers
Carers Trust is a major charity for, with and about carers. We work to improve support services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems.

We do this with a UK-wide network of quality assured independent partners and through the provision of grants to help unpaid carers get the extra help they need to live their own lives. With these locally based Network Partners we are able to support unpaid carers in their homes through the provision of replacement care, and in the community with information, advice, emotional support, hands on practical help and access to much needed breaks. We offer specialist services for unpaid carers of people of all ages and conditions and a range of individually tailored support and group activities.

Our vision is that unpaid carers count and can access the help they need to live their lives.

**OUR NETWORK PARTNERS**

By working with over 120 local carer services across England, Scotland, and Wales, we can provide vital grants directly to unpaid carers. Our Network Partners can identify those unpaid carers most in need of a break from caring and apply to our Respite Fund for a grant of up to £400 for each unpaid carer.

Network Partners can also provide the essential replacement care so unpaid carers can fully enjoy their time out, knowing the person they care for is being looked after. Our flexible approach, based on what unpaid carers tell us they need, means that our grants have paid for all sorts of breaks, everything from a weekend away, a day’s fishing, gym membership or time with a friend, all with the cost of replacement care covered.

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### Learning and connecting, with a new skill

Fiona cares for her daughter, Annie, who has epilepsy and learning difficulties. Annie’s needs are so complex that she now lives in a care home. However, Fiona still spends a lot of her time visiting and supporting her daughter emotionally.

Fiona has found that she is able to connect with her daughter, and share her world, through the photographs she takes. We were able to award Fiona a grant of £131 from the Respite Fund for an online photography course. The course is giving Fiona the chance to pursue one of her passions and take time out for herself. In turn, she is continuing to share her world with her daughter.
TAKING A BREAK

Unpaid carers tell us how not taking a break from their caring role impacts their mental and physical health.

- Research has shown that 42% of carers in England have not taken a break of more than two days since they started looking after the person they care for.
- 72% of unpaid carers in Wales haven’t been able to take any breaks from their caring role whatsoever since the start of the pandemic around a year and a half ago. Over three quarters say they are exhausted from additional caring burdens during the pandemic and two in five say they simply can’t manage their caring role.
- 25% of young carers and 42% of young adult carers in Scotland are currently unable to take any break from their caring role.

With an estimated seven million unpaid carers in the UK, now, more than ever, we know there is a huge need for unpaid carers to have a break.

The pandemic has intensified many of the challenges that unpaid carers were already experiencing. It has meant the closure or reduction of respite services for the person they care for, such as those provided by day centres or replacement care in the home. Unpaid carers have not been able to enjoy as many group and peer support activities run by local Carers Trust services. Many have been looking after people who are shielding, meaning they have been unable to leave their homes at all. We know the impact of coronavirus on unpaid carers will be felt for some considerable time to come.

Our flexible Respite Fund means that unpaid carers can choose the sort of respite they most need, whatever form that takes.

Walking all year round with new waterproofs

Sally cares for her daughter, Sophie, who has a chromosome disorder. Sophie requires assistance in all aspects of her daily life. She is doubly incontinent and needs help with personal care, dressing and feeding. Additionally, as Sophie is unaware of dangers, she requires one-to-one supervision to ensure she stays safe.

Throughout the lockdown, Sophie attended day care so that her mum and dad could work. However, the lockdown meant that there was no opportunity for respite for Sally and her husband. This put a huge strain on their relationship.

Sally and her husband enjoy spending the few breaks they have walking together and being outdoors. With our Respite Fund grant of £300 they have bought new waterproof walking gear ensuring the couple can get out, even in bad weather.
MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR FIRST SIX MONTHS

Since the launch of Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal Respite Fund for Carers in May 2021, we have raised £151,000 from generous donations from individuals, trusts and corporations. We are putting the money to work in three ways:

- Though our #TimeForMe campaign, unpaid carers receive grants of up to £400 on a case-by-case, periodic basis.
- Our Carer Respite Support and Development Fund provides Carers Trust Network Partners with the opportunity to offer community or group-based respite support such as befriending services.
- Unpaid carers in need of emergency respite funding can also apply through their local carer service.

The carer services that we work with around the UK make their own decisions on the most effective way for them to support unpaid carers with respite.

Quarriers Carer Service in Aberdeenshire is using the Respite Fund to develop a menu of breaks including golf, sight-seeing tours, cooking, horse-riding, footgolf, dolphin watching, bowling, theatre trips and spa-days. Unpaid carers desperate for respite can take advantage of multiple experiences or one-off longer trips/events throughout the year. Recognising the importance of flexibility, unpaid carers can choose the kind of break they want at a time that suits them.

Caring for Carers at Improving Lives Plymouth is making a positive difference to local carers unable to leave home by providing subscriptions to services such as online magazines.

To understand the impact of the programme, we are measuring outcomes for carers such as improved physical or mental wellbeing, reduced isolation and increased resilience and optimism.

Improving wellbeing with a gym membership

Ally is a single mum to four sons including Adam who is autistic. His behaviour is extremely challenging and can be hard to manage as he can be threatening and violent. Throughout the lockdown, Adam has only been at school for one or two hours a day. Lockdown has been extremely challenging for the family as no one has been able to visit their house and they have been unable to visit others. With no help from other adults, Ally has found it extremely hard. She has struggled to find time for herself, and this has had a negative impact on her wellbeing.

We were able to use the Respite Fund to award Ally £300 for a gym membership. Once lockdown restrictions lifted, Ally has been enjoying time to herself and the structure that going to the gym has given her.
Help us to raise £3 million to enable us to support at least 30,000 unpaid carers.

Your generosity will help make a demonstrable difference to the health and wellbeing of thousands more of the UK’s unpaid carers.

To find out more, please contact:

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