Think Carer 2019 – Policy recommendations on caring for candidates in the 2019 General Election

Unpaid carers need sustainably-funded services

• Under the law unpaid carers have important rights to an assessment of their needs, and support.
• Support for carers includes information, benefits advice and time away from caring, including respite breaks.
• However, many of the services providing this support are experiencing significant funding pressures, creating uncertainty for carers.

Carers Trust wants the next government to deliver long overdue reform of social care funding so it is funded sufficiently, sustainably and securely. This would mean carers receive support when and how they need it.

Young carers and young adult carers need support to achieve their potential

• On top of going to school and college, young carers and young adult carers provide significant support to their families.
• Without being proactively identified and supported at an early stage, their caring role can damage their mental and physical health.
• Failure to support young carers also makes it difficult for them to achieve their potential at school, college and university, as well as in training and employment.

Carers Trust wants the next government to measure: young carers’ attendance and attainment at school as well as how many young carers are identified, assessed and supported. The government should also ensure that transition support for young carers from childhood to adulthood is sustainably funded.

Carers need to be identified early, and their needs responded to

• Professionals like GPs, social workers and teachers too often fail to identify carers. Left unidentified, unpaid carers do not get the support they need.
• Professionals need support and training so they can recognise carers and respond appropriately to their needs.
• Not all carers need support all the time. But all carers need to know that support for them, and the person they care for, is available if circumstances change.

Carers Trust wants the next government to ensure that health, care and education professionals are required to identify carers, and help them get appropriate support, so that caring is always a choice.