

**P-06-1209 Create a national list of all unpaid carers in Wales, Correspondence –
Petitioner to Committee, 19.09.23**

Whilst I understand and appreciate that Welsh Government officials have undertaken to identify lists of unpaid carers that are held by local authorities, health boards and third sector organisations I still feel there is a need for a centralised list that is held by the Welsh Government alone. The past few years have shown that Welsh Government are unable to easily identify unpaid carers as was the experience during the initial roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccines. The lists that do exist are unable to be shared with Welsh Government due to GDPR regulations and not all organisations who do hold those lists are as willing to disseminate information from Welsh Government as others are.

One must wonder how much money was spent on identifying those lists and the key coordinators as well as how that money could have been better spent in the pursuit of funding the initial setup costs of a National Register of Unpaid Carers.

Both myself and a colleague have recently met with both the Deputy Minister and her advisor, Andy Pithouse, to discuss the creation of a national register and during those meetings we offered an alternative solution through collaboration working with Carers Card UK. The Welsh Government could purchase the carers cards in bulk and the admin team at Carers Card UK would help to facilitate and create a portal that could be used by Welsh Government to monitor uptake and information gained from such a scheme. Such a scheme rolled out across Wales would also give unpaid carers access to a UK wide discount scheme, much like the scheme offered to holders of the Blue Light Card. Welsh Government would also have to opportunity to add Wales specific discounts at both a national and local level.

I appreciate the financial pressures placed on the Welsh Government at the current time, but one of the commitments in the National Strategy for Unpaid Carers in Wales is to better identify unpaid carers across the country. Without the creation and promotion of a national register or some other such scheme I fail to see how the Welsh Government can hope to achieve a positive outcome to this commitment.

As an unpaid carer representative and through my connections made on social media and attending various meeting both online and in person, I have spoken with many other unpaid carers both locally and across Wales. All those I have connected with and spoken to can see the value in having a National Register of Unpaid Carers in Wales.

I am disappointed that Carers Wales and Carers Trust Wales appear to not be backing the creation of a National Register citing that other challenges faced by unpaid carers are more pressing. I feel that the creation of said register would aid help those organisations in their endeavours to support and assist unpaid carers and would also add value to any future funding bids they would wish to make in their pursuit to improve the lives of unpaid carers in Wales.