**Family Action's Young Carers in Healthcare Project Shortlisted for Prestigious Award**

Family Action Windsor and Maidenhead Young Carers Service is thrilled to announce that its ‘Young Carers in Healthcare’ project has been shortlisted in the Young Carers category at this year’s prestigious Children and Young People Now awards.

This National Lottery-funded project, which aims to improve the identification and support of young carers in healthcare settings, has had a remarkable impact. With the dedicated work of three staff members, the project has trained over 300 healthcare practitioners across 30 teams, developed key tools like conversation pathways and carer contingency plans, and dramatically increased healthcare referrals for young carers from 9 to almost 60 in just two years.

Research shows that young carers often go unnoticed for an average of three years before they are properly identified and some care for over a decade before being recognised. Through the ‘Young Carers in Healthcare’ initiative, Family Action targeted the healthcare sector, training professionals to recognise and support young carers early in their journey.

The program equips healthcare staff to ask crucial questions about family life and to ensure young carers are linked to specialist services before their caring responsibilities reach crisis levels. By fostering curiosity around potential young carer roles and integrating a simple yet effective Young Carers Checklist into practice, the project has provided the healthcare sector with the tools needed to make real change.

Sarah Collin, Family Action’s Young Carers Service Manager, said: "We are absolutely delighted to be shortlisted for this award. Young carers take on an immense responsibility, often at the expense of their own physical and mental health. Our aim with this project has been to ensure that healthcare professionals can identify these young people early and provide them with the support they need. By working closely with primary care services, we have made a huge difference in how young carers are recognised and cared for within the healthcare system. It’s been a privilege to see the impact this has had on so many lives, and we are committed to continuing this vital work."

The initiative’s success is underscored by its lasting impact on healthcare practices. For example, Primary Care Networks (PCNs) are now developing pilots where all identified young carers will be invited to attend six-monthly Wellbeing Checks, ensuring they receive continuous support for their health and development. Additionally, 15 healthcare practitioners across 6 teams have established Young Carer Champions, dedicated to advocating for the needs of these young individuals.

Furthermore, the project’s healthcare roundtables have enabled an understanding of the healthcare sector, which has supported the service to tailor approaches to open up essential referral pathways, ensuring young carers are no longer overlooked. With a worrying 38% of young carers reporting mental health problems and a higher prevalence of self-harm among this group, early identification and support are critical.

Please visit [Windsor and Maidenhead Young Carers Service - Family Action](https://family-action.org.uk/services/windsor-and-maidenhead-young-carers-service/) to find out more.

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**Notes To Editors**

**About Family Action**

Family Action is a national charity supporting people through change, challenge and crisis, in local communities and through its UK-wide helpline, FamilyLine.

Founded in 1869, when societal norms about family were fixed and rigid, the charity that established the founding principles of social work has reinvented itself multiple times throughout its more than 150-year history. With its message that there are many ways to be a family, it’s relationships that matter, Family Action ensures it represents the changing needs of families and communities in the UK today.

Driven by the belief that family can shape the future, that early experience stays with us for better and worse and that everyone deserves dignity, respect and an equal chance at life, the charity runs specialist services that protect children and support young people and adults.

It provides direct, practical help to families and communities in need through a wide variety of programmes including help for new families, parenting, family and post-adoption support, counselling, youth mentoring, FOOD clubs and the National School Breakfast Programme.

For further information, please visit our website at [www.family-action.org.uk](https://www.family-action.org.uk/)

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