

Health & Care Bill: Report Stage [HoL]

Parliamentary Briefing – March 2022

Summary

- The Health and Care Bill provides an **opportunity to improve the integration** of health and social care services **to better meet the needs of children and young people.**
- Barnardo's is joining with Carers UK calling for changes to the Health and Care Bill:
 - To **protect the needs of all carers including young carers** when discharging patients from hospital.

Amendment 113 - young carers and safe discharge from hospital

- **Barnardo's has been concerned** about **the poor identification of young carers for many years, yet the Health and Care Bill risks making the situation worse.**
- A young carer is a child under the age of 18 who provides care, often to a relative who is unwell or disabled.
- 1 in 3 young carers have a mental health issue¹
- Carers UK estimates that carers save the economy £132 billion per year, an average of £19,336 per carer²
- **Clause 80** removes the '**discharge to assess**' requirement, which **requires the NHS to identify and consult the carer, if known.**
- The change will mean **relying on statutory guidance** that an NHS Trust and local authority would "**have regard to**", which is not equivalent to clear rights for carers set out in primary legislation.
- The **right to be consulted** is moving to an "**expectation to be consulted**" in guidance.
- Barnardo's shares Carers UK's concerns that young carers will remain hidden. They often aren't aware of their rights which means the onus is on professionals to identify them so they do not slip through the net.

Amendment 113 will:

- Place a duty on the NHS body to take reasonable steps to identify and consult any carer or potential carer of the patient about to be discharged.
- The NHS body must consult any carer or potential carer identified
 - (a) whether the carer is able, and is likely to continue to be able, to provide care for the patient needing care, and
 - (b) whether the carer is willing, and is likely to continue to be willing, to do so.
- a "carer" means any person, including any child under the age of 18, who provides or intends to provide care in respect of a patient to whom the NHS may provide services, but a person is not to be regarded as a carer if they provide or intend to provide care under or by virtue of a contract, or as voluntary work.

Amendment 59 – assessment of Integrated Care Board (ICB) impact on children and young people

- Barnardo's supports this amendment, championed by a range of children's charities, which would require NHS England to assess how well each integrated care board is meeting the needs of babies, children and young people aged 0-25, creating

¹ <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/supporting-young-carers/facts-about-young-carers>

² <https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/press-releases/facts-and-figures#:~:text=Carers%20save%20the%20economy%20%C2%A3,of%20%C2%A319%2C336%20per%20carer>

accountability for delivery of ICB duties to integrate services and promote the health and welfare of children.

More details can [be found here](#)

Recognising the needs of young carers when discharging patients from hospital

- A young carer is a child under the age of 18 who provides care, often to a relative who is unwell or disabled.
- The 2011 census reported almost 166,000 young carers between the ages of 5 and 17 in England.³
- Research from 2018 estimated **800,000 children in England provide regular care. That's 1 in 5 children estimated to be a young carer.**⁴
- And **nearly 260,000 young carers are likely to be providing high levels of care.**⁵
- **180,000 young carers** in England are thought to be missing out on support because they are unknown to their local authority.⁶
- The Care Act 2014 gave young carers under the age of 18 the right to a needs assessment and placed a duty on local authorities to take reasonable steps to identify young carers in their area who may have support needs.
- Barnardo's report, [Still Hidden, Still Ignored](#), found that young carers are still slipping through the net. Over 70% of Barnardo's frontline workers agreed that NHS services needed to do more to identify young carers.⁷
- Caring Together, carried out a short survey on Young Carers
 - On average young carers were caring for three years before being identified.
 - Some young carers had been caring for more than 10 years before receiving any support.
 - Only 54% of young carers reported having had a young carers' assessment.
 - Out of 60 young carers 0 were identified through hospitals or mental health services.⁸

The case for Amendment 113:

- Clause 80 removes the requirement on the NHS to identify and consult the carer, if known before hospital discharge. Barnardo's is concerned that the number of children who are identified as young carers and offered support will be reduced.
- Amendment 113 would place a duty on the NHS body to take reasonable steps to identify and consult any carer or potential carer of the patient about to be discharged.
 - There is a duty on the NHS to ensure that carers are consulted and identified.
 - The duties to involve carers would also include parents of disabled children and young carers as well as carers of adults.
 - No assumptions are made about the carer's willingness and ability to care by the hospital.

³ [ONS summary of unpaid care by 5 to 17-year-olds in England and Wales](#)

⁴ [BBC and Nottingham University research into Young Carers, 2018](#)

⁵ Ibid

⁶ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-59222288> - Their analysis found some councils reported having less than 50 young carers, whilst others reported over 2,000 young carers

⁷ <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/still-hidden-still-ignored.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.caringtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Caring-Together-Young-Carers-snapshot-poll-Feb-2022-PDF-190kB.pdf>

Young carer case study – November 2021

Following a short hospital stay after a stroke, a mother and her 13-year-old son were sent home with little information upon discharge beyond being told she would be referred to a stroke clinic. Immediately becoming a young carer led to her son being worried about his mother's safety and reluctant to go to school in case she needed him. There was no sign posting by the hospital for a young carer needs assessment or wider support. There was no sign posting by the hospital for a young carer needs assessment or wider support.⁹

About Barnardo's

Barnardo's is the UK's largest national children's charity. In 2020-21 we supported 382,872 children, young people, parents and carers, through nearly 800 services and partnerships. For more information contact Ceri Finnegan, Policy and Public Affairs Lead, on ceri.finnegan@barnardos.org.uk.

⁹ Case study provided by a young carer supported by Barnardo's in November 2021.