



House of Commons  
Work and Pensions Committee

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# Employment Support for Carers: Government Response to the Committee's Thirteenth Report

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Thirteenth Special Report of Session  
2017–19

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## Work and Pensions Committee

The Work and Pensions Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Work and Pensions and its associated public bodies.

### Current membership

[Rt Hon Frank Field MP](#) (*Labour, Birkenhead*) (Chair)

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### Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

### Publication

Committee reports are published on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website and in print by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the [inquiry page](#) of the Committee's website.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Anne-Marie Griffiths (Clerk), Katy Stout (Second Clerk), Libby McEnhill (Senior Committee Specialist), Rod McInnes (Committee Specialist), Tom Tyson (Committee Specialist), Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Senior Media and Policy Officer), Esther Goosey (Senior Committee Assistant), Michelle Garratty (Committee Assistant).

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# Thirteenth Special Report

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The Work and Pensions Committee published its Thirteenth Report of Session 2017–19, *Employment support for carers* (HC 581) on 17 May 2018. The Government response was received on 13 July 2018 and is appended to this report.

## Appendix: Government Response

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### Introduction

1. The Government welcomes the Work and Pensions Select Committee's thirteenth report of Session 2017–19, produced following its inquiry into the support offered to informal carers and those transitioning into caring roles.
2. The Government recognises and values the vital contribution made by carers in supporting some of the most vulnerable in society, including those with disabilities and older people with care needs. The Government also recognises the important contribution carers can make in the workplace.
3. Currently, too many carers fall out of the labour market because the challenges of juggling care and work become too great. This can have profound negative impacts on the financial and wider wellbeing of those carers and their families, both at the time and in later life, due to the reduction in income, pension savings and social networks caused by leaving work. It can also mean that their skills and capabilities are lost to employers.
4. There were an estimated 5.4 million informal carers in the United Kingdom in 2016/17. Around 53% of all adult informal carers are in employment: 35% full-time and 18% part-time.<sup>1</sup> We want to ensure that these current, and future, working carers are supported to remain in the labour market.
5. This report is part of the Government's wider work to address the health and social care system. The forthcoming adult social care Green Paper will include a focus on how society supports carers as a vital part of a sustainable health and social care system, to ensure that they are properly valued, recognised and supported to provide care in a way that supports their own health and wellbeing. As we want to integrate the plans for social care with the new NHS plan and so we now intend to publish the Social Care Green paper in the Autumn around the same time as the NHS plan.
6. In the meantime the Government is working to improve a range of areas affecting carers and their ability to combine work with their caring responsibilities.
7. In its report, the Committee makes a number of recommendations, which include amendments to the current benefits system for carers, employment policy relating to the rights carers have to enable them to combine work and their caring responsibilities and the role of the Government as a model employer.
8. This document sets out details of the work we are doing across Government which ranges from improving flexible working practices, and highlighting the current

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1 Family Resource Survey 2016/17: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692771/family-resources-survey-2016-17.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692771/family-resources-survey-2016-17.pdf)

information and guidance available to carers and where this could be improved, to ensuring that the Civil Service itself can continue to improve the range of support it currently offers its employees who combine work with caring responsibilities. It also sets out the Government's response to the recommendations made by the Committee.

## Chapter 1: Benefits System

9. We recognise that people of working age with care needs face a number of challenges and that there are many common questions about the sustainability of the care system. The Government is considering the issues facing those of working-age alongside the engagement on care and support for older people in the Green Paper, whilst continuously reviewing the current provisions for carers.

10. The primary purpose of Carer's Allowance (CA) is to provide a measure of financial support and recognition for people who give up the opportunity of full-time employment in order to provide regular and substantial care for a severely disabled person. It is not intended to replace lost or foregone earnings in their entirety.

11. The rate of CA has increased from £53.90 to £64.60 a week since 2010, meaning an additional £550 a year for carers. The level of CA is also protected through uprating it by the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

12. In addition to CA, carers on low incomes can claim income-related benefits, such as Income Support and Pension Credit. These benefits can be paid to carers at a higher rate than those without caring responsibilities through the carer premium or the equivalent additional amount for carers respectively. In April 2018, these premiums were increased from £34.95 to £36.00 per week.

13. A National Insurance Class 1 credit is awarded for each week that CA is paid to a working age carer. Class 1 credits help towards the conditions of entitlement to all contributory benefits, as well as the new State Pension.

14. For those carers who can undertake some part-time work, there is an earnings limit in CA. In April 2018, the CA earnings limit increased from £116 to £120 a week, net of certain expenses (see below). Carers who can undertake some work can therefore benefit from greater financial independence and wider social interaction.

15. The earnings limit for CA is a figure net of certain expenses, including income tax, National Insurance contributions and half of any contributions to an occupational or personal pension. In addition, up to half the net earnings figure calculated as above can be allowed towards the cost of alternative care for the disabled person, or for a child aged under 16, while the carer is at work. CA rules also allow for further deductions from the net earnings figure to be made, these include:

- expenses wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of the duties of any employment; e.g. equipment, special clothing and travel between workplaces, though not between home and work;
- advance of earnings or a loan from the employer;
- the first £20 a week plus half the rest of the income from a boarder;

- the whole of any contribution towards living and accommodation costs from someone living in the person’s home (other than boarders and tenants); and
- allowances for the business expenses of self-employed people.

These rules mean that people can earn significantly more than the earnings limit and still get CA.

#### Recommendation 1

We recommend that the Government introduce a taper for Carers’ Allowance at the same rate as used for Universal Credit.

16. CA is not a means-tested benefit and its primary purpose is to provide a measure of financial support and recognition for people who give up the opportunity of full-time employment in order to provide regular and substantial care for a severely disabled person. The purpose that the earnings limit serves in CA is very different to that of a taper – it is essentially there to provide a test of whether the carer is in “gainful employment” and, therefore, eligible for CA. Tapers are designed to make sure that work pays in means tested benefits, and already work well for those carers also claiming Universal Credit.

17. A cost neutral taper would need to begin at a level lower than the current earnings limit. We are concerned that introducing a cost neutral taper, effectively reducing the amount of CA for some, would introduce a disincentive to work for some of those carers with the lowest incomes, as well as significantly complicating the current CA scheme. For these reasons, we are not in favour of introducing a taper in CA. We will, of course, continue to keep the earnings rules in CA under review to ensure they are meeting their objectives.

#### Recommendation 2

We recommend a link between the National Living Wage and the Carer’s Allowance earnings threshold. For as long as 16-hour rules exist in the benefits system, the Carer’s Allowance threshold should be equivalent to no less than 16 hours at the National Living Wage.

18. In April 2018, the CA earnings limit was increased from £116 to £120 per week net of certain expenses. This 3.4% increase was higher than the current average earnings growth.<sup>2</sup> The Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast that average earnings will increase by around 7.5% between 2015 and 2018, whereas we will have increased the CA earnings limit by around 9%.

19. There is no legal obligation for the CA earnings limit to be reviewed or raised annually. Nevertheless, each year we take a number of factors, such as work incentives and changes to wages, into account when looking at whether or not an increase is warranted and affordable. We will continue to keep the earnings rules and the way they operate under review. Our priority is to ensure that they encourage CA claimants to combine their caring duties with some employment where they can.

20. Furthermore, as the earnings limit in CA is a figure net of certain expenses such as half of any contributions to an occupational or personal pension, or a contribution

<sup>2</sup> Current average earnings growth figure used was average earnings growth (Sep 17).

towards the cost of care while the carer is at work, carers can earn more than the earnings limit and still get CA. This means that many carers can work for 16 hours at the National Living Wage while retaining access to CA and benefits such as Working Tax Credit (WTC) and free childcare allowance. The example below shows how this would work in practice:

***Claimant (over 25) works for 16 hours at the NLW and has net earnings of £125.28 per week. This would usually result in a disallowance to CA because earnings are over the £120 net earnings limit. But if this claimant chose to boost their savings for retirement and £12 per week towards a workplace pension, £6 would be counted as a deduction towards the CA earnings limit. So the figure used to determine CA eligibility would be £119.28.***

21. In the example above, the claimant would keep full entitlement to CA, all their net income from earnings, and access to relevant benefits that rely on the “16 hour rule”, such as WTC or access to free childcare for three or four year old children. References to contributions towards a workplace or occupational pension, and a contribution to paid care while the carer is at work, have now been prominently placed on the gov.uk CA page,<sup>3</sup> so that carers can access clearer information about some of the deductions that are available.

22. In addition to these deductions, and as already mentioned, CA rules also allow for further deductions from the net earnings figure to be made, including expenses wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of the duties of any employment. For example, equipment, special clothing and travel between workplaces.

23. It is our view that the CA earnings limit is generally working well for many claimants and allows them to keep a foothold in the labour market while undertaking their full-time caring responsibilities. Since 2010, we have regularly increased the CA earnings limit, doing so when it is warranted and affordable. In April 2018, it was increased by 3.4%, an increase higher than the current average earnings growth.<sup>4</sup>

### Recommendation 3

We recommend a series of simple steps to improve support for carers:

- Guidance on Carer’s Allowance on the gov.uk website should include full details of the taxes and expense that can be deducted from earnings before the threshold applies.
- As part of the application process for Carer’s Allowance, claimants should receive information on support services, including signposts to those provided locally by the third sector. This information should also be made available in GP surgeries and hospitals.
- People who only claim Carer’s Allowance are not currently entitled to an appointment with a Jobcentre Work Coach. If they want one, they should be eligible for one.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance>

<sup>4</sup> Current average earnings growth figure used was average earnings growth (Sep 17).

- DWP should review Work Coach training and guidance to ensure it adequately covers carers awareness, and collect data on the quality of the support and accuracy of information given to carers as part of regular performance monitoring.

24. After the WPSC oral evidence session on 6 February 2018, officials at DWP worked with Government Digital Service (GDS) colleagues to change the gov.uk ‘eligibility’ to Carers Allowance page.<sup>5</sup> It now makes specific reference to two of the most common CA allowable deductions, a contribution to private or occupational pension and a contribution to the cost of care/childcare while the carer is at work. This is featured prominently on the page, and means that carers have clearer information about the kinds of deductions that are available to them.

25. When developing the Carer’s Allowance digital service, which is now used by 80% of new CA claimants and has 90% satisfaction rates, extensive user research was carried out to design the service in a user centred way and this included how people responded to information and established their needs throughout their application. It was found that the application form itself was unsuitable for signposting and information because its primary focus is to capture claimant data. It also found that users wanted the ‘thank you’ page (the page displayed after a claim is submitted) to contain assurance that the claim had been received rather than details about where else they could go for support. However, the provision of signposting information forms part of ongoing user research around orientation to ensure that claimants get the right support for them.

26. Additionally, the Carers Employment Digital Discovery Project, a cross-government initiative led by DWP and co-funded by DWP, Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Government Equalities Office (GEO), aims to explore the information needs of working carers. The project will assess the current online information provision, including that of Government, and conduct research with working carers to ascertain whether their user needs are currently being met. The findings from this research will help to determine whether improvements are needed to the available information, and if so how those improvements should be made. The overarching aim of the strategy that this work is part of, is ultimately to reduce the proportion of carers falling out of the labour market because they feel unable to continue in paid work as a result of their caring responsibilities. This project will help to further develop the evidence base around the information needs of working carers, including how best to ensure that they can access the information they need to make informed decisions about caring and working, and who is best placed to provide that information.

27. For carers who are eligible for CA there is no conditionality applied to their benefit. This means that currently there is no requirement for carers in receipt of CA to be showing that they are actively seeking a job or to attend an appointment with a Work Coach. This will also be the case in Universal Credit (UC) for those receiving the Carers Element. This means they are not required to attend interviews with a Work Coach.

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5 <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/eligibility>

28. It is already good practice in Jobcentres for carers that wish to seek advice around the support available to remain in or re-enter the labour market are able to have a conversation with a member of staff who will be able to direct them to sources of support and be quickly signposted to any available guidance.

29. To support this advice provided by Work Coaches there are currently two optional training modules available to help raise awareness of some of the specific challenges faced by carers surrounding employment. DWP keeps its e-learning offering under continual review to ensure that it provides adequate training to enable Work Coaches to offer the correct support and advice to carers.

30. A quality assurance regime is in place in Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS) that focuses on the quality of all interactions with the claimant and ensures that claimant commitments are tailored and take into account individual circumstances, including caring responsibilities.

31. However, we are starting to look into the possibilities of more informal quality assurance processes in relation to carers in JCP. Currently there is opportunity to carry out specific deep dive checks on individual claimants to look at the way they are being handled, if there is a request to do so. The process involves reviewing any requirements that are set out in the Claimants Commitments to ensure they are relevant and appropriate.

## Chapter 2: Employment Policy

32. The Government is committed to supporting carers who are in work and want to remain in work. Our vision is for carers in the workforce to get the same recognition as parents in the workforce.

33. We want to enable them to provide care as they would wish, but minimise any negative impact on their own health and wellbeing, employment or other life chances. We also acknowledge that individual needs should be balanced with business needs. This is why through the Fuller Working Lives agenda we have made sure that policies are in place – like flexible working, which can support carers in work and allow businesses to continue to benefit from the skills and capabilities they offer.

34. Government believes the opportunity to work flexibly can be key for carers in successfully balancing caring roles with employment. We will continue to work to make flexible working a reality for all employees to help realise the potential in the labour market - including that of carers.

35. Access to flexible working practices, such as flexi-time, compressed hours and remote working is key to helping older workers and carers stay in the labour market. Working patterns are becoming increasingly more flexible: in the three months to April 2018 there were 24 million people working full-time, 259,000 more than for a year earlier. There were 8.6 million people working part time, 181,000 more than for a year earlier.<sup>6</sup>

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6 ONS Labour Market Statistics, June 2018: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworklesshouseholds/januarytomarch2018#employment-rate-for-women-increases-as-the-age-of-the-youngest-dependent-child-increases>



36. Based on 2011 data, around 60% of employees had done some form of flexible working in the previous year, up from 56% in 2006.<sup>7</sup>

#### Recommendation 4

We recommend the Flexible Working Regulations 2014 be amended to ensure the right to request flexible working exists from the first day of employment.

37. The Flexible Working Regulations 2014 provide all employees with the right to request flexible work from their employer after 26 weeks of consecutive employment. Over 90% of employees have more than 26 weeks continuous service with their employer.<sup>8</sup>

38. The Department for Business estimated that the 2014 regulations would lead to a further 80,000+ requests for flexible working – leading to 60,000+ new working arrangements a year. The Government has committed to evaluate the impact of the Flexible Working Regulations, including how effective it has been in achieving this estimate. The evaluation will be based on robust survey data and will be undertaken in 2019.<sup>9</sup>

39. As part of the Industrial Strategy's Ageing Grand Challenge, Government is working to galvanise further action to support carers in the workforce. This includes working with businesses to encourage more flexible practices to support carers - for example, putting in place caring plans, agreements and return to work policies and selecting 'caring champions'. We know there are good examples of companies already seeking to support carers within their workforces and we want to work with employers to scale this up.

40. Flexible working is a priority for Government. We would like it to be an option for employees, whatever their personal circumstances. That is why we have set up the Flexible Working Taskforce.

41. The members of the Taskforce have been drawn from across Government, business and representative organisations. It is co-chaired by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and by the Chartered Institute of Personnel development. The members all have active agendas on flexible working, and bring with them a commitment to do more to promote it. The intention is to draw efforts together and develop a consolidated and co-ordinated action plan to promote more flexible work places.

42. The first question the taskforce is tackling is how all sides can work together to make a reality of the Prime Minister's call for businesses to make flexible working a reality for all employees by advertising all jobs as flexible from day one, unless there are solid business reasons not to.

43. This is a little different from the Select Committee's recommendation in an important respect as it places the responsibility on the organisation to offer flexible working, rather than on the employee to ask.

44. Government considers that the key challenge is designing work so that it can be flexible. That question needs to be tackled organisationally to achieve real change. Businesses

7 Work Life Balance Employee Survey, 2011 and 2006: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/32153/12-p151-fourth-work-life-balance-employee-survey.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32153/12-p151-fourth-work-life-balance-employee-survey.pdf)

8 BEIS analysis of Labour Force Survey.

9 Modern Workplaces Consultation: Impact Assessment, 2012: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/impact-assessments/IA12-030.pdf>

need to explore how flexible working can work across the board – rather than just in relation to specific roles. That is a broader and more challenging question which is why we are seeking to work with business and other organisations through the taskforce.

45. The group’s work will also feed into the evaluation of the Right to Request Flexible Working Regulations.

#### Recommendation 5

There is a strong case for five days’ statutory paid carer’s leave based on the existing statutory leave system. We recommend the Government introduce this policy when resources allow and provide a full impact assessment for such a policy in response to this report.

46. Government is committed to explore the case for statutory carer’s leave.

47. The Carers’ Action Plan was published on Tuesday 5 June.<sup>10</sup> It set out the cross-Government programme of work to support carers over the next two years. Alongside other measures to help and support carers, that looked at their employment and financial well-being.

48. In the Action Plan the Government made a commitment to consider dedicated employment rights for carers, alongside existing employment rights (such as the right to request flexible working and the right to time off for family and dependents).

49. The Government notes the Committee’s request to provide a full impact assessment for statutory carer’s leave. A full impact assessment would require extensive analysis and would need to be underpinned by practical considerations such as eligibility, extent of take up and process. Government is not at that stage of policy development.

50. We have set up an official level working group (DHSC, DWP, BEIS, HMT) to work on this. This includes considering the practical questions that arise around introducing dedicated employment rights with the support of analysts so that any emerging carer’s leave proposal is most effective.

### Chapter 3: Government as Model Employer

#### Recommendation 6

We recommend that the Government adopts an approach to employing carers in line with existing best practice, including membership of Employers for Carers and Happy to Talk Flexible Working scheme.<sup>10</sup> We further recommend that Government collect and publish information on each department’s support for carers in their employment policies and practices. This should be published annually and include:

- The percentage of jobs advertised as flexible;
- The number of requests for flexible working received, accepted and denied;
- Policy on carer’s leave, and take-up of such leave;

- Whether the Department has a designated carer's policy and if so, what it includes;
- When applicable, the Department's level of recognition under the new employer benchmarking scheme.

51. We take very seriously our responsibilities towards our employees with caring responsibilities and aim to be a model employer in this area. Caring is a significant area for very many civil servants. In the 2017 Civil Service People Survey, 23% of respondents identified as carers, 67,146 civil servants in total.<sup>11</sup>

52. All departments have a range of supportive measures in place to help carers both in relation to their ongoing caring responsibilities and specific domestic emergencies. These comprise a mixture of paid and unpaid leave plus opportunities to work flexibly and at home for example around medical appointments. The aim is to enable carers to continue to be productive and engaged around their domestic commitments and to keep them in the workforce wherever possible.

53. We have been keen to build on the support already available, raising awareness and encouraging the use of relevant policies. In Carers Week (11–18 June 2018), the Civil Service launched a model carers' charter for adoption by individual departments. This brings together in one place the information and support available in that department for employees with caring responsibilities and their managers. This makes it much easier for carers to access the help they need to maintain their work-life balance. All eighteen main Whitehall departments have committed to adopting the charter.

54. We have chosen a charter approach rather than promoting a carers' policy because provision for carers is already included in all our relevant HR policies. In our view, the most helpful approach is to signpost people to these policies while making clear our overall commitment to supporting carers in combining work and caring.

55. Also in Carers Week, we launched a Civil Service-wide carer's passport. This is a simple communication tool that enables a carer and their manager to discuss and document the flexibilities needed to combine caring and work. The aim is to minimise the need to re-negotiate these flexibilities every time an employee moves post, moves between departments or is assigned a new manager. The passport is designed to be a living document that is reviewed every year and in response to any changes in the nature or impact of the caring responsibilities.

56. Civil Service Employee Policy, as part of the Cabinet Office, provides an HR consultancy service to the whole of the Civil Service and works closely with Employers for Carers. Their materials and advice were used in producing our carers' charter. A number of individual departments are members - DfT, DWP, DHSC, FCO, GLD, Home Office, MOD DE&S. We will be drawing the attention of other departments to the benefits of membership.

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11 Civil Service People Survey, 2017: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/698824/Civil\\_Service\\_People\\_Survey\\_2017\\_results\\_by\\_demographic\\_groups.xlsx](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698824/Civil_Service_People_Survey_2017_results_by_demographic_groups.xlsx)

57. Employers for Carers, in collaboration with DHSC, is currently piloting a scheme for accrediting the support for carers provided by employers. Once this pilot has been evaluated, we will consider next steps.

58. Flexible working, in its different forms, is widespread in the Civil Service. We fully recognise its benefits in improving employees' work-life balance and wellbeing, helping to attract and retain a diverse workforce, particularly those with caring responsibilities, increasing productivity and reducing costs.<sup>12</sup> As part of our approach to being an inclusive employer, we expect managers to consider the scope for flexible working as a routine part of their roles. This is an important part of our culture and means that formal procedures are used relatively rarely.

59. Working patterns are agreed subject to business need and arrangements can be contractual or informal depending on circumstances. They include part-time working, compressed hours, job shares, flexi-time and homeworking. An example of the support we offer is the Civil Service job share finder site, an online job share database which helps civil servants find and manage information so that they can make compatible job share matches with other civil servants.

60. It is also standard practice to advertise Civil Service posts as available for flexible working unless there is a strong business case for a different approach. We are looking at whether more could be done to explain to prospective applicants what is meant by describing posts as available for flexible working and will consider the Committee's suggestion that we adopt the 'Happy to Talk Flexible Working' logo in that context. The aim of this work will be to ensure that the vast majority of posts are advertised as flexible and there would then be little benefit in publishing a figure of the number of posts advertised as not being available for flexible working.

61. Although information is not held centrally about the numbers of civil servants across all types of flexible working patterns, the number of staff working part-time is collected quarterly by ONS and published as part of the Public Sector employment bulletin.<sup>13</sup> As of December 2017, there were 99,560 Civil Servants working part-time, representing 23% of all civil servants.

62. The Committee proposes that we publish annual figures on requests made for flexible working. We are not convinced it would be helpful to introduce new reporting arrangements. Formal requests for flexible working often concern part-time working and so there would be duplication with the figures already published. Figures on formal requests would also not cover the many informal arrangements and would therefore under-report the amount of flexible working taking place.

63. The Civil Service offers a flexible package of paid and unpaid special leave and unpaid career breaks to support carers alongside other employees.

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12 "[The government] has a vital role as an employer in leading by example, and extolling the benefits of employing carers to businesses and other partners. Several examples of best practice that came to light during our inquiry were from within the Civil Service. But we were both surprised and disappointed that just six government departments are members of the Employers for Carers forum and only five have specific carer policies. We welcome the employer benchmarking scheme commissioned by the Government as a means of driving change. Every department should be targeting the highest level of recognition".

13 Public Sector Employment Bulletin: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/publicsectoremploymentreferencetable>

64. The Civil Service special leave policy provides:

- paid and unpaid special leave which can be granted in a range of circumstances subject to a limit of 20% of the employee's working days over a 12 month period
- discretion for managers to grant up to 5 days' paid leave in relation to the statutory right to unpaid leave to deal with an emergency involving a dependent
- unpaid career breaks which can be taken for between 3 months and two years. Some departments offer longer career breaks of up to 5 years for caring purposes.

65. The Committee recommends that we publish annual figures on the take-up of carers' leave. The special leave taken by carers is not recorded separately from that taken by other employees and we do not wish to add to departments' workload by introducing new reporting arrangements. What is important is that carers know how they can be assisted by the types of leave are available to them. This is an important function of the carers' charter and carer's passport which we have launched. By raising awareness and understanding amongst employees and their managers, we can make a reality of our ambition be a model employer in supporting carers and helping them to stay in the workplace.

66. Individual departments also offer a range of support to the carers that they employ. For example the Department for Work and Pensions as an employer recognises that people who are in work have to balance their work with their home and family life. DWP has a dedicated Carers page with easy access to a range of internal and external supportive information, including signposting to partner organisations such as Employers for Carers and Charity for Civil Servants.

67. Within DWP our policies aim to enable business needs to be met whilst being as family friendly and flexible as practicable to support and encourage staff in balancing their lives. Our Carer Toolkit links to the guidance, policies and procedures covering a range of circumstances to support staff who have caring responsibilities. It also includes links to other organisations who can offer help and support.

68. DWP has also appointed an Age and Carers Champion at board level, who after consultation, set a priority in 2018/19 to review the support we provide for our carer community. This included confirmation that DWP would adopt the Civil Service wide Carers' Charter and Carer's Passport so that there was an up to date comprehensive package of support provided to those with caring responsibilities and their line managers

69. A newly formed and active social intranet group Carers in DWP is now established and has doubled in size over to last six months

70. During Carers Week 2018 there were a range of information activities including an all-staff telephone call hosted by our Age and Carer Champion and supported by our partners in Employer for Carers. During the celebration week DWP launched the Civil Service wide Carers' Charter and Carer's Passport, showcasing role models, sharing carer experiences and actively signposting our people to the help and support that is available to them.