What is the Young Carers Pledge?
The Young Carers Pledge outlines the commitment that NHS employees are making to Young Carers.

What is a Young Carer?
A Young Carer is anyone under the age of 18 who provides unpaid care to a friend or family member who could not manage without them. This could be due to an illness, disability, mental health illness or substance misuse.

How was this pledge created?
The Young Carers Pledge is based on the Young Carers Wish list – this is a document that the Young Carers created to tell professionals what they wanted from them. The wish list is now part of the Surrey Memorandum of Understanding for Carers. The pledge was formed by a group of professionals from the NHS, Local Authority and voluntary organisations.
How can you embed the Young Carers Pledge into your every day practices?

It is very easy for Young Carers to go unidentified and unsupported. In Surrey, we have a Young Carer Pathway which supports staff to recognise and support Young Carers appropriately.

The NHS Young Carer Health Champions have developed their own film Out of the Woods - YouTube describing why they think it is important that they are identified and supported.

Surrey have a Young Carer Pathway to support professionals in the identification, support and referral process of Young Carers. The Surrey Carers Prescription is a fantastic, quick and simple way to refer Young Carers to expert support.

Safeguarding Children

A young carer is a young person under the age of eighteen who has a responsibility for caring on a regular basis for a relative who has an illness or disability. This can be primary or secondary caring and leads to a variety of losses for the young carer.

Surrey Young Carers Health Survey Key findings:
- Young carers were on average caring for 14 hours
- 11% had sustained an injury due to their caring role with less than half having told their GP they were caring for anyone
- 35% recognised the symptoms of an eating disorder
- 9% had self-harmed
- 60% find it difficult to socialise
- 62% stated they struggled to keep up with school work

If there are concerns that a young carer is at serious risk of neglect, abuse or harm, this must be referred to the Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by completing a MAARF (Multiagency Referral Form).

Unless there is reason to believe that it would put the child at risk, young carers should be told if there is a need to make a referral if possible, the young carer consent should be sought through a discussion of why the referral must be made and the possible outcomes.

The extent and effect of their caring responsibilities may satisfy the criteria for children in Need (§17 CA 1989) particularly where a child is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development because of their caring responsibilities or may satisfy the child protection threshold (§47 CA 1989) for being at risk of significant harm or may have suffered significant harm and compulsory intervention by children’s social care is required and a strategy discussion convened.

Use the Surrey Carers Prescription to refer to the Surrey Young Carers Service
To make an electronic referral via the Surrey Carers Prescription, log onto www.actionforcarers.org.uk/sp

Please read in conjunction with Surrey Safeguarding Children Board Procedures:
http://surreyct.procedures.org.uk/Html/procedures-for-specific-circumstances/young-carers
How do you ask the right questions to identify a Young Carer?

Identifying a Young Carer is not always easy – perhaps the young person doesn’t know that they are a Carer. To support professionals in having meaningful conversations with young people, Surrey have developed a Young Carer Identification Script with the input of the Young Carers themselves.
There are around 14,700 Young Carers in Surrey but only 2,200 of these are accessing support.

- There are approximately 700,000 young carers in the UK (2010).
- 50,000 young carers look after someone with a mental health illness.
- 68% of young carers are bullied in school.
- Young adult carers are TWICE as likely not to be in education, training or employment.
- 38% of young carers develop a mental health issue as a direct result of their caring role and responsibility.
- Those who have a parent with a mental health illness are 2-3 times more likely to develop mental health problems themselves. Support can reduce the likelihood by 40%.
- 11% sustain an injury due to their caring role with less than half telling their GP.
- 60% find it difficult to socialise.
- 35% recognised the symptoms of an eating disorder.
- Young Carers care for an average of 14 hours a week.
- 62% stated that they struggled to keep up with school work.
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- 9% had self-harmed.