



Session 3

11 April 2024

11:00 - 12:15

YOU HAVE 12 SESSIONS TO CHOOSE FROM THIS MORNING. PLEASE CHOOSE ONE SESSION TO ATTEND

SYMPOSIUM (1 SYMPOSIUM SESSION IS AVAILABLE)

RESETTING THE DIAL - SUPPORTING AND CHANGING THE LIVES OF YOUNG CARERS AND YOUNG ADULT CARERS IN IRELAND SYMPOSIUM (4 PRESENTATIONS IN THIS SESSION)

a. Predictors of Depression in Young Carers in Ireland

Aoife Bowman Grangel

Caregiving in adolescence, specifically when directed towards a parent, is likely to be associated with increased depression. This study examines whether young carers of parents (CPs) are more likely to be depressed when compared to those caring for other family members and non-caring youth. Using data from two waves of the Growing Up in Ireland Study (N = 3,312), we examined the above associations cross-sectionally (Aged 17; T1) and longitudinally (Aged 20; T2) using Hierarchical Logistic Regression Analyses. We examined whether peer/and or parent relationship quality at 17 years was predictive of depression in CPs. Compared to non-caring youth, CPs were 3.67 times more likely to be depressed at T1. However, caregiving did not predict depression status at T2. Interestingly, the strongest predictor of depression at T2 was T1 depression status, increasing one's risk by almost 5 times. Peer relationships were important predictors of depression cross-sectionally. However, positive parental relationships were protective against depression in CPs at both timepoints. This is the first comparative study examining depression risk in young carers in an Irish context. Moreover, it is the first to use population-based, longitudinal data to examine depression risk in CPs. These findings show that young carers are a heterogeneous group, with mental health outcomes varying depending on the caregiving context. In addition to having implications for research, this highlights a need for tailored support and early interventions for adolescents caring for a parent, to prevent them embarking on a trajectory of depressive symptoms that pervades into adulthood.

b. The Strengths and Struggles Experienced by Young Carers Regarding Their Future Careers While in Upper Secondary School

Breda Moloney

Young carers are found to be more vulnerable than their peers to not be in employment, education, or training (NEET). Differentiating young carers' needs at upper adolescence stage from younger carers is a significant issue to decipher the nuances involved at this pivotal transitional stage of career development. There is a lack of research that examines young carers who are nearing school completion and who find themselves confronted with making future employment and education related decisions whilst still involved in a family caring role. To achieve a more in-depth understanding of caring and future aspirations while in upper-level secondary school, an exploratory study was conducted to illuminate young carers' experiences and perspectives. An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis approach was adopted which included eight semi-structured interviews with young carers who were either nearing or recently completed upper secondary school education. An emerging theme from the data analysis highlighted the 'Struggles & Strengths' that the young carer role can bring. While managing the demands of the caring role alongside completing schoolwork, the experience can often motivate

young carers, bringing resilience and a steadfastness to pursue a successful career. For young carers to be adequately supported within upper secondary school, it is imperative to raise awareness, among teachers and through school policy, of the strengths and struggles those young carers experience, while faced with important decisions about future employment, education, and career.

c. Sharing the Caring: Young Carers' Experiences and Access to Supports in Ireland **Niamh Finucane**

The YOUNGCARERS research project (2022-2023) funded by the Irish Research Council New Foundations programme, aimed to gather new evidence about the experiences and support needs of young carers and young adult carers in Ireland. A national survey of young carers (n= 131) and seven participatory workshops led to clear findings about the impact of caring on young people. Young carers experience a complex spectrum of positive and negative experiences associated with caring, which impact their health and well-being and make it difficult for them to engage in social, leisure, employment/training, or education opportunities. Stress and loneliness are common shared experiences. Worryingly, many are at risk of depression (80%). Balancing care demands with school and employment is challenging for many, with teachers and employers unaware of the caring responsibilities shouldered by their pupils or employees. Young carer voices informed key recommendations in relation to ongoing and future service provision. Development of a policy agenda for young carers, improved awareness of young carers and accurate enumeration of young carers were needs identified as a foundation for supports. Young Carers voiced the need for opportunities such as supporting the transition to further education and apprenticeships, active support to engage in paid employment, financial supports for young carers and access to respite. A key recommendation was access to targeted mental health supports such as dedicated funding for young carers to access counselling or psychological support from professionals familiar with the challenges of caring.

d. Working Towards Wellbeing; How Family Carers Ireland's Tiered Service Delivery Model Supports Young Carers **Elayne O'Hara**

This presentation will showcase Family Carers Ireland's Young Carers Service Delivery Model, including the assessment process and the 3 tiers of support, ranging from universal supports for all young carers to intensive, individualised supports for young carers experiencing significant negative impacts because of their caring role. An overview of the range of integrated young carer supports delivered by Family Carers Ireland will also be presented, including information on the Young Carer Wellbeing Service, young carer groups, programmes, and activities.

WORKSHOPS (6 WORKSHOP SESSIONS ARE AVAILABLE)

W1. Missed Opportunities for Change: Why a Holistic Approach to Support Matters **Sarah Jones**

The aim of this workshop is to provide a first-hand account of the complexity of the experience of young carers and the missed opportunities for family support that could have improved our lives. Myself and my younger sister were carers from birth, for our parents with physical disabilities and learning disabilities, and our younger brother, who had autism, a learning disability and epilepsy. Last year, following our brother's unexpected death, our caring responsibilities returned, and we stepped back into our roles whilst navigating grief. We have explored feelings of guilt throughout this process, forcing us to question if the responsibilities of young carers ever stop. We have identified pivotal missed opportunities in our lives for supporting us as young carers, and how these shaped our

development or prospects. We want to share these to promote a holistic, integrated approach to supporting young carers, both in their childhood and transition to adulthood. The aim of this workshop is to provide a first-hand account of the complex experience of young carers and the missed opportunities for family support that could have improved our lives.

W2. Initiative for young caregivers in Quebec - Unfiltered support for and with youth **Maude Lupien Montestinos**

Cap santé mentale is the Quebec association of 51 community organizations working with caregivers in mental health. Two years ago, young caregivers were rarely identified, referred and supported. Cap santé mentale then proposed the project Aider sans filtre, pour les jeunes, avec les jeunes, which can stand for “Unfiltered support for and with youths” which was integrated into the Interministerial mental health action plan 2022-2026. This project aims to create conditions conducive to the well-being of young caregivers from 12 to 29 years old who accompany a person who's experiencing a mental health disorder. The coordination of the project is entrusted to a team of young people. The awareness and support of young caregivers is provided by some 40 trained young workers. These workers are reaching out to young caregivers in their environments, in all regions of Quebec with an intersectional approach. This innovative initiative is part of a broader government commitment to recognize and support caregivers, updated by a law passed in 2020, followed by a national policy and a government action plan. The aims of our workshop will be to present the social and political contexts around caregiving in Quebec and to describe the origin, issues, implementation strategies and first results of the Aider sans filtre (“Unfiltered support for and with youths”) project.

W3. Supporting Young Carers in Schools **Adem Reggiero-Cakir & Lisa Witherden**

Established in 2014, the Young Carers in Schools (YCiS) programme works with schools across England to share good practice, provide relevant tools and training, and celebrate the great outcomes many schools achieve for young Carers. It is a free initiative that makes it as easy as possible for schools to support young carers. The programme is run jointly by Carers Trust & The Children's Society. YCiS seeks to ensure young carers attend and enjoy school and reach their full potential. Of schools that participate in the programme, 94% of staff said they were more likely to know what to do if they identified a young carer and had a better understanding of support required, and 83% of young carers demonstrated increased happiness and confidence. The aim of the workshop is to share learning from the programme, the impact it's achieving for young carers and schools, and how organisations can get involved. There is alignment with all three themes, but predominantly Support for Impact: *Support for Impact – Towards young carer friendly educational systems*: YCiS aims for all schools to be young carer friendly, to reduce the stigma associated with caring, illness and disability, to ensure young carers are comfortable identifying themselves and are in an environment that supports them to thrive. *Identify and Reach – Breaking down barriers and empowering professionals so they can identify young carers*: YCiS empowers schools and school staff to feel confident and know how to identify and support young carers. *Include to Empower: Experiences of co-design in research and development work with and with young carers*: Young carers are involved in the development of the programme, and schools are encouraged to ensure their provision is based on young carers needs' as said by themselves.

W4. Changing the lives of Children who have a parent with mental illness **Dympna Cunnae**

Children of parents with mental illness often provide support to their family but are reluctant to think of themselves as young carers. The children may offer emotional support as well as practical support and sometimes in the role of parenting their siblings. Mental illness is less discussable than disability or long-term physical illness because there is so much shame attached to it. The secrecy prevents the

children from asking for help or revealing their caring role to adults who might be able to offer support. We need to think about this group and offer specific support as early as possible to prevent them becoming the patients of the future due to the stress of carrying the secret and the responsibility for looking after their parents and siblings when the parent is unwell.

W5. Young Carers in Armed Forces Families **Helen Leadbitter & Dr Paul Watson**

This workshop will present evidence from both research and practice of the hidden nature of Young Carers in Armed Forces Families. Informed by young carers themselves from across the British Tri-Service Armed Forces; that is the British Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy and Royal Marines Armed Forces. The impacts of how caring roles during childhood can be compounded by factors linked specifically with military life; such as mobility and deployment becoming barriers to their identification for support and increasing their chances of being hidden by professionals and welfare services. By listening to the seldom heard voices of young carers from Armed Forces Families, how they consider their identity and how they can inform tools and resources to empower military welfare providers, armed forces family federations, external agencies including schools, the statutory and voluntary civilian services including dedicated young carers services to reduce barriers to recognition. To increase identification as service children who are young carers and reduce and prevent inappropriate caring upon their own wellbeing. Delegates will learn about experiences and impacts for service children who are young carers. Know the possible identifiers of young carers from Armed Forces Families to increase awareness of the needs and impacts upon these young carers, build bridges between support services and welfare agencies and feel confident to support them to thrive.

W6. Shame and Blame: The Young Carers You Don't Know Exist **Cath Pickles**

Caring for someone who has survived sexual abuse is challenging. Parents and carers who look after young people struggle to keep their loved ones safe, and often live with the knowledge of past trauma that they feel responsible for failing to prevent. Families face crisis and breakdown caused by challenging behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse and exploitation as well as intrusion into their lives by numerous professionals, increasing financial difficulties and delays in receiving services from statutory services (MH and education) or through the criminal justice process. Parents caring for someone who has survived abuse are stigmatised, isolated, and traumatized. They are hidden from sight due to shame and blame. And whilst driving their own needs underground, the needs of young carers in these families are hidden too. These young carers are equally traumatized, angry, confused and often left feeling bereft as their families are ripped apart and their caring role is hidden amongst the chaos of police investigations, trauma and often sudden poverty.

SHORT PRESENTATIONS (5 SESSIONS ARE AVAILABLE)

SP1. PARENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS (2 presentations in this session)

a. Presentation and Evaluation of Mental Health Literacy and Self-care Website Intended for Young People Who Have a Parent With a Mental Illness

Aude Villatte, Geneviève Pichè & Rima Habib

There is an expert consensus on the necessity of preventive measures supporting the resilience of young carers, especially those who support a parent with a mental illness. Digital technology might be a good way to improve mental health literacy, ability to use adaptive coping strategies and perceived social support among these youths. However, this type of site, whose appreciation by the young people

concerned has been assessed, is still very rare. However, it is essential to ensure that young carers appreciate the tools offered to them, to make sure that these tools meet their needs and are used. The speakers will present an interactive guide developed for and with young carers of a parent with a mental disorder (see: <https://lapproche.uqo.ca/guide-jeunes/>). The main aim of this guide is to inform and empower the young people concerned, but also to help them feel less alone. It is also intended to support those working with these young people or their families in their interventions. The results of an evaluation study of the user experience of 24 young people and 16 professionals who have experimented with this tool will be presented.

b. The Role and Impact of Social Networks for Children of Parents with Severe and Enduring Mental illness

Imogen Nevard

This paper presents the findings from empirical research with children of parents with severe and enduring mental illness (COPMI). A social process model adaptation (COPMI-NEM) has been developed from interviews with 17 children. Further consultation with professionals and experts, drawing upon this model and initial child-based research, has generated recommendations for social network for young carers where a parent has a severe and enduring mental illness.

Objectives: To clarify the construct of social networks; that the child is a part of a wider system of social ties and relationships integral to whole family approaches; To communicate research findings regarding the role and impact of social networks for children of parents with severe and enduring mental illness; To share recommendations for delivering social network interventions to young carers where a parent has a severe and enduring mental illness.

SP2. OVERLOOKED YOUNG CARERS (3 presentations in this session)

a. Care and Caregiving in the African-American Youth Caregiver Experience

Feylyn Lewis

Care and caregiving have always been a part of the African-American experience in the United States. Throughout US history, Black people—girls and women in particular—served as caregivers in their family and community. Enslaved Black girls and women cared for their own children while being forced to care for white women's children—frequently as wet nurses. Black women and girls holding dual caregiving roles continued through the Jim Crow era through present-day, with Black women working as domestic care workers, maids, nannies, and care home workers. Unpaid family caregiving continues to exist on the margins, especially when children uptake caregiving roles. There are an estimated 5.4 million youth caregivers in the US. Black girls and gender expansive youth are often seen as the face of youth caregiving, following gendered, racialized, classed, and cultural expectations of care.

b. Young Carers in Refugee and Other Migrant Families in the UK and Sweden: Key Messages for Practitioners and Policy Makers

Ruth Evans, Rosa Mas Giralt, Brigitte Suter & Katarina Mozetic

Young caregiving within refugee and other migrant families is often invisible, with very limited research evidence. This paper focuses on the dynamics of young caregiving in transnational families from refugee and other migrant backgrounds residing in Sweden and the UK. It analyses interviews and participatory workshop data gathered with children, youth, adult family members and practitioners supporting families in the UK and Sweden through a larger family-focused participatory research project. Objectives: This paper will analyse the caring practices that children and young people engage in with both proximate family members living in the UK and Sweden, as well as with distant family

members living in other countries. It will highlight the ways that young caregiving may differ among refugee and other migrant families compared to the wider population. It will also draw out key differences according to age, gender and/or ethnicity and other axes of social difference. The paper will present young people's and families' key messages for policy and practice, including outputs co-produced with families in participatory feedback workshops.

c. Including Youth Voices in Veteran Caregiving Research: I+YOUCare

Andrea Kalvesmaki, Eleanor Gonzales, Erin Bouldin, Rebecca Mabe, Mary Jo Pugh & Luci Leykum

Youth caregiving in the U.S. is an emerging field focused on assessing the lived experiences of young caregivers. Research has examined youth in the context of caregiving for specific conditions or populations, and compared youth caregiver to non-caregiver outcomes. However, work related to youth caregivers' family culture and functioning as a factor that may impact caregiving is lacking. Research suggests that youth in military and veteran households may have different experiences from civilian peers, impacting familial health and well-being. These families want to be included in research design. The *Identifying Youth Caregivers Project (I+YOUCare)* aims to explore family contexts to better understand family system factors related to youth caregiving outcomes. It fits the IYCC conference theme "Identify and Reach," specifically raising awareness and understanding how culture and family influence caregiving. Objectives: I+YOUCare is an academia-community research project grounded in principles of family ecology. It will include youth and guardians from military, veteran, and civilian families in a community advisory board to inform the design of a survey on youth caregiving. Cognitive interviewing techniques will be used to account for differing youth experiences and develop potential measurable outcomes. Including youth caregivers and families from differing backgrounds will advance our understanding of familial factors influencing caregiving outcomes for young carers and their families, especially to account for differences in familial contexts that might be otherwise overlooked.

SP3. RESEARCH AND POLICY MATTERS (4 presentations in this session)

a. Unheard, Unseen: A Collaborative Presentation Exploring the Representation of Young Carers in Early Childhood Through Research and Lived Experience **Carly Ellicott & Emmanuel Borges-Da-Silva**

To date research concerned with young carers has largely focused on children and young people aged between 8 years and 25 years. Whilst this provides valuable insight into the experiences of some groups of young carers, it has so far failed to fully recognise the importance of early identification, assessment and support in early childhood. This presentation provides an overview of the soon to be published chapter in which we explore what is known about young carers internationally and in the UK, including the increase in numbers of young carers among marginalised groups, suggesting that further research is needed to broaden awareness and identification of societies youngest carers, globally. Emmanuel shares his lived experience as a young carer through soul stirring, evocative verses which invite listeners to see the world from a different perspective. Emmanuel's words encourage delegates to let go of preconceived notions and be poetically persuaded to change their perspective for the better. Delegates will be invited to engage in a period of reflection as they listen to the song *Young Carer*, a deeply personal account of Emmanuel's experience. The presentation will be followed by a discussion session in which delegates, both professionals and young carers, will be asked to explore themes from the presentation relating to Emmanuel's story and consider the impact these will have in breaking down barriers to exploring young carers narratives in early childhood.

b. Ethical and Practical Challenges and Opportunities in Recruiting From the Wider Young Carer Population **Ed Janes**

Background: Young carers are an invisible population whose families are often reluctant to disclose their status due to fearing intervention. The challenges of reaching them are well known and researchers usually recruit through specialist support projects for those with substantial roles. In contrast, methods for reaching the wider spectrum remain undeveloped, with few attempts to use alternative approaches. Method: The Caring Lives study used a school-based population-level approach to identify and confidentially recruit young carers. The three-part procedure included recruiting schools, disseminating information to all pupils, and seeking family consent. Participants then attended three interviews over a year-long period. Recruitment was eventually expanded to include young carer projects. Discussion: The presentation will reflect on the partial success of recruiting a mixed sample of unidentified young carers in addition to those who access support. This enabled significant new knowledge on those with more manageable responsibilities and how their experiences vary from those with substantial roles. However, the method was also impractical and time-consuming, with the development and maintaining of confidentiality a particular ethical challenge. Recommendations: Research into the whole spectrum is vital to understanding how the positive and negative impacts vary depending on the caring role and family circumstances. However this is only possible with a renewed focus on developing methods for identifying and recruiting those not known to services.

c. An International Analysis Young Carer Policy: Where to Next?

Victoria McDonagh

Policy making is often a complex process, where there may be many voices and needs required to be heard and addressed. The young carer is often not seen or heard within the policy making process. There are many variances in how this occurs internationally. The aim of this research presentation is to highlight how a comparative policy analysis can illustrate how young carers are represented in caring policy, which may directly affect them and their caring role. By completing this analysis and comparing Ireland in particular, what can we learn from this, with regard to recommendations for policy making with and for young carers? This focus will hope to contribute to raising awareness of the importance of including the voice and lived experience of young carers within caring policy making. Ireland is described as being emerging within both research and policy making, what we can learn from an international comparative analysis, which could contribute to raising awareness for Irish young carers.

d. Crossing the English Channel. The Transfer of the Young Carer Category from UK to France: Background, Implementation and Questions

Diane Beduchard

The topic of young carers, which has been discussed in academic and social circles in the UK since the 1900s, has been acknowledged in France for less than a decade and remains relatively unknown. How can we explain the silence and the subsequent concern about young carers in France, and to what extent do the British and international experiences serve as models for building a response to this new 'public problem'? This paper is aimed at both academic and professional audiences interested in a comparatist approach to the subject of young carers. We will start by examining the social and political conditions that have encouraged this topic to come to fore in France in the 2010s. Then we will look at the ways in which young carers are being supported in France, and we will show the importance of foreign examples, particularly the British model, both as a model to be emulated and as a deterrent. Finally, we will look at some of the questions that have been raised by the professionals, particularly around the definition of care, the label 'young carer', and the place of families in these schemes. This communication is based on a PhD thesis in preparation. It is founded on 50 semi-directive interviews conducted with young carers (aged 9-30), 35 interviews with people involved in projects dedicated to young carers. It is also based on a literature review about young carers in France since 2011, and on the study of the first two legislative texts that recognise young carers in France.

SP4. TRANSITIONS TO UNIVERSITY AND EMPLOYMENT (2 presentations in this session)

a. Supporting Young Adult Carers to Transition to Higher Education

Holly Brown

This session will delve further into the findings of UCAS's recent report "Next Steps: What is the experience of young adult carers in education?". Created in partnership with The Carers Trust, this is the first UK-wide research report to explore this cohort's transition from secondary to higher education. For the first time in 2023, UCAS asked students completing an undergraduate application to self-identify in seven new widening participation questions, including if they have a commitment to providing unpaid care to a family member or friend who could not cope without their support. Sitting within the 'Support for Impact' theme, this session will provide practitioners and colleagues across the sector with key findings and practical recommendations to support progress towards an educational system which is young carer and young adult carer friendly.

b. MY TIME's Level up Programme - Identifying, Supporting and Transforming Lives

Dan Morris

MYTIME's mission is to empower schools with a comprehensive toolkit of resources, strategies, and support to identify young carers and support them mentally and emotionally while boosting their academic prowess. We are determined to level the playing field, ensuring that young carers have every opportunity to reach their full potential. Our presentation aligns with the conference's 'Identify and Reach' theme and the sub-themes of 'Raising awareness about young carers' and 'Empowering professionals to identify young carers'. In this presentation, we will: Provide an in-depth understanding of our Level Up Programme's inner workings; Share compelling data on young carers' attendance and attainment comparing it to their non-caring peers; Highlight our programme's profound impact on schools and its transformative effects on young carers. We aim for our audience to grasp our Level Up Programme's substantial influence on young carers' lives. It goes beyond staff training and data collection; it's about driving real change in schools and witnessing the incredible transformations it brings about in young carers. Our presentation is tailored for professionals in educational settings and other organisations, researchers, and policymakers looking to adopt best practices and make a genuine difference in the lives of young carers.

SP5. CO-PRODUCTION WITH YOUNG CARERS (3 presentations in this session)

a. Louder together: Campaigning Nationally with Young Carers

Raphy Poon & Laura Selby

This presentation will enable participants to learn from young carers' perspectives on campaigning and co-design by hearing the views and experiences of a national, active campaign group called 'Young Carers National Voice' (YCNV). The group is made up of young people aged 12-18 from 27 local organisations across England that are committed to promoting the voice of young carers. This fits the conference theme of 'INCLUDE TO EMPOWER: nothing about us without us' but also addresses campaigning and actions that young carers take for themselves to influence and implement change. Since it was established in 2020, YCNV's work has included recruiting network staff, co-producing campaign ideas and materials, creating petitions to influence the opinions of decision-makers, meeting with policy makers, and raising awareness with schools, healthcare professionals and the public around improving identification and support for young carers. This year, young people in the network also co-produced a video to submit as evidence to the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers inquiry. The presentation is aimed at practitioners to learn about a model for establishing and operating a successful young carers' campaign group. It will highlight how young

carers become empowered through their active participation in influencing change based on their lived experience. It will also provide academic researchers, policy makers and service providers the opportunity to learn from young carers' experiences and expertise in national campaign work, including how they use their collective voice, key recommendations, and challenges they have overcome.

b. Caregiving Youth, Redesign the World **Leiha Edmonds & Elizabeth Olson**

Caregiving happens in time and place, but the methodologies that geographers use to explore where care happens receive scant attention in the literature on caregiving. More challenging still, research that incorporates young people under the age of 18, perspectives as caregivers remain absent from much of the US-based geographic studies of caregiving. Recognizing the need for methodologies that capture how family caregiving happens in places, and the ways in which caregiving produces places and spaces that help us understand political, social, and economic dynamics of societies, we draw on the philosophy of care-ethics, theoretical frameworks from critical youth and feminist geographies and approaches from feminist GIS, participatory practices tailored to working with youth, and qualitative methodology to develop a flexible approach to mapping the everyday geographies of youth caregiving, Versatile Everyday Emotion Mapping (VEE-mapping). In an ongoing study in partnership with the Caregiving Youth Project of Palm Beach County, Florida, the only organization in the US focused on serving young carers, we use VEE-mapping to produce robust data about the places of care for youth over the course of a day and a longer life history, and about young people's emotional responses to care in different places such as home, work, or school. We then complement and complicate this data by co-designing workshops with caregiving youth to reimagine the built environment and social infrastructures of towns in Palm Beach County. Through photography, creative writing, drawing, and geospatial mapping, a small collective of caregiving youth examines downtown neighborhoods to identify what opportunities and barriers to care manifest in their city. From the challenges of transportation access to community building via Latinx grocery stores, workshop leaders highlight what would create a more caring city for themselves and their families. Workshop leaders are now in the process of developing a short digital booklet and print zine to share their insights. Together, the findings from the VEE-mapping method and the youth-led workshop on creating more caring cities produce unexpected insights into caregiving impacts and identities.

c. #WecareToo - Young Adult Carers SHOUT and Make Change **Claire Briston**

Young adult carers were asked "what would improve the health of young adult carers?", they responded 'we need to improve everyone's awareness of carers to improve early identification, not just a leaflet in the corner of a room, we want to think big – we want to shout our messages on billboards so everyone can see'. Working in partnership with NHS England we were able to make this wish a reality, supporting young adult carers to interview design agencies, work with them to create a campaign, select billboard locations around the city, carry out TV/radio interviews around the launch. They created a series of animations to share their lived experiences and supported younger carers to make animations too. This project started 5 years ago and has developed into a huge campaign, referrals of young and young adult carers to Newcastle Carers have more than doubled. Carers made this change.
