

COSW YOUNG CARER CHARTER RECOMMENDED BY COMMONWEALTH YOUTH MINISTERS AS ORITSÉ WILLIAMS IS AFFIRMED AS COMMONWEALTH YOUNG CARER AMBASSADOR

THE COMMONWEALTH CHARTER FOR YOUNG CARERS



Young carers from across the Commonwealth have developed this Charter, grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The needs and wishes of Commonwealth young carers were endorsed by Commonwealth Youth Ministers at their meeting in London on 12-15 September 2023. The final communiqué stated:

"We welcome the strategies proposed in our roundtable discussions to enhance inclusion and safeguarding of our young people by exploring the use of various policy approaches and tools, such as **the young carer's charter ...**" (Para 25)



The situation of young carers was also highlighted in a moving musical presentation by the newly affirmed **Commonwealth Young Carer Ambassador, Oritsé Williams**. He performed during the Commonwealth Youth Awards in St James Palace to an audience of young people, ministers and dignitaries, including the Duke of Edinburgh. His specially written song draws on his own experience as a teenage young carer and drew an emotional response from the whole audience. COSW is

pleased to be working with Oritsé over the coming year to promote the charter and bring the real lives of young carers to the attention of the Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa in October 2024.

The Charter was referenced in oral presentations to Ministers and delegations from over 40 Commonwealth countries and was highlighted to Ministers by COSW Board Member David N Jones. Several governments stopped by the COSW stand at the Commonwealth Expo on the final day to discuss the needs of young carers and the value of the charter, alongside the other priorities of the Commonwealth Children's Interest Group (ComCIG), chaired by COSW.

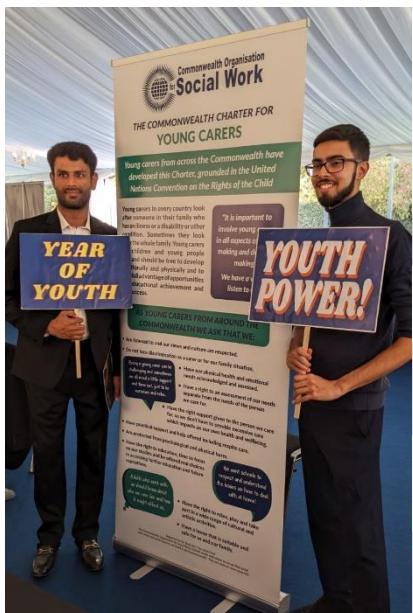


The COSW presence at the Commonwealth Expo (above) included young carer Omar Mohamed and, newly arrived from Pakistan, Syed Shah, both recently qualified social workers, with international young carer advocate Helen Leadbitter and David N Jones.

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Speaking after the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting, David commented: 'this recognition of the lives of young carers has involved contributions from many young people around the Commonwealth and is the culmination of almost 20 years work and advocacy. This is a great example of social workers listening to young people and working with them to produce a powerful summary of their needs and wishes. We thank all those young people and the organisations and associations which have worked with us.'



'But this is not the end. Our goal is to achieve endorsement by Heads of Government in 2024.'

'COSW is proud to be coordinating this coalition of young people and adult organisations, showing the strength, influence and potential of social work in partnership.'

28 September 2023

ENDS

NOTE FOR EDITORS: COSW is an organisation for citizens of the Commonwealth who are interested in supporting social work and social development. It is supported by social work associations in the Commonwealth. It aims to promote and support communication and collaboration between social workers and social work associations of Commonwealth countries, and to uphold and promote the code of ethics of the International Federation of Social Workers.

The Charter can be found [here](#). This statement can be found on the [COSW website](#).

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