



**[Addressee and date]**

Dear [*Editor / Director of Social Services / Chief Executive of Primary Care Trust*] ,

### **Recognition for carers**

Your recent [*article / job advertisement / radio-television programme / leaflet / policy document*] uses the term “carer” to describe what is in fact a [*paid care worker / home help / social worker*]

A “carer” is defined in law as an unpaid family member, partner or friend who helps a disabled, ill or frail person with the activities of daily living. Carers are not paid care professionals.

The distinction is important, because carers are entitled to a range of benefits and services, which depend on them recognising themselves as carers. Many carers do not see themselves as such. The more they are confused with care workers, the less likely they are to claim the help they need. Last year it is estimated that £660 million in carers benefits went unclaimed.

Carers make such a valuable contribution to society – worth £57 billion – all of it unpaid. Please help carers get the recognition they deserve by ensuring your staff understand the term carer and use it appropriately.

Yours sincerely,

*Signature*

Name and title