



PRESS RELEASE

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Birmingham employers encouraged to commit to carers for New Year resolution

Birmingham businesses have been urged to make 2019 the year they commit to carers in their workforce.

Those who wish to pursue the challenge are being encouraged to sign up to the Working for Carer scheme, which allows companies to better look after their staff, particularly those who may have responsibilities elsewhere.

Sadiq Muraj, from Birmingham, who looks after his wife and elderly father, recently started working for Forward Carers, the company that developed the initiative.

The 58-year-old said: "I lost my job in 2014 as the company went into liquidation. It was during my search for more employment that my wife was diagnosed with cancer. My father's health was also declining, so it became clear that I was needed at home.

"Caring for two people is very demanding and having spoken to friends who are carers, working and looking after someone can often be impossible. Many employers are not sympathetic and do not understand the complex demands you have on your time."

A free event – 'Do you Care? Retaining Staff Who Juggle Caring Responsibilities' – will take place on January 29, at the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce to promote the scheme.

A line-up of guest speakers will discuss its benefits and how employers can get involved.

Sadiq added: "I am incredibly grateful to Forward Carers for giving me a chance and for also developing this scheme, which is giving everyone in a caring role the chance to break the shackles that combining employment and caring."

Simon Fenton, CEO of Forward Carers, said: “Workplace wellbeing is a hot topic, yet most managers, employers or colleagues do not understand the pressure of caring for someone and still coming to work.

“All places of employment should have workplace wellbeing as a part of their agenda or part of their policies. This can include flexible working, carers’ leave, working from home and a non judgemental workforce.

“Forward Carers works with businesses to offer the Working for Carers accreditation scheme including downloadable ‘carer-aware’ resources, online training and staff discounts. We’re inviting local businesses to come along to our free business event and kick off the New Year safe in the knowledge they have the best interests of their staff in hand, no matter what their situation is.”

Forward Carers was launched to make a real difference to the lives of people caring for older frail people, sick or disabled friends and family members.

The aim is to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of carers, young and old, including parent carers, so that families stay healthier and happier together, for longer.

To reserve a place, click here: <https://forwardcarers.eventbrite.co.uk/>

Notes to editors

- For further details, to arrange an interview or more photographs, email fiona.bailey@ojpr.co.uk or call 0781 3988247 or 01604 882342.