

Information about a patient's health & consent

- Where appropriate ask patients who have carers whether they are happy for their personal health information to be given to their carer
- Give carers information about the diagnosis, the treatment – including medication and its side effects – and prognosis for the people they care for
- Obtain consent from all parties involved eg:

I agree to information about my health being discussed with my carer. I will contact the practice if this information changes.

Patient and carer signatures

Carer's name:

Patient's name:

Patient's illness or condition

In the presence of

Health professional:

Name:

Role:

Date:

Phone:

Signed:

Signature of patient

Date signed:

How you can support the carer

- Regularly advise carers that they can ask Social Services for an assessment of their own needs
- Refer carers to local services, advocacy, help, and support – including The Princess Royal Trust for Carers Centres and other carers' support agencies
- Take the special needs of carers into account eg when allocating appointments, issuing prescriptions etc
- Check the physical and emotional health of carers whenever the opportunity arises, and at least once a year
- Inform carers about the local services and support which can assist their role as a carer;
- Establish a practice-based carers support group
- Arrange for carers to have access to the local community nursing team who can offer advice and training on procedures including lifting the person they care for.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

www.rcgp.org.uk

www.carers.org/professionals

This practice is committed to listening and supporting carers and to improving patient care.



CARERS AS PARTNERS

A partnership between the Royal College of General Practitioners and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers supporting carers, patients and doctors.



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The Carers in Practice initiative is a two year partnership between the Royal College of General Practitioners and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers. The aim is to offer GPs best practice guidance on carers issues so that carers can receive tailored support.

The partnership, endorsed by the Institute of Healthcare Management, the Royal College of Nursing and The Stroke Association, will also seek to identify hidden carers – individuals who provide round-the-clock care but who view their role as 'simply looking after someone' and often miss out on benefits.

Who is a carer?

A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage without their help. This could be due to age, physical or mental illness, addiction or disability.

Carers come from all walks of life, all cultures and can be of all ages.

Some carers' lifestyles may be restricted while others feel isolated. As a GP you can advise on:

- care programmes and daycare arrangements
- helping carers to take action for their own health needs

- the illness or disability of the person they care for
- local community nursing services
- coping with the psychological effects of caring
- seeking further support from other agencies.

What are the benefits of identifying & supporting carers?

Carers as Patients

- 10% of your patients are carers
- Caring has an adverse impact on the health of 80% of carers
- Carers are at risk, both physically with ailments such as back strain, and emotionally with stress related illnesses.

Carers as Partners (in Care)

- 94% manage medication, 23% manage dressings, and 12% give injections
- Carers have a vital role in monitoring the condition of the person they care for
- Carers play a key part in out-of-hospital and community care – should anything happen to them statutory services will be needed.

The health and welfare of the patient and their carer are closely linked. Looking after the carer is cost effective and makes common sense.

Identifying Carers

1 in 7 households have a carer

175,000 carers are under the age of 18

13 million expect to become carers in the next decade

18% of carers look after more than one person

Carers save Health & Social Care £57 billion per year

1.2 million care for more than 50 hours per week

How do you find out which of your patients are carers?

- Make use of contacts through consultations, new patients registration, over 75s checks, flu jab sessions and notification of hospital discharge
- Pool your knowledge. As a Health Care Professional, you can extract information from existing practice records or knowledge database
- Encourage self identification through notice boards or forms and leaflets in the waiting room
- Make use of computer codes.

