

# PRIMARY CARE 10 TOP TIPS

## Supporting Cancer Carers

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- 1 Ask and listen:** Showing an interest can help carers talk about their needs. If a patient brings a friend, relative or partner with them, ask them how they are. If time is limited encourage the carer to make a separate appointment.
- 2 Signpost to services:** If you identify a cancer carer let them know that they can access a range of information, emotional support and financial help by calling the Macmillan Support Line on **0808 808 00 00**
- 3 Develop a carers' register:** Create a list of carers registered with your practice. Ask new patients if they look after someone and find existing carers via promotional posters and drop-in sessions such as the annual flu jab.
- 4 Identify a 'Carers lead':** The carers' lead could be first point of contact for carers, maintain the carers register and potentially develop links with local carers organisations or work with the practice manager to do this.
- 5 Promote local support:** Develop links with local carers' organisations and display their information in the waiting room. Refer carers for social services carers' assessments if appropriate. For further details visit [macmillan.org.uk/carers](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/carers)
- 6 Be aware of financial difficulties:** Macmillan's expert benefit advisers can help cancer carers understand what they might be entitled to and support them in applying for financial help. If appropriate, tactfully ask if any financial advice is needed and refer them to our Support Line on **0808 808 00 00** or [macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/financialsupport)
- 7 Involve carers in patient care:** Include carers in decision making by asking for their views and any problems they can foresee.
- 8 Consider the carer's health:** Carers often neglect their own health due to constraints on their time. Proactively ask about their own health concerns and consider offering specific health checks for carers.
- 9 Plan for emergencies:** Let carers know that some local authorities can provide carers with a card to carry stating they are a Carer. Ringing the number triggers an action plan providing emergency substitute support.
- 10 Monitor your support:** Use surveys and focus groups to gain carers' views on the service and their suggestions for improvement.

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