

Implementing the Care Act in health settings: identifying carers and signposting them to support



Carers Champions and involving volunteers

Having a designated Carers Champions (for the Trust or for particular wards) can help ensure that carers are prioritised in every area of the organisation. Carers Champions can:

- Act as a point of contact for staff and carers
- Help create and maintain directories and resources for carers
- Ensure hospital staff are aware of the needs of carers and the importance of identifying and signposting them
- Organise training for staff around the Trust's carers policy/ strategy and good practice
- Collect and record a list of people that are caring for someone, where they are identified, and ensure they receive necessary information and that their details get handed back to Primary Care professionals on treatment summaries
- Have responsibility for ensuring Macmillan's guidance and good practice is adopted.

You could consider the Carers Champion being a member of administrative staff or a volunteer. It is important, however, to ensure that the Carers Champion is supported to promote carers awareness amongst healthcare professionals, as often identification can take place during consultations.

Language is very important in identifying carers. Often healthcare settings have signposting in place but very few carers clearly present themselves to receive this information. Using language such as asking if someone is 'looking after' rather than 'caring for' a person can help carers more readily come forward for information or support. Some Trusts have a carer's agreement or specific paperwork they work through with the carer at various points in the treatment pathway (see page 17-20 in <http://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk/files/2010/03/CP181-Carers-Policy.pdf>.)

More information on language and identification can be found in our practical guidance - [*Supporting Carers of People with Cancer*](#).

Other resources:

- Skills for Care - resources for professionals:
<http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Skills/Carers/Carers.aspx>
- Carers UK e-learning:
<http://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/training/e-learning>
- Queen's Nursing Institute online resources for District Nurses, GPs and School Nurses
http://www.qni.org.uk/supporting_carers

Got any good practice examples you'd like to share, or is there more information you'd like to see on this page? Email Charlotte Argyle, Carers Support Programme Manager: cargyle@macmillan.org.uk