



Carers Identification Protocol

Introduction

Research shows that for every 1000 patients, 100 will be carers. Carers play a particularly important role in the NHS.

The following protocol sets out a simple, straight forward way which GPs, Health Care and other Practice staff can identify and refer carers for appropriate support and information.

Who is a Carer?

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, addiction, a mental health problem, or are elderly or frail, cannot cope without their support. A Young Carer is someone under 18 in this role. The support a carer might offer may be emotional or include shopping, cooking, dealing with medication, or attend medical appointments with the person they care for. The person they care for could live with them, in their own home, or even in residential care.

Objectives

The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that all patients in Nottinghamshire with a caring role are identified, registered and signposted for support as early as possible through their GPs Practice.

The practice seeks to support carers by doing the following:

- Sign up to the Carers Pledge
- Routinely, ask patients if they are carers and then refer them to support services at the earliest opportunity for further support.
- Have a designated Carers Champion in the practice
- Provide annual health checks for carers and invite carers to have an influenza vaccination.

Self-identification

The practice has in place mechanisms both to identify carers directly and encourage them to self-identify.

Notice board: Practices should have a dedicated notice board for carers with information that encourages carers to come forward, has details of the practice carers champion and of the local support and information available to carers. During seasonal events e.g. Flu clinics or

'National Carers' Week' any notice board dedicated to carer information could be made more prominent at the Practice.

Referral forms: Displayed in reception and on the practice website to allow carers to complete and hand in to the practice.

Digital Display/LED Screens: Digital displays in the Practice's waiting areas showing information or slides requesting patients that are carers to let the Practice know. Information shown on the display screens should also give a higher profile to carers during seasonal events such 'Flu Vaccination Clinics' or National Carers' Week.

Carers Page on Website: The practice will have an up to date Carers page on their website

New Practice Registration Forms: Use the Practice's New Patient Registration Form to ask if someone is a carer.

Practice Identification

As many carers do not consider themselves carers, all surgery staff will proactively take responsibility to try and identify carers. This could be at reception, at appointments (the carer may accompany the patient) or on home visits.

Prescriptions: Anyone collecting a prescription on behalf of someone else may be passed a carer's referral form.

Competency: All carer registrations will, in the first instance, be reviewed by the patient's usual doctor who will confirm that the patient is competent to give a valid informed consent.

The following read codes will be used to tag the patient's notes:

Is a Carer	UaOVL in S1
	918G EMIS
Has a Carer	918F

And discount anyone who has XaL1Y - Is no longer a carer (s1) or 918f - Is no longer a carer(EMIS) coded after the Carer codes.

SAMPLE LETTER TO PATIENTS – Could use as part of new patient registration

[date]

Dear [patient's name]

CARERS

Do you look after someone who is ill, frail, disabled or mentally ill? If so, you are a carer.

We are interested in identifying carers, especially those people who may be caring without help or support. We know that carers are often “hidden” looking after a family member or helping a friend or neighbour with day-to-day tasks and may not see themselves as a carer.

We feel that caring for someone is an important and valuable role in the community. While caring can be rewarding, it is often a 24-hour job that can also be very demanding and isolating for the carer. We believe carers should receive appropriate support by way of access to accurate information on a range of topics such as entitlement to benefits and respite care and - not least - a listening ear when things get too much.

Please complete the attached sheet only if you are a carer and return it to the surgery.

In the meantime if you would like support and information in regards to your caring situation, you can contact Nottinghamshire Carers Hub. They provide personalised information and support for Carers to make caring for a loved one easier.

To contact the Nottinghamshire Carers Hub call: 0115 824 8824. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am until 5pm. You can speak to an experienced support worker who will provide a personalised service that meets your individual needs.

email: hub@carerstrustem.org

web: www.carerstrustem.org/hub

Yours sincerely

Dr.....