



Information for Carers

Help and advice for relatives and friends who support people using our services

This booklet provides information and advice for carers who look after someone receiving services from 2gether NHS Foundation Trust.

“A carer is a person who provides unpaid help and support on a regular basis to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour, who is frail or has a physical or mental illness, disability or substance misuse issues. The carer is not employed to provide this help but does so to improve the quality of that person’s life.”

Thousands of carers experience mental and physical ill health themselves due to the demands of being a carer. Many more are unaware of the support available to them.

This booklet is for carers who have contact with teams throughout 2gether and takes into account different levels of need, types of problems experienced by the service user and different team working arrangements.



You can find out more about the support available to carers by visiting www.2gether.nhs.uk or by asking a member of staff.

Carers Charter

Our Carers Charter was developed with and for carers as a joint statement of how we will work together to help make life better. The charter is based on our core values and is our pledge to you.

Whenever we can, we will be:

Seeing from your perspective

- Recognise your expert knowledge and understanding of the person you care for
- Seek to understand what being a carer means to you
- Provide you with an assessment of your needs
- Recognise your health needs

Excelling and improving

- Work in partnership with you to make sure you are involved in the care we provide
- Undertake regular review of feedback from carers
- Provide staff training to further develop our knowledge and expertise of working with carers
- Ask for your involvement in helping us to improve the experiences of carers using our services

Responsive

- Make sure that you feel welcome in our care environments
- Provide you with relevant information about the care, diagnosis and medication
- Provide you with information about other organisations that can help you

Valuing and respectful

- Listen to you and respect your perspective
- Take note of what you tell us to help inform best clinical decisions
- Respect that parent carers, young carers and older carers will have different needs
- Value you as a partner in the planning of care and treatment

Inclusive, open and honest

- Include you by providing clear and accurate information about the needs of the person you care for
- Let you know what will happen in an emergency
- Include you in meetings about the person that you care for

Can do

- Involve you in the care and decisions about the person that you care for
- Give you a copy of the care plan
- Seek your views to help us make joint decisions about the care we provide

Effective, efficient, economic, equitable

- Provide you with the opportunity to share important information to inform the care provided
- Recognise and support your activities outside your caring role
- Support you to access relevant services as your caring role and responsibilities change

Carers Assessment

As the carer of someone receiving our services you should be given the opportunity to talk to a member of the team about your own needs.

The team member should discuss having a formal Carer's Needs Assessment with you. The care team can do this with you or arrange for another local organisation to work with you depending on which service your friend or relative is seeing. Once the assessment is complete a support plan is made which may involve contacting and working with other agencies to access the support you need.

A Carer's Assessment is not a test of your ability to care. It recognises your crucial role and may lead to you being offered services and support.

The results of a Carer's Assessment are taken into account when deciding what services to offer the person you care for and might result in:

- More services for the person you care for
- A break for you
- Information and guidance about local services, carers' rights and benefits
- Emotional support and opportunities to talk to other carers
- Access to information about treatments, therapies, leisure and employment opportunities
- Strategies for coping in a crisis

The Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 strengthen the rights and recognition of carers to have support from the local authority in their caring role. New rights entitle carers and the people they care for to have an assessment of their needs regardless of their income and finances or their level of need. Young carers and the parents of children with a disability are also included in the new system.

The assessment looks with you at how caring affects your life, including physical and emotional need, and whether you feel able and willing to continue caring. You don't have to live with the person you are supporting or be caring full time to have an assessment – you may be trying to juggle work and caring and this is what is having a big impact on you.

A Carer's Assessment can be particularly valuable if you feel isolated or your caring role is causing you problems.

You can also request a Carer's Assessment yourself at any time through either Carers Gloucestershire or Herefordshire Council depending on where you live. The contact details are below.

For more information ask your friend or family member's Care Co-ordinator about Carer's Assessments or contact:

Carers Gloucestershire Carersline Telephone: 0300 111 9000 or email mail@carersgloucestershire.org.uk

Herefordshire Council Advice and Referral Team Telephone: 01432 260101 or email ASCAdviceandReferralTeam@herefordshire.gscx.gov.uk

In addition to a formal assessment, team members should talk to you about how they can best support you in your caring role and how you can be involved in the care planning process. We regularly ask carers about how they are and if they have any concerns, to which we will respond.

Planning for an emergency

Preparation is the key to dealing with an accident or crisis so it is important to have a list of useful people to contact in a difficult situation.

You and the person you care for may like to write down and agree a plan so everyone knows what they need to do if there is an emergency. The Care Co-ordinator can also help with the plan and with your family member's permission can keep a copy with the individual's notes. The plan can be written in any format or use the Advance Care Planning Tools available through the Care Co-ordinator or you can download them from the Trust website. This is another way that service users, friends and family can talk through and record their preferences about treatment and other future support that may be necessary.

Carers often recognise early signs that someone's mental health is deteriorating and where necessary teams should provide information about recognising when someone is becoming unwell through documents such as the Care Plan. If you feel signs of a relapse are present you

should contact the most appropriate person for advice – who this is will depend on who is involved in your friend or relative's care. Examples may be the GP, current care team or a specialist crisis team whose contact details you have been provided with.

You should not worry that you will be seen as “making a fuss” – you are the person who may be most aware of a developing problem and staff should respect your opinion.

There are times when it is important that you don't feel alone, so please make that call.

- Take a few deep breaths
- Stay as calm as possible
- Stay safe
- Decide the best person to contact
- Say who you are and what is wrong
- Say what is needed
- Act on any advice they give
- Say if there is any reason why you cannot act as they advise



If you feel in immediate danger, dial 999 and ask for the Police

Carers Emergency Scheme

The Carers Emergency Scheme is for carers worried about what would happen to the person they look after if the carer falls ill or is involved in an accident or emergency.

Carers Emergency Schemes operate alongside the regular health and social care services a person is receiving, including 2gether services, and doesn't mean that other services would be withdrawn. As support is usually required quickly schemes recommend that carers register in advance.

Gloucestershire

This free scheme offers peace of mind so that if anything happens to the carer or they are called away suddenly to an emergency elsewhere the person they care for will not be left without help and support.

The scheme operates at two levels:

- **Level 1:** the carer nominates two contacts – family, friends or neighbours – who are willing to respond in an emergency through Carers Gloucestershire.
- **Level 2:** Carers looking after someone with higher care needs have the additional option having a support worker to take over their caring role for up to 48 hours. You can ask for this in your Carers Assessment

This care is provided free of charge.

Please contact the Carers Gloucestershire Carersline on 0300 111 9000 for further information.

Herefordshire

This free scheme is run in partnership through the Careline Scheme run by Herefordshire Housing and Herefordshire Carer Support. It gives you peace of mind by ensuring there are plans in place should anything happen to you.

To register, please contact Herefordshire Carer Support on 01432 356068

Triangle of Care

The Triangle of Care is a therapeutic alliance between carers, service users and professionals. It aims to promote safety and recovery; sustaining wellbeing in mental health by including and supporting carers. We are a member of the Triangle of Care programme.



Useful numbers

Don't be afraid to use the numbers below. Please use the spaces below to add contact numbers of other people involved in the care of the person you look after.

NHS 111: Confidential health advice and information on non emergency situations or where advice or reassurance is required, Telephone 111

Social Care Services out of hours (emergency only):

Gloucestershire: Adult and Childrens services 01452 614194

Herefordshire: Adult services 0330 1239309 Childrens services 01905 768020

Gloucestershire Police and West Mercia Police: For non-emergency advice please telephone 101

Samaritans: Tel: 08457 909090

Shelterline: Housing advice helpline telephone 0808 800 4444

Refuge: For women experiencing domestic violence telephone 0808 200 0247

Please speak to a member of 2gether staff looking after your relative of friend for a copy of our local leaflets or visit our website www.2gether.nhs.uk.

Your personal contacts

GP

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Community Nurse

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Care Co-ordinator

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Consultant

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Ward/Out of Hours

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Taking care of yourself and respite care

It's important to look after yourself and stay well to cope in a demanding caring role.

It is upsetting if the person you care for is distressed or you find yourself in a role you did not choose. Many carers experience depression, sleeplessness or anxiety due to the demands of their role.

The following tips come from other carers and can help you to look after yourself:

- continue doing activities you enjoy
- talk to friends and family about how you feel
- join a support group and share your experiences with others who understand
- make time for yourself each day – go for a walk, watch television, listen to music
- exercise regularly
- eat healthy food
- talk to your GP about your caring role. Ask about stress management workshops or counselling if you feel you need them
- find out more about the illness of the person you care for - this can help to reduce your anxiety or stress
- be clear about what you can and cannot do - and stick to it!

Respite care and carer breaks

If you go too long without a proper break you may become ill, which can make life more difficult for you and the person you care for.

Having a break is more likely to help you cope with caring and will give you time to recharge your batteries. This can make a real difference to your health and quality of life.

Respite care is short term care provided for someone who usually lives at home so their carer can have a break. Respite care can also benefit a service user by providing a change of environment, meet new people or take part in interesting activities.

Respite care includes:

- **Residential respite care or care at home** for a week or longer to enable you to go away on holiday or have a longer rest
- **Domiciliary care:** a care worker comes into your home and takes on some of the care you usually provide. This can include a variety of help such as prompting to take medication, preparing meals, helping to get the person you care for up, washed and dressed. Helping the person you care for with social activities of their choice such shopping or going to the cinema may also be included
- **Emergency respite care:** care is provided because you cannot fulfil your caring role due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness
- **Day care:** the person you care for spends time at a facility offering day care while you have a break

For information about how to access respite care and advice on funding and respite options for your specific situation please contact:

Carers Gloucestershire

Telephone: 0300 111 9000

www.carersgloucestershire.org.uk

Herefordshire Carer Support

Telephone: 01432 356068

www.herefordshirecarerssupport.org

Carer information sessions and support groups

Carer Education and Support Groups provide:

- Time to talk, share experiences and support each other
- Visiting speakers on mental health issues and services
- Increased understanding of mental health problems and how they may be managed
- Education for Carers on looking after their own wellbeing
- Information on Carers' rights
- A social event

Ask the Care Team or local carer support agencies if there are any groups or a carer education programmes run in your area.

For further information on Carer Education and Support Groups in your area please contact:

Carers Gloucestershire

Telephone: 0300 111 9000

www.carersgloucestershire.org.uk

Positive Caring Programme

E-mail positivecaring@carersgloucestershire.org.uk

Herefordshire Carer Support

Telephone: 01432 356068

www.herefordshirecarerssupport.org

Young Carers

This pack has been designed for adult carers. However young people can also be involved in caring and can really benefit from having their own specialist support and advice.

For further information you or the young person involved can contact one of the following young carer organisations for further information and guidance.

You can also visit our website or ask a member of staff for young carer information.

Gloucestershire Young Carers

Telephone: 01452 733060

Email: mail@glosyoungcarers.org.uk

Website: www.glosyoungcarers.org.uk

Herefordshire Young Carer Support

Telephone: 01432 356068

Email: help@herefordshirecarerssupport.org

Website: www.herefordshirecarerssupport.org/young-carers

GP Practices' Carers' Register

Many GP Practices have an established process and protocol for identifying Carers within their Practice. However, you should check and inform your GP Practice if you are a child or adult caring for someone at home or elsewhere who has a physical or mental illness, has learning difficulties, suffers alcohol or drug addiction problems or who is disabled, elderly or frail.

Once you are registered as a Carer many GP Practices offer some or all of the following:

- ✓ Free annual flu vaccination.
- ✓ Joint appointment for patient and carer.
- ✓ Make a back-to-back appointment for patient and their carer.
- ✓ Home appointment for carers who are housebound.
- ✓ Invite carers for a health check sometimes also linked to an advice clinic.
- ✓ To share relevant information with a carer regarding the illness, treatment and prognosis of the cared-for with appropriate agreement.
- ✓ To keep one or more 'emergency' appointment slots each day 'free' for carers.
- ✓ A nominated staff member who telephones older or vulnerable patients who are carers on a regular basis.
- ✓ To nominate a staff member as a carer lead.
- ✓ A dedicated carer's noticeboard and carer's link on their website for information.
- ✓ Link entry on their register to a referral for Carer's Assessment and/or referral to relevant organisation or agency for advice and support.
- ✓ To link registration to an invitation to a local Carers Support Group.



Confidentiality and information sharing

Our Carer's Charter sets out how we should involve you in the care of the person you care for.

It clearly states that we should listen and respond to your concerns, involve you and keep you informed about the care and treatment of the person you care for.

Staff have a legal duty to keep personal information confidential. For a variety of reasons service users sometimes do not consent for staff to share information with carers and if they are able to make that decision staff have to respect it. However it is good practice for staff to revisit this decision with service users, to ask them if it applies to all information or just some things, and to remind the service user of the positives of carer involvement.

If the person you care for has agreed that information **can be shared** with you planned care or treatment should be discussed with you. **If not**, you can still receive **general factual information** both verbally and written as well as support for yourself in your caring role.

As the carer you should be helped to understand:

- the present situation
- any confidentiality restrictions put in place by the service user
- the service user's treatment plan and its aims
- any written care plan, crisis plan or recovery programme
- the role of the professionals involved in the service user's care
- how to access help, including out of hours services

As the carer you should have:

- the opportunity to speak to a professional on your own and share information that you consider relevant and important
- rights to your own confidentiality when talking to a professional
- encouragement to feel a valued member of the care team
- confidence to voice your views and any concerns you may have
- support in your caring role
- access to an assessment of your own needs and your own written support plan

You can find more information about confidentiality and carers can be found on our website: www.2gether.nhs.uk/common-sense-confidentiality.

Carer's information

If you do not feel that you are getting the information you need the following questions might be helpful for you to use when talking to staff involved in the care of your friend or relative:

- What tests and assessments will you do?
- Are you able to tell me what the diagnosis/current problem is?
- Will medication help? Are there any side effects? Who can I talk to for more information about this?
- Are there any other treatments and services that might be useful/available?
- What is the treatment plan? Can I have a copy of the plan?
- How often will the person I care for be seen?
- What should I do if I think my friend or relative's condition is becoming worse?
- Where can I get further information about the condition and the services available?
- How will I be involved planning care?
- What support is there for me as a carer?

It is important that when we meet with you the information provided is what you need to know, and explained at the right time. As a carer, you will have questions about the diagnosis, treatment and progress of your friend or relative at different stages of their contact with us.

In some meetings, for example Care Reviews there will be a written record of the discussion. When the contact is less formal you can also ask us to write down the information and provide you with any supplementary information like leaflets or information sheets we have that might be useful to you.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists produce a very comprehensive list of questions which can act as a guide during discussions with staff. If this is not available as a leaflet from staff it can be accessed at



www.rcpsych.ac.uk/about/campaigns/partnersincarecampaign.aspx

We hope this information is helpful for both carers and service users.

If you need additional copies of this booklet, please contact us:



Write to: the Social Inclusion Team,
18 Denmark Road, Gloucester GL1 3HZ



Telephone: 01452 894200



Email: 2gnft.socialinclusion@nhs.net



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