

CARERS IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL

INTRODUCTION

The following protocol sets out the mechanisms the Practice has in place for identifying carers and ensuring that they are referred appropriately to Carers in Herts for a Carers Assessment. Young carers are also referred appropriately to the young carers service.

DEFINITION OF A CARER

Individuals irrespective of age, who provide or supervise a substantial amount of care on a regular basis of a child, relative, partner or neighbour who is unable to manage on their own due to illness, disability, frailty, mental distress or impairment.

The term 'carer' would **not** normally apply if the person is:

- A paid carer
- A volunteer from a voluntary agency
- Anyone providing personal assistance for payment either in cash or kind

A carer can be a child looking after an older person or parent, or an older person looking after a disabled partner. The definition may be quite wide-ranging and can include caring for someone with a physical or learning disability, dementia, mental health condition, misuse of drugs or alcohol or could be ill or frail.

PROTOCOL

The practice is committed to ensuring that carers are identified where possible and their details recorded. Care must be taken however with regard to confidentiality of the patient and the person cared for. This protocol aims to ensure that all carers registered with the Practice are identified and offered information about local support from Carers in Hertfordshire and how to contact Adult Care Services for an assessment.

Any identified carers will also be coded correctly on the Clinical System.

CARERS CHAMPION

The practice will seek to support carers by:

- We now have a nominated Carer's champion – Karen Judge. Karen will attend regular meetings in the Locality to ensure she is up to date with all the resources available for our Carers
- The Champion will wear a badge at all times to identify herself as the main contact point for Carers and also to encourage new Carers to come forward
- The Champion will keep an up-to-date notice board in the Waiting Room entrance.
- The Champion will also ensure that there are carers packs available at reception
- All GP's will identify any unknown Carers from our patient list when they are in discussion with them during consultations
- Providing information and local authority resources and contact points
- Supporting carers with suitable appointment flexibility and understanding
- Care for the carer to enable them to maximise their own health and needs by providing health checks and advice
- The Practice Manager will meet with the Champion regularly to discuss progress

There are two methods of identification – self-identification and Practice identification and the Practice has put in place mechanisms for both of these.

SELF IDENTIFICATION

Notice Board

The Practice has a dedicated notice board for carers which has details of support organisations. It contains a poster asking carers to let the Practice know about their caring responsibilities and gives the telephone number for Adult Care Services which is 0300 123 4040. This service is available from Monday to Fridays from 8am - 8pm and Saturdays from 9am – 4pm

New Patient Registration Forms

The Practice's new patient registration form asks the question: 'Carer-Is there someone you look after on a regular basis' and requests their details and surgery.

This information will be used when the patient is registered and will be flagged to the Carer's Champion for their records to be updated. This is reviewed by the HCA who conducts all the patient NHS health checks and new patient health checks for any necessary action. There is also a facility to advise if you are a carer on our website.

PRACTICE IDENTIFICATION

Letter and Questionnaire to Patients

If the Practice sends a text to a patient, perhaps as part of the flu vaccination campaign or QOF actions, we have the facility to remind them that we can help support any carers if they identify themselves.

Prescriptions/Paperwork

Anyone collecting a prescription on behalf of someone else or any other paperwork, may be asked if they are a Carer. The Practice Manager reminds receptionists to do this on a regular basis for patients that are collecting prescriptions for an elderly relative Carers can also request directly at Reception, where there is always a supply of Carer's Packs available to give out directly. These include the relevant paperwork to register as a Carer at the surgery and (if completed) to be referred to Carers in Herts. All receptionists are reminded of this on a regular basis.

Health Professional Identification

All health professionals in the surgery ask patients to request a Carers Registration Form when they ascertain that the patient is a carer or may pass the matter directly to the Carer's Champion. Information on the role of Adult Care Services and Carers in Hertfordshire may be given to the patient.

Competency

All Carer Registration Packs have a Consent to share information form, which is to be completed by the person being cared for. This gives permission to discuss medical information with the Carer. (This patient may NOT always be registered with the surgery)

Advice

Patients who are identified by themselves or the Practice, will be offered information from our Champion and referred to Carers in Hertfordshire via Email to carer.support@carersinherts.org.uk

Recording Carer Information

When the Practice receives a carers registration form or a patient is highlighted by a healthcare professional as being a carer the following read code is added: *Carer – Ub1ju*

All carers are coded with Snomed CT code 224484003 – “patient themselves providing care”

There is no longer a separate code for young carers so they will continue to be coded after they turn 18.

Snomed code 199361000000101 – is no longer a carer is to be added when the person is no longer providing the care.

Details that they are a Carer will be added to their home page on their records, so that everyone dealing with the patient will be aware they are a Carer.

Information will be added to their records concerning the person they care for and their relationship to that person. E.g. parent/child/relative/friend.

The Carer's Champion will keep the Carer's Register updated, adding any new Carers and the relevant details. Any young carers or Autistic children who have parent Carers are highlighted, as well as any Gold Star patients for easy identification.

Carers will be invited in for a health check on an annual basis and any relevant vaccines.