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Identification of Carers

Version History

[illegible]



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Introduction

Policy statement

The purpose of this document is to detail the procedures that The Practice has implemented to identify and record carers, ensuring that such individuals are aptly referred for a Carer's Assessment¹ to Adult Care Services, who will provide further advice and support. Carers form a diverse group and provide services for individuals who need assistance or support with day-to-day living.

Status

This document and any procedures contained within it are non-contractual and may be modified or withdrawn at any time. For the avoidance of doubt, it does not form part of your contract of employment.

Training and support

The practice will provide guidance and support to help those to whom it applies understand their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Additional support will be given to managers and supervisors to enable them to deal more effectively with matters arising from this policy.

Scope

Who it applies to

This document applies to all employees of the practice and other individuals performing functions in relation to the practice, such as agency workers, locums and contractors.

Why and how it applies to them

This document provides information that is applicable to all members of staff at The Practice. It is the responsibility of all staff to give accurate, relevant information to those individuals identified as carers, whilst also recognising and signposting those individuals who are providing a service but not registered as a carer.

The practice aims to design and implement policies and procedures that meet the diverse needs of our service and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Consideration has been given to the impact this policy might have in regard to the individual protected characteristics of those to whom it applies.

¹ [NHS Support - How to get a Carer's Assessment](#)



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Policy

Definition of a carer

A carer is an individual who provides unpaid care and support on a regular basis to a member of their family, a partner, friend or neighbour who is suffering from illness, frailty, disability, mental health or substance misuse issues (this list is not exhaustive).

Carers are not defined by age, as there are many young carers within the community, nor are they defined by the amount of support they provide; this can vary from a few hours per week to full-time care, at home or at another location.

Carers provide a range of support, which includes but is not restricted to:

- Manual handling assistance (bed to chair, etc.)
- Administering medication
- Personal care (such as feeding and washing)
- Emotional support

It is worthwhile to note that carers should not be confused with paid care support workers, volunteers or care assistants, or those individuals who receive payment in kind.

Support to carers

Carers are encouraged to discuss that they have become, or are, a carer with their GP practice as soon as possible so that it is highlighted in the carer's medical records using SNOMED code 224484003. There is a dedicated Carer Template on EMIS for the health assessment of carers.

It is important to inform a GP so that the practice can understand the specific needs of, and the demands placed on, the carer, then they will be able to offer advice and ongoing support to the carer as required.

This support could include:

- Professional advice to support the person(s) who is being cared for, to promote confidence in their caring role
- Clinical support such as annual influenza inoculations and advice about any services provided by the NHS for carers
- It may be difficult for the carer, or the person(s) whom they care for, to attend appointments at The Practice. Therefore, by offering a double appointment for both, this could avoid unnecessary difficulties
- Whilst the carer should have an understanding of any medication that has been prescribed, this should be discussed. Likewise, discuss arranging any repeat prescriptions to be delivered to save collection
- To signpost towards well-being support by discussing other sources in both public and voluntary sectors
- To provide supporting letters and information to enable access to any benefits or the blue badge scheme

There are numerous charitable organisations specific to carers, some of which are listed below in section 3.3. Support can also be gained from Carers Week, which is an annual charitable event.



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For more information, go to: www.carersweek.org

Significance of identifying carers

Identifying carers ensures that individuals are afforded the necessary support and advice, whilst also reducing the risk of injury from:

- Stress
- Back and upper-limb injuries
- Personal health issues
- Psychological issues affecting long-term carers

Without these carers, there would be an increased demand for support services provided by the NHS. Therefore, it is important that The Practice accurately records carers using the appropriate read code (918A).

Carers will feel supported and valued by the practice and will receive the necessary level of support to ensure they are providing care in a safe and effective manner, and are free from the risk of injury or illness as a result of providing such care.

Additionally, The Practice will provide support by referring carers to Adult Social Care. There are numerous services and agencies that support carers and provide further advice; below are some providers to which carers can be signposted:

- Social Services Department² located at <https://brentcarerscentre.org.uk/>
- www.care.org
- www.carersuk.org
- www.carers.org
- www.ageuk.org.uk
- www.healthwatch.co.uk/

The government has published a useful and summarised factsheet outlining the Care Act 2014 and its responsibilities. It also includes needs, entitlement, planning, costs, abuse and neglect, and lastly legal requirements³.

Mechanisms for identifying carers

At The Practice, there are two methods used for identifying carers:

- Self-identification
- Practice identification

² [Local Authority - Adult Social Care Finder](#)

³ www.gov.uk - Care Act 2014 Factsheet



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Self-identification is reliant on individuals informing practice staff that they are carers. In order to raise awareness of the support available to individuals, The Practice has devised a number of methods aimed at identifying carers, such as:

- Displaying posters in the waiting room and clinical areas
- Including a carer section on new patient registration forms
- Promoting carer information on the practice website
- Generating carer-based discussions at Patient Participation Groups, including visits from local organisations
- Placing carer registration forms at reception
- Holding carer campaigns and events using local media, etc.
- When an individual is collecting a prescription on behalf of someone else
- During a discussion with patients in consultation or other opportune times

All staff have a responsibility to try and identify, support and signpost carers.

Carers' champion

A carer's champion is a member of the team who is aware of the stresses and strains a carer may be facing. They have the skills to chat about caring, as well as confidential issues related to caring.

They can share information about what support is available and direct carers to other services.

At The Practice, our carers' champion is the Dr Rasooly, supported by the practice manager. It is their responsibility to take the lead on all carer-related matters, providing advice and direction to staff and patients as required.

Supporting documentation

The following documentation is used to support this policy:

- Carer's identification form
- Patient-carer consent form

Summary

The Practice is committed to supporting all of our patients who have a caring role.

There is a responsibility for all staff to try and identify those patients who are carers. At The Practice, all staff are aware of the effects that caring for someone can have on an individual. Therefore, it is essential that carers are given the necessary support to enable them to provide care effectively.

Any questions relating to this policy, or about carers in general, should be directed to the carers' champion in the first instance.



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Carer's identification form

By identifying yourself as a carer, we will be able to support you and signpost you to the support services available to you as a carer. If you consent, we will also refer you to Adult Social Care for an assessment; they will identify your needs and provide further support to you as a carer.

Carer's details:			
Surname		Forename	
Date of birth		NHS number	
Street		Region	
Town or city		Postcode	
Telephone		Email	

Details about the person you care for:			
Surname		Forename	
Date of birth		NHS number	
Street		Region	
Town or city		Postcode	
Telephone		GP & practice	
Details about the care you provide:			
I consent to you referring me to Adult Social Care for an assessment.			
Please pass my details to the local carer support services.			

Signature	
Date	

Please return completed forms to reception.



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Carer-patient consent form

Patient details:			
Surname		Forename	
Date of birth		NHS number	
Street		Region	
Town or city		Postcode	
Telephone		GP details	
Carer details:			
Surname		Forename	
Date of birth		NHS number	
Street		Region	
Town or city		Postcode	
Telephone		GP & practice	

I give permission for my named carer to have access to my healthcare records held by my GP surgery. This permission relates to all / part of my record*. (**Please delete as appropriate.*)

Where permission is restricted to part of the record, please stipulate those areas for which access is authorised:

I am aware that my GP may overrule my decision at any time and that this authorisation will remain in force until/...../..... or until cancelled by me (in writing).

Signature (of patient)	
Date	

I agree that I will treat all information confidentially and will not disclose this information to any third party without the express permission of the person named as the patient above. I will only use this information in the best interests of the patient.

Signature (of carer)	
Date	

Please return completed form to reception.