

Introduction

This document establishes the procedures that the Practice has in place for identifying Carers to ensure they are appropriately referred for a Carers Assessment to Adult Care Services.

Definition of a Carer

Carers are people who, without payment, provide help and support to a family member, friend or neighbour who cannot manage on their own due to physical or mental illness, disability, substance misuse or frailty brought on by old age.

Caring roles can include administering medication, lifting and handling, personal or emotional care. Carers should not be confused with paid care workers, care assistants or with volunteer care workers.

A “Young Carer” is defined as being below 18, who carries out significant caring tasks and by so doing, shoulders a level of responsibility for another person which is inappropriate for their age.

This situation often arises when parents who have long term conditions are not offered appropriate help and support, although it is a fact that most children of disabled or sick parents do not have to take on such responsible caring roles.

The person receiving care may, or may not be registered at the Carer’s Practice. When this situation arises, because the Practice will not be always be able to ascertain that the Carer / Patient relationship has ceased, the Carer may be asked to re-confirm their Carer status.

Where the person receiving care is a registered patient at the Carer’s Practice, the Carer / Patient relationship can be verified more frequently, resulting in practice-held information being able to be modified when significant events such as death or de-registration occur.

Protocol

It is important to estimate the total number of Carers within your Practice Catchment Area.

Insert Your Practice List Size	Likely Number of Carers	Likely Number Caring for 20+ hours per week	Likely Number Caring for 50+ hours per week
4,475	448	152	49

The objective of this Protocol is to ensure that all Carers registered with the Practice are identified and referred to Adult Care Services if required.

The Practice will do its utmost to facilitate this process by actively identifying, supporting and referring known Carers who are patients of the Practice or where the person receiving care is a registered patient of the Practice.

The Practice will support Carers by:

- Providing relevant information and Local Authority resources and contact points
- Providing suitable appointment flexibility and understanding
- Providing care, health checks and advice to enable them to maximise their own health and needs.

Identifying Carers

There are two proven methods of identification:

- Self-identification and
- Pro-active Practice identification.

The Practice undertakes the following activities as part of each method:

SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Notice Boards

The Practice displays a poster on existing notice boards requesting Carers to contact the Practice to provide details of their caring responsibilities. During seasonal times e.g. flu clinics, higher profile is given to information for carers and a notice board is designated to this information at this time.

Prescriptions

A message is attached to repeat prescriptions requesting appropriate patients to complete the Carer-referral Form which can be obtained from Reception.

New Patient Registration Forms

The Practice's new patient registration form incorporates the following two questions:

- Do you look after someone?,
- Does someone look after you?

This information is used in the new patient screening appointment, tagging the patient's notes and arranging referral to Care Services.

PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICE IDENTIFICATION

Letter and Questionnaire to Patients

If the Practice writes to a patient, (e.g. during the flu vaccination campaign), the communication incorporates a section on Carers, where if they are a carer but have not yet completed a Carer-referral Form, they are requested to contact the Practice and complete one. This may be part of the procedure for Disability Allowance forms.

Prescriptions

A person who collects a prescription on behalf of someone else, may be passed a Carer-referral form. It may be part of a regular discussion at multi-disciplinary team meetings to exploit personal knowledge.

Health Professional Identification

All Health Professionals in the surgery complete referral forms when they ascertain a patient is a Carer.

This is regularly discussed at multi-disciplinary team meetings to exploit personal knowledge.

Upon identification of a Carer the Practice will take the following steps:

- The Medical Record of the Carer should be edited to insert the 'Carer' Read Code of 918A and entered as an alert.
- The Role of Carer should be marked as an 'Active Problem' so that it can be easily visible to the Clinician when accessing the Medical Record of the Carer.
- An 'Alert Message' should be added to the Carer's Record on the Front desk to alert Receptionists in order that they may prioritise booking appointments where necessary.
- The medical record (EMIS) of the person receiving care will be allocated a read code of 918F ("has a carer") and cross reference the carers details in the text box

The following read codes are used to tag Carers notes:

Carer	918A
Has a Carer	918F
No able Carer in household	ZV604
Carer unable to cope	ZV608
Carer referred for assessment	EMISQCA6 (this is an EMIS Clinical System code and will be different on other systems.)

When the details on the form have been entered on to the patients' notes, the referral forms are to be copied and sent, as appropriate, to:

Sherborne Social Services
The Sheilings
The Avenue
Sherborne
Dorset DT9 3AJ

Tel: 01305 221016