

Carers Policy

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| For Use in: | Organisation-wide |
| By: | All staff |
| For: | All Carers of all patients/all patients with Carers |
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This is a Controlled Document

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Carers Policy

1. Introduction

Norfolk & Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Hereby known as the 'Trust') created a Carers' Strategy in 2016. That strategy enabled the Trust to set out its strategic aims in relation to Carers, which included identifying priorities, processes and commitment to support Carers whilst those that they care for are accessing our services.

The strategy is now superseded by this policy which embeds the Trust's approach to supporting Carers.

In an acute care setting, the primary focus is most often the needs of patients who require medical or surgical intervention to improve their physical health. However, many patients admitted to our hospitals may live with conditions that are long term or progressive and require on-going care and support. At the Trust we recognise and value the vital role Carers play in the health and wellbeing of the person they care for. This policy supports all Carers - young, adult, parent, new Carers who may not have been a Carer in the past and staff who may also be Carers. These Carers may be providing long term and short term care to the cared for person following a period of ill health or longstanding condition. Many of these patients are already in situations where family members have taken on a caring role. The Trust recognises the vital knowledge Carers have on the patient's condition/s, need and wishes. Carers can also help improve the experience for the patient and reduce levels of anxiety and stress. Therefore, Carers should have the opportunity to be involved in the care of the patient both during hospital stays and their care on discharge. Carers also require respite, so this policy emphasises that a Carer's involvement in the patient's care is not a necessity and should be discussed and agreed between the patient, Carer and staff.

The Trust is committed to working closely with a range of partner organisations; such as Norfolk County Council, Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group, Carers Matter Norfolk, Carers Voice Norfolk and Waveney and Caring Together (through their Norfolk Young Carers Forum project); to improve support for carers of all ages. We support the principles in the Norfolk Carers Charter and will also work with the partners on the local Carers strategy.

In 2014, National Health Service (NHS) England published its Commitment to Carers. This has been reviewed within the NHS Long term plan in 2019.

2. Purpose

This policy sets out a framework to facilitate mutually supportive and helpful relationships between the patient, Carer and Trust staff throughout a patient's stay and to aid a smooth transition of care upon discharge. It also aims to guide staff in raising awareness and informing good practice around the needs of different types of Carers.

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In addition, this policy will signpost Trust Staff who are also Carers to relevant Trust guidelines to support them in their caring role (see Section 11, Associated Documentation).

3. Scope

The Trust is committed to supporting national and local visions to improve the availability of services, support and information to Carers. The Trust has been awarded the Carer Friendly Tick- Health accreditation and the Trust is committed to maintaining the accreditation by following the aims set out in this policy in relation to Carers.

4. Aim

The aim of the policy is to ensure that Carers are supported throughout the patient journey from first contact to discharge.

5. Definitions or Explanation of Terms Used

For the purpose of this policy, a Carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, mental health problems or an addiction, could not cope without their support. Carers can be any age, caring for another person of any age, including young Carers and parent Carers.

These do not apply to people who are paid Carers or appointed through the voluntary sector, referred to as “care workers”, “support workers” or “personal assistants”.

6. Duties

Chief Nurse

The Chief Nurse is the Executive lead for the implementation of this policy.

Lead for Patient Engagement & Experience

The lead for patient engagement and experience will provide strategic leadership for the implementation of this policy.

Patient Engagement & Experience Team

The team will provide operational support to the organisation to support this policy, training, guidance and engagement with community groups and organisations supporting Carers.

Carers Forum Chair

The Chairing role of the forum will be shared between a Carer and a Patient Experience Team member. The Chair of the Carers Forum will provide an oversight of all Carer

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related projects and initiatives to ensure they are effectively supporting The Trusts' overall Carer strategic objectives.

The Chair of the Carers Forum will ensure current initiatives are shared with Senior Practitioners and other staff/organisational groups on a regular basis to obtain feedback on Carer projects being undertaken within the Carers Forum.

The Chair of the Carers Forum will be represented on the Patient Panel and provide reports to Patient Engagement and Experience Governance Board.

Carers Forum

The members of the Carers Forum will actively promote the Carers' Policy in terms of providing support and guidance to staff in meeting the needs of Carers who are accessing Trust services. The Forum will work in partnership with other organisations outside the Trust to support Carers' representation. The Forum has 2 tiers of membership allowing Carers the opportunity to choose the level of commitment they are able to sign up for-

- **Full membership**; this level of membership is an ongoing, regular commitment to and engagement with the Forum. The aim is that the Forum will offer an opportunity to co-produce services, regularly provide feedback and suggestions on current services and attend meetings. Full members will be invited to attend as many meetings as possible on a regular basis. Meetings will be held once every two months, for approximately 1.5 hours.
- **Flexible membership**; this level of membership would offer the opportunity to Carers who want to get involved as and when they are able or would like to. There is no expectation to attend bi-monthly meetings but the Carer may wish to dip in, for example a particularly relevant issue is on the agenda or they feel strongly about a recent experience or situation. Another way of contributing could be for the Carer to share their thoughts and ideas to the Patient Experience and Engagement Team ahead of a planned meeting they are unable to attend.

The Carers Forum are committed to the actions determined and discussed within the Carers Forum to ensure the Trust is adhering to current guidance relevant to the support of Carers within a healthcare environment.

All Staff (including volunteers)

We are committed to being a Carer friendly organisation; all staff has a role in the identification and involvement of Carers, the provision of information, and the support for Carers' physical and mental wellbeing.

All staff has a duty to ensure optimal support of and inclusion and engagement with Carers.

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Where patients have a known named medical condition, for which support teams are available, staff should signpost Carers to those services, and/or make referrals to those services where appropriate.

7. Processes to be followed

The following commitments and associated practices must be followed at the Trust, as they are aligned with areas identified as important to local Carers:

Commitment 1: Information on Services and Support

Carers receive information in an appropriate and timely manner and in a way that suits them.

- We implement 'John's Campaign' – a campaign for the right of people with dementia to be supported by their Carers in hospital (www.johnscampaign.org.uk)
- Patient information leaflets detail information for Carers such as telephone numbers for support where appropriate
- Most common Trust information leaflets are translated into most common utilised languages and available on the Intranet and Internet
- Promotion undertaken Trust-wide of how to identify Carers and implement support mechanisms already available to Carers (e.g. Carer's Passport)
- Trust web pages signpost Carers to support organisations and other social media
- Annual Carers survey includes assessment of content and timing of information provision
- Patient Engagement and Experience Team are point of contact and ensure information is available, up to date and co-produced where relevant with the Carers forum
- Information provided to Carers of patients attending outpatient appointments at different points i.e. Carers related information included on leaflets given to patients in outpatient clinics about health issues, health promotion and signposting Carers to the Carers page on the Trust website.

Commitment 2: Having a life outside caring

We ensure that all staff has the right skills and knowledge to identify Carers. We ensure that all Carers of all ages are signposted to appropriate support mechanisms and services. These commitments help Carers identify opportunities to pursue a life outside their caring role.

- Trust web pages and social media signpost Carers to support organisations
- There is a Trust Guideline Working in Partnership with Carers of Adult In-patients

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- Annual Carers survey includes audit for the effectiveness of transition services for Carers to ensure services are designed around the needs of both patients and their Carers (e.g. Discharge process).
- Promotion undertaken Trust-wide of how to identify Carers and implement support mechanisms already available to Carers (e.g. Carer's Passport)

Commitment 3: Income – Financial Support

We ensure that all Carers are aware of any financial support (e.g. reduced canteen charges) available to them. Trust Policies will be reviewed and if required, developed to actively support working Carers in employment.

- All identified Carers are made aware that they may be able to receive reduced car parking costs in Trust car parks and Trust canteen. Promotion of this is to all Trust staff via Communications Circular and Trust intranet and to all Carers via internet Trust web pages and external communications (including PULSE magazine and Patient Engagement & Experience Team).
- Support is provided to ensure key staff can signpost Carers to accredited benefits information, advice and representation services. Promotion of this to all Trust staff via Trust intranet.

Commitment 4: Health and Wellbeing

Measures will be taken to provide support to Carers in regards to their own health and wellbeing.

- Regular review of Trust Guideline Working in Partnership with Carers of Adult In-patients
- Annual Carers survey includes identification of information needs
- Trust Web pages (and social media) signpost Carers to support organisations

Commitment 5: Having a say in service provision

The trust will involve Carers where appropriate and practical in care planning, delivery of care and discharge planning processes as consented to jointly by the person accessing our services and the Carer themselves. Carers will be supported to visit at the most suitable times that meet their needs and the needs of those being cared for.

The Trust will consider the needs of Carers as well as the cared for when developing new services or making improvements to existing services where possible and appropriate, this will be achieved by involving Carers in the planning stages of developments to help us identify needs.

The Trust's Carers Forum membership will assist in evaluation of the impact projects and initiatives have on Carers and such projects and evaluations will be reported to Patient Engagement and Experience Governance Board.

- Quality Assurance Audits have Carer representatives

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- All leaflets approved by the Patient Information Forum are reviewed by representatives of patients and/or their Carers
- Carer representatives are members of committees/groups where appropriate
- The impact of plans for new service developments, projects or initiatives are considered by patients and Carers.

Commitment 6: Practical Support

The Trust will work collaboratively with the voluntary and independent sector organisations to ensure that both patients' and Carers' needs remain at the heart of our care delivery. All staff at the Trust must be aware of and supported to implement the Trust's Carers' agreement which ensures optimal close and cooperative working between Carers and staff (this supports commitment 5).

- Promotional stands from voluntary and independent sectors are welcomed by the Trust
- Regular review of Trust Guideline Working in Partnership with Carers of Adult In-patients
- Annual Carers survey includes assessment of timing of provision of information

Commitment 7: Access to Services that support the cared for person

A high standard of care is ensured for all patients, and this must be agreed upon by Carers feeling confident that the needs of the person they care for are being met to a high standard.

- Quality Assurance Audits have Carer representatives
- Regular review of Trust Guideline Working in Partnership with Carers of Adult In-patients and other policies directly related to Carers
- Departmental action plans developed following Trust-wide audit of nursing documentation relating to specific care needs

Commitment 8: Emergency Support

Trust Staff must be able to support Carers to access emergency support services, which will look after the cared-for person, if something happens to them.

- Trust Web pages and social media signpost Carers to support organisations
- Patient information leaflets detail information for Carers such as telephone numbers for support where appropriate
- Support is provided to staff to enable them to identify and sign post/refer Carers to appropriate services/agency in an emergency

Commitment 9: Having a break

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Trust Staff must be supported to identify Carers who may benefit from a break and ensure that Carers are appropriately referred for a Carer's assessment and support with Carer's personal budgets.

- Quality Assurance Audits have Carer representatives
- Trust Web pages and social media signpost Carers to support organisations
- Patient information leaflets detail information for Carers such as telephone numbers for support where appropriate
- Departmental action plans developed following Trust-wide audit of nursing documentation relating to specific care needs

8. Development and Consultation Process

This policy was updated following the review of the previous Carers Strategy. The development of the policy has involved feedback from existing members of the Carers Forum and Carers organisations via the Patient Engagement and Experience Team. Suggestions for improvement identified within the feedback have been included within the action plan from the Trust's Carers Forum.

This version has been endorsed by the Trust's Carers Forum and Patient Engagement and Experience Governance Board.

9. Audit / Monitoring Compliance

To determine the effectiveness and compliance to this policy and its commitments, an annual Carer Satisfaction Audit will be conducted to assess the experience of Carers and the support they receive during the admission of those they care for. The audit will be led by the Carers Forum supported by the Patient Engagement & Experience Team, and the results and resulting actions reported to Patient Engagement and Experience Governance Board.

10. Supporting References

Carers' Council for Norfolk (2014) '*Carers' Strategy for Norfolk 2014-17: Working together to support Carers in Norfolk*', available from:
<http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC161727>

Norfolk County Council *Carers charter* (2018)
<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/campaigns/think-carers/carers-charter>

Department of Health (2008) '*Carers at the heart of 21st-century families and Communities*', available from:

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/136492/Carers_at_the_heart_of_21_century_families.pdf

NHS England (2014) '*Commitment to Carers*', available from:
<http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/commitment-to-Carers-may14.pdf>

NHS England (2019) '*The NHS Long Term Plan*', available from:
<https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/nhs-long-term-plan-version-1.2.pdf>

NICE Guideline [NG150]: Supporting Adult Carers (2020)
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng150>

Carer Friendly Tick Award Health Standards
<https://www.caringtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Carer-Friendly-Tick-Award-Health-Standards-PDF-125kB.pdf>

11. Associated Documentation

Trust Guideline for Working in Partnership with Carers of Adult Inpatients – [Trust Docs ID: 1090](#)

Carers Partnership Agreement - [Trust Docs ID: 15099](#) (for use with Carers Passport)

Trust Special Leave Guidelines – [Trust Docs ID: 679](#)

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12. Equality Impact Assessment Form

| | |
|--|---|
| Name of the Policy or Function/Service: Carers Policy | |
| Policy for Procedural documents | |
| Type of function or policy | Existing <input type="checkbox"/> Proposed <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Division | Corporate | Department | Corporate | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|--|--|
| Name of person completing form | Ruby Allen and Amrita Kulkarni | Date | 29.10.2020 | |
| Equality Area | Potential Negative Impact | Impact Positive Impact | Which groups are affected | Full Impact Assessment Required YES/NO |
| Race | No | No | Diverse groups including BAME communities will be approached in relation to carers initiatives. Literature and information will be made available in appropriate language as necessary. | No |
| Disability | No | No | Mental Capacity Act to be considered to ensure the carer has the opportunity to be involved in a patients care. Patient information leaflets meet Accessible Information Standards. | No |
| Religion and beliefs | No | No | Carers of patients are made aware of support available through Chaplaincy. | No |
| Gender | No | No | No | No |
| Gender Re-assignment | No | No | No | No |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | No | No | No | No |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | No | No | No | No |
| Sexual Orientation | No | No | No | No |
| Age | No | No | Raising awareness about young carers through training packages at the NNUH to ensure | No |

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| | | | young carers receive the benefits and support through this policy. | |
| EDS2- How does this change impact the equality and diversity strategic plan? | | | | |
| NOTES: (Please use to record and describe any decisions made or discussions had regarding the EIA) | | | | |
| Patient and Carer engagement across the county will allow opportunity for discussions with representatives and community leaders from different protected characteristics about carer initiatives and support at the Trust. Carers from these communities will be encouraged to join the NNUH Carers Forum to diversify the carers voice in all carers initiative planning. | | | | |