

I have attended Carer Awareness Training and I'm now a Carer Champion...what can I do next?

There are many things you can do now to raise carer awareness within your area and support carers, here's a few key suggestions:

- ❖ Do you have a dedicated carers notice board in your practice/clinical area? If not, ask us for one!
- ❖ Ask for a regular slot in your practice/team meeting to discuss carers. It's an opportunity for colleagues to discuss patients who may be or have a carer and to discuss the work you are doing to support carers
- ❖ Highlight the easy internal referral routes to carer support and ensure staff have copies of the referral pathway card/poster for the Edinburgh Carer Support Team
- ❖ Invite the Edinburgh Carer Support Team to host an information stall in your area
- ❖ Use the checklist below for further inspiration about what you and your colleagues can do to support carers. You don't have to do it all at once, you can add to this on going process over time
- ❖ Remember to check your e-mail for updates from the Edinburgh Carer Network

Good luck, and if you need support to undertake any of these ideas then please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Edinburgh Carer Support Team on 536-3371 or e-mail Carer.support@luht.scot.nhs.uk



I am a Carer Champion. I support unpaid carers.

**"It's everyone's
job to identify
and support
carers"**

says the Scottish
Government
in Caring Together
2010-15 (the carers
strategy for Scotland).

Six steps: To aid the identification of hidden carers within GP Practices

	Action	Completed	Ongoing	Notes or action points to be taken forward
Step 1	Identifying Carers			
	Establish a carer register within the practice/your clinical area			
	Build in time at meetings to exchange information and update the carers register on a regular basis			
	Encourage colleagues to make active referrals and highlight the easy internal referral pathway to the ECST . Continue to remind colleagues of this.			
	Make use of patient contact to identify potential caring roles during; routine consultations, home visits, new patient registrations, health checks or flu clinics			
	Encourage carers to self identify – this can be done by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using a carer dedicated notice board • providing information on the practice website • displaying electronic messages on monitors in waiting areas 			*If you would like a notice board supplied from the Edinburgh Carer Support Team please contact us on 536-3371
	Ensure Edinburgh Carer Support Team leaflets are available to carers, colleagues and throughout patient areas			
	Include carer information with your annual flu-clinic literature			
	Be aware, if a patient with a long term illness has children, they could be a young carer			
	Recognise parents of children with disabilities as carers			
Step 2	Involving carers in patient care			
	Seek permission to share patient information with where appropriate			
	Involve carers in care planning and care implementation			

Step 3	Improving healthcare for carers			
	Provide flexible or longer appointments for carers			
	Invite carers for an annual flu vaccination			
Step 4	Providing information and support for carers			
	Develop links with Edinburgh Carer Support Team (ECST)			
	Refer carers to the ECST through: Sci-gateway Phone Internal e-mail Paper referral			
	Encourage carers to apply for benefits they are eligible for			<i>The ECST will cover this if a referral is made</i>
	Ask if the carer has an emergency plan in place			<i>The ECST will cover this if a referral is made</i>
Step 5	Providing specific support to young carers (Y.C)			
	Include young carers in steps 1-3			
	Refer carers age 12+ to ECST			
	Question why the young Carer is taking on a caring role, does the cared for person need a review of their needs			
	Provide age specific information and support. For carers age 12 and under, refer on to dedicated young carer projects within Edinburgh; Edinburgh Young Carers Project, The Broomhouse Centre, North West Carers Centre Centre			
	Consider referring the young carer to social care direct for an assessment			
Step 6	Audit improving carer support			
	Audit carers register to ensure this is up to date on a regular basis			
	Monitor the number of carers identified within the practice and aim to improve the numbers identified year on year			

Supporting carers: An action guide for general practitioners and their teams (2nd edition)¹

The information noted below was extracted from the action guide: [Five key ways for GPs and Primary Care teams to support carers](#). (RCGP/e-Learning for Health Supporting Carers in General Practice (2011)).

1. Just Listen
2. Think of depression
3. Ask about finances³
4. Sign post to carer services
5. Plan for emergencies

Benefits to GP Practices in working with the Edinburgh Carer Support Team:

- ✓ Increased Carer awareness
- ✓ A clear internal referral pathway to effective carer support
- ✓ An additional resource to meet patient's needs
- ✓ Help with early identification of carers' own health problems
- ✓ Promoting and sharing best practice
- ✓ Cost efficiency through promotion of carer health; crisis prevention; reduction in repeated and missed appointments; reduction in unplanned hospital admissions and secondary care referrals

¹ <http://static.carers.org/files/supporting-carers-an-action-guide-for-general-practitioners-and-their-teams-second-edition-5877.pdf>

