**Identification of Carers Policy**

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**Table of contents**

[1 Introduction 3](#_Toc112227346)

[1.1 Policy statement 3](#_Toc112227347)

[1.2 Status 3](#_Toc112227348)

[2 Policy 3](#_Toc112227349)

[2.1 Who are carers? 3](#_Toc112227350)

[2.2 Significance of identifying carers 4](#_Toc112227351)

[2.3 Mechanisms for identifying carers 4](#_Toc112227352)

[2.4 Recording carer details 4](#_Toc112227353)

[2.5 Support to carers 4](#_Toc112227354)

[2.6 Carers’ champion 5](#_Toc112227355)

[2.7 Additional resources for carers 5](#_Toc112227356)

[2.8 The Carers Toolkit 6](#_Toc112227357)

[3 Summary 6](#_Toc112227358)

[Annex A – Example of a carer’s identification form 7](#_Toc112227359)

# Introduction

## Policy statement

The purpose of this document is to detail the procedures that Sheerwater Health Centre has implemented to identify and record carers, ensuring that such individuals are appropriately referred for a Carer’s Assessment[[1]](#footnote-1) 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. This document provides information that is applicable to all members of staff at Sheerwater Health Centre. 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 who are not registered as a carer.

## Status

The organisation 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](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents). Consideration has been given to the impact this policy might have with regard to the individual protected characteristics of those to whom it applies.

This document and any procedures contained within it are non-contractual and may be modified or withdrawn at any time.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.

# Policy

## Who are carers?

A carer is a person of any age (including children) who provides unpaid support to a partner, relative, friend or neighbour who could not cope without their help. This could be due to old age, frailty, disability, a serious health condition, mental ill health or substance misuse. Parents of children who are disabled or who have a serious health condition are also considered to be carers.[[2]](#footnote-2)

There is a difference between a carer and care professionals who are paid to provide care. Some carers receive statutory payments or a direct payment for their caring role. Even when carers do not receive such payments, they are still considered to be carers.2

Many carers may not identify themselves as a carer. Instead, they see themselves as someone’s partner, relative or friend who is simply ‘doing their best’ to help someone they care about. For this reason, asking ‘do you look after someone?’ can be a more effective opening question than ‘are you a carer?’2

## Significance of identifying carers

By identifying, assessing and supporting carers’ needs, Sheerwater Health Centre, will be effectively reducing:2

* Avoidable demand on services
* Carer ill health
* Carer and family breakdown
* Unwarranted variations in carer support

Furthermore, by effectively identifying and appropriately supporting carers, Sheerwater Health Centre can make sure carers are able to lead a positive life outside of their caring role.

## Mechanisms for identifying carers

At Sheerwater Health Centre, there are two methods used for identifying carers:

* Self-identification
* Organisation identification

Self-identification is reliant on individuals informing organisation staff that they are carers. In order to raise awareness of the support available to individuals, Sheerwater Health Centre 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 organisation website and other social media
* Generating carer-based discussions at Patient Participation Groups
* Placing carer registration forms at reception ([see Annex A](#_Annex_A_–))
* 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 to identify, support and signpost carers.

## Recording carer details

At Sheerwater Health Centre, as soon as an individual is identified as being a carer, this fact will be annotated on the individual’s clinical record using SNOMED CT code: Caregiver (person) SCTID: 133932002. Furthermore, the individual will be added to the carers’ register and an alert added to the clinical system to ensure the whole organisation team is able to see that the individual is a carer.

## Support to carers

To ensure carers are identified and supported effectively, Sheerwater Health Centre will adhere to the framework of quality markers which covers six key areas as illustrated below.

Detailed guidance explaining how to apply the framework of quality markers can be found at Appendix A of the [Supporting carers in general practice: a framework of quality markers](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/supporting-carers-in-general-practice-a-framework-of-quality-markers/) document.

## Carers’ champion

At Sheerwater Health Centre, our carers’ champion is Nine Taylor, 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. Furthermore, they will gather evidence and complete the declaration at Appendix B of the [framework of quality markers](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/supporting-carers-in-general-practice-a-framework-of-quality-markers/). Having this evidence can be used both for carers to know that Sheerwater Health Centre is a supportive organisation and for CQC inspection purposes.

Appendices A and B are attached to this document from [Supporting carers in general practice: a framework of quality markers](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/supporting-carers-in-general-practice-a-framework-of-quality-markers/)

## Additional resources for carers

Additional services and agencies to which carers can be signposted are:

* [Care](http://www.care.org/)
* [Carers UK](http://www.carersuk.org/)
* [Carers Trust](https://carers.org/)
* [Age UK](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/)
* [Healthwatch](https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/)
* [Adult Social Care resources](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/Local-Authority-Adult-Social-Care/LocationSearch/1918)

Further support is also available from [www.carersweek.org](https://www.carersweek.org/).

## The Carers Toolkit

An integrated approach to identifying and assessing carer health and wellbeing is detailed in [The Carers Toolkit](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/identifying-assessing-carer-hlth-wellbeing.pdf) which offers a formal mechanism for organisations to collaborate with partners to agree ways of identifying and supporting carers.

# Summary

There is a responsibility for all staff to try to identify those patients who are carers. At Sheerwater Health Centre, 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.

# Annex A – Example of a 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 and 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 the completed form to reception.**

This is the symbol for the National Health Service (NHS) which led this piece of work.

**Appendix A** **from** [Supporting carers in general practice: a framework of quality markers](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/supporting-carers-in-general-practice-a-framework-of-quality-markers/)

**Supporting carers in general practice:**

**quality markers and practical ideas**

NHS England and NHS Improvement

This diagram show six boxes linked by a circle. Each box contains one fo the six quality marker themes that show what carers want from their doctors. The circle represents good practice in supporting carers.


| Quality marker | Practical ideas |
| --- | --- |
| identification and registration  how does the practice proactively identify carers? | Does the practice keep a Carers Register?  • How many patients are registered with this practice?  • How many young carers are registered with the practice? |
| How does the practice proactively identify young and young adult carers? |
| Does the practice review disease registers, long term condition registers and at risk registers to help identify carers of all ages? |
| Does the practice use a form to enable carers of all ages to request being placed on the carers register? |
| Is an alert system in place so that the whole practice team is able to see that someone is a carer when accessing their notes? |
| Does a named person have responsibility for maintaining the Carers Register? |
| How frequently is the Carers Register updated? |
| Does the practice encourage carers to self-identify in the surgery, on their website, and through newsletters? |
| Other – what else does the practice do to help identify carers? |

Supporting carers in general practice: quality markers and practical ideas

| Quality marker | Practical ideas |
| --- | --- |
| holistic support  how does the practice use its Carers Register to support carer health and wellbeing?  Holistic support (continued) | Are all carers given an opportunity to discuss what matters them, including their own health, wellbeing and other support needs? |
| Does the practice support carers maintain their physical health and emotional wellbeing? For example:   * Are all carers encouraged to have a flu vaccination? * Are all carers are offered a regular health check? * Are all carers screened for anxiety and depression? |
| Are carers who attend the appointment of a patient encouraged to book a separate appointment for themselves to discuss what matters to them, including their own health and wellbeing needs? |
| Is the practice aware of local carer support services? |
| Does the practice refer carers to local social prescribing schemes, including referral to a link worker, so as to develop tailored plans to connect the carer with local preventive services and local community-based support? |
| When discussing and planning a carer’s own care, support and treatment, does the practice work with the carer to develop and agree a contingency plan for use in an emergency or when the carer is not available/no longer able to provide support? |
| Are all carers, including young carers, advised of their right to request a carer’s needs assessment? |
| Does the practice provide carers with a ‘Carers Passport’? |
| When referring carers to secondary care, does the practice inform the receiving healthcare provider that they are a carer? |
| When referring carers to secondary care, does the practice ask what implications this could have for the person being cared for? |
| How does the practice proactively refer young carers for assessment or support from the local authority or young carers services? |
| Does the practice provide information to carers of all ages about how to access services for their own health through the practice? |
| Does the practice refer carers to local self-management support, to help maintain good physical health and help manage any long term/chronic conditions the carer may have? |
| Does the practice have an agreed process for actively identifying, referring and supporting those, including children and young people, to reduce or prevent inappropriate caring responsibilities, as a result of taking on caring roles through a patient being given a life-changing diagnosis, or having a life-changing accident? |
| Other – what else does the practice do to meet carers’ holistic support needs? |

Supporting carers in general practice:quality markers and practical ideas

| Quality marker | Practical ideas |
| --- | --- |
| in-practice support  how does the practice understand and promote the needs of carers within the practice? | Does the practice have a GP who acts as a strategic lead for carers? |
| Does the practice have a designated ‘Carers Champion/Carers Lead’ responsible for operational support for carers? |
| Does the practice publicise contact details of the ‘Carers Champion/Carers Lead’ in-practice and in publicity produced by the practice? |
| Does the practice know how to refer carers to the local carer support organisation? |
| Does the practice have agreed processes in place for referring adult and young carers to local carer support? |
| Does the practice enable the local carer’s support organisation to run clinics for carers on the practice premises? |
| Does the practice enable a carer’s support group to meet at the practice? |
| Other – how else does the practice promote the needs of carers? |

Supporting carers in general practice: quality markers and practical ideas

| Quality marker | Practical ideas |
| --- | --- |
| appointments and access  how does the practice make it easier for carers to access services? | Does the practice offer registered carers priority appointments? |
| Does the practice offer carers flexible appointments for carers themselves and the person they care for? |
| Does the practice offer designated clinics for carers? |
| Does the practice offer designated clinics for young carers? |
| Do practice staff take carers’ needs into account when booking appointments? |
| Are carers able to book a double appointment so they may be seen when they accompany the cared for to an appointment? |
| Does the practice allow carers to make ‘virtual appointments’ by offering telephone and video consultations? |
| Are carers able to order repeat prescriptions online? |
| Do clinicians visit carers who are unwell, if they are unable to leave the person they care for at home? |
| Other – how else does the practice make it easier for carers to access its services? |

Supporting carers in general practice: quality markers and practical ideas

| Quality marker | Practical ideas |
| --- | --- |
| information, involvement and communication  how does the practice inform, involve and communicate with carers? | Does the practice provide up-to-date information to carers, including those not currently identified and is this information clearly displayed in the practice? |
| Does the practice provide a Carers Information Pack? |
| Does the practice operate and promote use of a Carers Passport with other local health and care services? |
| Is the information the practice provides to carers clear and accessible, according to the identified needs of the practice population? |
| Does the information the practice provides meet the requirements of the Accessible Information Standard? |
| Does the practice actively involve and consider the views of carers in planning care, treatment and support for the cared-for? |
| Does the practice use and promote a form to enable the person with care needs to give consent to sharing information with their carer? |
| Does the practice work with the carer to develop and agree a contingency plan for use in an emergency or when the carer is not available/no longer able to provide support? |
| Does the practice provide clear information on how carers can join its patient participation group/patient reference group? |
| Does the practice work with its carers to build and share knowledge about local carer support and preventive services? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Quality marker | Practical ideas |
| Information, involvement and communication (continued) | Does the practice use digital and social media to communicate with carers of all ages? |
| Is information for carers provided in the practice itself, on the practice website and in practice newsletters? |
| Are there posters and leaflets on display aimed at carers of different ages? |
| Other – how else does the practice communicate with, inform and involve its carers? |

Supporting carers in general practice: quality markers and practical ideas

| Quality marker | Practical ideas |
| --- | --- |
| awareness and culture  how does the practice promote a carer-friendly culture? | Can each member of the practice team correctly define the terms ‘carer’ and ‘young carer’? |
| Is carer awareness included in all staff inductions and job descriptions? |
| Do all practice staff receive carer awareness training? |
| Are all practice staff confident in engaging with patients who are carers, including young carers, young adult carers and their families? |
| Do all staff have a basic knowledge of the types of services available to carers and can staff explain to carers how these services can be of benefit? |
| Are children and young people who regularly book or attend appointments with an adult who needs assistance with day-to-day living asked if they provide any care and offered appropriate support? |
| Are adult carers, young adult carers and young carers represented on the practice Patient Participation Group? |
| Where the person with care needs consents, is the carer involved in discussions around future care planning and shared-decision making? |

| Awareness and culture (continued): | Does the practice listen to its carers and take action on what carers say?  • Does the practice carry out an annual carer’s survey?  • Does the practice carry out a separate annual survey of young carers?  • Can the practice demonstrate changes that have been made as a result of  feedback given to the carers survey? |
| --- | --- |
| Does the practice involve its Patient Participation Group in its work around quality markers for carers? |
| Are young carers given the opportunity to ask questions and to be listened to? |
| Are staff encouraged to identify themselves as carers? |
| Do staff members who are carers feel that the practice is supportive and willing to accommodate their needs? |
| Does the practice have carer-friendly employment policies? |
| Other - what else does the practice do to promote a culture of carer awareness? |

This is the symbol for the National Health Service (NHS) which led this piece of work.

**Appendix B** **Declaration template from** [Supporting carers in general practice: a framework of quality markers](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/supporting-carers-in-general-practice-a-framework-of-quality-markers/)

At **SHEERWATER HEALTH CENTRE** we are committed to identifying and supporting carers according to the requirements of the Care Quality Commission and as evidenced against the NHS England quality markers for general practice.

| **Quality marker** | **How achieved** |
| --- | --- |
| identification and registration |  |
|  |
| holistic support |  |
|  |
| in-practice support |  |
|  |
| appointments and access |  |
|  |
| information, involvement and communication |  |
|  |
| awareness and culture |  |
|  |
| **How did the practice involve carers in this declaration?** | |

NAME:………………………………………………………………………… DATE:………………………………………………

1. [NHS Support - How to get a Carer’s Assessment](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carer-assessments/) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [CQC GP Mythbuster 44: Caring for carers](https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/gps/gp-mythbuster-44-caring-carers) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)