

Supporting carers in general practice, a framework of quality markers (2019) – A checklist for unpaid carers to use in relation to their GP practice.

The NHS England 2019 Supporting carers in general practice framework of quality markers offers GP surgeries practical ideas and best practice that have been developed in partnership with carers, primary care teams and other key stakeholders to improve the support and care of patients who are unpaid carers.

Collectively, these provide a framework for improving how general practice can better identify and support carers of all ages.

In order to support unpaid carers in Wirral, WIRED have created a short summary of the questions that GP Practices are asked to consider when using the framework to ensure that patients who are unpaid carers are being effectively supported within the practice.

Unpaid carers can use this summary as a checklist to gauge how effectively the GP practice that they are registered with supports unpaid carers.

The questions are split into 6 categories.

1. Identification and registration – how does the GP practice proactively identify carers within the patient group?

- 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 for the practice? (All GP practices are required to keep a register that identifies any patients who are unpaid carers)
- 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?

2. Holistic Support - how does the practice use its Carers Register to support carer health and wellbeing?

- Are all carers given an opportunity to discuss what matters to 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 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?

3. 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?

4. 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?

5. 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?
- 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?

6. 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?
- 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?