Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business

An introduction to supporting carers better through learning and development of staff
Minister's foreword

Many of us will be a carer at some point in our lives; this may be for a short time while supporting someone through illness, or for longer period, perhaps for many years caring for a spouse, partner or disabled child. Most of us will face the challenge with little help or training in how to care for someone. It is therefore remarkable that, over six million of us take on this challenge in order to help and maintain the health and well being of those we care for.
Once someone takes on a caring role, they may come into contact for the first time with a range of professionals whose primary focus is to provide support for the person they care for. It is critical that these staff are also aware of the needs and wishes of carers. Health and social care services in particular, have a vital role to play in ensuring that carers are at the heart of the social care system and are treated as expert partners in care. Of course, carers also deal with everyday services like everyone else, except that now they can have a direct impact, for good or ill, on how life is for them as a carer.

Many local authorities and health services have already begun the process, working in partnership with carers and carers’ organisations. Because this is not just about health and social care; other organisations, such as Post Offices, Housing Associations and banks will also need to challenge themselves to ensure they are meeting the needs of their customers who are also carers.

This Coalition Government has demonstrated its commitment to improving carers lives by publishing ‘Recognised, Valued and Supported: Next Steps for the Carers Strategy’ (November 2010), building on the Carers Strategy (2008). We have heard from hundreds of individual carers and many organisations representing carers about what they saw as the priorities for carers. The Strategy focuses on the key activities upon which the Government – working in partnership with carers, local authorities, the NHS, employers, the voluntary sector and local communities – can focus on from April 2011.

To support many of these outcomes, all staff that come into contact with carers as part of their work need to be aware of the needs a carer may have. Those supporting carers need information, understanding and commitment to perform their role in a way that makes a real difference to carers. Organisations too need to challenge themselves to understand better the role that they have in offering their employees opportunities to learn and develop these skills, but also to be an employer who involves and supports carers at every level. In this way, carers do become ‘everybody’s business’.

With this in mind, I welcome ‘Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business’, a learning and development framework with supporting resources for those that work with carers. This framework has been funded by the Department of Health and developed by Skills for Care and Skills for Health working in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders.

Based on a set of Common Core Principles for Working with Carers, Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business provides employers with a clear framework and supporting resources that encourage the learning and development of staff who come into contact with carers. It provides guidance and practical assistance to employers to gain knowledge and improve the behaviours and attitudes of their workforce towards carers.

I urge employers to use this resource, so we can work together towards supporting and enabling carers to get the help and support they need and deserve.

Paul Burstow MP
Care Services Minister
Carers Matter
– Everybody’s Business
is guidance for employers and organisations to ensure that carers are at the heart of the health and social care system with the people they care for, and are recognised and supported by all sectors of society.

The complete guidance, which comes in three parts provides information about:
- who carers are (as distinct from care workers)
- the range of caring roles
- why carers are important
- how you can support the learning and development of your workforce to improve and enhance your services for the people who use them, and their carers.

The guidance is based on a set of Common Core Principles for Working with Carers, see page 14.
Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business is divided into three parts:

Part one
This introduction you are reading is aimed at chief executives and senior managers who are responsible for the strategic direction of their business and its priorities. It is also relevant for those involved in commissioning services and workforce development. It covers who carers are, why your organisation needs to be aware of their needs and the Common Core Principles for Working with Carers.

Part two
This is aimed at people who are directly responsible for commissioning or delivering learning and development. It provides guidance on how to identify learning and development needs within an organisation and offers a framework that will enable you to select learning at the right level to enable any given workforce to provide effective services and support to carers.

Part three
Contains a wealth of additional supporting resources relevant to people across a wide range of settings and roles that support learning and development. The supporting materials give more detail on areas within this guide and also include practical materials that support the three levels of development described in part two. These materials can be used flexibly, whether to plan learning, to deliver learning and development yourself, or to commission learning and development.
Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business (CMEB) is also explained by the following diagram:

**CMEB part one**
- Supports
- Contains
- This is aimed at chief executives, senior managers, commissioners and others who are responsible for the strategic direction of their business and its priorities.
- It gives an overview of CMEB and its importance to your organisation.
- Contains an introduction to:
  - Who are carers
  - Why carers matter to your organisation
  - Carers rights and entitlements
  - The Equality Act 2010 & Carers
  - How can your organisation support carers better
  - Common Core Principles for Working with Carers.

**CMEB part two**
- Supports
- Contains
- This part is aimed at those who are directly responsible for commissioning or delivering learning and development.
- It provides fuller guidance on the learning and development of staff in relation to meeting carers needs.
- Contains an introduction to:
  - Why provide Learning and development about carers
  - What CMEB means by ‘staff’
  - Important question before you begin-business case
  - Beginning the journey – the Common Core Principles for Working with Carers
  - Six steps to developing your staff in relation to carers
  - Developing your organisation – more than just training
  - Developing the right level of staff development
  - The three levels of development
  - Selecting the right learning and development materials
  - Adapting the materials to the local scene
  - Involving carers in developing your staff
  - Knowing if your learning and development has made a difference
  - Getting going with supporting material (part three of CMEB).

**CMEB part three**
- Supports
- Contains
- This is aimed at people across a wide range of settings and roles that support learning and development, whether planning learning, delivering learning and development yourself, or commissioning learning and development.
- It contains a wealth of additional resources and practical tools to support learning and development in relation to carers.
- Contains tools and resource to support:
  - Context – about CMEB
  - The common core principles
  - Equality and diversity of carers
  - Equality and carers
  - Carers rights and entitlements
  - Diversity of carers
  - Business case and rationale
  - Whole organisational approaches
  - Where are you now – self assessment
  - What do you need to do? – six step guide
  - How do you get going? – the learning and development framework
  - Level one – carer awareness activities 1-4
  - Level two – enhanced learning activities 5-9
  - Level three – specialist learning suggested outlines 1-4
  - The common core principles and the learning resources
  - The common core principles and National Occupational Standards
  - Planning, commissioning or leading learning and development
  - Adapting the materials to your needs
  - Involving carers in learning and development
  - How do I know it’s worked – evaluation.
Who are carers?

Although there is no single definition of ‘carer’, a carer is generally described as a person of any age providing unpaid care to an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or partner. This may include physical care or emotional support, advice and advocacy. **It is important to note** that a carer is **not** a volunteer who has been placed in a caring role by a voluntary organisation, **nor** someone who is paid as a care worker or personal assistant. You will find a useful glossary of terms to distinguish between these roles in Part Three of Carers Matter Everybody’s Business.

Carers often feel they have no choice about taking on a caring role. They provide care because they want to help the people they care about and because their child, partner, relative or friend could not manage without that help.

Some carers have multiple caring responsibilities; for example they might be the parent of a disabled child and have responsibility for an elderly parent.

Carers often end up having to juggle the support they give with their other responsibilities, in a difficult balancing act. For many carers, looking after their own health, combining caring with work, getting access to training or simply having time to take a break or go away for a weekend can be a major challenge. Government research on carers shows that people who provide a substantial amount of care tend to have lower incomes, poorer health, and are less likely to be in work than their counterparts (DH 2008).}

---

1 Sources given in brackets in the text are detailed in the references section at the end.
Quality of life for carers is generally poorer than for society as a whole (Equalities Review 2007). This means that they are disadvantaged from participating fully in society and their local communities in terms of, for example, paid employment or leisure.

Campaigning body Carers UK says:

“The difficulties experienced by carers can be highlighted by the following three statistics:
- carers lose an average of £11,050 pa by taking on significant caring responsibilities
- over half of all carers have a caring-related health condition
- carers represent one of the most socially excluded groups of people.”
(Carers UK 2009)

Many carers do not recognise themselves as carers. They simply see themselves as husband, wife, parent, son, daughter or friend. The majority of carers do not access formal services and therefore could be missing out on valuable support. For example, when Barrow Borough Council launched a campaign to target ‘hidden carers’ in 2010 they estimated that two thirds of the 8,674 people in the borough who care for someone do not class themselves as carers and are not accessing the help available to them (North West Evening Mail, 1 Feb 2010).

Many public bodies, including some local authorities, have incorporated these six strands into their equality and diversity frameworks, policies and practice. However, carers should be recognised explicitly as existing within each of these strands and deserving of particular attention in the planning and delivery of services. For more information about The Equality Act 2010 and carers, see page 10.

It is also important to recognise that carers come from diverse backgrounds. The Home Office identified six strands of diversity that categorised or grouped together common human differences; these are age, gender, race, disability, religion and sexual orientation.

The law currently makes discrimination in relation to these six ‘protected characteristics’ unlawful (The Equality Act 2010).

Click this link to find more detail and guidance on duties towards carers, including carers and The Equality Act 2010 in ‘Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business’ part three, where you can also find useful information on the diversity of carers.
Why ‘carers matter’ to your organisation

According to the 2001 census, there are an estimated six million carers in the UK and this is set to increase to nine million by 2037. Every year, two million people move in and out of caring. This means that employees in all kinds of organisations are increasingly likely to have contact with carers in the course of their work. Indeed, they may well be carers themselves too.

Organisations that deliver health and social care services have specific responsibilities for supporting carers. Carers UK estimates that carers save the economy £87 billion per year (Carers UK 2007), so providing them with the right support is crucial to the health and social care economy and makes good business sense for organisations in other sectors.

For organisations in sectors outside of health and social care services, recognising, valuing and supporting carers is important because:

- **carers are customers and consumers**
  who have the right to expect and receive a courteous and responsive service in their dealings with organisations and their staff

- **many carers are actual or potential employees** – one in five carers gives up work to care full time, meaning that employers are losing valuable staff.

Providing a good service to carers can also benefit your organisation or business, your local community and your staff, as well as carers themselves and the people they care for.

As part of the development of Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business, Skills for Care and Skills for Health ran an impact assessment across 15 sites in England. We wanted to know what impact training staff to support carers better using the CMEB framework and materials had on their practice. We found that almost three quarters, 74 per cent, said the training had helped them with their interaction with carers at work to some extent or to a great extent. This is strong evidence to show that enabling staff to develop their skills can have an impact on business outcomes.

**Organisations and the people who work for them will potentially benefit by supporting carers, through:**

- improved performance against key performance indicators, business plan targets and standards of service delivery
- enhanced community reputation
- improved customer satisfaction
- increased customer loyalty – customers will keep coming back
- new business opportunities
- fewer complaints.

**Carers and the people they care for will benefit through:**

- being served and supported by staff who recognise and understand what it means to be a carer
- having access to a full range of services as equal members of their local communities
- services that are responsive to their specific requirements
- support that enables them to continue to live in their own homes within local communities
- lower levels of stress and improved well-being.

Click this link for further details about this in Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business part two, that provides learning and development about carers and important questions to consider before you begin.
Carers’ rights and entitlements

Carers were first mentioned in legislation in 1986. In the first 15 years the legislation focused on how carers should be supported to carry out their caring role; more recently, and particularly with the introduction of the Carer’s Equal Opportunities Act 2004 and the Work and Families Act 2006, there is an increasing requirement to view carers as individuals with a right to a life beyond caring and a right to their own support.

Most significantly, The Equality Act 2010 creates a seventh strand to the equality framework described above, by requiring public authorities to undertake impact assessments to ensure their policies do not have a detrimental effect on carers. An equality impact assessment is a tool for identifying the potential impact of a public bodies’ policies, services and functions on its residents and staff. It can help staff provide and deliver excellent services to residents by making sure that these reflect the needs of the community, including carers.

These equality impact assessments are likely to provide an important mechanism for increasing awareness of carers’ needs and rights through large parts of the public sector. They may prove to be valuable tools for carers’ organisations challenging circumstances where they feel that carers’ needs have been overlooked (Carers UK 2009).

The Equality Act 2010 also means that carers cannot be directly discriminated against or harassed by their employer because they are caring for someone who is disabled. The new rights protect carers in situations where they are provided with a poorer service than someone who is not caring for a disabled person, as well as protecting carers where they are discouraged or prevented from using a service because they are caring for a disabled person.
Previous carers’ legislation and guidance places more specific obligations and good practice expectations upon health and social care organisations.

For example:

- Social services departments must inform carers of their rights to an assessment of their own needs and the services that are available to support them.
- Social services departments must consider carefully how they address a carer’s needs where a ‘critical’ level of risk has been identified through a carer’s assessment.
- It is good practice for primary health care providers (GPs) to identify carers, keep a register of all carers in their practice, and provide support to maintain their health.
- Hospitals must ensure patients are ‘safe for discharge’ in order to return home and cannot ignore the risks to the carer.
- The regulations for providers of adult health and social care services encourage them to understand, value and respect the important work that carers do, and urge them to work cooperatively with carers when meeting the needs of the people who use their services (Care Quality Commission 2009).
- All staff in social care and health care services should be aware of, and working in accordance with, the Code of Practice of The Mental Capacity Act 2005. This gives guidance to staff on working with carers to determine ‘best interests’ of the person being cared for when they lack capacity.¹

For all the above reasons, it makes sense for your organisation to make sure it is aware of the carers it comes into contact with, support them well and meets it’s legal obligations. Much of this is possible through the learning and development of your staff.

In what way can my organisation support carers better?

There are a number of things you can do to review and improve the ways in which you support carers who come into contact with, and access goods and services from, your organisation.

How can staff support carers better?

Thinking about the goods and services your organisation provides will help you to clarify the frequency and nature of your employees’ contact with carers and whether they have specific responsibilities for supporting them.

If your organisation’s core business is outside of health and social care then your employees are less likely to know whether their customers and consumers are carers. Employees will no doubt come into contact with carers but won’t necessarily know how their caring responsibilities affect their ability to access your goods and services.

From Skills for Care and Skills for Health impact evaluation of Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business, we found that there was in some places confusion between the terms used to describe a carer, meaning that staff often thought that a carer was a person employed and paid to support a person. Therefore, clear definitions, such as those on page 7, are vital to help staff identify carers who may use your services.
Carers are more likely to have a positive experience of your organisation if the staff they come into contact with understand their issues and concerns and respond appropriately. You will need to help your staff provide good information and support to carers. Health and social care staff may require access to a range of training and development activities, depending on the nature of their roles and responsibilities for supporting carers.

“I have spent some time supporting a woman who cares for her two elderly parents. As I had a better awareness of what strains she was facing, I was able quickly to signpost her to the most appropriate agency, and allow my service to meet her individual needs by changing the way I contacted her.”

Recipient of training received as part of the Impact evaluation of CMEB.

Most importantly, your organisation and its staff can support carers better by knowing about the Common Core Principles for Working with Carers and using them in your organisation. Feedback from employers has indicated that the Common Core Principles for Working with Carers provide a useful benchmark for employers to assess and understand how well their staff and the organisation as a whole supports carers.
Applying the common core principles for working with carers

Skills for Care and Skills for Health (the workforce development bodies for adult social care (England) and for health (UK) have worked with key stakeholders, including carers, to develop the Common Core Principles for Working with Carers (CCPs).

They should reinforce, challenge and help to change practice of those working with carers. The intention is to ensure carers are at the heart of the health and social care system with the people they care for, and to be recognised and supported by all sectors of society.

1. Carers are equal partners in care. Over time, carers become experts with skills that are to be valued and appreciated.

2. Make no assumptions, regarding a carer’s capacity or carers’ capacities and willingness to take responsibility for, or to continue to care.

3. Support carers to be as physically and mentally well as possible and prevent ill health.

4. Work together to involve all carers in decision making, and choices at all levels and at all stages in the caring role in a positive, timely and proactive way, following best practice in sharing information.

5. Provide care and support with flexibility and understanding in a personalised way that reflects the circumstances, cultural background and lifestyle of the carer.

6. Respect and recognise that carers will have their own support needs, rights and aspirations, which may be different from those of the cared for person.

7. Identify, support and enable both children and young people who are carers to be young as well as carers. Provide support and a safe environment to help learn, develop and enjoy positive childhoods.

8. Recognise the experience of carers as the caring role ends and after it has ended and offer support to carers accordingly.
The eight Common Core Principles for Working with Carers underpin the whole of Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business and set the national standards for England that your workforce and your organisation should be aiming to achieve.

The common core principles describe the attitudes, behaviours, actions and outcomes that need to be achieved by staff, whatever their role. You can apply them in your organisation to help you improve how you work with carers to ensure they have a positive experience of your organisation and its workforce. For example, they can be incorporated into training specifications to help you design and commission appropriate learning solutions. More widely, the common core principles can be integrated into performance management processes and activities, including individual and team supervision and appraisal.

“I think the principles form an excellent foundation for all we are seeking to achieve in Crossroads Care and greatly enhance our approach.”

Crossroads Care

Click this link to see the Common Core Principles for Working with Carers and their full context in Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business part three.

Click this link for guidance on how to use them, please see Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business part two, ‘beginning the journey’ – the Common Core Principles for Working with carers.
Where to go from here?

Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business is divided into three sections in order that people in varying roles can make use of it’s different parts.

This is part one of Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business. It is designed to give you an overview of what Carers Matter – Everybody’s Business aims to do and why you should think about the learning and development needs of your staff in relation to carers.

Part two is guidance, suggested levels of development and planning advice on how to develop your workforce to support carers better.

Part three contains a broad range of sample learning and development materials, together with good practice examples, encompassing different methods and presentation styles. They aim to help you and your colleagues to develop or commission your own learning and development programmes for staff who work either directly or indirectly with carers.

All this material is freely available to download from:
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/carers
www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/carers-matter
What is part two?

Part two is guidance, suggested levels of development and planning advice on how to develop your workforce to support carers better.

9.0 the three levels of development

**level 1: basic awareness**

This level of development aims to raise awareness of the issues of carers and their families. It is aimed at all staff and focuses on the basic level of awareness. This level of development will be tailored to the needs of the organisation.

- Care planning outcomes at this level
  - Understanding the issues of carers and their families
  - Recognising the importance of supporting the carer
  - Identifying the support needed for the carer
  - Identifying the support needed for the carer

**level 2: enhanced awareness**

This level of development aims to provide further guidance on how to work with carers, and to develop skills in identifying and supporting carers. This level of development will be tailored to the needs of the organisation.

- Care planning outcomes at this level
  - Understanding the issues of carers and their families
  - Recognising the importance of supporting the carer
  - Identifying the support needed for the carer
  - Identifying the support needed for the carer

**level 3: specialist**

This level of development provides specific guidance on how to work with carers, and to develop skills in identifying and supporting carers. This level of development will be tailored to the needs of the organisation.

- Care planning outcomes at this level
  - Understanding the issues of carers and their families
  - Recognising the importance of supporting the carer
  - Identifying the support needed for the carer
  - Identifying the support needed for the carer
What is part three?

Part three contains a broad range of sample learning and development materials, together with good practice examples, encompassing different methods and presentation styles. They aim to help you and your colleagues to develop or commission your own learning and development programmes for staff who work either directly or indirectly with carers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carers UK 2007</td>
<td>Valuing Carers – calculating the value of unpaid care, Carers UK 2007, see <a href="http://www.carersuk.org">www.carersuk.org</a> under professionals &gt; research library &gt; profile of caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carers UK 2009</td>
<td>The Equality Bill and Carers, Carers UK 2009 see <a href="http://www.carersuk.org">www.carersuk.org</a> under professionals &gt; resources &amp; briefings &gt; policy briefings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H M Government 2005</td>
<td>The Mental Capacity Act, Code of Practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Version 2 updated May 2012