

Haddenham Medical Centre Carers Policy

Introduction

This document establishes the procedures that the Practice has in place for identifying carers to ensure they are appropriately referred to Carers Bucks for information, support and guidance.

Definition of a Carer

Carers are people of any age, adult or child, who provide unpaid support to a partner, child, relative or friend who cannot manage on their own or whose health or wellbeing would deteriorate without this help. This could be due to frailty, disability or serious health condition, mental ill health or substance misuse.

Caring roles can include domestic care, personal care, providing transport, administering and monitoring medication, advocacy (including translation), helping with finances / paperwork and providing emotional support.

Carers should not be confused with paid care workers, care assistants or with volunteer care workers.

“Young Carers” are under the age of 18, and shoulder a level of responsibility for another person which is inappropriate for their age. This situation can arise when a member of the child’s household is not offered or accessing appropriate help and support from health or social care services.

The Cared-for may or may not be registered at the Carers Practice. It is important that the Carer/Cared-for status is regularly checked. This will be easier to monitor when the Cared-for is a registered patient at the Carers Practice. Other Carers will need to be asked to re-confirm their Carer status at regular intervals (usually annually).

Protocol

It is important to estimate the total numbers of Carers within the Practice Population.

10% of the practice population are likely to be Carers.
34% of the practice’s Carers are likely to be Caring for 20+ hours per week.
11% of the practice’s Carers are likely to be Caring for 50+ hours per week.

Research has consistently shown that caring has a pronounced adverse effect on psychological and physical health. The risks increase progressively with the amount of time devoted to caring each week.

The Practice will do its utmost to ensure Carers receive appropriate support by actively identifying, and referring Carers who are patients of the Practice or where the Cared-for is a registered patient of the Practice.

The Practice will support Carers by:

- Identifying a “Carers Lead” to ensure that support to Carers by the Practice is being undertaken and to be available to Carers as the first line of liaison.
- Providing relevant information, contact points and referral for support.
- Providing suitable appointment flexibility and understanding.
- Providing care, health checks and advice to enable them to maximise their own health and wellbeing.

Identifying Carers

There are two proven methods of identification:

- 1. Self-identification**
- 2. Pro-active Practice identification**

The Practice undertakes the following activities as part of each method:

SELF-IDENTIFICATION

❖ Notice Boards/ Leaflets/ Website

The practice displays publicity material requesting Carers to identify themselves to the Practice as a Carer. Wherever possible the Practice will provide a notice board dedicated to Carer information. Leaflets for Carers are made available in waiting areas. Information for Carers on the Practice website with links to Carers Bucks website.

❖ New Patient Registration Forms

The Practice’s new patient registration form incorporates the following two questions:

1. Do you look after someone?
2. Does someone look after you?

This information is used in the new patient screening appointment, coding and tagging the patient’s notes and arranging referral to Carers Bucks.

❖ Carer-registration Forms

Carer-registration Forms are available at reception to encourage Carers to complete and hand them in to the Practice.

❖ Prescriptions

A message can be attached to repeat prescriptions requesting patients to identify themselves to the Practice as a Carer.

PRO-ACTIVE PRACTICE IDENTIFICATION

❖ Health Professional Identification

All Health Professionals in the surgery to be vigilant for potential Carers and facilitate the opportunity for them to register as a Carer with the Practice and be referred for support.

Potential Opportunities to ask 'Do you look after someone?':

- When someone makes an appointment for another patient
- When someone arranges or collects repeat prescriptions for another patient
- When someone provides transport or accompanies another patient to the Practice
- During consultations or home visits
- During health checks (many Carers will be on chronic disease registers)

Remember

- Anyone can be a Carer including children and non-family members
- The Cared-For may have more than one Carer sharing their care including children
- The Cared-For may also be a Carer themselves, e.g. in a reciprocal caring role for someone

❖ Letters and Questionnaires to Patients

When the practice writes to patients, (e.g. during the flu vaccination campaign), the communication incorporates a section on Carers encouraging those who have not yet identified to make themselves known to the surgery.

❖ Prescriptions

A person who collects a prescription on behalf of someone else, may be passed a Carer-registration form.

❖ Flu Vac Season & Carers Week (in June) – all opportunities at these times to be exploited.

❖ Text messaging – texts may be sent to various patients to encourage Carer identification

Upon Carer Identification the Practice will take the following steps:

1. Carers Identification and Referral Form is completed by the Carer (or verbal consent given)
2. If the Cared For is a patient with the Practice an Information Sharing Agreement is given to be signed by the Cared For
3. Carer provided with Carers Bucks leaflet and advised they will be referred
4. The Carer is read-coded 'Is a Carer' on the system and entered as an alert
5. The Role of Carer should be marked as an 'Active Problem' so that it can be easily visible to the Clinician when accessing the Medical Record of the Carer
6. An 'Alert Message' should be added to the Carer's Record on the front desk to alert Receptionists in order that they may prioritise booking appointments where necessary.
7. The medical record of the Cared-for should be read-coded 'Has a Carer' and the Carer's details added in the text box
8. Unless the Carer has ticked to show they don't want to be, they will be referred to Carers Bucks for further information and support

Referral to Carers Bucks

Once Carers details have been entered on to the system, unless they've indicated they don't want to be, *all* Carers to be referred to Carers Bucks.

If the information below is present, the Identification and Referral Form can be sent.

Details Required:	1. Carer's name, address, contact number(s), date of birth
	2. If possible, Cared For's name, address and date of birth
	3. Brief description of the caring role – e.g. 'Cares for wife who had a stroke last year.'

Referrals are accepted using any of the methods below:

Email: mail@carersbucks.org

Website: www.carersbucks.org

Phone: Carers Bucks main office: **0300 777 2722**

Post: Carers Bucks,
Ardenham Court
Ardenham Lane
Oxford Road
Aylesbury HP19 8HT