



West Sussex joint commitment to family & friends carers 2015- 2020

In Partnership: Coastal West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group, Crawley Clinical Commissioning Group, Horsham and Mid Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group, West Sussex County Council



FOREWORD

We are pleased to introduce the West Sussex Joint Commitment to Family & Friends Carers.

"A carer spends a significant proportion of their life providing unpaid support to family or friends. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems"

There are carers of all ages – young carers supporting their parents and siblings through to older couples providing mutual support and care to each other. Most people are likely to have caring roles and responsibilities at some stage in their life. There are over 84,000 carers in West Sussex and trends suggest that this number will grow significantly year on year. There could be as many as 6000 'hidden' young carers in the county. There are also growing numbers of 'dual carers' juggling work and family caring whilst caring for older relatives.

Caring has its positives; it can bring families closer together, help the carer to develop a whole range of skills and expertise and to become very good multi-taskers! There are often however difficulties too. Over time, caring can bring family pressures and result in the neglect of other family members. There can be financial consequences to caring and there can of course be physical health and emotional wellbeing issues brought about by caring roles and responsibilities. This is why we have in West Sussex been proactive in trying to reach and identify family and friends carers and provide a range of advice information and support. There is however more to do in achieving our vision:

Family and friends carers will be universally recognised and valued as being fundamental to strong families and stable communities. Support will be tailored to meet individuals' needs, enabling carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside caring, while enabling the person they support to be a full and equal citizen.

In recent years the support of carers has been a stated priority for national Government and changes to legislation in 2014 via the Care Act and the Children and Families Act mean that for the first time, Carers and users have equal rights to assessments and care/support plans. Underlying principles of 'well-being' and personalisation have informed the law and guidance – a culture shift in focus from crisis intervention to life chances and outcomes. A strengths-based approach to care, support and inclusion is now required. People need to be seen as more than just their health and care needs – they need to be experts and in charge of their own lives. The need for integrated and preventative approaches from health, social care, housing and the welfare system is further recognised. This gives us in West Sussex a rare opportunity to take our partnership working, prevention work and 'whole family working' to another level. We will achieve our commitments in collaboration with carers. The voice of family and friend carers in West Sussex will continue to be listened to and acted upon as we strive to deliver our vision.



Peter Catchpole, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, West Sussex County Council



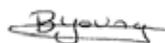
Peter Evans, Cabinet Member for Children – Start of Life, West Sussex County Council



Dr Katie Armstrong, Clinical Chief Officer, NHS Coastal West Sussex CCG



Dr Amit Bhargarva, Accountable Officer, NHS Crawley CCG



Barry Young, Acting Accountable Officer/Chief Finance Officer, NHS Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG





Introduction

This document is a public commitment that sets out how organisations will work together to identify and support carers in West Sussex.

The aim of the Commitment to Family & Friends Carers is to state the main priority areas for health and social care over the next five years, in the support of carers. It is produced in partnership with West Sussex County Council and Coastal West Sussex, Crawley and Horsham and Mid Sussex Clinical Commissioning Groups. It lets local people, and organisations, know how our approach will

be developing over the next few years and is an invitation to join us in our efforts. It also contains, for the first time, a formal carer care pathway to enable better identification and signposting of carers for support.

This commitment is based upon the views of carers and young carers themselves, health and social care staff feedback, legislation and key policy documentation, such as the Government's National Carers Strategy and NHS England's Commitment to Carers.

“ GP's don't take caring seriously, if it is a physical condition like back ache they will refer you to a consultant but if you are a carer they expect you to carry on. ”

(West Sussex Carer, National Carers' Week, 2014).

What have we achieved already?

Organisations have worked together and have achieved:

A good level of carer identification (compared with similar sized authorities) with over 13,000 carers registered and receiving some form of information and support (September 2015).

A single point of access. Carers Support West Sussex have been providing a consistent, county wide, advice, information and support service to adult carers. This is also a gateway service to a range of other services for carers provided by a range of other organisations. e.g. carer respite by way of short break services, referral to the Carer Health Team (Sussex Community NHS Trust).

A robust universal offer to carers that includes:

- a free universal advice information and support service
- carers assessments

- emotional support and counselling
- a Carers Health Team
- emergency planning and support – Carers Emergency Alert Card
- respite services (planned & emergency)
- carer support workers in acute hospital settings
- a return from hospital scheme
- health and wellbeing payments ('something for me')
- equipment for independence /assistive technologies
- specialist carer bereavement support
- return to work/training support

West Sussex has an effective young carers' service that helps young carers to achieve:

- better physical and emotional health
- better school attendance and attainment
- enjoy a life outside caring



“ I find working with (the) Young Carers (Service) helpful, especially having someone to touch base with and meet with to talk about how things are for me and trying to find solutions and ways forward for my family and me. ”

West Sussex Young Carer, aged 17

Priority Commitments

The commitments are set around themes.

To raise the profile of carers/young carers – make carers part of everyone’s core business.

To be proactive in identifying and supporting carers and young carers, in order to avert avoidable crisis situations.

- All partners to raise the profile of what a carer does and make clear the responsibility of everyone in listening to carers, including carers in care and support plans and signposting carers for support when required.
- We will routinely deliver education, training and information to professionals so to ‘Think Carer’ becomes automatic.
- Good information and advice is to be made available to professionals and patients/customers at every stop along the road of a patients/ carers journey.

“ Right information at the right time is really important. ”

A West Sussex Carer

To achieve personalised support to carers.

- In order to raise the profile of carers we will work towards everyone routinely taking a ‘Think Family’ perspective on illness, disability and frailty.
- We need to ask “who is caring?”, “Is that appropriate?” (e.g. young carers), “Does the carer even realise that they are a carer and therefore entitled to an assessment.”
- We commit to reducing barriers to effective information sharing and the need for family & friends carers to repeat their, or the person they care for’s history, over and over again.
- We renew our commitment with carers and communities regarding new ways of identifying and supporting carers.

“ It is great if you have a professional, e.g. a good GP who understands your whole situation and can listen and support you. ”

A West Sussex Carer



Ensure young carers do not carry out inappropriate levels of care and can achieve in education and employment.

- We will assist schools and colleges to get better at identifying and supporting young carers.
- We will support all services to 'Think Family' and act where the roles and responsibilities of a young carer are not age appropriate.

“ Have visible information in schools and colleges relating to parent carers and young carers. ”

A West Sussex Parent Carer

“ Help parents to accept their child is a young carer. ”

A West Sussex Young Carer

Support carers to remain physically and mentally well.

- We will promote statutory carer assessments and ensure assessments have carer wellbeing at their heart.
- New models to identify and support carers will be explored and adopted.
- Services will be continuously monitored and reviewed, with carers' inputs, in order to ensure desired health outcomes are being achieved.
- We will continue to develop the dedicated Carer Health Team SCT, a team of clinicians focussed on the health of the carer.

“ Respect, involve and treat me as an expert in care. ”

A West Sussex Carer

Build a carer friendly community.

- Each partner organisation will review their own practice and procedures as an employer.
- Each partner organisation to influence partners (through contractual relationships) to be 'carer friendly' employers.
- Carer experience (of services to their 'cared for') to be evaluated and acted upon when possible in order to improve on procedures and services.



“ Having an employer who was supportive and provided flexible working has been crucial in enabling me to look after my family, work and care. ”

A West Sussex Carer

The Family and Friends Carers' Care Pathway



The new Carers Care Pathway serves two purposes.

- To provide a generic pathway for incorporation into all patient and customer care pathways and hospital admission/discharge procedures
- To help health and social care staff in identifying, recognising and supporting carers.

“ Carers’ knowledge about the person being cared for and co-operation are vital for planning and implementing any care plan successfully. Engaging and co-operating with carers is therefore an essential part of good patient care. ”

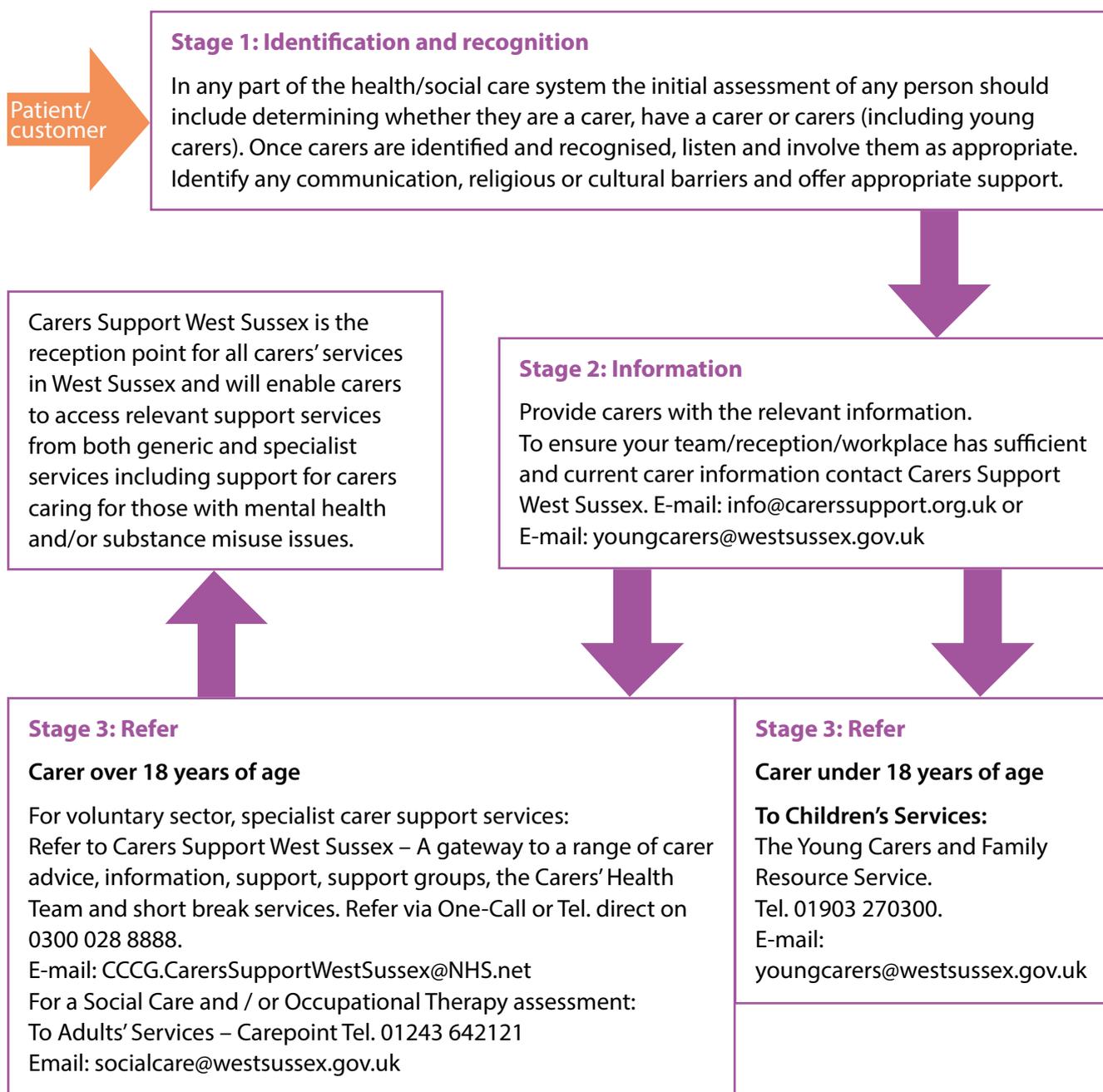
The Royal College of General Practitioners



The Family and Friends Carer Care Pathway.

A carer is a person who provides unpaid support to a partner, child, parent, relative, or friend who couldn't manage to live independently 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.

A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking impacting on his or her emotional or physical wellbeing or educational achievement and life chances.



How we will deliver on our commitments?

West Sussex County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups will continue to work with each other and local people to build on the good practice already in place in West Sussex. Not all of the priorities can be addressed at once however each partner organisation will develop their own strategies and policies to ensure measurable progress is made to delivering on the commitments set.

We want local people to encourage anyone who is caring to call Carers Support West Sussex.

If you are a carer and are concerned about your caring roles and responsibilities, contact your GP or Carers Support West Sussex on 0300 028 8888 or visit www.carerssupport.org.uk

