



Royal College of
General Practitioners

Carers and Carers' Health A Good Practice Guide

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Promoting Excellence in Family Medicine

Context and Data Collection

- Evaluation to elicit feedback from Practices about the draft GPG
- Evaluation process agreed through Steering Group (PRTC and RCGP)
- 50 Practices in original pilot of GPG
- Additional canvassing in June 2007
- By September 2007, evaluation data elicited from 18 Practices

Data in 3 sections

- How much 'support for carers' is already part of Practice protocols
- Feedback about the draft GPG
- Future use and suggestions for improvement

Section 1:

Current situation in the Practices

- Average Practice list size = 8300
- No obvious relationship between size and number of carers on list
- Some feel that numbers of carers are an underestimate
- 70% have developed a 'local' protocol
- Agreement that a 'commonly agreed but flexible protocol' would benefit Practices

Usefulness and Benefits

- Consistency and continuity of care
- Increasing PHCT awareness
- Facilitating a team approach
- Improving knowledge of carer support services
- Ensuring carers receive the necessary help and support
- Maintaining an up-to-date register
- Getting uniformity of approach across a geographical area

Section 2: Feedback about the draft GPG-topics

- Clarity of purpose and rationale
- Issues about getting whole team 'buy-in'
- Usefulness of the GPG
- Ideas for change and improvement
- Additional content

Clarity and 'Buy-in'

- Majority of Practices feel GPG is clear
- Practices without protocols feel there is insufficient rationale/justification to facilitate 'buy-in' from PHCT
- More comprehensive approach to 'selling' the GPG needed

Ideas to support use by PHCT

- More comprehensive rationale
- Examples of useful interventions with carers
- More context and examples of good practice
- Links to resources
- Ideas about implementing a comprehensive service for carers
- Show benefits of direct involvement with carers' groups

Change and Improvement

- Most Practices report positive change as a result of using GPG
- ‘reminded us to bring carers back to the top of our agenda’
- ‘reflected and agreed priorities...useful tool to help us re-visit’
- ‘asked questions of us...new rigour regarding needs of carers’
- ‘team has concentrated more on the identification of carers’
- ‘focus more on the role of the carer and make more effort with their needs’
- ‘a means to work across boundaries within PHCT’
- ‘developed an action plan...partnership with local carers’ organisations’

Additional Content

- Links to existing resources and good practice
- A computer-based resource?
- Signposting for help, support and training
- Less on structure and more on outcomes?
- More 'wow and sparkle' factor!

Section 3: Future Use

- To identify hidden carers and child carers
- Use criteria to measure where practice is now and for regular review
- To help implement systems and policies
- Some critical comments about sections 1 and 2 and how they need to be improved

Concerns about use

- A few practices have concerns about the process ‘imposing extra work’ on the practice
- Others made constructively critical comments, such as:
 - ‘the language at the start is off-putting as it feels like it has a performance management focus’
 - ‘don’t like the presentation...it’s very much like others and carers deserve more...it needs to be more creative, user-friendly and fun to use’
 - ‘need to ensure all the team understand and use it’

Suggestions for change

- Make it shorter and provide more support information
- Address repetition and ambiguities
- Provide case studies of good practice
- Encourage completion with patient participation groups (possibly a small section for this?)
- Give it a more human 'feel' perhaps using a storyboard approach
- See the GPG as a 'living' document and not a one-off exercise
- Use as a training tool in the practice

(More) suggestions for change

- Action Plan needs to link into Practice Development Plan and so less likely to be seen as an added task
- Encourage completion with focus groups such as Child Carers and other networks e.g. PPI forum
- Needs to be inspiring and challenging and get beyond a check-list
- Some detailed feedback re-amending some sections

Further comments/observations from practices

- Overall very useful
- Have identified priorities
- Would like easy reference to examples of good practice
- Has the potential to make a difference and would encourage it's further development

Some evaluator reflections

- Evaluation mined a rich vein of ideas and suggestions
- Steering Group to consider whether to amend the GPG particularly in light of comments about ‘user-friendliness’ and ‘creativity’
- Any amendments should include examples of good practice, case studies, links to other resources
- There is a commitment to using the GPG, to continuing the development work and wider scale impact evaluation

The next part of the session will provide an opportunity for questions and discussion of 'next steps'