

I Care You Care Carers and Family Annual Report 2019-2020

In 2017 Oxford Health launched the I Care You Care strategy, beginning our journey towards embedding a culture which includes families, friends and carers (FFCs) through our work.

This year marks the 3rd year of the I Care, You Care strategy 2017-2020, and this report summarises our achievements over the past year 2019-2020. The covid-19 outbreak has posed some challenges to delivering some of the objectives in the strategy in 2020 however this work has/ will be restarted, and the outbreak has also created many opportunities to be innovative, for example a carers befriending line and letters to a loved one – more detail is below.

In addition to the carers awareness e-learning package, in the Autumn 2019 face to face carer awareness sessions were launched for teams, facilitated by the Trust's carers lead and a carer. Four teams have received a session to date and our aim is to deliver these to teams across the organisation. The session covers carers rights, consent and confidentiality, local signposting and support, working in partnership and carer involvement. Sessions are tailored to the service, they are interactive, and staff have the opportunity to hear about the experiences of the carer and ask them questions.

Heide, one of the carers involved says *“Carers play an important part in the bigger picture and are a valuable resource in supporting people, a fact that in the busy working environment can easily become overlooked. Having a carer present and involved with the carers awareness sessions helps to give a more rounded insight into the important part we, as carers, play and the challenges we might be facing. This is helpful for professionals and carers alike and opens the door to clearer more open communications, as it enables carer and professionals to ask direct questions. I feel privileged to be able to be involved with such an important project. “*

Progress update on key areas of improvement identified for 2019/20.

1. Create more opportunities to support and educate carers through support groups, forums and workshops.

There has been a gradual growth in the support groups, forums and workshops that we provide to our family, friends and carers (FFC) across our services. The development and success of these initiatives rely heavily on the capacity and resources within the team, in some cases staff dedicating their time in the evening and at weekends to facilitate these, and their commitment is commended.

We recognise the importance and the evidence base of providing information and specific education to carers to allow them to provide care in the best possible way and understanding their loved ones' condition will significantly support this.

One example of this is within the Oxfordshire children and young people's eating disorder service. They have run a 3-month pilot parent/carer skills programme. All parents and carers new into treatment were invited and encouraged to attend 2 x 3 hour workshops. The programme includes psychoeducation and treatment specific information and also facilitates group discussions and support. The programme is supported by a volunteer peer support parent carer. The Initial attendance

and feedback has been very positive and should impact significantly on the intense start to treatment the families receive.



Additionally, we recognise the need for carers to have an environment where they can feel safe and supported and have the opportunity to talk to other carers in similar situations.

Autumn 2019 saw the launch of the forensic services carers forum providing FFCs with a supportive environment and the opportunity to hear from the services health professionals on a range of topics.

This year has seen the Buckinghamshire CAMHS ‘walking with you’ parent group successfully grown, with approx. 10-15 parents attending each month and 140 parents on the circulation list. The group is led by 7 parent volunteers, for parents, and supported by CAMHS and Barnardos. The aim of the group is to provide a space for parents and carers to come together, share experience and insight, and look at ways to best support their young people. CAMHS are now in the process of setting up a parent group in South Oxfordshire using the walking with you model. Parents from the Buckinghamshire group are keen to support the development of the new group. During the covid-19 outbreak and response the walking group decided to continue virtually.

The CAMHS neuro developmental conditions pathway provides training workshops for parents post diagnosis ASD/ADHD and are currently working on developing online teaching materials to extend access.

The successful family and friends support group held by the Vaughan Thomas ward is now in its third year, and this year, has extended to support the FFCs of Allen Ward.

2. Better recognise the needs of specific carer groups that have unique requirements. For example, young carers.

Across the Trust, services continue to review their service leaflets and webpages and part of this improvement work is to ensure we are being inclusive of all carer groups. Our carer awareness sessions and carer awareness eLearning package include identification and support for young carers and other specific carer groups.

Our new Oxfordshire stroke rehabilitation unit FFCs handbook and forensic service FFCs leaflet have included a section for young carers.

All of our trust handbooks and leaflets for FFCs are available in other languages on request.

A new carers webpage on our Trust public website is underway and will include information for specific carer groups.

3. Increase carer involvement in the trust’s business. For example, at interview panels, in the co-production of services and creation of more peer support worker posts.

Carer involvement is fundamental to us continually improving the quality of the services we provide to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the FFCs of our patients.

The Oxford City older adults’ community mental health team have involved a mental health carer on their interview panel for interviews this year for both a mental health practitioner and band 3 support worker.



Pat, a carer says’ I like being involved on interview panels. I am keen to support staff and mental health services in general and to raise carer awareness. My involvement also makes me aware of the dedication of staff and the difficulties they face.”

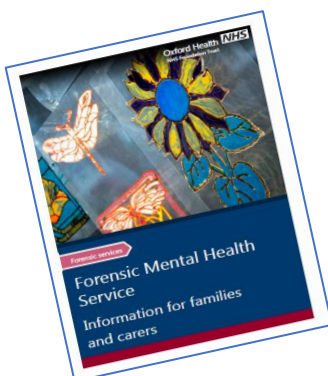
Lorena, deputy team manager says “Pat has opened our eyes by making us reflect more on our practice and approach to families and carers, her point of view is highly respected by all professionals”.

Focus groups have been convened to begin to look at how the Trust can develop the resources it has available specifically for FFCs who are supporting someone who may be suicidal. This work contributes to the Oxford Health self harm and suicide prevention strategy. The focus groups have been looking at the idea of a carer support plan which would be seen as an intervention – this is a discussion with the carer about what can help support them and what can be put in place to help them move forward. These discussions would then be recorded in the support plan and kept in an appropriate place. The focus groups also identified a need for more education and training for carers in this area.

The newly re-instated forensic service carers council has helped to develop a new and improved service leaflet for FFCs of the service which is available across the Thames Valley region it covers.

Carers feedback was sought for the development of the Oxfordshire stroke rehabilitation unit FFCs carers handbook which launched in October 2019.

The Oxfordshire Children and Young People’s eating disorder service pilot parent/carers skills programme has been supported by a volunteer peer support parent carer.



4. Continue to grow the carer champion role within services and give people time to focus on the initiative, including the volunteer programme

The carer champion is an invaluable staff role which advocates for carers and helps drive forward the 'think carer' agenda across our services.

The number of staff undertaking this role continues to grow and there has been an increased effort into recruiting new champions in teams who have not previously had the role and also to replace champions who leave. There are currently approx. 56 carer champions across the trust, here are the number of champions within each of our directorate;

- Buckinghamshire Mental Health: 15 champions
- Oxfordshire, BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire Mental Health: 18 champions
- Specialist Services: 16 champions
- Community Services: 7 champions

A role profile has been developed to outline what can be achieved within this role however, it is important to note that this role relies on staff being nominated or putting themselves forward to undertake this and promote the valuable resource of carers as partners in care

The Buckinghamshire adults and older adults mental health services carers champions forum launched in the summer 2019 and meets 4 times a year. This forum allows the champions and the trust's carers lead to network, share information and best practice, and to focus on various initiatives towards our improvement journey. This forum approach will be rolled out to other areas of the Trust.

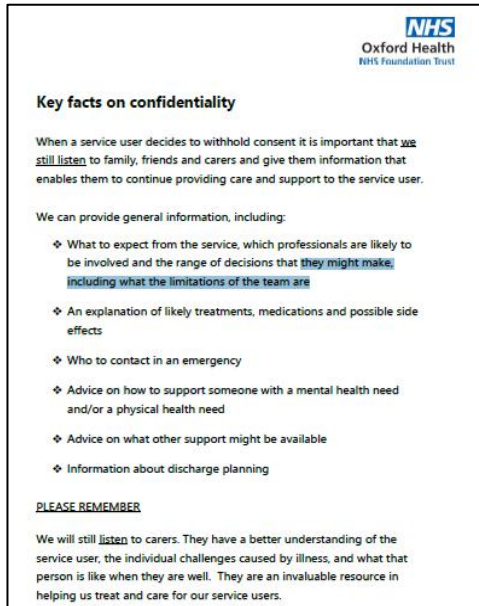
Tricia, carer champion in the Aylesbury adult mental health team says *"Being part of the carers forum allows you to meet likeminded colleagues and share the work and support that is going on. We can develop our own service and look at ways of developing carer forums/support groups, for example, that reaches out to as many carers as we can. This is now going to be more challenging in the times ahead, however it will also demonstrate the fabulous commitment that colleagues have in ensuring carers are not forgotten."*

A new volunteer carer support role was developed and launched. It had a slow start to becoming established within our pilot areas which can be expected for any new initiative. At Witney Community Hospital we have had to undertake an unexpected second phase of volunteer recruitment and Ruby Ward has taken time to find the best approach that works for the ward and its carers. Discussions were underway to extend this to Bicester Community Hospital however, the covid-19 outbreak has meant that this initiative has currently been postponed, with the aim to restart when it is safe to do so.

5. Further embed good practice around confidentiality and information sharing.

Ensuring all staff maintain confidentiality is crucial however there are many ways to involve carers without breaching confidentiality and improving outcomes for patients. This important topic is

covered in the carer awareness sessions and the carer awareness eLearning package with the aim to help address any uncertainties or anxieties our staff may have when it comes to sharing information.



A confidentiality factsheet has been developed as a quick guide to the general information that can be shared if consent is refused, this includes;

- What to expect from the service
- An explanation of likely treatments, medications and side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- Advice on how to support someone with a mental health or physical health need
- Advice on what other support might be available

The factsheet highlights the importance of listening to FFCs when consent is refused.

We recognise there is still more work to do in this area which is two- fold; for the development of our staff and to help FFCs gain a better understanding.

6. Increase staff awareness and knowledge around signposting and support for carers

Our staff are uniquely well placed to help carers identify themselves as carers and know about the support that is available to them.

The carers' resource centre launched in June 2019 and is accessible to all staff via the Trust intranet. This includes a library of information for staff to help them better support families, friends and carers.



The past year has seen an increase in the carer related Information, news and events that are shared with our carers champions and across our teams to ensure they are kept up to date to then be able to share this with the FFCs connected to their service.

Our public carers webpage has had over 1700 views over the past year. We have been busy on social media publicising our initiatives for carers.

- ✓ Our facebook page has had over 5,000 views for the befriending line initiative,
- ✓ over 2,300 views for our carers week initiative and
- ✓ over 2,200 view for our carers advice sheet during covid_19 outbreak.

We continue to grow our links with our local carer organisations to be able to communicate their information across our services and look to develop our working partnership with them.

7. Continue the rollout of the Triangle of Care assessment across our community services

The triangle of care (between a patient, carer/ family and professional) has been rolled out across our mental health services. The aim this year was to roll out the standards to our physical health services. Owing to the change in the triangle of care host (this was the Carers Trust), and the uncertainty of the triangle of care, this was temporarily put on hold until the Spring 2020. However, the significant impact on our community health services following the covid-19 outbreak has meant that the triangle of care assessment process against the national standards has been postponed at the current time.



We continue to work in line with our carers strategy and to embed this work across our community health services.

How have we responded to covid_19 in the support for our families, friends and carers?

There have been a number of initiatives put in place to support carers during the covid-19 pandemic, at a time when they are facing more challenges than ever before.

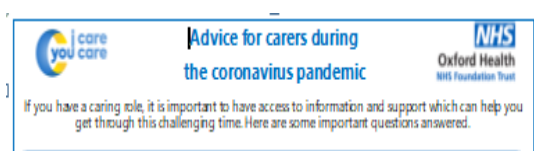
Befriending Line



A dedicated phonenumber has been set up to offer a friendly chat to FFCs of our patients if they are feeling lonely, isolated and have little or no contact with other people. The befriending team include our Trust volunteers and staff from our experience and involvement team. Befrienders will be available to talk to people at a set time each day.

Becca, one of the volunteer befrienders, said: *“I am really excited to be part of the carers’ befriending line. Growing up as a carer myself I often I just got on and did it, without taking the time to care for myself. I am proud to be part of an initiative where carers are cared for.”*

Oxford Health Carers Advice Sheet



The advice sheet has been developed with carers in mind to provide helpful information and advice during covid-19.

Signposting Sheet for Carers



The signposting sheet provides FFCs with information on the support which our local and national carer support organisations are providing, including phone numbers and website links.

Letters for a loved one initiative



This initiative supported by the experience and involvement team is another way for our carers to stay in contact with their loved ones whilst they are an inpatient and visiting is restricted. Letters, poems and pictures have been greatly welcomed by our patients in inpatient settings.

Locally, some of our services have been able to respond in new ways to support the FFCs of their patients.

The Cotswold House specialist eating disorders service in Oxfordshire are now providing their carers forum virtually and offering carer support on request via call/teams.

The forensic service has developed a new carers newsletter to stay in touch with carers and are also holding their carer forum virtually.

Some of our mental health inpatient units are keeping in contact with families and carers by phone and facetime.

Following feedback from parents, the Buckinghamshire CAMHS walking with you parents group has continued to run virtually. Their main themes for discussions have included anxiety relating to covid_19, self isolation and restrictions imposed by lockdown. The Buckinghamshire CAMHS Article 12 youth forum have joined the session to share their tips for managing during the pandemic.

Every ward has facilitated video calls for inpatients and families during the covid-19 response. Our community hospitals have also arranged handwritten letter exchanges between patients and family members. This has been done by photographing the letters and sending these via email.

Some of their patients have sent same set hearts to small children in their family and they have been able to show these via video call that they have the same heart and are thinking about them.

Overall Progress against the Strategy set for 2017-2020

Here is the progress we have made against the I Care You Care Strategy objectives for 2017-2020

- New Trustwide carers lead ●
- Senior Leader role include expectation re: carers ●
- Triangle of care roll out to physical health services ●
- Carer champions across all services ●
- Annual programme to review and improve our approach ●
- Training for all staff ●
- Creating a community of practice for local carer leads and carer reps ●
- Reviewing and improving our webpages/leaflets and other information ●
- Carers involved in our programme governance ●
- Inclusive for disadvantaged groups ●
- Annual Report ●
- I Want Great Care feedback tool ●

Our Strategy Refresh

Our current strategy is now coming to an end and work is underway to set out our priorities for a refreshed strategy. It is important that we do not lose sight of the objectives in amber which are still in progress and so these will be a continued focus within our refreshed strategy.

The strategy refresh work initiated with a workshop earlier this year but unfortunately was unable to progress any further due to the covid-19 outbreak. We are keen to progress this important work virtually rather than delay any further, and will still be engaging our stakeholders albeit in a slightly different way as planned.

To do this, the ideas generated from the first workshop have been categorised into five themes below;

- Staff awareness and training
- Support for carers
- Working in partnership in carers
- Carers resources
- Carer involvement and experiences

The themed ideas will be organised into a survey monkey questionnaire and these will be sent out to all participants who had booked on the second workshop. They will be asked to rate them in order of priority from 1-10 and will be given the opportunity for any additional comments they may have.

The final stage will be to convene a virtual meeting of key representatives of staff, carers and stakeholders to review the survey monkey results and to discuss and agree the final objectives for our new refreshed strategy. It is likely that this will take place in early September 2020.

As we approach the end of the year and the end of our first I Care You Care strategy, there is still so much more, we want, can and need to do and we look forward to working with everybody on this improvement journey.

Thank you for your ongoing support.