

Supporting Unpaid Carers in General Practice – Social Prescribing Link workers

As a social prescribing link worker, you have a key role in supporting people in ways that matter to them. Unpaid carers consistently report that something that matters to them is for the vital role they play to be recognised, and to receive the support they need to keep on caring, whilst protecting their own physical and mental health.

In your role, you may work with people who you know are carers, or people who have someone at home who helps to care for and support them, who could also benefit from your support. You may also work with people who do not think of themselves as carers or have not been asked about their caring responsibilities before.

Completing this short checklist can help you to consider if you, your practice or your PCN is taking steps in the right direction to support unpaid carers through identification and support.

Activity	
Does your practice have processes to identify and code unpaid carers (including young carers?) See latest NHS England guidance: https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/coding-unpaid-carers-snomed-ct/	Yes/no
Do you know how accurate coding carers is in your practice (e.g. is a regular audit undertaken?)	Yes/no
Does your practice have a carers register?	Yes/no
Is your carers register up to date, and is it used to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Invite carers for vaccinations? ✓ Invite carers for health checks? ✓ Signpost to support including offering proactive social prescribing referrals? ✓ Help target health screening for particular areas of risk such as depression and high blood pressure? 	Yes/no
Is your practice/PCN aware of the <i>Supporting carers in general practice: a framework of quality markers</i> ? https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/supporting-carers-in-general-practice-a-framework-of-quality-markers/	Yes/no
Do you know who in your practice is responsible for completion of the quality markers? If not, is there someone in your practice you could share this with who could lead discussion around completion of the quality markers?	Yes/no

Did you know?

Early identification of physical and mental health problems experienced by carers can support a preventative and personalised care approach, giving people the right support when they need it. This can lead to:

- ✓ faster treatment and improved health outcomes
- ✓ timely identification and referral of young carers, which can help reduce the impacts of inappropriate caring during childhood
- ✓ improved support for the carer can lead to better care planning based on “what matters to me”
- ✓ lead to more effective implementation of the care plan
- ✓ result in improved physical health and emotional wellbeing of carers
- ✓ Providing support for the carer means the person being cared for may also be healthier and happier and experience benefits such as **improved confidence and trust in their carer, reduced anxiety and feelings of guilt, and reassurance that their carer will continue caring for them** [NHS England and NHS Improvement, 2019].

Which in turn may:

- ✓ lead to reduced demand on services
- ✓ lead to savings in a general practice’s prescribing budget.

For information about how you can identify and support carers:

If you would like to access/join the Commitment to Carers Future NHS workspace, please send an email to the team-
england.nhsthinkcarer@nhs.net

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/blog/today-on-young-carers-awareness-day-how-can-you-help-a-young-carer-in-just-5-minutes/>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/blog/our-long-term-commitment-to-carers/>

for more information on social prescribing:

email england.socialprescribing@nhs.net for access to our social prescribing Future NHS collaboration platform