



Working together to support the person you care for

Our commitment to anyone looking after a family member or friend receiving treatment from any of our services and who needs help because of their illness or disability





Welcome

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust greatly value the very important work of family and friends caring for people who use our services. The complexity of mental health or disability conditions means that the path to recovery can be long and unpredictable. Carers play a critical role in this journey through the care and support they offer to loved ones. Without your support, our staff would not be able to deliver the hope, treatment and care to our service users and patients that we always aim to do.

We recognise that, on occasions, carers will also need support for themselves.

The information in this booklet will never replace the care and support that a member of staff can provide you with. Please feel free to discuss your worries or concerns with our staff and ask them any questions that this booklet has not answered for you. After all, it's always good to talk.



John Lawlor
Chief Executive

Carer's tip

I didn't want to think of myself as a carer, I'm his wife – but it is important to recognise the role so that you can access the help and information you need.

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Working together – our principles

Our NHS Foundation Trust is committed to work in partnership with you to ensure we carry out our role more effectively and to listen to what you say so that we might work more efficiently. To achieve this we are committed to the principles outlined below.

Recognition and value

We will ensure that carers are valued by all professionals and that their individual needs are recognised, responded to and reflected in a supportive engagement plan that complements the service users' care plan.

Information and advice

Our staff will give you information that is clear and accurate and provided in a way that is easy to understand. We will respect at all times the need for confidentiality for both you as a carer and the person you care for.

Co-production

We will work with you to involve you in care planning in the decisions made about the care and treatment of the person for whom you care (with their consent), including the preparation of the Care Plan.

Listening and validation

We understand the need to creatively listen to your concerns and will commit to offering opportunities to validate your experience. We value your knowledge and experience of the person you are caring for and will work with you to ensure the person you care for receives a high quality and safe episode of care.

Getting to Know You – Think Family

When someone needs our services or comes into hospital, as a matter of good practice we ask if there is someone, a family member or friend, who they rely on for support now or when they leave hospital. This person may not be the same as next of kin.

Within a few days of coming into contact with Trust services, a member of staff will arrange to spend some time with you – to get to know you. Staff will explain how the Trust will work in partnership with you, listen to what you say, and ask questions so that we might work more efficiently.

Getting to know you

Getting to know you is our way of getting to know the whole family of the person being cared for. It helps clinicians to gain a better understanding of the patients background and family circumstances as well as identifying more quickly the patients support network.

We will have already spoken to the person you care for, to find out who they consider to be their 'main' carer(s) – family members or friends who support them. In some cases if the patient is not well enough you may have already identified yourself as the 'main carer' or been approached by a member of staff.

At the back of this booklet there are some questions that you need to consider in preparation for the time to get to know you.

By helping you access help, advice and support

It is important that you let staff know how you see your role going forward and what help and support you might need to enable you to do so.

We need to take into consideration your other commitments, e.g.

- Caring for other family members such as children or elderly relatives
- Work employment commitments
- Education or training
- Maintaining relationships

Staff will advise you how to access appropriate help and support, and can provide you with further information and resources if required.

For families and carers who live outside of our region, information of your nearest Carers Centre can be accessed from the Carers Trust at www.carers.org



The importance of sharing information

The importance of sharing information

We recognise that if you are caring for a friend or family member, the sharing of information between staff and you is vital to the care and treatment of your friend or relative. Providing you with information about care plans and medication, and advising you on managing a crisis may be able to help to deal with difficult situations until other assistance is available.

Issues in sharing information

Healthcare is a partnership between patients, carers, families and professional care staff. Sometimes there can be difficulties in relation to confidentiality and sharing information. When a patient wishes to withhold information, then these wishes must be respected by professional staff.

It is essential that you are informed of this. Staff will ensure that you receive as much information as possible to help you in your caring role.

Even when the patient continues to withhold consent, you must be given enough information to enable you to provide effective care from an early stage. You will be given the opportunity to discuss any difficulties you are experiencing in your caring role with clinical staff.

Pharmacy medicines information helpline

The Pharmacy Medicines Information Helpline is for patients who have been prescribed a medication by Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. Carers can also access this service for advice and information on behalf of someone they care for.

Calls will be answered by qualified pharmacists. We can answer any question about medication that has been prescribed or purchased. For example, medicines bought from the chemist or the internet. All calls are completely confidential.

The Pharmacy Medicines Information Helpline is open Monday to Friday 9am - 4pm, telephone 0191 245 6604



Triangle of Care

What is Triangle of Care?

The Triangle of Care brings together carers, service users and professionals. It aims to promote safety and recovery for people with mental health issues and to encourage their wellbeing by including and supporting carers.

How the Triangle of Care can help carers

As a carer you might be the only consistent form of support the person you care for has. You may well be there when crisis occurs, when the person you care for is unwell and when that person needs help with day-to-day activities. You are also likely to understand their needs and condition extremely well. This can make you a vital partner in their care.

When professionals recognise the support that you are giving and see you as a key partner in care, then the person you care for is more likely to receive better care and support on their journey to recovery.

Triangle of Care can help you to recognise your own needs as a carer and give you appropriate information and support.



What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website www.ntw.nhs.uk (click on the 'Contact us' tab)
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- email complaints@ntw.nhs.uk Please note that information sent to the Trust via email is sent at your own risk
- We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention. You can provide feedback in the following ways:
 - the quickest way for you to do this is to complete our short online survey at www.ntw.nhs.uk/poy
 - complete a Points of You survey, available on wards, reception areas or from staff.
 - some areas of the Trust have electronic feedback touch screens, staff can help you to use these.

Useful websites

- Carers Trust - www.carers.org
- Carers Direct - www.nhs.uk/carersdirect
- Carers UK - www.carersuk.org
- Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust - www.ntw.nhs.uk Useful resources

Useful resources

The following booklets and other useful publications are also available to view/download at www.ntw.nhs.uk click on 'Resources Search' and type in the title of the leaflet. During the Getting to Know You meeting, your clinician can give you a paper copy if you would like one:


- A checklist for carers
- Carers' Charter
- Commonsense Confidentiality
- Getting to know you
- Useful contacts for carers
- Mummy is poorly
- Resources for carers – additional information resources



Get Involved

Sign up to become a Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust member

 www.ntw.nhs.uk/membership

 0191 245 6827

 FREEPOST NTW MEMBERSHIP

Membership is completely free and as a member you can:

- give your views on the Trust's plans and any issues that interest you
- vote in the Governor Elections or stand as a Governor yourself
- receive regular information about the Trust



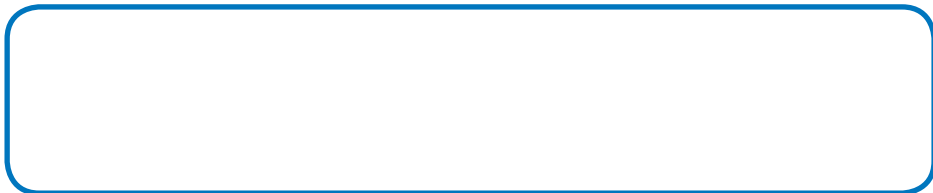


Preparing for staff to get to know you

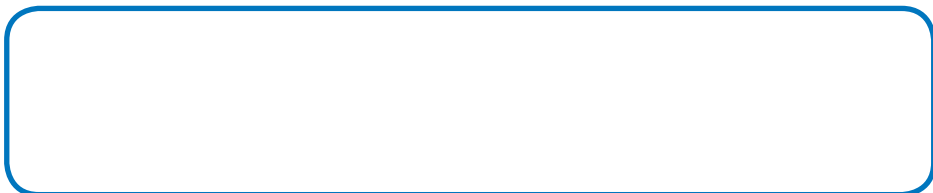
Questions for you to consider in preparation for the clinician/team to get to know you. Take this page with you when you attend your Getting to Know You meeting.

What is your relationship to the service user and how are you involved in their care?

tear here

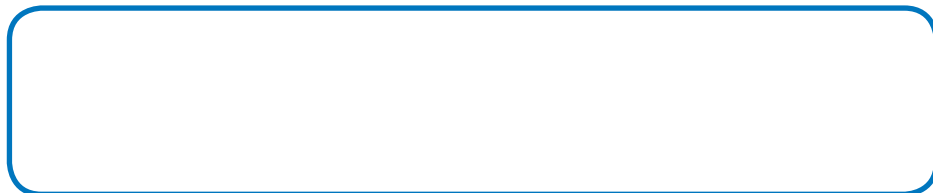


What support would enable you to continue in your caring role?

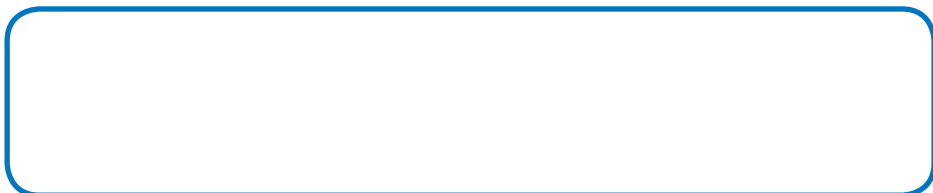


Do you get support from anywhere else?

tear here



Agreed outcomes





Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust has been awarded a Triangle of Care Gold Star Award. The award recognises the Trust's commitment to ensuring all staff adopt good practice when working with carers and families.

Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this booklet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, BSL, easy read or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre
Tel: 0191 246 7288

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