

Newsletter

Get Involved Campaigning for Carers

Who cares? is a campaign run by NHS South West Essex and SEPT to improve NHS support for carers in south west Essex. We've been given a year to make this happen.

Who we are

NHS South West Essex **decides** what NHS services are provided here and how the NHS spends its money in this area. SEPT is paid to **provide** NHS mental health and learning disability services for south Essex.

Welcome to the second edition of the 'Get Involved' newsletter, where will be telling you about the new 'Who Cares?' project which is working across South West Essex until March 2011.

This newsletter will also keep you up to date on dates and invites to social events where we value your input to help in the success of the 'Who Cares?' project.

Meet the "Who Cares?" Team

The Team is now fully in place to make this happen. The Project Manager, Fiona Cutts, leads the team made up of Project Support Officer, Harpinder Priest, and six Carer Recognition Workers – Lindsay Munroe, Trisha Geoghegan, Mark Cory, Vishnoo Yellappa, Sandra Woolley and Becky Ashdown. Eleven carers have volunteered to help with the 'Who Cares?' project. The team will be concentrating on building partnerships with unpaid informal carers and will be working with Essex County Council, Thurrock Borough Council, Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital, GP surgeries, primary care teams and pharmacies, as well as a number of voluntary organisations such

as Alzheimer's Society, Action for Family Carers, Crossroads, Carers UK and many more to ensure that carers are recognised and supported as soon as possible after their first point of contact with services.

This team will be working with the outcomes of the consultation meetings held at the Basildon Holiday Inn in November '09. It was invaluable opportunity for us to gain a thorough understanding of some the problems faced by carers.

Some of the issues raised were:

- need for consistency in support and easier access to benefits;
- carers are not seen as a

- priority and empathy to the situation of the carer is not always shown. Staff need to consider whole family - not just 'theCared For' person;
- there is too much paperwork and processes for accessing services are complex
- only poor support is available at time of crisis - Helplines are insufficient, and sometimes the only recourse is to go to A&E;
- carers are passed "from pillar to post" around services and agencies don't work well together;
- carers are often not kept informed during diagnosis / medication;
- earlier referrals and diagnosis required;
- GP's often don't signpost to available services and there is sometimes a lack of awareness of services available – a simple to use directory of available services is required;
- little respite care.

The 'Who Cares?' team will be actively addressing these through out the next year...



Back Row left to right - Harpinder Priest, Nicola Curtis, Fiona Cutts, Stephen Rabbitts, Mark Cory, Lindsay Munro, Stacey Hilton

Front Row left to right - Sandy Woolley, Becky Ashdown, Debbie Lierens, Vishnoo Yellppa, Tricia Geoghegan



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Did You Visit our Roadshow?

Another big event so far in this project has been the Roadshow held by the 'Who Cares?' project team in February 2010. This was held in conjunction with NHS South West Essex, Carers and representatives from Essex County Council as well a host of colleagues from other local organisations.

The trailer was sited at different locations across South West Essex. The important message of recognising carers and working with them as our expert partners was carried by this event. We have successfully increased the number of originally unidentified carers and informed them of the support to which they are entitled. This has led to this Roadshow having a very positive outcome. The whole team agree that they have learnt even more about the different services we each provide and how interlinking can improve the way our messages are delivered.

The entire Who Cares? Team would like to thank all the volunteer carers and volunteers from organisations who gave up their time to make this a great success...and due to this we plan on holding another during Carers Week (14 -19 June 2010) across different sites in the week. More information on this nearer the time....

New "who Cares?" local website for local carers

Launch 25 March 2010

www.southwestessexcarers.co.uk

The website provides jargon-free advice and information for carers in south west Essex. Clear explanations of complex mental health conditions, with direct links to other websites so carers can get more in-depth information. The latest news about carers' rights, to ensure carers are receiving all the legal and financial support available. There is an on line carers' self-assessment form, Information on benefits and allowances. Carers can chat to other local carers – for general advice, emotional support, or to offload your worries and concerns on the carers forum. There is also information about how best carers can look after themselves, and who to talk to locally for practical, hands-on help. The website also has a section for professionals who are involved in supporting carers. This section has a professional forum and information and latest updates regarding carers.

The 'Who Cares?' team will also be at the: 'Women's Health' event evening at Billericay Library on 22 April 2010

For more information and to book tickets to this free event please contact Carolyn Peters, Customer Services Supervisor, Billericay Library carolyn.peters@essexcc.gov.uk 01277 624624

SEPT (South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust) and the Who Cares? Team welcome carer volunteers wishing to help us achieve our 'better support for carers' goal. To achieve this it is essential that clinical staff understand the key needs of carers so we can achieve the support needed in our local towns.

For more information Please contact Stephen Rabbitts, 01277 265354

Thinking about it? Have a chat with the Get Involved office on 01277 265353 or 07855 752849 or email stephen.rabbitts@southessex-trust.nhs.uk or write to Get Involved Carers Team, SEPT Brentwood Resource Centre, Highwood Hospital, Geary Drive, Brentwood, Essex CM15 9DY