

Brian told us....

“Given the pressure that the NHS is under at the moment, I was amazed how many services are available to the general public. I say this as a man of 70 years of age, who in the last 6 months has become the carer of his wife who has lung cancer. We have had 30 wonderful years of marriage and then our life's hit the buffers. I became very depressed and isolated until I walked through the doors of the Carers Cafe in QA Hospital. It was a light bulb moment. I was greeted with friendship, sympathy and understanding. After several cups of tea I relaxed and started to talk to the other Carers that were there, which made me realise I was not alone being a carer but the most important thing I got out of the morning was information, which enabled me to access all the services that are available when you are in this situation. So to sum up the Carers cafe is a life saver and I would encourage anyone in a similar situation to attend.”



QAH – a carer friendly hospital

Family carers provide unpaid support to people, who without that support would not cope. They make a major contribution to the health and wellbeing of the person they care for. Early identification and provision of support to family carers is key to ensuring that they are supported in their role, reducing the risk of hospital admission of the person they care for. To date, we have identified over 1000 carers who were not previously known to social care support systems. This means they have been offered help in their role, which will enable their own health and well being needs to be met, in turn ensuring they have a positive and rewarding experiencing of caring for someone close to them.

During 2016/17 we have continued to develop strong working relationships with our local carer community and those services that help them. Carers are becoming integral to our everyday work. They are represented at meetings, involved in quality monitoring activities and provide teaching for clinical and non-clinical staff.

Key achievements this year have been:

- “This is us” - a carers passport has been co-designed with the local carer community, and implemented.
- The Trust is part of a national initiative – “Always Events”, the aim being to improve the experience of carers who support people with additional needs, specifically learning disabilities.
- The co-design of an e-learning tool for health and social care staff to improve carer awareness at practice level.
- Carers of people with vascular disease participated in a patient, family and carer reference group who advised the group managing the transfer of major vascular services to Southampton.

- A Carers Café has been started, to provide advice, information and emotional support to family carers in the hospital setting.
- We have been recognised as committed to improving the experience of carers in the hospital setting and have presented nationally to share our learning.

Sharing Our Learning

The Trust has significant interest from other NHS organisations about the successful working partnership we have created with Portsmouth City Council Carers Team and the Princess Royal Trust for Carers. As part of the national Experience of Care Week, we were invited to host a webinar telling our story about how we have set up our QA Carer Friendly initiative. This was an exciting opportunity to share our learning nationally, talk about the challenges and give examples of practical steps taken. The webinar will be made available on social media.

PATIENT EXPERIENCE TEAM ENSURES TRUSTS SERVICES ARE MORE CARER FRIENDLY



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