DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A CARERS LINKS NETWORK

Julia Ellis
Development Manager for Primary Care and Community Reach Carers Trust.
So what is a carers link? And what would you like them to do?
So what was the problem?

Practice staff said:-

“We want to help carers, but we’re really busy.”
“I worry that I might say the wrong thing.”
“I don’t know what’s out there for carers so I tend to avoid asking them if they’re OK.”
“It’s very hard to find the time to attend a workshop.”
Staff also suggested some solutions...

“Make it quick and easy for us to support carers.”
“We need advice on what we should say to carers.”
“How about holding a short lunchtime event?”
“If you do want staff to attend in their lunch break, give them some decent food!”
“Each practice should have someone on the team who can be a champion for carers.”
1. An **event** was designed that would be easy for staff to fit into their working day

2. The event launched a network of **Carers Links** in each of Salford’s 56 GP practices

3. A letter was sent to practices, co-signed by the Director of Primary Care Commissioning, inviting them to nominate a Carers Link (and, as a result, qualify for two free places at the event)

4. The letter included a ‘contract’ setting out how little the Carers Link would need to do, how much support Salford Carers Centre would give them and how their practice and their patients would benefit

5. A **toolkit** was designed that would make it much easier for staff to identify and refer carers and to encourage self-referrals.
CARERS EXPRESS

Fast-track training for time-poor GP practices
A FREE lunchtime carer awareness event for GP practice staff who find it hard to attend workshops or fit carer awareness training into their working day.

Includes FREE lunch on arrival followed by a menu of bite-size presentations designed to showcase local carers services and explain how GP practices can identify, support and refer their patients who are carers.

All GP practices attending CARERS EXPRESS receive a FREE Supporting Carers Toolkit designed to make it quicker and easier to identify, refer and support carers.

Also includes a marketplace of displays from other organisations offering services for carers plus specialist staff to advise and answer questions.
An influential GP emailed all GP practices asking them to support the initiative. He also said he expected each practice to send two members of staff to the event, including one clinician, Dr Nigel Hyams, GP and Chair of the Local Medical Committee, and passionate about supporting carers in general practice.
How to get your presenters on board

Invite them to a planning meeting to explain the Carers Express approach and how they will benefit.

If carers are presenting, use agreed and rehearsed Qs and As and make sure they have ready access to carer support services, if necessary.

Choose a strong facilitator who will make sure presenters don’t exceed their time slots.

For more on presenting concisely, Google ‘PechaKucha’: The art of concise presentations. Or visit www.pechakucha.org.

PECHAKUCHA
20 slides. 20 seconds per slide.
CARERS EXPRESS: The Recipe

1. Create a **lunchtime** event at a popular venue
2. Give it a snappy and memorable **title**
3. Position it as the **fast-track** to supporting carers
4. Make sure all the **presenters** are on board with the concept too and support them if they’re new to ‘bite-size’ presentations
5. Describe the event as **enjoyable** and a **beneficial** use of practice staff’s valuable time
6. Food is important so **flag it up** and remember, hot food wins more hearts than cold sandwiches
7. Promote the event in a **professional** way, using proven marketing techniques and professionally designed materials
8. Provide something **concrete** for people to take away = the quick-start toolkit
9. Orchestrate **emotional engagement** through music, imagery and powerful language
10. Make practice staff feel **privileged** to attend and let them know that it’s proving very popular with other GP practices in the area!
Use powerful sales messages!

Attend CARERS EXPRESS, collect your FREE toolkit and find out:

- Why you may need to avoid using the word ‘carer’
- How to tell which of your patients are carers
- Why some carers are more than twice as likely to become seriously ill
- What services are there for carers?
- How to identify carers while sitting at your PC
- What are the signs that a child is a young carer?
- Which small things can make a big difference to carers?
- What training is currently available for carers?
The Launch:-
CARERS EXPRESS 2010

• Played poignant music as people arrived and loop of slides with photos of and quotes from carers
• Closed the curtains, dimmed the lights
• More than 120 attendees from local GP practices
• Bite-sized presentations from both professionals and carers
• Some people moved to tears; quite a few attendees said it made them recognise that they too were carers
• Carers Support Workers were on hand for people to talk to afterwards
• As people left the event, they collected their streamlined GP practice toolkit to take back to their practice
What was on the programme?

• A personal story and facts about carers from the facilitator
• Services offered by Salford Carers Centre
• An interview with two young carers about how they’ve benefited from Salford’s young carers services
• How Age Concern supports carers of people with dementia
• The services offered by the Federation of Jewish Services
• Wai Yin Women’s service for carers
• How Crossroads Care supports carers
• Support services for carers of people with mental ill health
• Carers social worker explaining carer’s assessments
• A summary of the Fast-track Toolkit and how to use it
• Questions and close, with an invitation to visit marketplace.
What was in the streamlined GP Practice toolkit?

- Used a yellow key as its theme
- Provided posters, signs and yellow key bookmarks
- Simplified information for staff and carers into 60 second guides to services etc.
- Letter and form templates
- Further information and links
- All available on NHS Salford Intranet (now Greater Manchester CSU)
Simple, A5 pad and e-referral form.

1. Staff identify someone is a carer
2. Tear off sheet and give to carer to add name and D.O.B.
3. Carer takes slip to Carers Link/receptionist.
4. Carer’s notes are tagged.
5. Carer referred to Salford Carers Centre using e-referral form on EMIS or Vision.
What's the key to getting help if you look after someone?

Here's the key to getting help:

- Tell your GP practice that you're a "carer"
- Ask your GP practice to refer you to Salford Carers Centre

Or contact Salford Carers Centre direct on 0161 833 0217
Email carers_centre@salford.gov.uk or write to:
Salford Carers Centre, 1 St Philip's Place, Salford M3 6FA

Explains to carers how to self-refer and let their GP practice know they are a carer
Banner for GP practice notice board which avoids using the word ‘carer’

If you look after someone, this is for you...

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Carer registration and referral form

This practice has a Carers Link for people who look after a partner, relative, friend or neighbour.

Here’s the key to getting help

Please ask a member of staff for details.

Or contact Salford Carers Centre direct on 0161 833 0217
Friend or relative of a Carer needs advice?
Salford Carers Centre, 1 St Philips Place, Salford M3 6FA
Primary Care Toolkit also available on NHS Salford’s Intranet

Some 60 second guides were written for carers and were assembled into a ‘carers information file’ and displayed in practice waiting rooms.
Yellow key positions GP practices as holding the key to support for carers

Eye-catching shape and colour has proved popular with carers, healthcare organisations, NHS Trusts and local authorities

Since its launch, has been adopted by a range of other organisations, both voluntary and statutory

Quote from carer about yellow key bookmark she was given: “I’m OK at the moment but I know that if anything happens, I’ve always got that key.”
CARERS EXPRESS: The feedback

✓ Liked the fact it was over lunch and we kept to time
✓ Felt the variety of presentations kept people’s interest
✓ Seen as manageable in a working day
✓ Concise talks helped to keep audience’s attention
✓ Event didn’t take up too much time but still effective
✓ Found some of the presentations very moving
✓ Well-paced and informative
Powerful emotional engagement

✓ Personal stories from carers very moving
✓ Gave real-life perspectives of carers’ day-to-day lives
✓ Highly emotional presentations were very effective at reinforcing the importance of supporting carers
✓ Liked the relaxed atmosphere
✓ Powerful enough to have a real impact on practice
Very informative

✓ Lots of info on variety of carers’ support and who provides it
✓ Liked having a toolkit to take away at the end
✓ Useful information on how healthcare staff can signpost carers
✓ People understood more about how to identify carers
✓ Increased awareness of what the local carers centre can offer
✓ Interesting to hear from the carers themselves about the support they are getting
✓ Good range of information/contacts that could be passed on to carers at the surgery
What changes did CARERS EXPRESS bring about?

“The event has opened my eyes to a wide range of issues that carers face and how I may be able to direct them to support.”

“I enjoyed the event very much. It has given me more perspective of how other people live and how you can identify the people who need help.”

“I think everyone will take something positive back to their base and feel they must do more to help raise awareness of carers.”

“Listening to the carers speaking about their role as carers has made me very aware of how important their job is.”

“I will get our GPs to be more actively involved in asking patients who are cared for about their carers.”
Large increase in referrals to Salford Carers Centre

..and all but one of the 56 GP Practices appointed a Carers’ Link

Also paved the way for a Local Enhanced Service to provide Carers’ Health Checks to carers under the age of 40.
Key Learning

✓ Keep everything light and easy.
✓ Emotional engagement vital- greet people warmly, use poignant music, low lighting, heart-felt presentations
✓ Be clear about the benefits
✓ Be open about what the event cannot do as well (e.g. unsuitable for giving detailed information about carers’ benefits)
✓ Make people feel privileged to have a place at the event and that they will miss out if they don’t attend
✓ Make sure practice staff complete and return a registration form to cement commitment
✓ Have someone chase up registrations with a ‘places are running out’ message
✓ Find a strategic champion who is passionate about supporting carers to drive it forward
Maintaining the Carers Links network

After attending Carers Express, Carers Links:-

- Were provided with a brief induction session at their practice
- Received training on how to use electronic carer referral form that had been uploaded onto EMIS and Vision
- Received regular e-bulletins and newsletters from Salford Carers Centre with updates on services and feedback on the outcomes for the carers they had referred
- Were frequently thanked for their support
- Received regular supplies of posters, leaflets and bookmarks
- Were invited to attend twice-yearly interim meetings to share best practice and offer mutual support
- Received invitations to the annual Carers Express event each year
What’s happened since 2010?

Carers Express is now an annual event in Salford

Steady increase in referrals (5,423 on carers centre database in July 2014)

Has evolved over time to accommodate changing needs (e.g. Young Carers Express in 2011)

Time pressures increasing for all health staff which has led to a shorter event

Has been successfully adopted in Derbyshire with other areas keen to follow suit
Carers Express 2014

• Introduced by commissioner.
• Recap of project and celebration of achievements.
• Included short, emotionally engaging film.
• Event closed by GP (CCG lead for integrated care and older people).
• Shorter event (12.00- 1.15 pm) meant people had more time to network, with most people staying until 1.45.
• As before, positive feedback on the Carers Express format and contents.
• People valued having time away from their practice and a chance to reflect
• Hearing about case studies and real life stories were seen as being of huge benefit.
ACTIVITY

• Write a role description for a GP practice carers link in no more than five bullet points
• List the benefits to the GP practice of appointing someone as a carers link in no more than five bullet points
• All the GP practices in your area have appointed someone as a carers link and have agreed to let them attend your Carers Express event.
• What would you include in your menu of bite-sized presentations to ensure they go away feeling motivated?
Thank you

For further information email Julia Ellis, Development Manager (Primary Care and Community Reach) at Carers Trust via jellis@carers.org

Also visit NHS Improving Quality
http://www.nhsiq.nhs.uk/media/2535962/carers_express_final.pdf