

Support for Carers in Oxfordshire



Main findings

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Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board

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Background

- National Carers Strategy 2008 – need for primary care to proactively identify and support carers
- Oxfordshire Carers Forum (OCF) commissioned to undertake study with carers and GP practices
- Research findings & recommendations
- Next steps

Findings of national studies point to the need for better support...

- Caring activities are leading to:
 - Stress/nervous tension (38% of respondents)
 - Depression (28%)
 - Anxiety (27%)
 - Back injury (20%)
 - High blood pressure (10%)

Princess Royal Trust for Carers January 2004

- **68% of Carers felt that they had missed out on practical support for over 3 years.**

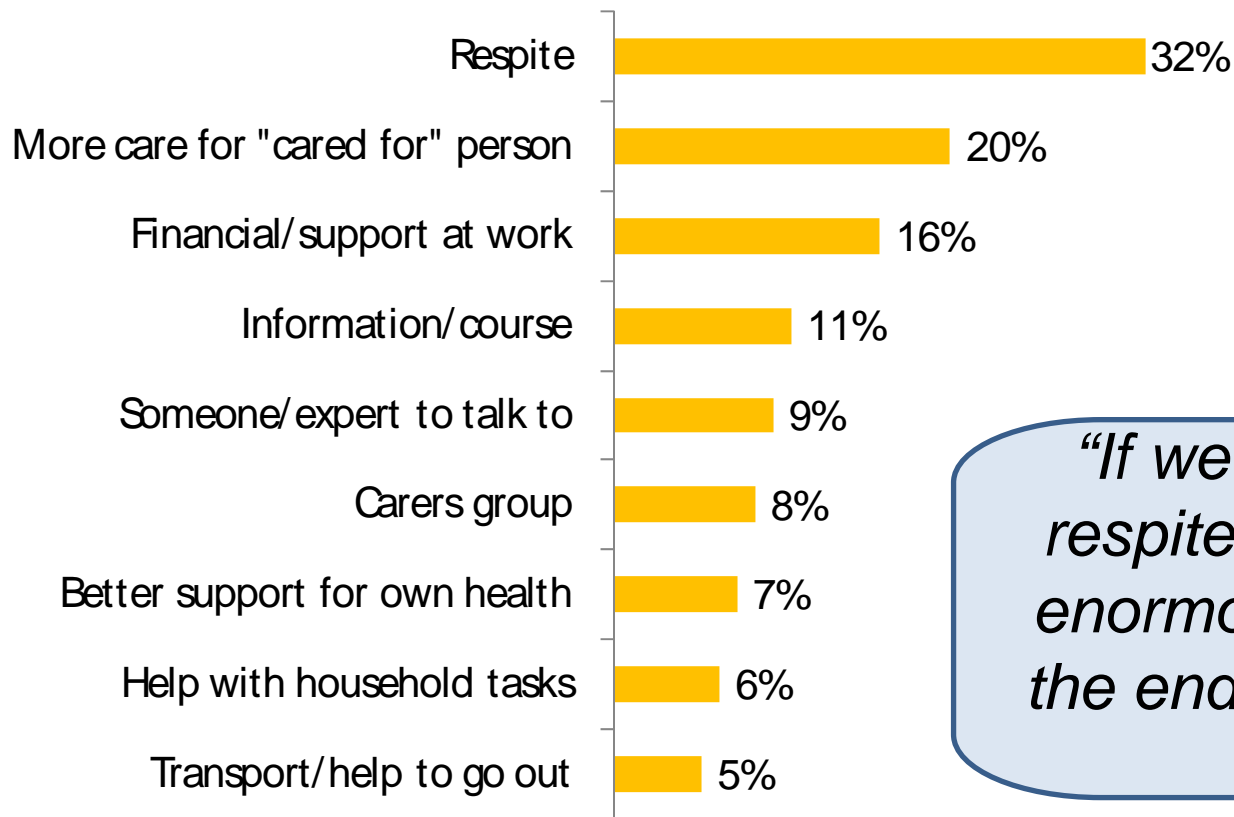
“In the Know” Carers UK 2006, survey of 265 Carers

Research Findings - Carers more likely to be suffering from ill health

- 40% of Carers in this survey are suffering a limiting long term illness
- Double the rate of the general population aged 16+ in households in Oxfordshire (2001)
- Finding is consistent with analysis by Carers UK – *those providing high levels of care (50+ hours) are twice as likely to be permanently sick or disabled*

Most frequently cited need is for respite

What kind of support do you feel you need to enable you to continue caring?



“respite is so key – lots of short breaks are what is needed”

“If we were given more respite care it would help enormously. ... You get to the end of your tether. It is awful.”

Analysis of verbatim comments – these are the most frequently mentioned, some respondents mentioned more than one type of support.

95 Carers registered with 43 practices in Oxfordshire
Some Carers rate their GP very highly

*“Excellent, brilliant.”
Understands about
tiredness. Attentive and
open. Writes supportive
letter - with bureaucracy
etc. GP is there for her,
helpful and approachable.*

*“I respect his (GPs)
opinion and take his
advice... He makes me
laugh!”*

*“He sees me every six
weeks to make sure I am
OK. He is concerned that I
am able to do things to
enjoy myself”*

Identification is an issue recognised by Carers and GP practices

- 41% Carers say they are “not known as a Carer” by their GP

“You don't automatically identify yourself as a carer, it's just assumed that you will look after your loved one.”

“I have been caring for my husband since 1998 and I've only just found I'm not down as a carer!”

“it is common that people do not see themselves as Carers particularly when caring for a long-term partner”

A strong enough reason for Carers to register?

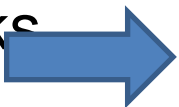
- 75% of those registered as a Carer say they received no additional help or support as a result
- This is consistent with responses from GP practices - treat Carers “just like other patients”

GP practices (out of 9) agreeing that specific health service is offered to Carers

	Yes (unqualified)	Yes (if needed)
Home visit by GP	2	3
Annual health check	0	2
Flexible appointment time	1	5
Double appointment	1	6
Priority flu jab	8	1

Recommendations - To improve support to Carers by...

1. Continuing with Carers breaks via GP practices
2. Changing the process of Carers Assessments so that GPs are informed of the results
3. Supporting GP practices to hear the views of Carers in their area
4. Improving identification and registration of Carers
 - Practice carer lead; **awareness training**; alternative methods of identification (eg flu letter)
 - Developing local targets
5. Improving the signposting of support to Carers
 - Simplifying display; more publicity; information packs



Next Steps - To improve support to Carers by...(1)

1. Proposal for improving clinical engagement to strengthen the identification and recording of carers in primary care settings – PCT Clinical Think Tank
2. Carers awareness training to GP practices and locality health teams – commissioned via three Carers Centres
3. Re-commissioning of carers services – improved marketing to identify hidden carers, universal offer of information and advice, improved pathway for carers assessment and respite services

Next Steps - To improve support to Carers by...(2) What HWPB can do?.....

4. Raise awareness of carers issues within your organisations/practice
5. Training for frontline staff on carers issues, identification and signposting to relevant services (carers training resource available on request)
6. Support for working carers within your organisations, flexible working policy, information & advice, carers support group

THANK YOU

QUESTIONS

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