

SUPPORTING RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING:

NHS STAFF WHO ARE INFORMAL CARERS

Awareness of support for informal carers is limited



Less than 30% of informal carers have been made aware by their line manager of carer policies, carers staff network, carers passport, carers support service, stress/risk assessment and employers for carers.

Carer policies are not always supportive

One in five of informal carers find current carers policies not helpful. Nearly two in five (38%) feels they are neither helpful nor unhelpful.



Emotional and practical support is invaluable

A third of informal carers receives practical (33%) and emotional support (34%) from their line manager, the team and colleagues at the organisation.



Consistent use of policies



Less than 20% of informal carers feel policies to support their caring role are consistently used, which is significant considering that 88% of respondents indicated that juggling their caring role alongside their job impacted their health.

IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR INFORMAL CARERS IN THE NHS

Support through carers policies

- Increase awareness of existing policies.
- Increase consistent application of policies across the organisation.
- Ensure policies are clear, accessible and direct to limit the need for interpretation.

Considerations around annual leave

- Carer's leave/paid time off for planned occurrences.
- Time for carers admin if informal carer works day-time hours only.
- Changes to certain leave rights to include a variety of informal carers.

Flexibility

- Work with the informal carer to address their individual situation and personal needs.
- Review needs regularly or incorporate "what can help" into reviews and appraisals to trigger support.
- Increase understanding of "emergencies" potentially lasting over 24h.
- Increase flexibility in hours (e.g. allowing admin to be done out of hours).

A supportive organisational culture

- Use visible role models of people who progress in their careers in the NHS and are also informal carers.
- Encourage compassion and understanding across the organisation and at all levels.
- Provide a short summary of the sources of support available to staff that are also informal carers.
- Encourage open discussion and the creation of a formal plan for support.
- Increase awareness among wellbeing service of pressures related to being an informal carer.

For more information, please contact us

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