

CARING FOR CARERS: A SOCIAL WORKER AND NURSE- LED HOSPICE MODEL

¹Glyn Thomas, ¹Louise Harris, ¹Liz Thomas, ¹Jason Davidson, ^{1,2}Faye Gishen. ¹Marie Curie Hospice, London, UK; ²University College, London, UK

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Introduction Marie Curie recognises the contribution that carers make to the support and wellbeing of those diagnosed with terminal illness.¹ Their 2012 report highlighted a lack of support for carers as well as the associated negative social and economic impact of caring for a dying relative. The Carers UK Report, 2014² found that nearly 6000 people become carers every day, with £1.1 billion of Carers' Allowance going unclaimed each year.

Aims The understanding and appreciation of challenges faced by carers led to the establishment of a dedicated Carers' Clinic at Marie Curie Hospice, Hampstead, London in April 2016. The aim was to support carers, with the focus on answering their questions and addressing their concerns. **Methods** The model was social worker and nurse-led. A modified version of the Carers Support Needs Assessment Tool (CSNAT) was used as the basis for the consultation³ and a questionnaire evaluation was completed following the clinic appointment.

Results Between April 2016 and March 2017 there were 31 consultations with 23 evaluations completed. Both quantitative and qualitative data was captured. 83% of respondents said that the clinic met their needs. Many carers requested follow-up sessions. The key themes identified were around financial advice, carers' health needs and support with managing their relatives' illness.

Conclusion The Carers Clinic is now established in the hospice. Further developments include the establishment of a new service enabling carers to be referred for six sessions of pre-bereavement support, as well as a plan to implement an 8 week mindfulness programme.

REFERENCES

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