

What do we mean by Carer Involvement?

You are a carer if you are providing care for an adult or child who is ill, frail or has a disability.

Carer involvement means carers working with those involved in providing services to improve the quality of those services. We believe that the interests of carers and patients should be kept at the heart of decision making at Belfast Trust. Carers should therefore have opportunities to be involved in decisions that will affect their lives and the lives of future carers.

It is important for carers to be involved as they have the day-to-day experience of receiving services, and providing care to loved ones who are unwell.



Who can be involved?

Carers aged 18 or over, supporting a relative or friend in the Belfast Trust area can be involved.

Why is it important for you to be involved?

It is important to ensure that your views as a carer are heard and that issues that matter to you are at the centre of service development.

How can you help?

There are many different ways in which you can get involved in influencing how services are developed in the Belfast Trust. So far carers have been active in:

- Discussing their experiences with staff
- Sharing their ideas how services can be improved
- Developing a Carer's handbook and website

information

- Reviewing carer information leaflets
- Delivering training for healthcare professionals
- Organising carer events alongside staff
- Commenting on draft Trust policies and guidance
- Being a member of the Trust's Carer Strategy group
- Being a member of the Trust's Carers Reference group.

There are other ways of being involved. You don't necessarily have to attend meetings, as you can also give feedback by phone, e-mail or by post. The time commitment also varies. Some opportunities will be one-offs, others may be on-going. However this will be agreed with you before you take on a role.

What support will be provided?

You will

- Be treated with respect and courtesy
- Hear what is new in carer services
- Gain an understanding of how the Belfast HSC Trust works
- Have opportunities to influence decision making
- Be able to take part in training that will help you be involved more effectively
- Have a named contact for support
- Have recognition and thanks for your contribution
- Have re-imbursment for any reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in the course of your involvement
- Have a supportive and positive experience when you participate.

One carer who has been involved in Trust work has said,

“I was really pleased to see what I had said at a focus group had been listened to and was now part of the new services plan ...”

By being involved, the real pressing issues for carers can be highlighted and discussed with senior Trust staff. Can you share your carer expertise to help design better carer support? If you are interested in getting involved please contact one of the Carer Co-ordinators.

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You can also go to the carers section of the Trust website at <http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/services/CarersInformation.htm>.

If you require this information in larger size or in a different format please contact one of the Carer Co-ordinators.

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INVOLVEMENT



Carer Involvement

Are you a Carer?

Can you help us to
make services better?