

# CARERS MATTER

**Skills for Care has worked in partnership with Skills for Health to develop a range of resources that will support employers, organisations and staff to better support carers.** These resources

are based upon a set of *Common Core Principles for working with carers* (See Figure 1), which describe the behaviours that carers would like to see when professionals are working with them, and provide a foundation for good practice and a benchmark for training. They also provide a unifying set of standards, which all those who deliver training can use.

This overview is intended to share this good practice across the wider NHS in order to make healthcare professionals aware of these standards and to help with the commissioning and delivery of training and development.

## WHO ARE CARERS?

A carer is defined as someone who spends a significant proportion of their life providing unpaid support to family or potentially friends. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems (*Carers at the Heart of the 21st Century, Department of Health, 2008*).

According to the Department of Health White Paper *Caring for our future* (July 2012), there are an estimated 5 million people providing care and support to a loved one, and this is set to increase to nine million by 2037. Every year, two million people move in and out of caring.

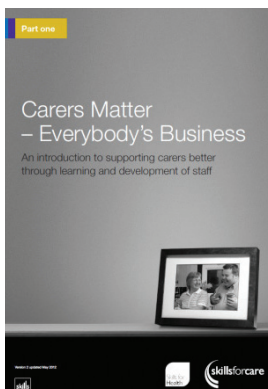
By contrast there are around 1.8 million people in the paid social care workforce. Health and social care services have a vital role to play in ensuring that carers are at the heart of the social care system and are treated as expert partners in care.

## COMMON CORE PRINCIPLES (FIGURE 1)



## GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS TO SUPPORT THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

## CARERS MATTER - EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS



This guidance is designed to help employers and organisations support carers better, through the learning and development of staff (refreshed version now available). This is not an 'off the shelf' training

package, but rather the tools that enable training to be commissioned or developed to reflect local workforce needs, local settings and context. It aims to be flexible enough to be delivered in a variety of ways to meet differing working and learning needs.

The guidance comes in three parts and provides information about:

- Who carers are (as distinct from care workers)
- Why carers are important
- How the NHS can support the learning and development of its workforce to improve and enhance services for the people who use them, and their carers.



**Part 1** - aimed at chief executives and senior managers who are responsible for the strategic direction of their business and its priorities.

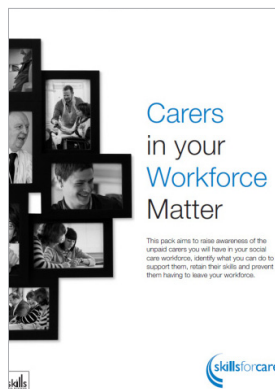


**Part 2** - aimed at people who are directly responsible for commissioning or delivering learning and development.



**Part 3** - contains a wealth of additional supporting resources relevant to people across a wide range of settings and roles that support learning and development.

## CARERS IN YOUR WORKFORCE MATTER



This resource offers guidance for employers, and aims to raise the awareness of carers in the social care workforce.

The resource is divided into ten practical sections which

allow employers the opportunity to ask important questions around the prevalence of carers they employ, acknowledges the important role that carers play within the organisation, sector and society as a whole and suggests ways in which the carers' skills can be retained and developed. It also provides an opportunity to evaluate the impact of any changes made for working carers and signposts to further support for employers and carers. Real life examples demonstrate some of the guidance already being successfully employed by organisations.

Each section of the guidance can be downloaded here as PDF documents:

#### [Introduction](#)

1. [Recruiting, employing and retaining unpaid carers in the social care workforce](#)
2. [How many of my staff are likely to be carers?](#)
3. [Why is supporting working carers so important?](#)
4. [Carers legal rights a summary](#)
5. [How can I retain the skills of my employees who are carers?](#)
6. [Learning and development for those employees who are carers what works?](#)
7. [How do I know if changes have had an impact on working carers?](#)
8. [Awareness raising in your organisation](#)
9. [Notes and action planning](#)
10. [Further specialist sources of support](#)

## DEMENTIA: WORKERS &amp; CARERS TOGETHER



This is a practical guide that includes hands-on advice for care workers in day centres, domiciliary care, residential care, social work and related roles, and for social care managers, on typical

experiences of family and friends who are caring for a person with dementia and the support they need. It is illuminated throughout with quotes giving real carers' perspectives. The guide stresses that the social care role is to support the carer as well as the person with dementia, and to supplement the carer's work, not replace it.

The guide is supplemented with [Dementia & carers: workers' resources](#). It outlines the main areas of knowledge that a care worker supporting a person with dementia and their family or friends carers should have. It addresses recognising the signs of dementia, support when there is a diagnosis, social care assessments for both the person with dementia and the carer, living independently as dementia advances, and legal and financial issues care workers need to know about.



#### CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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