



Manchester University
NHS Foundation Trust

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Carer's Strategy 2023-2026



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Foreword

Setting the Carers' Strategy in the context of our Patient Experience framework, "*What Matters to Me*", goes to the heart of our vision and describes our commitments to the Communities we serve.

Our vision is to improve the health and quality of life of our diverse population by building an organisation that:

- Excels in quality, safety, patient and carer experience, research, innovation and teaching
- Attracts, develops and retains great people
- Is recognised internationally as a leading healthcare provider.

It is only through seeing our services through the eyes of those receiving care and those who provide care, that we will truly achieve our vision.

Thank you on behalf of the Board of Directors for your leadership, professionalism, strength, compassion and care.

Mark Cubbon, Group Chief Executive



Introduction

I am delighted to introduce Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust's (MFT) Carer's Strategy 2023-2026. This strategy builds on and sets out improvements on our work to delivering high quality person-centred care and to delivering the quality of experience any carer would want to receive.

Carers of all ages play a significant and important role within the communities served by MFT. However, their individual experiences are often overlooked, and their health and wellbeing are not always supported.

The strategy outlines MFT's commitment to improving the experiences of all our carers and how we will play an active role in supporting their health and wellbeing.



Our Commitments are:

1. To ensure appropriate **identification and recognition of carers** is well documented – both when an individual has a carer or an individual themselves has caring responsibilities.
2. We are committed to **communicating with carers** in an accessible, friendly and respectful manner.
3. We commit to working in **partnership** with health, social care and third sector services to best **coordinate care**.
4. We are committed to **developing carers awareness** across all areas of the organisation and to **develop training** to ensure all staff feel equipped and skilled to work in partnership with carers.
5. We commit to ensuring **reasonable adjustments** are made to meet the carers and their loved ones needs.

I would like to thank everyone involved in developing this strategy and for everyone's help and support in realising our commitments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheryl Lenney".

Professor Cheryl Lenney, OBE Chief Nurse

Background

A carer is a person, either adult or child, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who requires help due to their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support¹.

Following research undertaken during Carers' Week 2022, Carers' UK estimate there are currently 10.58m people in the UK that are unpaid carers, which equates to one in five adults². It is also documented there are approximately 800,000 young carers in the UK³.

Carers of all ages play a significant and important role within the communities served by MFT. However their individual experiences are often overlooked, and their health and wellbeing is not always supported.

The development of this strategy illustrates MFT's commitment to improving the experiences of all our carers and to play an active role in supporting their health and wellbeing.

The Care Act 2014 and Children and Families Act 2014 legislated local authority access to a carer's assessment for unpaid adult and young carers'. The assessment places emphasis on the carer's needs for support and their individual needs.

The Health and Care Act 2022 and the introduction of Integrated Care Boards / Systems sees an accumulation of items from the aforementioned acts whilst introducing new legislative measures to allow health and care organisations to deliver a better linked service, especially for those individuals accessing multiple organisations.

Building on recommendations from NHS England and the introduction of integrated care systems, there is now an emphasis on all organisations to deliver a carers' strategy. With the Health and Care Act 2022 placing a duty on the NHS to have regard to carers', and to promote their health and wellbeing.

Furthermore, the Care Quality Commission will now require evidence from organisations in support of promoting the health and wellbeing of carers' and improving their experience.

Whilst the above denotes our legal obligations to develop a carers' strategy, the Trust's values of 'Together Care Matters' – Everyone Matters, Working Together, Dignity and Care, Open and Honest – emphasise our internal commitments to improve carers' experiences whilst accessing MFT services.



How Our Strategy Was Produced

This strategy outlines MFT’s commitments to improving the experiences of all our carers, playing an active role in their health and wellbeing, and ensuring their individual experiences are not overlooked by 2026.

Building on the commitments outlined in MFT’s Experience and Involvement Strategy 2020-2023 and to ensure MFT’s Carers’ Strategy development is inclusive and co-produced, a series of engagement activities were undertaken to ensure all views and voices were heard relating to ‘What Matters’ to carers and other important key stakeholders.

A key activity was a Stakeholder Engagement Event held in November 2022. The event involved a wide range of individuals, from carers themselves, to clinical and clerical staff both internally and from our external partners such as charitable organisations working together to learn about What Matters to Carers.

The following MFT strategies impact carers’ and this overarching MFT Carers’ Strategy will align with:

- MFT’s Experience and Involvement Strategy: Our Commitments to Patients, Families and Carers 2020-2023
- MFT’s Adult Supportive Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy 2021-2026
- Our plan for people with learning disabilities and / or autism, their families and carers 2022-2025
- MFT’s Dementia Strategy 2023-2026
- 2022 Care Quality Commission (CQC) Expectations (Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive, Well-led)

The Trust is also developing a Carers Policy to underpin this strategy.

How we have produced and plan to deliver on our commitments and strategic ambitions:



Our Commitments

Identification and Recognition

To ensure appropriate identification and recognition of carers is well documented – both when an individual has a carer or an individual themselves has caring responsibilities.

To do this, we will:

- Ensure staff are approachable, kind, and empathetic. This will make carers feel welcome and are treated with respect and dignity in our Hospitals / MCS / LCOs. Staff need to acknowledge, carers may be young.
- Provide a positive carer experience through offering support and, where possible, provision of facilities for carers to support/visit their loved ones.
- Encourage patients to identify all those involved in their care, and for carers to come forward to identify themselves as such to allow them to seek extra support if necessary.
- Support the delivery of person-centred care by encouraging carers to be involved in the completion of 'Getting To Know Me' documentation to support individual carers.
- Recognise that the carers are the 'expert' on how their loved one feels. Staff need to recognise a carers needs.
- Ask carers 'What Matters' to them about the care of their significant other / loved one at all times, and particularly during Palliative Care of their loved one.
- Ensure that patients with their carers are as involved in discussions and decisions about their care as they wish to be – "No decision about me, without me".

- Provide choice for carers regarding where the care of their loved one will be delivered, where this is clinically appropriate.
- Support staff to continue to treat carers as individuals. They will respect the protected characteristics of age, physical or learning disabilities, cultural and religious needs.

Carer Quotes 2022:

"I came feeling extremely anxious and depressed. Over the weeks I have made changes to address my own needs and this has resulted in a significant shift in my mindset and feelings of being able to cope as a CARER for my partner with cancer and also in dealing with work and life. For this I am so very grateful. I feel happier and stronger. Thank you."



Our Commitments

Communication

We are committed to communicating with carers in an accessible, friendly and respectful manner.

To do this, we will:

- Provide carers with full consistent information about the care of their loved one, that is clear and presented in their preferred or required manner.
- Ensure that carers have an opportunity to speak to a doctor, nurse, other healthcare professional or member of the chaplaincy team for practical, spiritual and emotional support.
- Maintain patient and carer confidentiality at all points of care, unless policy indicates a need to share information.
- Improve information sharing across the Trust, so that carers will not need to answer the same questions repeatedly.
- Provide access to interpretation and translation services for all carers who may need it.
- Be responsive to carers' questions in a timely and effective manner and inform them of the reasons for any delays in answering their questions.
- Be responsive to carers' needs, when booking appointments / accessing treatment for themselves as well as for whom they care for. Eg "Flagging" system in HIVE.



Carer Quotes 2022:

"Very prompt arrival following phone call with doctor. Health care practitioner was very polite and respectful to my very elderly mum. Answered any questions I may have had. I felt like I was being listened to which is very important when you are a CARER."

"Poor communication and really long wait. Waiting for over 6 hours now, I am a CARER for my wife so has caused lots of anxiety."

Our Commitments

Signposting and Partnership Working

We commit to working in partnership with health, social care and third sector services to best coordinate care.

To do this, we will:

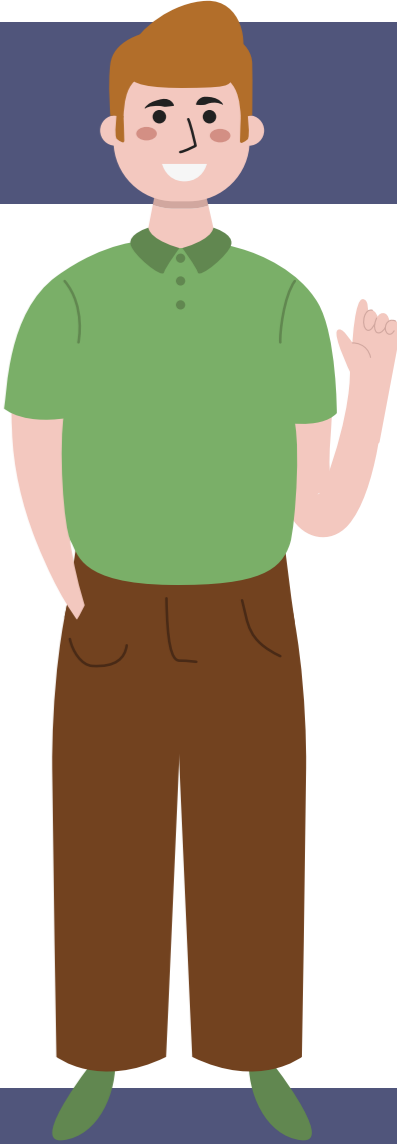
- Establish an MFT web page for Carers. This will have links to other related websites, such as support groups, patient and carer forums, Carers' Manchester.
- Provide or signpost carers to appropriate information and or support groups when the patient is discharged.
- Keep the Trust website up to date with correct contact information, useful information about the Trust's services, and links to local and national support.
- Promote care at home by ensuring that carers and their loved ones are provided with support necessary to enable them to continue care at home.



Carer Quotes 2022:

"...There were no wheelchairs available at any of the entrances. Finally found one abandoned outside St Mary's. Eventually found cardiology, ...I was told I couldn't stay with her in the waiting room... Other hospitals in the trust allow me to stay. Mum is 89, completely deaf, non mobile and very confused. She needs a CARER...."

"Better signage, Send a map of hospital out with appointment letter. Wheelchairs available at all entrances. Use some common sense when applying the no family to accompany rule. A patient with an essential CARER needs a CARER to stay with her."



Our Commitments

Education

We are committed to developing carers' awareness across all areas of the organisation and to develop training to ensure all staff feel equipped and skilled to work in partnership with carers.

To do this, we will:

- Provide staff with the right training, skills and support to best respond to the individual needs of carers and their loved ones. This includes mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.
- Encourage carers to raise any questions or concerns, so they may be resolved in a timely manner, either by speaking directly with staff or by seeking advice from the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) or by making a complaint should they wish to.
- Listen to, act on and learn from feedback from carers across the Trust to develop service improvements alongside coproduction frameworks. Triangulate Patient Feedback, PALS and Complaints data to facilitate this learning.
- Ensure all carers are given the chance to provide feedback through asking *What Matters* to them and offering the Friends and Family Test (FFT) to be completed.
- Review the WMTM Patient Experience Surveys. Develop a specific Carer / Family member survey, to gather feedback on their experiences.
- Regularly review how we obtain and use feedback, and assess its validity and effectiveness.
- Participate in national patient surveys and use the feedback to inform continuous improvement.



- Implement a Trust Carers' Policy which supports the implementation of the Carers' Strategy and acknowledges that staff may also be carers.
- Include carers' experience in the annual Board "Patient Story" programme.
- Review the Trust's monthly Quality Care Round (QCR) audit, to include specific questions to carers are included.

Our Commitments

Reasonable Adjustments

We commit to ensuring reasonable adjustments are made to meet the carers and their loved ones needs.

To do this, we will:

- Provide clear information on how to find the way round our Hospitals / Managed Clinical Services (MCS) / Local Community Organisation (LCO), including public transport and car parking. We will offer wayfinding maps in each reception area in accordance with our MFT Wayfinding Policy.
- Provide up-to-date accessible Access Guides on our Trust website.
- Be responsive to the needs of carers and make reasonable adjustments with for example visiting times.
- Establish agreed ward “boundaries of care” for carers during an inpatient stay, such as when carers can support meal times; identifying what patient care, a carer would like to be involved with.
- Be aware of all carers’ needs regardless of age. Acknowledge carers themselves may require reasonable adjustments for, e.g. autism; dyslexia. Development of a “Carers’ Passport”.





Implementation

Each Hospital / MCS / LCO will ensure that their Business Plans reflect the actions required to deliver the commitments and ambitions of this strategy.

The Group Quality and Patient Experience Forum will oversee implementation of the commitments, enabling services across the Trust to give updates on their progress and share best practice.

Our ambitions, deliverables and commitments will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain responsive to issues that matter to carers. This update will be included in the annual Patient Experience Board report.



This strategy has been co-produced with thanks to:

Andy Proctor – Estates & Facilities
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