

## Welford Ward: Information leaflet for Carers

### Common concerns for those in a caring role and how to address them:

#### Introduction:

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) have developed guidelines for the treatment of eating disorders. The guidance is freely available at the NICE website [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk). When the guidance was originally put together a group of carers were asked about their concerns and views about the specific needs of carers. Some key areas were identified including the following:

- Carers can feel isolated and want the opportunity to talk to others in a similar situation.
- Carers may have financial or housing issues resulting either directly or indirectly to their caring role.
- Carers may have problems related to their physical and mental health either the result of their caring role or independently in a way that might affect the capacity to provide care.
- Carers may find that their lives have become distorted in the course of providing care i.e. achieving a caring for/life balance.
- All the above can cause considerable stress and in some cases frank physical or mental health illness (e.g. depression and anxiety, insomnia, stress related physical illness such as stomach ulcers, recurrent headaches etc.).

Some of these issues are dealt with in general terms in our carers pack and also in some of the recommended reading especially “Skills-based learning for caring for a loved one with an eating disorder” by Professor Janet Treasure.

- As a carer you may be entitled to a carer’s assessment which should include an assessment of your financial and social circumstances. This assessment is not conducted by the eating disorders service. More details on a carers assessment can be found via <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carers-assessments/>
- We would advise any carer with physical or mental health problems to activate support and help through their own GP in the first instance. Your GP is certainly best placed to help with physical health problems and they are very well placed to refer or signpost you to psychological/psychiatric support as necessary. The GP is also very well placed to understand your family situation especially if you have had a long term relationship with the practice.
- It is well understood now that the role of the carer can be difficult when looking after a loved one with an eating disorder. There is evidence that the caring role can involve managing distress and considerable psychological burden, including mental disorders such as anxiety and depression. The carers pack addresses some of these

problems and suggests some coping strategies. It also includes advice on further reading and other support resources.

- There some free workshops provided by National Health Service Workforce Training and Education Directorate has worked in partnership with Charlie Waller Trust . Trained facilitators deliver the New Maudsley Approach carers skills workshops to parents and carers who are supporting a loved one with an eating disorder. Based on the New Maudsley approach, these courses have helped so many families to navigate their way through a seemingly impossible task and offer professional techniques for becoming a 'Change Coach' including:
  - Dealing with challenging behaviour
  - Specialised communication skills
  - Avoiding traps that may maintain the disorder
  - Supporting recovery

The aim of the New Maudsley Model is to lower anxiety and distress in family members and to give carers communication tools, skills and techniques that help them engage their loved one to improve their self-esteem and develop the resilience to embark on change.

The courses are broken down into five, two-hour workshops and are full of practical tips, real life scenarios and case studies.

More information can be found -

<https://www.charliewaller.org/what-we-offer/projects-in-partnerships/the-new-maudsley-approach>

<https://www.charliewaller.org/what-we-offer/new-maudsley-training-course-dates>

For the carers of patients outside of the Leicestershire area: your local eating disorder service will also be able to advise you on their specific local arrangements for carer support.

Patients local area	Contact details
Lincolnshire	Lincolnshire Eating Disorder Service, Unit 4, the bungalows, St Georges Hospital, Long Leys road, Lincoln, LN1 1FS, Tel: 01522 421632.
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire Eating Disorders Service, The Mandala Centre, Gregory Boulevard Nottingham, NG7 6LB, Tel: 0115 8760162
Derbyshire	Derbyshire Eating Disorder Service, Unity Mill, Derwent Street, Belper, Derbyshire, Tel: 01773 881467
Northamptonshire	Eating Disorder Service, Campbell House, Northampton, NN1 3EB Tel: 01604 658907

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