



supporting staff to better support carers

Skills for Care, Skills for Health and the Department of Health are working in partnership to strengthen and embed the importance of carers in the delivery of health and social care services.

Definition of a carer: A carer 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 DH, 2008.

Carers Matter - Everybody's Business

Following the development of a set of common core principles of good practice, we have developed the final draft of *Carers Matter Everybody's Business*; a national learning and development framework with a wide range of supporting resources. Through *Carers Matter Everybody's Business* we aim to help employers ensure that key workers can receive training to support carers better that is based on national standards and the common core principles.

It 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 is flexible enough to be delivered in a variety of ways to meet differing working and learning needs. It is based on the common core principles of good practice with carers.

The common core principles reinforce good practice and challenge employers and workers to improve and change their practice when working with carers. These form the basis of *Carers Matter Everybody's Business*. These can be seen at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/carers and www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/carers.

Where are we now?

Carers Matter Everybody's Business was developed working with a range of development site partners, to whom we are extremely grateful for their patience, feedback, comments and contributions.

We are now reflecting on that feedback and those suggestions as part of the editing process to ensure that *Carers Matter Everybody's Business* is both easily accessible and user friendly. This final part of the development involves working across a number of key partners and stakeholders in editing the document and publishing it in suitable formats and we anticipate that it will be made widely available by **March 2011**.

What else are we doing?

As part of the ongoing development and refinement we are now further testing *Carers Matter Everybody's Business* in a range of Early Implementer Sites to enable an independent evaluation of the resources and the impact they have on the carers those workers come into contact with when delivering their services.

The evaluation will continue into 2011 with the results being available in Summer 2011. Findings from the evaluation will be used in two key ways. They will be reflected back into *Carers Matter Everybody's Business* as appropriate, but key findings will also be shared widely to further support employers across health social care and other sectors to reflect and take action to support carers better through their own workforce and the services they deliver.

Want to find out more?

For details of the development and early implementer sites please visit **www.skillsforcare.org.uk/carers** or **www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/carers**.

To add your name to the wide range of people who receive regular updates about the project, please contact **carersstrategy@skillsforcare.org.uk**.

We are now in the final stages of this development, and entering a rewarding phase of the project. The culmination of many hours of hard work and effort across a wide range of partners and stakeholders, based on existing good practice in this area is making *Carers Matter Everybody's Business* a reality. Expect another update from us early in 2011.