

NHS Forth Valley

Carers Information Strategy

Revised September 2007

September 2009 Update attached

**To be reviewed in 2010 after publication of the National Carers
Strategy**

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1 INTRODUCTION

There are estimated to be 670,000 carers in Scotland, 16% of the population. We are witnessing a steady annual 4.5% increase in carer numbers, and increases in the amount and intensity of care provided. At present carers in Scotland are estimated to save the public purse £5 billion per annum by providing unpaid care to friends and family members. It is clear that if this care were to be withdrawn health and social care systems would collapse. If carers stop being able to provide care because of their own health problems, the pressure on these systems is significantly increased. We know that carers have an increased likelihood of developing long-term health problems, often as a result of their caring role.

Recent findings published by Office for National Statistics offer worrying evidence of the detrimental impact of caring on the health of carers.

- 39% of carers say that their mental or physical health has been affected as a result of caring. This amounts to an estimated 253,000 carers in Scotland.
- There are high incidences of stress, depression and musculo-skeletal problems among carers.
- 14% of carers report that they smoke, drink or use drugs more as a result of their caring responsibilities. This amounts to an estimated 91,000 carers in Scotland.

The NHS has an important role to play in supporting carers.

Whilst this Strategy is for NHS Forth Valley it is being developed in conjunction with our local authority partners who have the statutory responsibility to carry out the carers assessment.

Carers will only be adequately supported and informed if positive and active partnerships between carers, voluntary sector, local authorities and the NHS are formed and sustained. Only in these circumstances will the best and appropriate information be available upon which assessment and service developments can be based.

Since the legislation that formalised Community Care was introduced in 1993, there has been a steadily increasing awareness of the contribution that informal / unpaid carers make in supporting people at home. This contribution is increasingly important as the percentage of the population in Scotland that is older and dependent continues to increase.

Following devolution in 1996, the Scottish Executive required each local authority to prepare a Carers Strategy for their area. As the Joint Future initiative (formalising partnerships between the NHS and Local Authorities joining up Health and Social Care) gained momentum, the importance of including carers in the planning and delivery of services was reinforced.

A major development has been the introduction of adult and young carers entitlement to an assessment of their ability to provide care (carers assessment) independent of any assessment of the person for whom they care. This has been enshrined in legislation as part of the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002 which was implemented from 1 September 2002.

The Scottish Executive issued full Guidance on the legislation in March 2003.

The Act also provided for Scottish Ministers to require NHS Boards to prepare and submit to them a “NHS Carers Information Strategy”. This sets out how NHS Forth Valley will identify hidden carers and, and where they appear to be providing a “substantial and regular” amount of care, to inform carers of their potential right to assessment under Section 12AA of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 or Section 24 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

Scottish Ministers issued final guidance on the preparation of the Carers Information Strategy on 24th April 2006.

NHS Forth Valley worked with the local Councils, voluntary sector and carers through 2005 to prepare a Carers Information Strategy that was approved by the Board in January 2006. Work was then undertaken during the summer of 2006 to ensure the Strategy met the requirements of the Guidance and to develop Action Plans appropriate for the different service delivery structures in NHS Forth Valley.

NHS Boards must provide a copy of the Carer Information Strategy to any person who requests it.

2 THE CONTEXT

2.1 Who are Carers?

A Carer is someone who, unpaid, provides help and support to a relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage without that help due to frailty, long-term illness or disability.

Many carers do not see themselves as carers but primarily as a parent, child, wife, husband, partner, friend or neighbour. Many carers tend to be hidden in our communities and are not aware that help and support is available. Carers may live with the person they care for but many do not. Some carers will be balancing caring responsibilities with paid employment. Many give up paid employment to care. There is no such thing as a typical Carer. Caring roles have an impact not only on individual carers but also on whole family units.

2.2 The Role of Carers in Health and Social Care

Carers are a vital and central part of the whole Health and Community Care system. Carers are often the main providers of care to the person for whom they care. The drive towards delivering person-centred services that support people in their own home depends heavily on the contribution made by unpaid carers.

Demographic change will mean a significant growth in the number of older people wanting to be looked after at home. Already many carers are older people themselves looking after partners, husbands, wives or children. The contribution made by carers will certainly continue to be vital and is likely to be increasingly valuable as Local Authorities, the NHS and other agencies strive to improve service provision.

While the number of people needing care is set to rise, social trends indicate a reduction in the number of potential carers. Families have become less stable, smaller and more fragmented. Extended family networks, which may support a person with

care needs, are becoming less common. This reinforces the need to support those carers who want to take on caring responsibilities to family members and friends.

Carers must be valued and supported in their caring role.

2.3 Impact of Caring on Carers Own Health

Carers have a right to have their own health and social care needs met. There is sufficient evidence to indicate that caring has an impact on the health of carers. For example in one study 51% of carers had suffered a physical injury such as a strained back since they began to care and 52% had been treated for stress-related illness since becoming a Carer. [1] Another study revealed further evidence of the effects of caring on carers' mental health. Of 93 carers interviewed, 32% felt their health was affected by caring, 63% reported stress and 47% depression. [2]

Many carers cope well with their caring responsibilities and require little or no support. But carers' needs change and it is vital that carers are identified early on in their caring role and provided with appropriate information on the sources of advice and help available to them. Early identification, information and support are critical. Too many carers are not aware that support, financial and practical, may be available until they reach crisis point, a point at which their own physical and mental health can already be damaged.

Footnote 1 Source – Henwood, M (1998), Ignored and Invisible? Carers Experiences of the NHS (Carers National Association).

Footnote 2 Source – Liston R, Mann L, & Bannerjee – (1995) Stress in Informal Carers of Hospitalised Elderly Patient (Journal of the Royal College of Physicians).

2.4 Local Carer Strategies (covering each Council area)

The Scottish Executive's *Strategy for Carers in Scotland (November 1999)* provided a national framework for improving the support available to carers. Central to the Strategy is the development of quality, flexible services to support carers and to

improve, both at a national and local level, the provision of information to carers. Another aim of the Strategy is to give a new impetus to the way that statutory agencies work with carers and how they involve carers in care management and service planning decisions.

The Strategy has helped to deliver change. The creation of local Carer strategies, led by local authorities, and the creation of local Carer support structures have meant that the skills, expertise and knowledge of carers is now being valued more at both a care management level and in terms of strategic planning of services.

One of the most pressing challenges is to ensure that supporting carers becomes an integral part of the way that statutory agencies work. Carers are now **key partners** in the provision of care. The fundamental principle of carers as key partners arose out of the development of the carers' provisions contained in the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002. This development in the status of carers is aimed at creating a fundamental shift in the way that statutory agencies work with carers. Carers should not be regarded as a distinct client group needing support, but should be regarded as key service providers who need resources to help them deliver their contribution to the overall package of care.

Young carers will be engaged, consulted with and supported but not viewed as key care providers.

In addition to the Carers Strategy key health and social care policies recognise and support the important role played by carers. They include:

- Joint Working between Local Authorities, the NHS and the Voluntary and Private Sectors under the Scottish Executive's Joint Future Agenda.
- The Scottish Executive's Health White Paper - Partnership for Care
- Fair for All – NHS Scotland
- NHS Patient and Public Involvement Initiatives
- The Development of Community Health Partnerships
- Community Planning
- The Mental Health Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003

- The Executive's Development of New Hospital Discharge Protocols
- Integrated Children's Planning Services
- Development of Home Care Services
- Implementation of the 'Same as you' – The Scottish Executive's Review of Social Care Services for People with Learning Disabilities
- Free Personal and Nursing Care
- Improved Access to Independent Advocacy
- The Scottish Executive Introduction of National Care Standards for Care Homes
- The Introduction of Direct Payments for Parents of Children with Disabilities (from June 2003)
- Adults With Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- The Scottish Executive's Implementation of the Beattie Committee Report
- Delivering for Health – Scottish Executive 2005
- Partnership for Care

All levels of NHS Forth Valley are committed to work in partnership with carers in accordance with 'Delivering for Health' and 'Partnership for Care'.

2.5 NHS Role in Supporting Carers

Traditionally the lead for supporting carers has been taken by local authority social work departments. As joint working across agency boundaries is being driven forward through mechanisms such as Community Planning, the Joint Future agenda and the development of Community Health Partnerships, the NHS will have an increasing role in supporting carers. Many health and social care services will be provided locally by a wide range of skilled staff working together as a team with other professions and agencies. This multi-disciplinary and multi partner approach is essential for the provision of local, integrated and improved services to support service users and their carers. It is vital that carers are embraced within these partnerships not just at a care management level but also at a strategic level in terms of service planning and design.

The NHS has a vital role to play in identifying carers, offering them information and referring them on to sources of advice and support. It also has an important role to play in ensuring that carers own health needs are proactively addressed.

Information is key to improving the health and well being of carers. Information enables carers to make early and informed choices about seeking practical and financial support. It helps carers access support before they reach crisis point. It helps to tackle inequality and social exclusion for many 'hidden' carers who are not aware that help and support is available.

In developing and implementing the NHS Forth Valley Carers Information Strategy, all involved must ensure that carers are included. Young carers, those with mental health problems, carers from ethnic minorities and other Minority Groups must have the same access to information, support and services as the wider Carer population. NHS Forth Valleys Race Equality Scheme, Fair for All Group, commitment to the principles of equality and diversity and the equality and diversity training that is undertaken by all staff, will enable this strategy's commitments in this area to be implemented. This will include ensuring that information and support is available and accessible as required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Fair for All.

3 NHS FORTH VALLEY CARER INFORMATION STRATEGY

3.1 Introduction

To ensure that the Carers Information Strategy is consistent across Forth Valley and throughout all parts of the NHS, a Reference Group was established to oversee the development of the Carers Information Strategy. This had representatives from Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling Councils, all parts of the NHS Forth Valley, Carers Organisations and carers themselves. This Group supported the development of the Carers Information Strategy by the NHS Forth Valley. Consultation on the Strategy took place with a much wider Group of interested parties throughout all 3 Council areas in the Spring of 2005.

The Strategy was then agreed with an outline Action Plan, by the Reference Group, before being approved by NHS Forth Valley Board in January 2006.

Since then, detailed discussions have been undertaken with lead managers in NHS Forth Valley so that a detailed Action Plan can be developed for the Strategy.

The Reference Group membership has been reviewed and continues as a Carers Information Strategy Implementation Group.

3.2 Aims of the Strategy:

- To recognise and treat carers as key partners in the provision of care.
- To work in partnership with carers, local authorities, the voluntary sector and others to provide information to carers as early as possible within the care journey.
- To provide information in a range of formats or languages enabling carers to access information irrespective of their age, disability, ethnicity, gender religion / faith, sexual orientation or other specific needs.
- To inform carers of their potential right to a carers' assessment under the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002 and to direct carers on to sources of information and practical support.
 - To promote Carer awareness amongst all levels of NHS staff whether employed by or contracted to the NHS (including Volunteers).

3.3 Outcomes for Carers

- Carers are identified early at first point of contact.
- Carers are informed of their potential right to an assessment of their support needs as Carer under Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002.
- Carers are provided with all appropriate information.
- Carers are well informed of the process and procedures of hospital admission and discharge and are fully involved in the decisions taken at these key stages.
- Carers are equipped and supported to carryout effective caring.

3.4 Partnerships with Carers in Forth Valley

NHS Forth Valley is co-terminus with 3 local authorities. These are Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling. Each Council area has developed its own structure for working in partnership with carers. Following the Scottish Executive's National Carers Strategy each Council was required to lead on the development of a local Carers Strategy and to consult with carers and other interested partners on the allocation of the funding that the Scottish Executive provided for carers support

services. In the years that have followed the following structures have been established in the Forth Valley area.

3.4.1 Clackmannanshire

Clackmannanshire is the smallest Council in Scotland and to maximise efficiency in these circumstances has created a “Strategy into Action Group” which brings together the statutory services, the voluntary sector and carers in one group. This meets regularly and the Carers Strategy, funding for carers services and the NHS Carers Information Strategy considered at regular intervals by this Group.

3.4.2 Falkirk

Falkirk Council initiated a Carers Consultative Forum. This is now chaired by a carer and attended by statutory organisations, the voluntary sector and individual carers. An Annual Carers Conference takes place funded mainly by the Council and NHS Forth Valley. The Consultative Forum agrees the Carers Strategy, informs the funding of carers services and has contributed to the development of the NHS Carers Information Strategy.

3.4.3 Stirling

Following a survey and action research carried out by the Community Care Forum in Stirling, a Stirling Partnership for Carers was established which also has representation from the statutory agencies and the voluntary sector. This partnership has developed a Carers Strategy for Stirling, is a Forum for discussing the appropriate spending on carers services and has been involved in the development of a NHS Carers Information Strategy.

NHS Forth Valley is involved with all 3 Councils in the development of these groups and in the work that they undertake. Carers are also represented on the CHP Public Participation Forums and the Acute Services Patient Panel. Combined, these partnerships are a strong and positive force for supporting and developing Carers Information Strategy.

Further details of how carers are involved and of the progress being made, are contained in appendix 3.

3.5 Links with Other Initiatives

The NHS Carers Information Strategy is being developed at a time of considerable change within the Health Service. The importance of listening to patients and carers when planning and delivering services is being given more significance. Changes in the partnership working arrangements between Health & Social Care have been steadily and consistently implemented in the last few years. In 2005 Community Health Partnerships were established and take the joint working between Council and the NHS another step forward. There are a number of other initiatives alongside the development of CHPs. These are:

- Patient Focus / Public Involvement.
- Fair for All.
- Health Improvement.

The Carers Information Strategy has to ensure that all these initiatives are taken into account and that the aims and outcomes as listed on are achieved on page 12.

Carers Information Strategy – Development and Implementation

The aims of the Carers Information Strategy will only be achieved once it has been fully implemented. This will take a considerable period of time and an Action Plan is attached to this document detailing how the Strategy will be implemented. It is important for all partners involved to recognise that agreeing the document is the beginning of a process that will bring a far wider understanding of carers and issues surrounding caring to all staff in all statutory agencies and voluntary sector agencies thus enabling them to work with carers as key partners in the provision of that care.

The Action Plan to achieve all this will be divided into different sections with actions aiming to achieve the following outcomes.

A	NHS Forth Valley's structures and policies developed to be more Carer friendly and responsive.
B	Higher proportion of carers identified.
C	Information on NHS Services and services for carers developed and available across Forth Valley, including carers from Minority Ethnic Groups.
D	Identified carers informed of their rights to an assessment of their own needs, including carers from Minority Ethnic Groups, and Young carers.
E	Carers are included as Partners in Care when: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Care plans are agreed.• Discharges are being made.
F	NHS Forth Valley staff are equipped and trained to identify carers, access information for carers and include them as key partners in care.
G	Action Plan is implemented and monitored to ensure services are more carer focussed.

Forth Valley Carers Information Strategy

Revised Action Plan – September 2007

**Forth Valley Carers Information Strategy
Revised Action Plan – September 2007**

Objective	Actions	Timescales / Lead NHS staff	Outcome
Implementation of Carers Information Strategy led by senior Management encompassing all partners	Identify lead managers Establish CIS Implementation Group (including all partners, esp. carers)	Completed October 2006 Tom Hammond	Structure in place to deliver Action Plan
All NHS staff informed of their duty to identify hidden carers and inform them of their rights.	Information pack (including checklist and information card to be given to identified carers) sent to all NHS staff.	Completed May 2007 Tom Hammond and Implementation Group	NHS Forth Valley staff are equipped to identify carers, access information for carers and include them as key partners in Care. (Training commenced)
Identify hidden carers	Establish in each department / service. Key lead or link person Raise awareness of statutory duty to identify carers Train staff about carers rights and implementation of Carers Information Strategy, including young carers. Establish a process to identify and record details of carers	Undertaken from May to October 2007 and continuing. Tom Hammond / Stephen French (NHS Board) General Managers (Acute Services) All lead Nurses And other lead managers as	Key staff identified in each department. Higher proportion of carers identified

Objective	Actions	Timescales / Lead NHS staff	Outcome
	<p>Ensure all staff have a personal objective relating to carers rights</p> <p>Develop and implement referral pathway to appropriate Social Work Department for carers who request an assessment</p>	<p>identified</p>	
<p>Provision of full range of information for carers</p>	<p>Lead staff will ensure posters are displayed in the department to inform carers of their rights</p> <p>Lead staff will ensure a copy of carers leaflet is issued to all identified carers</p>	<p>Commencing May 2007 and continuing through 2007/8.</p> <p>All lead staff</p>	<p>Identified carers informed of their rights to an assessment of their ability to continue caring including carers from Minority Ethnic Groups, Young Carers and carers of people with Mental Health problems.</p>
	<p>Each CHP and the Acute service to review existing information available to carers from NHS, Council and voluntary sector in line with appendix 2 of the strategy, ensuring its availability in appropriate format or language.</p>	<p>May 2007 and continuing throughout 2007/8</p> <p>General Managers and Lead Nurses</p>	<p>Information on NHS Services and services for carers developed and available across Forth Valley, including carers from Minority Ethnic Groups.</p>
<p>Ensure carers are given appropriate support to carryout their caring tasks.</p>	<p>Ensure provision of training for carers aimed directly at supporting them in their caring role</p>	<p>October 2006 to March 2007</p> <p>General Managers and Lead Nurses</p>	<p>Carers are equipped to carry out caring tasks.</p>

Objective	Actions	Timescales / Lead NHS staff	Outcome
	<p>Develop 3 local CHP / Council area carer training strategies including an expert carer training plan.</p> <p>Local strategy to :</p> <p>Set priorities for carer training in agreement with local partners, including carers, local carer support agencies and local authority partners.</p> <p>Demonstrate delivery of person-centred training for carers, covering advice on physical and emotional well-being including demonstrations on moving and handling techniques (if appropriate) and stress management, and advice on specific conditions such as caring for someone with dementia, physical disabilities, mental health problems, special needs, etc.</p>	<p>To be completed by March 2008. Implementation to begin in 2008/9</p> <p>CHP lead Nurses</p>	<p>Carers are equipped to carry out caring tasks.</p>
<p>Carers are included as partners in care</p>	<p>Review current Hospital discharge protocols.</p>	<p>By December 2007 Andy Bytheway, Anna Groggan</p>	<p>Carers fully involved in development of care plans</p>

Objective	Actions	Timescales / Lead NHS staff	Outcome
		and Stephen French	
	Ensure carer identification, the provision of targeted information to carers, carer signposting on to sources of advice and support, and advising carers of their right to an assessment is integrated into hospital discharge procedures and admission procedures	By December 2007. Ian Aitken Andy Bytheway, Anna Groggan and Stephen French	Carers identified and informed of their rights to an assessment of their ability to provide or continue to provide care including carers from Minority Ethnic Groups, Young Carers and carers of people with Mental Health problems. Carers fully involved in development of care plans and informed of services and support available to them.
	Review Single Shared Assessment process and provision of care plans	Theresa McLean (Stirling CHP) Zea Kennedy (Falkirk CHP) Glynis Gordon (Clacks CHP)	Identified carers informed of their rights to an assessment of their ability to provide or continue to provide care including carers from Minority Ethnic Groups, Young Carers and carers of people with Mental Health problems. Carers fully involved in development of care plans
Carers Information Strategy includes all Minority Ethnic and other Equality Groups	Taking advice of NHS FV Fair for All Group , revise web based staff diversity and equality training to	March 2008	Minority Ethnic and all other Equality Groups included

Objective	Actions	Timescales / Lead NHS staff	Outcome
	include carers		
NHS Forth Valley employment policies developed to be more Carer friendly and responsive.	Review and revise current internal Carer Friendly Employment Practice.	Commenced March 2007 Stephen French / HR Manager	NHS Forth policies developed to be more Carer friendly and responsive.
Establish a system for recording and monitoring when carers are identified and provide information to the Lead Officer.	Agree data recording requirements and reporting arrangements for department and service (Link to Joint Performance / Joint Local Improvement Targets). To include: baseline information against which quality improvements can be measured. Identification of joint performance.	By March 2008 Carers Information Strategy Implementation Group (chaired by Stephen French) in conjunction with all General Managers and Lead Nurses. (Some of whom will be members of the group) Detailed work to be undertaken by monitoring sub group which will commence work in October 2007.	Information reported to NHS Executive Group Action Plan is implemented and monitored to ensure services are more Carer focussed.
Review of the NHS Forth Valley Carer Information Strategy	Consult with staff, carers and other stakeholders.	Commencing May 2008 CIS Implementation Group	CIS improved and revised to meet carers needs more effectively
Annual report to Scottish Executive Ministers.	Report to made following Review in Autumn 2008. Reports to be jointly signed by the NHS Board Chief Executive, the relevant local authority Chief Executive and	By October 2008 CIS Implementation Group as led by Stephen French	NHS Forth Valley account for CIS progress to Scottish Executive, partners and public.

Objective	Actions	Timescales / Lead NHS staff	Outcome
	representatives of the main carer groups / organisations operating within the NHS FV Board area.		

MEMBERS OF THE NHS FORTH VALLEY CARERS INFORMATION STRATEGY GROUP 2007/8

Stephen French	Senior Planning Manager NHS Forth Valley (Chairman)
Carol Jones	Falkirk Council
Gillian Murray	Quality Action Group
Elizabeth Findlay	Advocacy into Action
Jane Menzies	Clackmannanshire Council
Kate Milliken	People 1st
Carol McMillan	Stirling Council
Ruth Owen	Forth Valley Advocacy
Stuart Landels	Clackmannanshire Council
Martine Turner	Forth Valley Advocacy

LEAD MANAGERS

All enquiries about this strategy or action plan should be made to Stephen French, [Senior Planning Manager, NHS Forth Valley, Carseview House, Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4SW. \(01786 457241 stephen.french@fvpc.scot.nhs.uk\)](#)

Key Responsibilities : To ensure all staff in their operational sphere are aware of statutory duty and understand, receive information about carers rights and the importance of referring to Social Work Services for an assessment of needs where appropriate

OPERATIONAL AREA	LEAD
Executive Director	Fiona Ramsay
NHS Forth Valley Carers Implementation Group	Stephen French

General Managers:	
Clackmannanshire CHP	Kathy O'Neill / Grace Christie
Falkirk CHP	Sue Dow / Zea Kennedy
Stirling CHP	Eddie MacDonald / Theresa McLean
Acute Services	Ian Aitken
PFPI	Fiona Mackenzie / Stephen French
ACUTE	
Outpatients	Anne McBride
Endoscopy / Day Surgery Theatres	Diane Keir
Critical Care	Louise Boyle
Surgical Inpatient / Outpatient Services	Alison Brown
Medical Inpatient / Outpatient Services	Lorna Henry / Phyllis Wilkieson
Women & Children Inpatient / Outpatient Services	Mary Miller
Allied Health Professions	Sue Phillips
Speech and Language Therapists	Mary Turnbull
Pharmacy	Fiona Stewart
Medical Staff	Associate Medical Directors / Post Graduate Tutor
Emergency Care	Rita Ciccu
Outreach Services	Bette Locke
Renal	Jane Rodriguez
Respiratory / Cardiac Rehab / Physiology	Irene Tulloch
Chaplains	Marjorie Collins
Support Services Phlebotomy X-ray Domestic / Portering	Andrene Dickens / Brian Nolan
Admin and Clerical	Agnes Proven / Unit Administrator
Cancer Services	Mary Orzel

Discharge Protocols	Andy Bytheway / Anna Grogan
SPECIALIST COMMUNITY SERVICES	
Community Based AHPs	Via CHPS
Learning Disability	Alison Ramsay
Mental Health	Jan Jamieson
LOCAL AUTHORITY LEAD	
Clackmannanshire	Clare Hebbert
Falkirk	Liz Erskine
Stirling	Carol McMillan

Appendix 2 – Carer Information Needs

Key Questions

- *Where do carers go for information?*
- *Who do they see?*
- *Where else might they be sent?*
- *What are the barriers?*

- *What information do carers want?*
- *What do they get?*
- *Where are the gaps?*
- *What do staff need in order to meet carers information needs better*

Lack of Awareness

- *Carers may not recognise themselves as carers*
- *Many carers are reluctant to admit that they need help and to ask for help*
- *Carers are not necessarily aware of their own needs and the importance of their contribution*
- *Staff are not necessarily Carer aware*

Lack of Accessible Information

- *Carers often do not know where to start*
- *Carers do not know what questions to ask*
- *There is often too much information and too much inappropriate information*
- *Carers find it difficult to pick their way through lots of information*

In order to deliver the right information at the right time and in the right way three approaches are needed.

Approach 1

Forth Valley wide information	Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Who is a Carer?</i>• <i>Carers rights</i>• <i>Where can carers get support?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Identify hidden carers</i>• <i>Help people identify themselves as carers</i>• <i>Signpost to assessment and support services where appropriate</i>

Approach 2

Local Council area based Information	Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Local Community Care Services</i>• <i>Who to contact</i>• <i>Range of support and advice available to carers in area</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Enable carers to access support within local community</i>• <i>Provide staff with source of up to date local information for carers</i>

- Approach 3

Specific Information	Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Medical conditions</i>• <i>Medication</i>• <i>Specialist support groups</i>• <i>Individual care plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Enable carers to access specific advice and information to help them care for an individual</i>• <i>Enable carers to get support and self-help from people in similar situations</i>

Appendix 3 – Update – September 2009

During 2008, the Scottish Government provided new funding to NHS Boards to assist with the implementation of Carers Information Strategies. The total amounts of additional funding nationally were as follows:- 2008/09 £1m, 2009/10 £3m, 2010/11 £5m. In Forth Valley, this equates to £53k, £159k, and £265k over the three year period.

In year 1 of this new funding, the Forth Valley Carers Information Strategy Implementation Group, which has representation from NHS Forth Valley, the three local authorities, and the local carers centres, decided to focus attention on identifying and informing carers, and raising awareness of staff, primarily in the acute sector. To address end, a Carers Health Liaison Worker was appointed, managed by one of the local carers centres, and with a base in both Stirling Royal and Falkirk and District Royal Infirmaries, with a remit of identifying and providing information to carers, and also working alongside NHS staff to raise awareness of carers issues, and with a focus on addressing the training needs of NHS staff. Early outcomes from this post are very positive, with increased numbers of carers being identified, and staff reporting that they feel more willing, able and prepared to raise and deal with carers issues.

In year 2, the approach locally is around focussing on identifying and providing information to hidden carers in the primary care sector. To address this, Carers Health Liaison Workers have been appointed to cover the three localities of Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire (although Clackmannanshire is funded via a separate funding stream), and these officers will work closely with staff in GP practices to continue to identify and provide information to carers. A toolkit is currently being developed to ensure that this is done consistently across Forth Valley. This will link into the work around the Carers Registers established by GP practices during 2006/07. These posts will also look at improving and ensuring consistency of information materials available locally for carers and staff, such as leaflets, posters, web based information etc., and will also assist in addressing staff training needs. In addition, a Carers Training Co-ordinator post has been funded to identify training needs and establish training courses specifically for carers. All of these additional posts are managed by one of the local carers centres

Multi agency discussions around year 3 of this funding have just commenced, and there is an expectation that this will focus at least partly on young carers.

A National Carers Strategy is currently being developed, and it is anticipated that this will be published during 2010. NHS Forth Valley staff are participating in the steering groups developing this document. A full review of this Forth Valley strategy will be carried out after publication of the National Carers Strategy.