



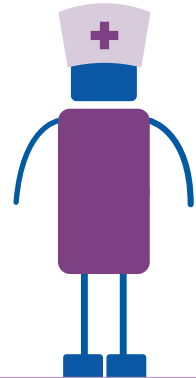
Hospital logo

# Carer Passport

**For families and friends looking after someone at this hospital**

**Our Carer Passport scheme helps staff to identify family and friends who are caring, unpaid, for patients who have a disability, or are ill or older.**

**We use the Carer Passport not only to identify carers, but also so we can take steps to make caring easier. This includes sharing information with them (after we've sought the right permission), involving them more fully as partners in care and ensuring that they are better recognised and supported.**



[carerpassport.uk](http://carerpassport.uk)

## Why do carers need a Carer Passport?

Many people provide care, unpaid, to their relatives and friends. Often they know the needs and preferences of their family member or close friend. Many carers become an expert in the condition of the person that they are caring for.

There are about 6.5 million people caring at any given time – that’s around one in eight adults – and the support they provide is worth a second NHS; £132 billion a year.

When a patient goes into hospital, it can be a difficult time for the carers. Some carers are real experts and know the condition well – especially if the patient has a complex condition, learning difficulties, communication difficulties or memory loss. They often know about medication, side-effects and how the patient wishes to be cared for.

Many carers want to be involved, informed and some also want to help to provide care. Many can help understand communication and needs.

But it should always be their choice about whether they wish to be involved. Some can be exhausted through caring, or juggling caring with work and have other responsibilities.

Our Carer Passport scheme offers the following benefits for carers:

- Visiting out of normal visiting hours
- Provide assistance with meals and drinking fluids
- Be actively involved in the meetings about the patient
- Be involved in discussion and planning for the discharge of the person they care for
- Providing support when the patient is having tests in the hospital
- Free/Discounted car parking tickets
- Regular drinks
- Discounts in the hospital canteen/café
- Occasionally staying overnight

## What difference can this make for staff?

Evidence from a number of different schemes shows that a Carer Passport scheme can help staff, improve care, and aid hospital discharge. Specifically the benefits have been:

- Improved care
- Reduced falls
- Improved nutrition and hydration
- Increased dialogue between families and staff
- Improved and smoother hospital discharge

## What do staff have to do?

- Signpost the carer to the Carer Passport scheme and ask them to make an application using the form provided
- Understand the other help for carers that exists in the hospital

When a carer applies for the Carer Passport, they also sign a statement to ensure it is clear where they are able to be involved and where they know that privacy may be needed, and how the provisions of the scheme are balanced to enable staff to do their job. The statement is a way of helping the carer understand that the benefits in the Carer Passport are not a right or an entitlement, but a way of describing what support is on offer.

## Confidentiality

It is important that confidentiality is explored with the patient and an agreement made about what can be shared and not shared. Good practice under the Mental Capacity Act means that everyone also has to act in the best interests of the person lacking capacity.

## What difference does the passport make for carers?

Carers say that a Carer Passport can make a world of difference. They feel more included and understood. When they provide most of the care in the community, they often want to be involved. Many have said that it improves care – and some of the discounts or free offers make a really important financial difference too. The costs of being ill or disabled can be very high and many are on low incomes.

## Where to find out more information

More information about the benefits and challenges of establishing Carer Passport schemes in a hospital can be found on the Carer Passport website.

This is part of a partnership project run by Carers UK and Carers Trust, funded by the Department of Health and Social Care

[www.carerpassport.uk](http://www.carerpassport.uk)

## How else does the hospital support carers?

(Insert information e.g. training on moving and handling)

