



Carers' Champions in Somerset

An evaluation

May 2011



CARERS UK
the voice of carers



An evaluation of the Somerset Carers' Champion Scheme

May 2011

Report written by the Somerset LINK, May 2011
www.somersetlink.org.uk

Front cover shows Carers' Champion Delia Kiddle from North Street Surgery, Ilminster. With thanks.

“Carers will only be able to access the right support if they are adequately informed about the options that are open to them.”

Dr. David Rooke

“A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help.”

**Carers save the UK
£119 billion a year.**

Carers UK

Summary

Carers' Champion Scheme evaluation

WyvernHealth.Com in partnership with Carers UK, St. John Ambulance, Somerset County Council, the Somerset Local Involvement Network and a lay carers' representative have coordinated a Carers' Champion scheme in GP practices across Somerset.

The Somerset Carers' Champion project was a pilot project funded by Carers' UK and ran from April 2010 until April 2011.

88% of practices across Somerset participated in the Carers' Champion scheme, and 82% have a Carers' Champion as a result of the scheme.

The scheme was evaluated in May 2011 by the Somerset LINK.

Some key findings of the evaluation were as follows:

- Surgeries with Carers' Champions increased the number of carers on their Carers' Register by an average of 56% over one year;
- 90% of Carers' Champions that had received feedback from patients had received positive feedback.
- 91% of participating surgeries have a Carers' Noticeboard;
- 96% of Carers' Champions have been able to give carers relevant information;
- 89% of Carers' Champions have enjoyed the role;
- 90% of Carers' Champions that had received feedback from staff had received positive feedback.

This report explains how the Somerset Carers' Champion project was carried out and the results of the evaluation of the project. It recommends that funding is sought for the scheme to continue, through the support of Carers' Champions via a monthly newsletter and occasional workshops, or if possible, through a longer-term commissioning plan.

Why was this project started?

WyvernHealth.Com – the practice-based commissioning company for Somerset - applied for a grant of £30,000 from Carers' UK from a fund for projects that aimed to “increase Carers' awareness/issues training for key workers”. One of the groups of key workers that the funding aimed to target were ‘Staff working in GP Practices’. It was this group of individuals that the Carers' Champion project focussed on.

The project was funded for one year from April 2010. The aims of the project were:

1. Carers will be encouraged to identify themselves as carers;
2. Professionals are able to identify carers;
3. Carers will be recognised and respected as partners in the provision of services of the cared for;
4. Information will be clear and accessible in a variety of locations; and
5. Carers will be given information about their rights to an assessment.

How did the Somerset Carers' Champion Scheme work?

Surgeries were asked to choose a Carers' Champion from their (ideally) front-desk staff. The Carers' Champion would take on the role in addition to their usual daily tasks. The main tasks were:

- To be a contact point for carers in the surgery;
- To maintain a Carers' notice board in the surgery;
- To champion carers' issues in the practice; and
- To encourage carers to register on their practice's Carers' Register.

“There are potentially 52,000 carers in Somerset. This training will enable us to understand the issues for carers and identify how practices can support them in future.”

WyvernHealth.com

The Carers' Champion scheme was in two parts:

Part One: The Carers' Champion received a half-day's Carers' Awareness Training, run by St. John Ambulance. The aim of the training was to increase the Carers' Champions' awareness of carers and carers' issues, to inform them of resources that might be available, and to ensure that they understood the importance of registering with the practice as a carer. Above all, the aim of the training was to enthuse the Carers' Champion with an understanding of the difference that support can make to a carer.

Part Two: The Carers' Champions shared their learning with other members of the practice team, for example at a practice meeting.

Each practice was offered £150 to provide backfill to allow staff to attend Carers' Awareness Training.

Why are Carers' Registers important?

Each practice has a Carers' Register – a record of all the 'registered carers' among its patients. Usually, this register is in the form of a tick-box or code on the patient's electronic record, which then alerts the GP that the patient is also a carer.

This means that the GP can be aware of some of the wider issues and responsibilities that the carer might have – for example, they may be at risk of stress or depression, or from back problems due to physical caring responsibilities.

"If my patient record alerts me that I have a carer walking down the corridor towards my office, then my time with that patient is far more effective and efficient."

Dr David Rooke, Chair of Somerset's Interim GP Commissioning Consortium

With a register of carers, practices can also ensure that carers are offered up-to-date information that might benefit them (for example, information about carers' support groups) and can make sure that they are offered 'flu vaccinations – because if a carer is ill, they may be unable to look after their cared-for person.

Carers' registers are also important in order to target carers for other needs, for example, to ensure that carers take advantage of annual healthchecks which can ensure that health and wellbeing issues are identified as early as possible.

Who coordinated the project?

A Task and Finish Group was formed (the Carers' Champion Strategy Group) which comprised representatives from:

- WyvernHealth.Com;
- Carers' UK (local branch);
- St. John Ambulance;
- Somerset County Council;
- A lay carer; and
- The Local Involvement Network (LINK).

The group met regularly to coordinate the project, manage the support of the Carers' Champions through a monthly newsletter and face-to-face support, monitor the finances of the project, evaluate the project and to ensure a wider alignment with the Somerset Carers' Strategy.

“I have found that when patients have been identified as carers and have been told about the Carers' Champion, they are just so pleased to have someone to talk to who recognises the role they are undertaking.”

Carers' Champion

What was the content of the Carers' Champion training course?

The training course was delivered by St. John Ambulance and covered:

- Who are carers?
- How to recognise a carer: how to listen and ask the right questions
- How/who to refer for help and support
- Resources including your surgery's Carers' register
- Local and national Carers' Strategies
- The Somerset Carers' Champion Network
- Difficulties facing carers
- How to take this forward in your own surgery setting

Information was also provided for Carers' Champions to take away with them. This included the book *If Only I'd Known That!* written by Susan Hartnell-Beavis (a local past-carer and member of the Carers' Champion Strategy Group), which contains advice about where support can be found for carers.

How were the Carers' Champions supported?

The Carers' Champions were supported by an informal network that shared good practice via a monthly newsletter that was put together by WyvernHealth.Com. This contained news about how the scheme was going, innovative ideas that Carers' Champions had carried out in their practice, and general information about carers' services in Somerset. A dedicated website page at WyvernHealth.Com was created with resources and examples of best practice for all Carers' Champions.

A reunion event was held at the end of the year for all Carers' Champions.

“One lady is so pleased with her Life-line for her husband. She can now go out without worrying if he's ok and not fallen - which he had done one day when she had left him.”

Carers' Champion

How many practices took part in the scheme?

There are 76 practices across Somerset. 63 practices took up the scheme and had a Carers' Champion in their practice. A further 4 practices ran carers' awareness days for their surgeries as a way of raising awareness about carers. In total, 88% of practices benefitted from the Carers' Champion scheme, and 82% have a Carers' Champion as a result of the scheme.

The evaluation

How was the project evaluated?

The project was evaluated by the Somerset LINK between April and May 2011 – after the project had been running for one year. Surveys were distributed to Carers' Champions at all surgeries that had participated in the scheme. 40 completed surveys were returned. This represents just over 50% of all surgeries across Somerset, and 63% of surgeries with Carers' Champions.

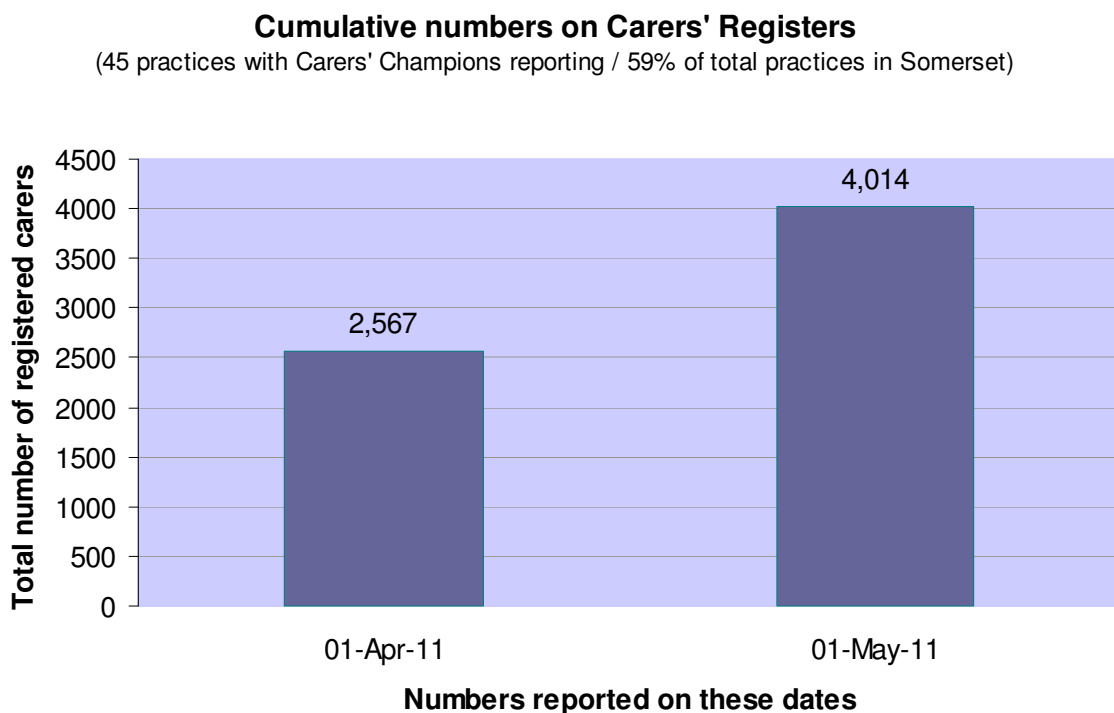
What did the evaluation show?

Key points from the evaluation:

- Surgeries with Carers' Champions increased the number of carers on their Carers' Register by an average of 56% over one year;
- 90% of Carers' Champions that had received feedback from patients had received positive feedback.
- 91% of participating surgeries have a Carers' Noticeboard;
- 96% of Carers' Champions have been able to give carers relevant information;
- 89% of Carers' Champions have enjoyed the role;
- 90% of Carers' Champions that had received feedback from staff had received positive feedback.

What effect did the scheme have on the number of registered carers?

Carers' Champions were asked to record the numbers on their practices' Carers' Registers at the start of the Carers' Champion Project and at the end of the Carers' Champion project. Of the practices with Carers' Champions, 71% reported these numbers. Of those, the cumulative numbers of registered carers increased from 2,567 in April 2010 to 4,014 in May 2011. This represents an overall/average increase of 56% in numbers of registered carers over 13 months.



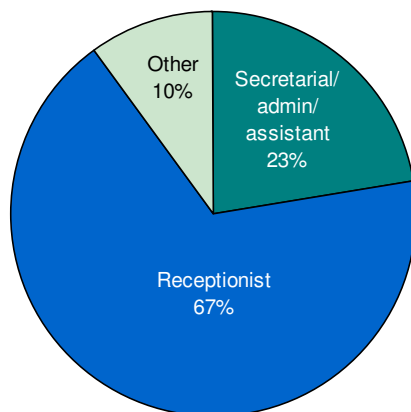
Over the year, practices with Carers' Champions increased their numbers of registered carers by an average of

56%

What did Carers' Champions say about scheme?

Carers' Champions' roles within their practice:

What is your job title?



Evaluation of Carers' Champion role:

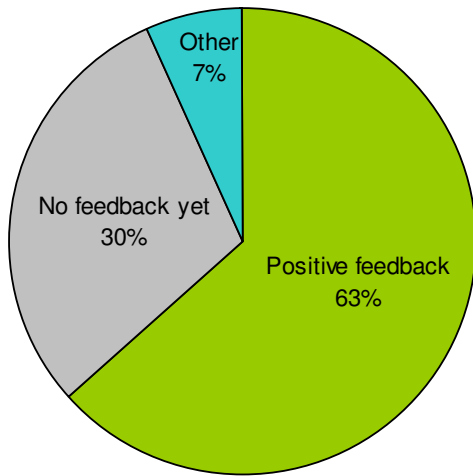
Carers' Champions were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements. In the following table, green (or gray) represents a positive response (Strongly agree or Agree) and amber (or light gray) represents a neutral response (Neither agree nor disagree). There were no negative responses (Disagree or strongly disagree). The breakdown of the responses is shown in Appendix A.

As a result of my Carers' Champion role...

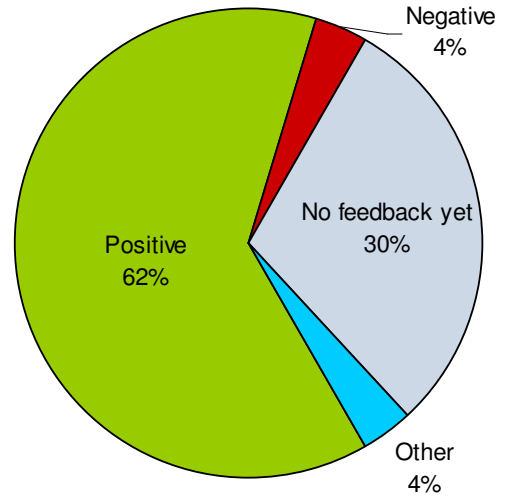
Neutral response:

I value the opportunity to expand my role at work	Agree, 86%	14%
I have enjoyed my role as a Carers' Champion	Agree, 89%	11%
I feel I am able to contribute more at work	Agree, 83%	14%
I have identified carers that my surgery was not otherwise aware of, and ensured these are on our Carers' Register	Agree, 91%	9%
I have identified carers that my surgery was not otherwise aware of	Agree, 91%	9%
My surgery has a notice board especially for carers	Agree, 91%	9%
I have been able to give carers at my surgery relevant information	Agree, 96%	4%
I am more aware of the needs of carers at my surgery	Agree, 94%	6%

Have you received any feedback from patients or carers at your surgery about your Carers' Champion role?



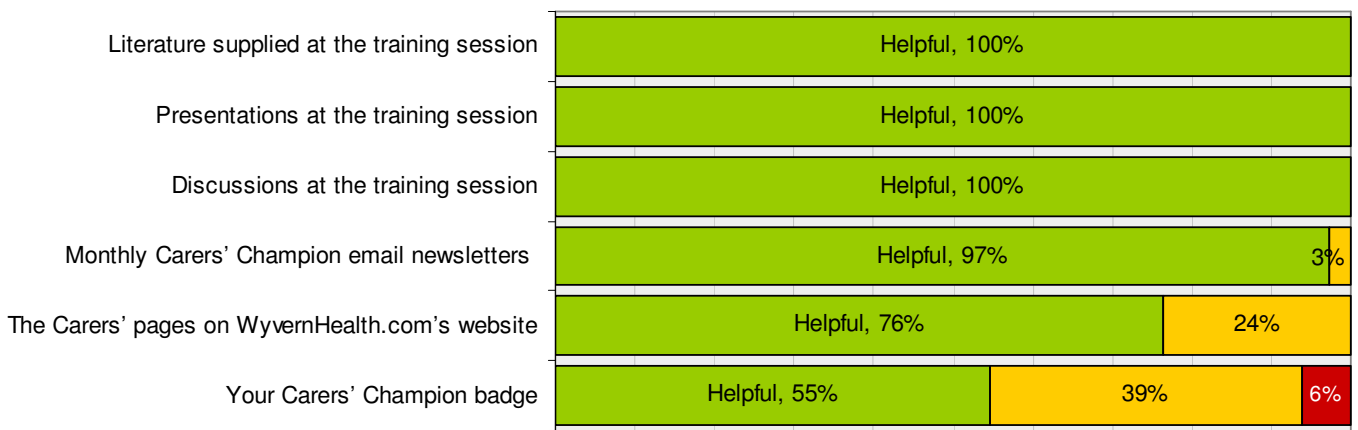
Have you received any feedback from staff at your surgery about your Carers' Champion role?



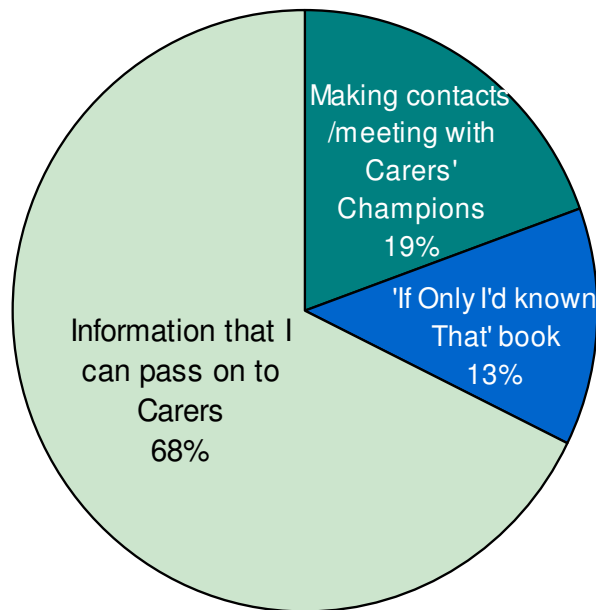
Evaluation of course content and materials:

In the following table, green (or gray) represents a positive response (Very helpful or helpful), amber (or light gray) represents a neutral response (Neither helpful or unhelpful) and red (very dark gray) represents a negative response (unhelpful or very unhelpful).

Please indicate how helpful you found the following:



What did you find the most useful information that you received at your Carers' Champion training?



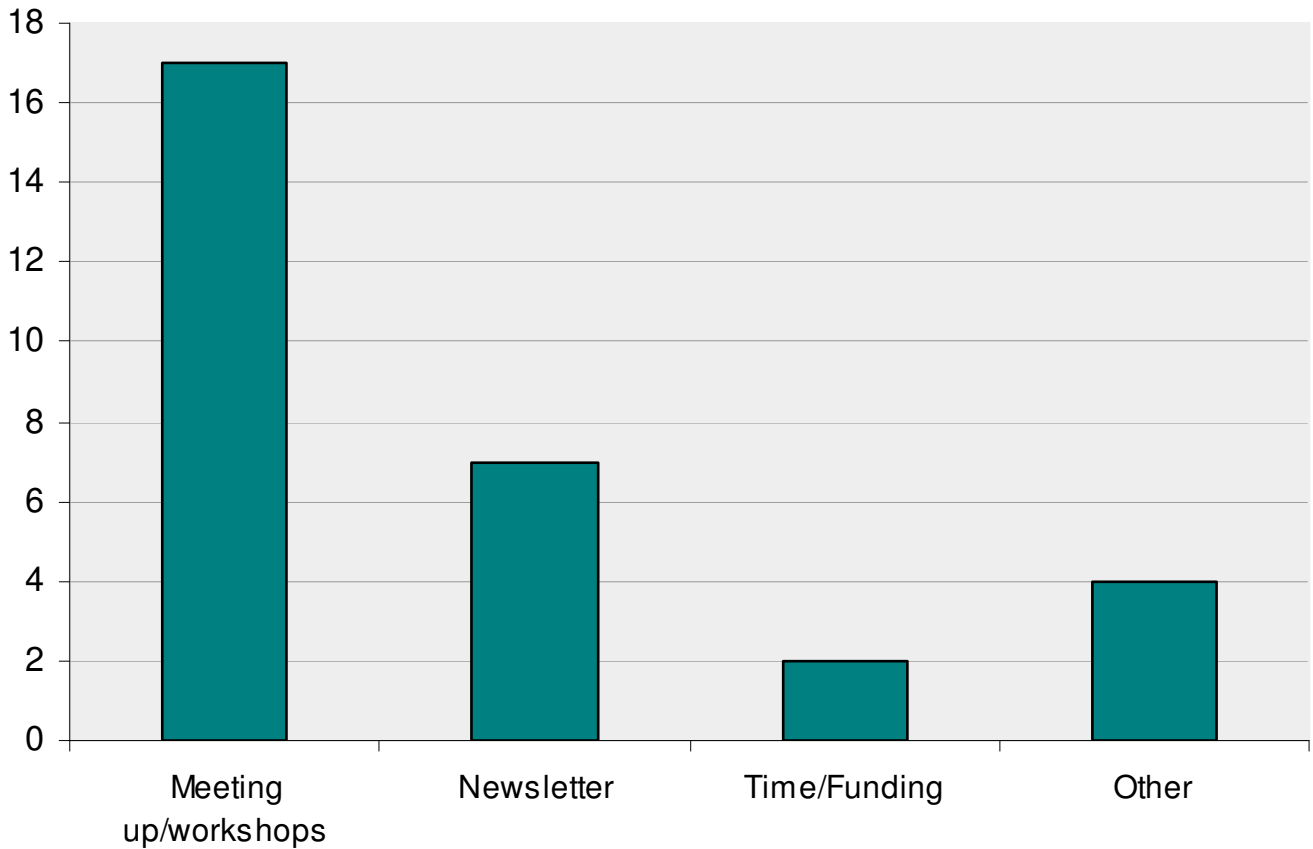
Can you give an example of an instance where you have been able to help a carer at your surgery or put your training into practice in other ways?

33 examples were given (83% of respondents). The following is a selection of responses.

- A daughter bringing in her elderly parents - asking for aid for homecare/care direct.
- As I register most of the new patients I forward all those who ask to the carer support worker.
- Made carer aware of "sitting service".
- We have had more people signed up on our register.
- Have been able to pass on info and request appointments at Somerset Direct.
- Arranging for the Carer Support Worker to become involved with a patient before they go into crisis.
- I have presented a training session to GPs and reception staff.
- Three patients went on the St Johns Carers Program in Minehead.
- From the training we then displayed the booklets in the waiting rooms and also on the reception desk, we then found it was easy to engage in conversations with patients and were able to identify carers.
- Patient's wife unable to cope with the aftermath of her husband's recent stroke.
- As a surgery on the back of my training we contacted everyone on our original carers' list giving them the details of how they could obtain help.
- A young man asked about my carers' badge, after my explanation I asked him if he was a carer. He explained about his wife who had depression and cried.
- I have made up a Carers' Pack full of useful information - telephone numbers, leaflets etc plus registration form.

Maintaining the Carers' Champions in future:

How can we best support and motivate Carers' Champions in the future?



'Other' responses were: Training for GPs, feedback from Carers' Support Workers and a source of support for Carers' Champions (example of someone to telephone or to visit the surgery were given).

Recommendations

This evaluation clearly demonstrates that the pilot project was a success.

The scheme has continued over the last year due to short-term funding for a pilot project by Carers' UK, and the commitment of seven staff and volunteers from different organisations and carers' groups across Somerset. Without continued funding to build on the success of this pilot scheme, the roles are unlikely to continue and the benefits of the scheme will be lost.

- 1. Sustainable funding for the project should be planned as a matter of urgency:** in particular, for the monthly e-newsletter and for occasional workshops for Carers' Champions (and for new Carers' Champions). Funding should cover appropriate hours for the Carers' Champions to undertake their work, so that the role is properly sustainable and does not impinge on existing work. Carers' Champions need overall coordination and support if this scheme is to continue. A long-term commissioning plan should be developed in order to ensure the sustainability of the scheme.
- 2. A dedicated Carers' Champion Co-ordinator role should be put in place:** ideally within the GP Commissioning Consortia but it is also possible that this could be within the local authority. Alternatively, the role of coordinating this scheme should be formally included in the job description of an existing member of staff.
- 3. Local community access to carer support and information should be commissioned via the Carers' Champion model:** Some of the tasks that the Carers' Champions are taking on were previously carried out by a Carers' Support Worker, particularly in surgeries where the Carers' Support Worker role is no longer based due to cutbacks. This demonstrates that this gap in existing provision could be addressed by the ongoing funding for the Carers' Champion scheme. Carers Champions should continue to be funded to meet the need for local community access to carer support which was a need strongly identified in the Peter Fletcher Carers' Services Appraisal report 2010.

The benefits of increasing the number of registered carers:

Continued support for Carers' Champions will ensure that carers' register numbers continue to increase. This will enable carers' provision to be better improved and more intelligently targeted – for example, ensuring that carers have access to information and advice, ensuring that carers receive healthchecks and 'flu vaccinations and increasing awareness of carers' needs among GPs and within surgeries.

Conclusion

The Carers' Champion scheme has had some very positive results for practices and carers across Somerset.

The take-up of the scheme was high, with 88% of practices benefitting from the Carers' Champion scheme, and 82% that have a Carers' Champion as a result of the scheme.

Carers' Champions themselves feel positive about the roles, and over 90% have identified carers that their surgeries were not otherwise aware of and ensured that they are registered as carers. Carers' Champions have reported many personal stories of individuals that they have been able to help, either by referring to Somerset Direct or to other agencies or sources of information.

In order to embed Carers' Champions in practices, ongoing support is needed to maintain the momentum that has been developed through this project.

Ongoing resources should be made available for Carers' Champions to ensure that the scheme continues, that Carers' Champions are encouraged and supported with information and advice and that new Carers' Champions are trained when existing ones move on or retire. Carers' Champions have expressed a preference for workshops or meeting up with other Carers' Champions, and for maintaining the current Carers' Champion newsletter provision. 97% have found a Carers' Champion e-newsletter helpful. It should be noted that this resource is currently being maintained on a voluntary basis by St. John Ambulance and funding to secure the long-term viability of this should be sought.

The Carers' Champion project has been extremely successful. The benefits to practices and to carers has been significant. Ongoing support is needed to maintain the momentum that has been developed through this project, in order to ensure that a culture of 'caring for carers' is embedded into practice life.

“I think this role is very important. Carers are unpaid and need a lot of support.”

Carers' Champion

Appendix A:

Evaluation results in detail

Appendix A: Evaluation results in detail

The evaluation results in detail were as follows:

About your role

What did you find the most useful information that you received at your Carers' Champion training?

- Communication with the group.
- Most useful information was the "If only I'd known that" booklet given.
- For me personally I found the whole day exhilarating and very informative. I was not aware of the help that could be given to carers.
- It was very useful. I learnt a lot of new contacts and where to find advice. I also made a lot of new friends.
- All of the info was useful.
- Information and support information available for carers.
- The amount of additional resources available for carers.
- How carers can access support.
- I took over from the previous Carers' Champion who retired end of last year, so have not been on training days yet, but have read through material given and this has been useful to know points of contacts and what help is available for carers.
- Gaining the knowledge that Carers need to be given help and info.
- General information about Carers and what is available to them.
- That there is help available to carers provided you know where to look.
- Most of the training was useful made me aware of the support options that carers can have.
- There is so much help out there for carers. Easy to refer carers for an assessment by a Carers' Support Worker.
- Learning how much information is available for carers.
- Discovering the "If only I'd known that" booklet, it covers all areas and is a good handbook for carers.
- I was amazed at the proportion of our Practice register who will be carers and have not been identified. I have learnt about a number of organisations whose main focus is supporting carers. I was particularly interested in the number of young carers and the push to identify them. As a Practice, we are trying to raise awareness of young carers and carers in general, promoting Somerset Direct Adults team in particular as a one-stop contact for carers.
- Networking and a better appreciation of how and where to access information.
- Just the overwhelming need for Carers to be taken into account.
- "If only I'd done that" leaflet. Overview of the Carer Support Worker role.
- How to interact with carers.
- The amount of information there is available.
- Realisation how important the role of a Carer is in saving money for the health service.
- Who is a carer? Services available to carers?
- The guide to caring book has been very useful. Free for all patients and very informative.
- Insight into their situation and needs.
- Consolidation of resources, ideas. Learning from others.
- To learn about the young carers project. It ties in with our young adult clinic.
- The pack has lots of info, contacts etc
- The information, leaflets, handouts and just talking to others.
- Ideas on how to display information to patients.
- Identifying carers and endeavouring to increase numbers of carers.

- Different things that are available for carers.
- The information I can take away and pass on to the carers

Can you give an example of an instance where you have been able to help a carer at your surgery or put your training into practice in other ways?

- A daughter bringing in her elderly parents - asking for aid for homecare/care direct. Also handing out information packs.
- As I register most of the new patients I forward all those who ask to the carer support worker.
- I have been able to talk with carers and offer advice of where they need to go for specific issues.
- I have made some very valuable contacts and friends with my carers. I have also put a lot of my carers in contact with Pat Vickery (Carers' Support Worker), which was invaluable to the patients. Unfortunately her post has now ceased which is a great loss.
- I have only dealt with 2 carers so far. On both occasions I was able to give them the contact number and the booklet "If only I'd known that".
- Made carer aware of "sitting service".
- Have put several in touch with carers support worker or given written information/leaflets to read.
- Posters are up on our notice boards and we have had more people signed up on our register.
- Giving the "If only I knew that" booklets have proved helpful to the Carers I spoke to.
- Have been able to pass on info to carers and request appointments at Somerset Direct.
- Arranging for the Carer Support Worker to become involved with a patient before they go into crisis.
- I have presented a training session to GPs and reception staff. I have also helped a few patients by giving them a carers' pack.
- 3 patients went on the St Johns Carers Program in Minehead. I have given lots of information to Carers and referred quite a few carers to Somerset Direct.
- Giving packs of useful information to people identified as carers.
- From the training we then displayed the booklets in the waiting rooms and also on the reception desk, we then found it was easy to engage in conversations with patients and were able to identify carers.
- I have found that when patients have been identified as carers and have been told about the Carers Champion, they are just so pleased to have someone to talk to who recognises the role they are undertaking. In my experience, I feel that there is a real need for a sympathetic ear, almost as much as practical help. Whilst I have been happy to listen and have tried to be as helpful as possible, I have sometimes felt inadequate as I feel that in some instances I do not have a solution for the stresses & pressures the carer may be under. If we are to promote ourselves as trained Carers' Champions, I feel that we may need some counselling skills in order to respond correctly to the carer and to protect ourselves as you can become quite emotionally involved with the individual situation and wonder how they are going to manage, especially when they are already getting the level of help they are entitled to and I have nothing else left to suggest. The other impact of course, is time. When someone opens up to you, the least you can do is let them unload and listen to them hoping that you may be able to give them some practical help. This however takes time. Our surgery is always very busy, we have a high elderly population and our workload is high. It is particularly difficult if you are working on Reception and are helping a carer who obviously needs you to listen to them but you are conscious that your colleagues are struggling in your absence.
- Have had a number of occasions where the training I received gave me the confidence and knowledge to signpost other carers and to persuade those caring for someone else that they are in fact carers - which they had previously not regarded themselves as.
- A patient's wife unable to cope with the sudden aftermath of her husband's recent stroke, mundane things they did together and financially the husband did everything, also coping with all his new medication. So just talking and giving her the appropriate advice.
- As a surgery on the back of my training we contacted everyone on our original carers' list giving

them the details of how they could obtain help. All staff more aware of needs of carer and what is available to them.

- It was very helpful to be able to offer help as to where a new carer could get advice and assistance and to give them a booklet that they could take away. They have since been back with various questions and having had the training I was then armed with the right information to pass on.
- Talking to patients about the help available and pointing them in the direction of specific help when wanted.
- I have given out the Carer Helpline no. on numerous occasions, drawn attention to the various helpful websites and we have purchased several copies of 'The Selfish Pigs Guide to Carers' which have just arrived and we will be giving out to patients we feel would benefit.
- I have registered patients who have carers and been able to offer information about accessing help for themselves rather than those they care for & holiday information.
- Providing many carers with the carer support workers phone number. So many patients did not know that they exist.
- Provision of dedicated notice board and information.
- Finding a telephone befriending service.
- A young man asked about my carers' badge, after my explanation I asked him if he was a carer. He explained about his wife who had depression and cried.
- Seeing patients come into the surgery, chatting with them and giving them info and advice.
- Patients referred to Somerset Direct.
- I've passed on carers' details to get a care support worker to be involved in helping the family. Updating our carers' list and highlighting them on the patient's notes.
- I have made up a Carers' Pack full of useful information – telephone numbers, leaflets etc plus registration form
- Giving "If only I'd known that" to several carers and listening to their problems and putting them in touch with Somerset Direct for Care Support and who to contact.
- Given information about courses on offer.

Have you received any feedback from patients or carers at your surgery about your Carers' Champion role? (Positive or negative). If so, please explain.

- None (7 responses)
- It has all been very positive. I try to contact all new carers when they are added to our list. I have contact regularly with our carers. I have a notice board in reception which I regularly update.
- Positive feedback from patient group members
- One patient felt that not enough emphasis was put on patients with mental health problems.
- All patients helped have been very grateful and have given positive responses to the help they have been given.
- One patient's husband came in and thanked me for the pack - he found it very useful.
- Yes. St John Carers Program was a great help to those who went. Lots of Thank-yous for information that I have given them. One lady is so pleased with her Life-line for her husband. She can now go out without worrying if he's ok and not fallen which he had done one day when she had left him.
- That the information is useful.
- Several carers I have spoken to have said how nice it is to have someone to talk to about their role as carers.
- Yes. On the whole very positive. A few people have said that it doesn't go far enough. Would have liked to get more detailed advice on financial matters and the like, especially as they say it is increasingly difficult to make contact with the local Carer Support Worker.
- None as such I still feel the need to go on more training days if possible.
- Several patients who we have contacted have made use of Carer Support Worker.
- I think there has been only positive feedback as far as I am aware. The carers that I have dealt with stressed that it is nice to have a person that they can ask for rather than not knowing who to speak

to for advice.

- One patient who cares for his wife told me of some of the meetings he has attended and found helpful.
- Positive feedback from patients only on saying how useful the booklet 'If only I had known that' is. No other feedback - negative or otherwise.
- Some people say the assessment has been useful - for others a waste of time - I guess it depends what you want to get out of it.
- No. Have from the doctors though. A lot of them don't know where or who to refer people to and therefore the Carers' Champion role has really helped.
- Positive - glad to have point of contact and many resources available.
- The above patient was so grateful for being listened to and receiving a Carer's Pack. He often stops to speak on his way in and out of the surgery and seems much happier.
- Most like the idea to use my help to find the information they need e.g. a service for doing jobs around the house. Patients don't always have the use of a computer, so I will try to get details and print them off for the patient
- Lots of positive comments.
- Positive feedback regarding above leaflets. Also negative feedback about being bombarded with paperwork and not having time to read it.
- Patients like the fact that all leaflets etc are all in one place.
- They are pleased to be recognised and welcome any support or info I can pass on.

Have you received any feedback from staff at your surgery about your Carers' Champion role? (Positive or negative) If so, please explain.

- No (x 5)
- Discussed information pack to hand out.
- Doctors mainly - very glad we now have a "Carers' Champion".
- Most of the staff are aware of my champion role and I get all referrals sent to me. This is for the initial training I gave last year. The staff have found it useful to have a contact.
- Positive - Practice Nurses are encouraging carers to register. Negative comment from patient, we were not getting any help as we have tried before (they were referring to money).
- None as yet, although all are now aware of my role.
- They are pleased to have someone in the surgery they can refer patients to if asked.
- Positive in the respect that the patients have had some anxieties taken away from them because of the help they have received.
- Receptions have been very proactive in giving out the Carer's Packs.
- Yes. Since the Carers' Champion reunion, I have put together my own packs to hand out to anyone that is a carer. Have given all the GPs 10 each, DN's, and Practice Nurses. Everyone thought these were great. GPs have asked me to contact some patients with information and offers of help and advice.
- That it highlights the needs of carers and the need to be more aware of carers' health issues as these will affect two people.
- Staff are pleased to have something (or someone) to offer to a carer when they have been identified.
- Yes, always very positive. Soon after I completed my training a colleague volunteered to become the second Carers' Champion at the surgery.
- Doctors seem to like having a specific person through whom referrals are made.
- Positive feedback from colleagues in as much that quite a few members of staff have experience of caring or knowing those that do and understand the importance of offering support.
- Not really, if someone says they are a carer they are pointed in my direction.
- Negative: spending too much time on it! Positive: Educating staff on these matters and raising awareness.

- The Manager thinks the carers' pack is a good idea and list of contacts which I have made up.
- Some of them have been slightly negative but I am on a mission to getting them all involved.
- GPs have become more aware of identifying carers and we have put in a section for new patients when they register. Also have a section for carers in our newsletter.
- Made them more aware of carers' needs.
- Mainly positive and my colleagues are assisting in identifying carers for me.

How do you feel about your role?

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

“As a result of my Carers' Champion role....”

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
... I am more aware of the needs of carers at my surgery	25	9	2	-	-
... I have been able to give carers at my surgery relevant information	15	11	1	-	-
... My surgery has a notice board especially for carers	25	7	3	-	-
... I have identified carers that my surgery was not otherwise aware of	19	13	3	-	-
... I have identified carers that my surgery was not otherwise aware of, and ensured these are on our Carers' Register	19	13	3	-	-
... I feel I am able to contribute more at work	17	13	5	-	1
... I have enjoyed my role as a Carers' Champion	16	15	4	-	-
... I value the opportunity to expand my role at work	18	13	5	-	-

If you would like to comment on any of the above, please do so here:

- I think this role is very important. Carers are unpaid and need a lot of support. The cared for have support but the carers miss out. I have been a carer so I can empathise with the patients.
- My input with carer's role depends on my workload for the week. Usually manage to give attention within 10 day period.
- We are a single handed practice so we all know the patients well and are aware to look out for carers.
- I do not work on reception, so am not in contact with patients coming into the surgery.
- GPs still not good at identifying carers.
- I did not want the role but it seems logistically most sensible that receptionists do it.
- We will have a Carers' specific display for our main practice and new branch surgery in the near future.

As I have previously mentioned, in order for Carers' Champions to perform their role adequately I feel they need time and counselling skills.

- There is no notice board but we now have a leaflet stand in reception and will do a display for National Carers week.
- Increased workload initially but is definitely of benefit to the carers.
- Because there are so many other tasks to undertake and the fact that I am part time I do sometimes feel there are not enough hours in the day to be on top of the Carers' Champion role.
- I do feel however, whilst I have enjoyed the role I am trudging through somewhat - very difficult to actually pin point who the carers are - they don't see themselves as carer - just as a daughter/ wife/husband doing what they should be doing and rather object to the term 'carer'.
- I do not feel I currently work enough hours to give this role as much time as I should and therefore I feel I am letting people down. I could see it could be wonderful and perhaps with a small change to my hours this could be achieved.
- Still slightly unsure as to how this carer's register works? Who has access to this information?

How well you were prepared for your role?

Please indicate how helpful you found the following:	Very helpful ☺	Helpful	Neither helpful nor unhelpful	Unhelpful	Very unhelpful ☹
Literature supplied at the training session	27	9	-	-	-
Presentations at the training session	21	13	-	-	-
Discussions at the training session	23	12	-	-	-
Monthly Carers' Champion email newsletters	22	13	1	-	-
The Carers' pages on WyvernHealth.com's website	17	9	8	-	-
Your Carers' Champion badge	10	8	13	1	1

Please let us know how we could improve any of the above resources:

- The badges are far too large to be worn at all times in the practice, particularly if we also have practice name badges to wear as well.
- Keep up with the reunions.
- We were trained by another member of staff who had attended the training but she had to make her own training materials.
- The booklet *If Only I'd Known That* is most helpful.
- I don't wear the badge. All staff know I am in the role, including Community Staff who I gave info to shortly after initial course. Staff in surgery know where to find info as we all work on a part time basis.
- I have always been able to find any information that I have needed via the various newsletters and website.
- Feedback from the person carrying out assessments would be helpful so we know if they have been to see the carers, referred and the outcome - if any. Because there is no follow up it feels like 'passing the

buck' and when a patient complains about no contact we could say - they tried to call you 5/6 times but couldn't get an answer. Also on one occasion where telephone contact could not be made the case was closed (unbeknown to me) but no letter was even sent to establish contact which I felt was very poor. I met once with the assessor for this area and was promised posters and additional information and she was going to contact me with a date for an open session at the Surgery where people could just pop in to see her but nothing came of any of it. Unfortunately I have been unable (due to childcare) to attend meetings and so currently fairly unsupported. On a positive note my hours are increasing and hopefully this will address some of these issues.

- I don't use the badge because I have created a display and carer's info packs and as I only work part time I have told the other staff what to do in the case that a carer presents themselves at the desk. I don't want to single myself out because my role is kind of shared out in the sense that I have made these info packs for when I am absent.
- Sorry but could the badge be a clip on one.

Carers' Register

How does your surgery use its Carers' Register? Please tick to indicate how it is used.	Yes	No	Not sure
We use it to alert carers about 'flu jab clinics	18	4	4
We use it to offer carers priority and flexible appointments	10	4	5
We use it to offer carers Healthchecks	5	8	7
We use it like a mailing list to send relevant information to carers (such as information about carers' support programmes)	19	6	3

Please let us know of any other benefits to patients that are on your surgery's Carers' Register:

- We have all our information on TV screens within the surgery.
- They are highlighted on our clinical system and all staff are aware of our carers.
- We are just updating our carers' register. We have also designed a leaflet to give to carers to ask them to register, plus a letter which is sent to the person receiving care.
- We used to offer carers healthchecks but now its limited due to finance.
- All the relevant patients' notes are coded with carer/has a carer so GPs are aware when patients attend surgery and can check their needs are being met.
- They know there is someone at the surgery that they can talk to and get the help and advice they need without feeling they are imposing or being a time waster.
- Sometimes offer Healthchecks.
- Still to be identified.
- I am in the process of verifying our carers' register. As we have had a register for some years, we are aware that some people will have passed away and we do not want to target people who are no longer carers and cause them distress. We have not therefore used our register for mail shots as yet.
- We will be liaising with our local Patient Participation Group and holding a joint awareness morning on 16th April 2011 with an aim to promote the role of carers locally.
- Use Major Alerts (EMIS) so that as soon as you look at patient's details you are aware they are a carer.
- Final question - yes but minimally due to issues already written.
- As previously stated I don't really understand how this carers' register works. Not sure how to access it on EMIS to be honest.
- It enables the GPs to be aware that the patient is a carer when they are in the consultation so she/he

Carers' Register

How does your surgery use its Carers' Register? Please tick to indicate how it is used.

Yes

No

Not sure

can consider their wider needs.

- The above is something that we plan to do in the future.
- GPs/Practice nurses find it a useful tool.

How can we support you in the future?

We would like to be able to support and motivate Carers' Champions in the future. How can we best do this? (e.g. more workshops/ training / newsletters???)

- More workshops. Meeting up with other Carers' Champions at other surgeries would be helpful.
- More workshops and training please.
- Workshops - great for building networks. I am in contact with quite a few around my area. Newsletters. Have a Carers' Champion Day, where we could all get together.
- Newsletters are time consuming with my own tasks at work. Although I'm happy to participate as Carers' Champion.
- More info regarding the situation of cuts.
- I have found it useful to attend carers' courses. I went to the Expert Patient Programme "looking after me" and will be going to the St John's ambulance course in June/July. It's useful to gain an insight into what carers have to deal with from day to day.
- More workshops and further training please. An opportunity to meet with other Carers' Champions.
- It would be good to have more workshops, particularly dealing with things like Palliative Care - getting an insight into how people need help in these times.
- Training for GPs.
- Yes More Workshops Training and keep up the Newsletter. THANK-YOU FOR ALL YOUR TRAINING.
- I think the name Carers' Champion promises too much – a less dramatic name might be better. Newsletters are better than meetings – don't have time to go to more meetings, sorry.
- More training sessions would be helpful. I only work mornings and do find it very difficult to find time for my role so perhaps more training would be useful.
- 1) Counselling skills 2) Adequate time to offer carers on a one to one basis & prepare Carer's packs photocopying etc.)
- Would be great to get some topic specific workshops and more information about what is happening with the Carer Support Role in Somerset (and nationally). It is also great to hear about the good news stories. It can be very beneficial and encouraging to hear what others are doing and what's worked for them. It's good to share good practice!
- Yes please more workshops and just being available on the end of the telephone.
- More feedback from Carer Support Worker - Initial referral works well but updates to the surgery are non-existent. Our Carer Support Worker has attended only a couple of meetings since we have started inviting her.
- The workshops are very useful however it is not always possible to pull away from work to do this so I think the best support we can receive are regular updates about changes.
- I don't see how you can do more - regular newsletter is good and notification of when workshops for Carers are on - providing bump for Carers Week always a bonus - great to dedicate a corner of the waiting room for the cause.
- Contact meetings with other local surgeries - information/ideas sharing. For example there are 6 surgeries in Ilminster and Chard and it would probably be fairly easy to get a small group together like this - perhaps I should organise it?

- I think you're doing a good job already. Maybe pop in and see us once in a while to check we have the most recent info.
- How about a page on the Wyvern site with a list of all the leaflets for carers and where to get them from, so that we can make up packs for them. To be sustainable I feel it needs to be a funded role or at least bringing funds into the practice on a regular basis for materials, copying etc. Practices are inundated by requests to do things that involve staff time and effort which is not funded. I wonder if some Carers' Champions find themselves in a difficult position because of this. Carers' Champions should not be used as a back door to access practice resources (staff, time, etc) My belief is that to make this work more mainstream, through a LES or other commissioned role is the key to greater buy-in and sustainability. Alternatively the benefits need to be repeatedly sold to practices by clinician or clinician transmission. "My 3 top reasons for identifying carers" from David Rooke say "Why caring for carers cuts unscheduled admissions". Alternatively try creating greater demand...."What you should expect from your General Practice" - an article in carers newsletters on "Why your GP needs to know you are a carer." PS I do think the terminology can be confusing to patients. All register with a general practice and then we are telling them to register as carers on the carers' register - needs clarity for people! I am concerned that if the Carers' Champion role remains as a volunteer and amateur role it may not be able to meet expectations of other agencies whose workers in this field are paid professionals - fear of being swamped! Having said all that, though we CCs are better than nothing and it is worth carrying on. I am amazed that Devon landed £400,000!!! Just think what we could do with that!
- I would caution against being too ambitious and branching out into Health Checks yet. I think all energy should be focussed on increasing the numbers on our carers' registers. If you paid each practice £0.50p per carer, added the whole 55,000 carers for the County it would come less than £30,000. It would also develop the habit in practices. That is cheap and effective commissioning. Point out that you have already trained the Champions.
- Keep up training and motivation.
- Newsletters and training are so informative.
- Workshops, meeting, and training always good. Emails and newsletters.
- Just discussion groups with other Carers' Champions is very useful.
- Monthly Newsletters are an excellent source. More workshops please!
- More workshops and training to keep up to date with new things that are available.

Appendix B:

List of participating practices

- Axbridge Surgery, Axbridge
- Beckington Family Practice, Frome
- Blackbrook Surgery, Taunton
- Brendon Hills Surgery, Watchet
- Brent Area Medical Centre, Highbridge
- Cranleigh Gardens Medical Centre (Brent House), Bridgwater
- Bruton Surgery, Bruton
- Burnham Medical Centre, Burnham-On-Sea
- Cannington Health Centre, Bridgwater
- Cheddar Medical Centre, Cheddar
- Church View Surgery, Ilminster
- Crewkerne Health Centre, Crewkerne
- Crewkerne Surgery, Crewkerne
- Crown Medical Centre, Taunton
- Dr Gaymer and Partners (Milborne Port Surgery), Sherborne
- Dunster Surgery, Dunster
- East Quay Medical Centre, Bridgwater
- Edington Surgery (Quarry Ground), Bridgwater
- Essex House Medical Centre, Chard
- Exmoor Medical Centre, Dulverton
- French Weir Health Centre, Taunton
- Frome Medical Practice, Frome
- Glastonbury Health Centre, Glastonbury
- Glastonbury Surgery, Glastonbury
- Grove House Surgery, Shepton Mallet
- Hamdon Medical Centre, Stoke Sub-Hamdon
- Harley House Surgery, Minehead
- Hendford Lodge Medical Centre, Yeovil
- Highbridge Medical Centre, Highbridge
- Ilchester Surgery, Ilchester
- Irnham Lodge Surgery, Minehead
- Lusson Surgery, Wellington
- Lyngford Park Surgery, Taunton
- Mendip Country Practice, Radstock
- Millbrook Surgery, Castle Cary
- North Curry Health Centre, Taunton
- North Street Surgery (Langport), Langport

- Oakhill Surgery, Radstock
- Park Medical Practice, Shepton Mallet
- Penn Hill Surgery, Yeovil
- Porlock Medical Centre, Porlock
- Preston Grove Medical Centre, Yeovil
- Quantock Medical Centre, Bridgwater
- Quantock Vale Surgery, Taunton
- Queen Camel Health Centre, Yeovil
- Springmead Surgery, Chard
- St James Medical Centre, Taunton
- Summervale Medical Centre, Ilminster
- Taunton Road Medical Centre, Bridgwater
- Tawstock Medical Centre, Chard
- Victoria Gate Surgery, Taunton
- Victoria Park Medical Centre, Bridgwater
- Vine Surgery Davies/Munro, Street
- Warwick House Medical Centre, Taunton
- Wellington Medical Centres, Wellington
- Wells City Practice, Wells
- Wells Health Centre, Wells
- West Somerset Healthcare Wiliton, Taunton
- Westlake Surgery (Dr Cox), West Coker
- Westlake Surgery (Dr Smith), West Coker
- Wincanton Health Centre, Wincanton

This report was written by Lucy Nicholls at the Somerset LINK
on behalf of the Carers' Champion Strategy Group:
Jayne Nicholas, WyvernHealth.Com; Caroline Toll, Carers UK (East Somerset Branch);
Alison Templeton, Somerset County Council; Emily Lang, St John Ambulance
and Susan Hartnell-Beavis, a past-carer who is not past caring.