

- ▶ 3) Practical and emotional support both during the person's life and after bereavement
- ▶ 4) Carers to have their own needs assessed and reviewed.

Aims of the new service To provide psychological support, information and advice to Carers; to provide an opportunity to share experiences with one another; to offer Complementary Therapies.

The Service This takes place fortnightly on a Tuesday evening. A personal invitation and information leaflet about the service is sent to every Carer of the Day Hospice patients.

Venue Day Hospice

Resources The service is run by two qualified nurses, two complementary therapists and a volunteer. The hospice receives a grant to fund this.

How the need was identified The need was identified through our patients and carers feedback via a survey conducted in 2009. We also wanted to implement this as part of what the 'End of Life Strategy means for patients and carers (2008) to support carers.

Evaluation Carers are requested to complete a questionnaire after 6 months. This has shown that the service is useful and provide valuable support to the carers.

Proposals for the future Developing a bereavement support group for carers, currently the carer is contacted 6 weeks after bereavement to be offered counselling – we have identified 'group' bereavement support may be more beneficial as they have met together as carers and formed friendships, so meeting post bereavement could be further support to them.

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In the last few years there has been a wealth of research and literature identifying the importance of supporting Carers. The End of Life Care Strategy(2008) identified four key principles in supporting Carers.

- ▶ 1) Carers need to be involved in decision making with the recognition they have their own needs
- ▶ 2) Need information about the likely progress of the person's condition and information about services available