

Dear Sir or Madam,

As part of our **local Carers Week campaign**, we wanted to take the opportunity to highlight the **importance of identifying and supporting unpaid carers in Primary Care**.

**Carers frequently step in to reduce the burden on health and social care services.** If a carer becomes unwell, the needs of a cared for person often turns into an emergency presenting issues for both primary and secondary care. **Early identification and connections to local support are therefore vital;** it can significantly improve a carers health and wellbeing, as well as having positive benefits for the person being cared for.

Across the South Tees it is **estimated that there are 30,000 carers**, although we suspect this to be much higher. One of the **main obstacles** to **carers** getting the right support is **identification** – both self-identification and identification by health professionals.

**Primary Care plays a critical role in identifying and supporting carers.** We therefore encourage you and your colleagues to look at our website ([wecareyoucare.info](http://wecareyoucare.info)) to support your knowledge and consider ways you can improve identification of carers in your practice such as through coding in line with **NHS guidance and good holistic practice**. We have created a handy Guide for **Healthcare Professionals in Primary Care** which encourages you to consider the needs of carers and provides information on the range of local services enabling you to refer and signpost quickly and easily. **It is vital that carers have their own health needs met.**

Teesside Mind are supporting **Primary Care services in South Tees to become 'Carer Friendly'**. Susan Lee (Primary Care Co-ordinator) offers a bespoke service to each practice supporting you to become 'Carer Friendly'. To discuss this offer, contact **Susan Lee- 07543 309039/ [susan.lee@teessidemind.org.uk](mailto:susan.lee@teessidemind.org.uk)**.

Keep in mind that **Healthwatch South Tees is the local health and social care champion**. They can signpost patients through their independent **#JustAsk** service.

Please support our campaign by sharing our **short video** through your website, social media, and direct carers to our site for further information of local support and carers rights. **Let's work together to put South Tees carers on the map.**

Yours Faithfully,

*Kelley Hodgson*

We Care You Care Project Lead