



A joint campaign of The Royal College of Psychiatrists
and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers:
January – December 2004

The Royal College of Psychiatrists and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers have joined together to mount a year-long campaign for carers of all ages to:

- highlight the problems faced by carers of people with different mental health problems and learning disabilities
- encourage true partnerships between carers, patients and professionals

“Carers are an integral part of the patient’s support system...They are the ones with the day-to-day experience of the patient’s condition, and they carry the most intimate responsibility for the patient’s welfare...The carer’s voice in decision making about admission and discharge is ignored at everyone’s peril - and yet so often is.”

DR. MIKE SHOOTER, PRESIDENT,
ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

“This is an important opportunity for professionals, carers and patients to work together. The Partners in Care campaign will help to develop a dialogue on vital issues that affect the mental health and well-being of some of the most vulnerable people in Britain. We hope that the campaign will leave a legacy of better mutual understanding and improved care.”

PETER TIHANYI, HEAD OF POLICY,
THE PRINCESS ROYAL TRUST FOR
CARERS

The campaign will emphasise that

- carers play an important role in looking after, and promoting the well-being of, people with mental health problems or learning disabilities – carers’ responsibilities need greater recognition
- carers themselves can suffer from mental health problems, often because of lack of support
- specialist help is available for carers of someone with a mental health problem or learning disability

PARTNERS IN CARE plans a number of campaign activities, including:

Booklet on confidentiality

- Trust is essential to good care. Confidentiality issues between patients and professionals; carers and patients; and carers and professionals will be explored, and recommendations made for good practice.

Research among carers

- At the launch of the campaign, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers will release the results of a major survey of

the health of carers themselves. More than 1000 carers have been surveyed over a ten-month period to see the effects that the caring role has on carers’ own health, particularly their mental health.

Checklists for carers, patients and professionals

- It is important for carers and patients to know what questions to ask, and for professionals to ensure that patients and carers are fully informed. These checklists will form a simple prompt for all ‘partners in care’.

Leaflets on mental health problems

- Leaflets will be prepared on different types of mental health problems, designed to help carers understand, and cope with, the difficulties faced by those they are looking after. The leaflets will cover dementia, depression, psychosis, substance misuse, eating disorders and postnatal depression. Similar leaflets to help carers understand and support children and adults with learning disabilities or autism will be launched.

Training video and CD-ROM

- 'Being seen and heard' is a training film for staff who are involved in the care of parents with mental illness and their children. It is a moving and challenging film which focuses on the difficulties facing young people who have to care for a family member, as well as solutions to help them through this difficult time.

'Caring around the clock' booklet

- As many as 175,000 young people in the UK are responsible for caring for a family member. This may cause problems with schooling, managing homework and keeping up with friends. This practical and informative booklet for young carers is designed to remind them that they are not alone and can seek help.

Training of professionals

- The Royal College of Psychiatrists will prepare a Code of Conduct for professionals on issues relating to carers. The College will also involve carers in psychiatrists' basic training, and will 'train the trainers' to run a roadshow of study days for mental health professionals across the country.

Media programme

- The more media coverage on carers' issues, the more public and professional

interest will be generated around the campaign. Partners in Care will run a lively media programme to stimulate interest among the press, radio and TV. This campaign will include case histories, news and feature releases, placed articles and interviews with carers, patients and professionals.

Christmas debate for young people

- The Royal College of Psychiatrists' popular annual debate for young people will focus this year on young carers and the challenges they face.

Carers Week 14th – 20th June 2004

- This annual awareness week is run by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers with Carers UK, Crossroads – Caring for Carers and the MS Society, and aims to highlight issues carers face. In 2004, the theme for the week will be health and during this well-known annual event, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers will feature the Partners in Care campaign.

Regional and local activities

- The organisers of Partners in Care will encourage carers, patients and professionals to become involved in local and regional activities to generate interest and help promote the campaign across the country.

If you are interested in receiving further information about Partners in Care, please contact:

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