



Guy's and St Thomas'  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Information about the Carer Passport

## **We recognise and value your role as a carer.**

We have given this Carer Passport to you because you have told us that you are the main carer for a patient in our care. Whether you have been a carer for some time, or this is the beginning of your journey as a carer, we want to help support you and your loved one throughout this hospital journey.

## **What is a carer?**

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support (as defined by the Carer's Trust).

## **What does this Carer Passport mean for you?**

By identifying you as a carer, hospital staff will be able to open a conversation with you to discuss:

- **Information sharing:** What information you can share with hospital staff to optimise the patient's care and treatment.
- **Carer involvement:** What, if any, involvement you may wish to have in the patient's care while they are in hospital.
- **Carer support:** Any support you, the carer, may need.

**Information sharing:** We actively encourage partnership working between carers and hospital staff to optimise a patient's care and treatment.

Patients will benefit from co-ordination, understanding and co-operation between hospital staff and those who know the patient best. The knowledge and expertise you hold as the carer will positively inform the care and treatment they receive.

In some cases you may be asked to complete an information booklet about your loved one's routine, likes/dislikes and individual needs. This may be the **This Is Me** document (for patients with dementia and delirium) or the **Hospital Passport** (for patients with additional needs such as learning disabilities).

**Carer involvement:** As a carer, hospital staff will actively involve you in decision making about the patient's care and treatment and planning for their discharge from hospital.

You may also wish to be involved in a patient's care while they are in hospital. We will discuss this with you individually following discussion with the patient and relevant staff member. As a carer your involvement may include:

- extended visiting times or staying overnight
- accompanying and supporting the patient when they have investigations, assessments or procedures carried out

- providing assistance with personal care or eating and drinking
- access to tools and aids such as pictures and favourite possessions to promote patient engagement and stimulation
- involvement in decision making and discharge planning.

Wards will be staffed appropriately, regardless of carer involvement.

**Carer support:** As part of the hospital journey we will ask you what support you as a carer may need and will strive to support you or help you find relevant support.

This may include:

- helping you access information or a Carer assessment
- ensuring the patient's discharge planning takes your needs and abilities into account
- offering you training and education to help you prepare for discharge and become confident in new or complex care tasks.

On an individual basis, we may be able to offer carers parking concessions or food vouchers for the hospital canteen.

## Useful contacts

Further information for carers is available on our website **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):** To be directed to a specialist team in the hospital, contact PALS.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**Carers UK:** **t:** 020 7378 4999 **w:** [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

**How to look after yourself:** As a carer it is important to remember to take care of yourself.

- Take time out for yourself and access support from family, friends and organisations that support carers.
- Eat a well-balanced diet and take regular exercise.
- Try to get enough sleep.
- See the GP to check your own health and register as a carer at the GP practice.
- Contact Social Services to find out about a Carer assessment.
- It is important to remember that for many carers, a stay in hospital can provide crucial respite as well as time to prepare for hospital discharge.

**Help us to care:** For us to provide the best care for your loved one and other patients, we would ask that you:

- Respect the role of healthcare professionals within the care or treatment decision making process.
- Respect the discussion and decisions made regarding your involvement in care or concessions.
- Respect other patients and their visitors.
- Always wear appropriate clothes while visiting or staying in the hospital.
- When entering and leaving, always use the hand sanitiser next to the main entrance of the ward to reduce the risk of infection.
- Do not drink alcohol during visits or smoke on the hospital premises.
- For security reasons, please do not bring visitors into the ward without asking the ward team.



