

Supporting carers of people with dementia in an acute setting.

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Aims and Objectives:

- To provide a brief summary of the role of Admiral Nurses
- To discuss the benefits of the collaborative project
- Highlight the importance of working in partnership with family carers

for dementia admiral nurses

Admiral Joe



for dementia
training ■ development ■ admiral nurses

WHAT IS AN ADMIRAL NURSE ?

Admiral Nurses are specialist mental health nurses based within mainstream services.

Working with and supporting families of people with dementia, and people with dementia.

Admiral Nurses provide education, leadership, development and support to other colleagues and service providers.

Admiral Nurses make a positive difference to the lives and experiences of all those affected by dementia.

AIMS OF ADMIRAL NURSING

- Improve family carer's well-being and quality of life
- Enhance family carer's adjustment and coping with their caring role
- Improve the well-being and quality of the life of the person with dementia
- Enhance the person with dementia's ability to adjust and cope with dementia
- Enhance colleague's knowledge and experience of working with family carers and people with dementia

Working with Carers.....

.....making a positive difference to the lives and experiences of all those affected by dementia

- Develop therapeutic relationships
- Assess and address the impact of caring and the carers needs and those of the person with dementia
- Promote positivity in living with dementia
- Identify coping strategies for families and people with dementia

Working with Carers.....

- Build upon the carers understanding of dementia and enhance carers skill base.
- Promote the well-being of the carer and maximise their physical and mental health.
- Emotional support around transitions, to address feelings of loss and guilt.
- Enable the carer to have a voice.
- Facilitate access to practical support.

Supportive Education.....

.....providing education, leadership, development and support to other colleagues and service providers

- Facilitation of learning
- Awareness raising
- Advisor to colleagues
- Clinical supervisor

Summary of Admiral Nurse Role

- To provide emotional support to family carers from the point of diagnosis to post bereavement
- To provide information and advice to family carers (social and educational groups)
- To provide supportive education to other professionals who work with people with dementia

History of the collaborative project

- Project group set up in April 2007 under the auspices of CSIP
- Modern Matron in acute trust concerned about the care of patients with dementia
- There was a need to address complaints from family carers
- A need to develop a dementia liaison service

Carers' experiences of hospital admission

- It is well documented that family carers of people with dementia experience high levels of stress of stress and anxiety when the person cared for is admitted into hospital
- This can be compounded by the possibility that the person may never return home
- Carers of people with dementia experience the gradual loss of the person, hospital admission is yet another loss

Project Aims

- To improve the experiences of people with dementia during admission
- To improve the experiences of family carers
- To establish a liaison service
- To implement a dementia training programme for staff in acute settings

Project Team members

- Carers
- Ward sisters (Orthopaedic and Medicine for the Elderly)
- Hospital Care Manager
- Dementia Liaison Nurse
- Admiral Nurses

Best Practice Guidance

- Who carers wins
- Care for People with dementia in Acute Ward settings
- Support for carers of people with dementia during hospital admission
- National Dementia Strategy Consultation document

Benefits of a Collaborative Project

- Senior Management endorsement
- All parties committed to attending and participating in monthly meetings
- Support for project lead from CSIP facilitator
- Working to an agreed tool for planning, implementation and evaluation.

Progress/Achievements so far...

- Appointing a Dementia Liaison Nurse
- Establishing an in-reach service for family carers
- Introducing the use of a checklist to be completed by family carers
- Implementing a training programme for staff in acute wards.

Purpose of the in-reach service

- Reduce stress, isolation and carer vulnerability
- To provide carers with the opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings (especially around issues of long term and end of life care)
- To provide an advocacy service
- To offer carers the opportunity to access ongoing support after discharge or post bereavement

How the in-reach service works in practice

- Service is provided by Admiral Nurses and a hospital Care Manager
- Service is provided during visiting hours
- If there are no carers present, we spend time having an informal chat with staff about caring for people with dementia

Training Programme

- Involved a family carer as a co-facilitator
- What is Dementia?
- Recognising , assessing and managing pain in people with dementia
- Nutrition
- Managing the environment
- Working in partnership with family carers
- Language, culture and communication

Benefits of involving carers as trainers

- Carers are a fountain of knowledge and they know the patient best
- Carers' personal experiences are powerful and can help in changing staff attitudes
- Enhances the relationship between carers and staff as both parties learn from each other

Working in partnership with family carers: Comments from staff

- “Carer’s story excellent, heart warming”
- “John was excellent, right mixture of objectiveness and emotion”
- “Useful tips, the carer made the training real”
- “The talk from John was very interesting and touched us all”
- “Really enjoyed John’s talk. A lovely man who cares”

Working in partnership with family carers: the benefits

- Carers are an immensely valuable resource for staff in acute care settings
- They have in-depth knowledge about the person's likes, dislikes, habits, routines and personal history. Can help staff save time.(a personal story)
- Help staff see the person and not just the dementia

Summary/conclusion

- The project is ongoing and evolving
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that carers have found the support to be beneficial
- Future plans include a formal evaluation of the use of the admission checklist and the carers' in-reach service
- We also plan to set up a staff peer supervision group which will be facilitated by an Admiral Nurse

Acknowledgements

- Special thanks to my colleagues:
- Anne Bamford, Hospital Care Manager
- Steve Mason, Admiral Nurse

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Thank you for listening!

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