

Building a Carer Friendly Community in East Sussex

Why not sign up to be a Carer Ambassador?

We know that when we ask someone if they would like to become a Carer Ambassador, as part of our Building a Carer Friendly Community Initiative, they often want to ask a few questions before deciding. Below are the answers to the questions we are most frequently asked.

Question – What do you mean by a Carer Friendly Community?

A Carer Friendly Community is somewhere where:-

- There is some idea of a carer's daily reality; that they can be under a lot of pressure and are often hidden from view;
- Every corner is carer aware – from hospital, workplace, primary school to leisure services and beyond takes into account the needs of carers;
- Local services and systems remove obstacles and make sure things are done differently so carers' lives are a little bit easier.

There are many different types of community (reasons why people gather) for example based around a place or locality, shared need or interest, a specific purpose or shared identity. Any group, service, organisation, town or village can become Carer Friendly.

Question – What is a Carer Ambassador?

A Carer Ambassador is someone who tries to do **little things that can make a big difference to an unpaid carer's life** within their organisation, business or community.

They may be a volunteer with a local or national charity or be employed in a local business or service. They may be a carer, a former carer or anyone who is interested in making a difference to carers' lives.

Being carer aware they will be able to raise awareness of the valuable role unpaid carers play, share information about local services, feel able to have a conversation that supports people to recognise themselves as carers, and signpost them to Care for the Carers when appropriate.

A Carer Ambassador's role can fit in with interests, skills, availability, current work or current volunteering. An Ambassador may already:

- Volunteer for a charity or local community organisation for example in your local hospital, place of worship, charity shop, support group or community centre
- Be a member of your local Patient Participation Group;

- Be a local Town or Parish Councillor, Member of Parliament or represent your community through other roles across the county.
- Be supporting Care for the Carers as a Volunteer Counsellor, Care for the Carers Member, Carers Voices Network Member, Wellbeing Group Host, Carers Card business or fundraiser;
- Be a Carers Lead or Champion in a Health or Social Care setting;
- Work in a local business and have an interest in employee rights and welfare.

Question - What does a Carer Ambassador do?

Carer Ambassadors are not expected to have all the answers; they just need to be willing to have the conversation. Some examples of what Ambassadors might do include the following:

- **In the workplace** they may be the 'go to person' – being carer aware and happy to talk to carers, share information and signpost to Care for the Carers.
- **In the community** they may check noticeboards and displays, deliver magazines, support fundraising activities or a wide range of other activities that support communities to be more carer friendly.
- **As a volunteer with a local or national charity** they can ensure that whenever they make contact with a community member in their role they also consider if they may be an unpaid carer and share information as appropriate.

Question – If I sign up as a Carer Ambassador what will I get?

- You will have access to free Carer Awareness Training;
- You will have access to a range of resources and support from CftC staff;
- You will receive a certificate to display (at home or in your organisation) and a Carer Ambassador badge;
- You will be invited to free events where you will meet and share experiences with other Carer Ambassadors from across the county;
- You will receive a Carer Friendly Community checklist for your service, business, organisation or community as appropriate;
- You will get support in helping your business, organisation or community group gain Carer Friendly Community Status;
- You will be encouraged to sign up as an Ambassador to our Carers Voices Network;
- You will receive the Care for the Carers e-Newsletter (monthly) and Careline magazine by email (quarterly);
- You will be informed of national or local agendas and campaigns that impact on unpaid carers or may support you in your Carer Ambassador role.

Remember – the little things you do can make a big difference to an unpaid carer's life so sign up as a Carer Ambassador now.

If you want to sign up or find out more either phone Care for the Carers on 01323 738390 or email info@cftc.org.uk