

Caring for the Carer

AIM

The group was asked to help increase the number of carers on the Practice's Carers list.

HOW WE WENT ABOUT IT

Research:

We asked advice from a number of people

1. A marketing professional to get ideas of the sorts of methods to use
2. Carers to establish how people felt about this and what would encourage them to sign up
3. VASL, major providers of help for carers
4. Practice Manager and Assistant to try to establish why people should sign up

Discussion

To establish the type of publicity we could use we thought of

1. Asking the pharmacy attached to the surgery to put a leaflet in medication bags for a month. Most people needing care have medication that is issued monthly. Their carer would be likely to see a leaflet, and the cared-for person would probably tell them about it
2. Use the screens in the surgery
3. Social media – could we use this?
4. A display in the surgery about caring for the carer, perhaps with a cut-out doctor or nurse holding an information bulletin, a pop-up poster and leaflets on a table.
5. Local press

Action

We then set about asking the Pharmacy and investigating how leaflets and posters could be produced as well as costs, investigating various printers, shops selling card suitable colours etc.

Result

1. The Pharmacy enthusiastically offered their help and that of their students
2. The Practice manager agreed to leaflets, cut-out figure and poster as well as the use of the screens and mounting a display
3. He was not keen on social media so it was decided not to do this. The Pharmacy students were able to put the contents of the leaflet on the Pharmacy website.
4. The local press was not involved at this stage,

Action

We set about preparing the leaflet, intending that it be small to fit in the medicine bags, bright to contrast with the white bags, written in simple language and as brief as possible. It was

eventually approved by the PPG and the Practice, and its message used for the poster and cut-out figure.

We approached a printer who had been recommended to us. They agreed to do the work and offered their expertise to design the poster free of charge as it could not be done on an ordinary PC. We had expressed concern at the cost and they felt it was a contribution to a worthwhile project. We also had an offer of a substantial contribution to the cost of printing the leaflets from a company run by a member of the group.

VASL also lent us a pop-up poster and supplied a box of various leaflets to display and hand out, as well as emergency containers for medical details to put in a fridge.

Completion

When everything was ready, we put the display up in Rosebery Surgery and organised a small party -tea/coffee and cakes to which those who had helped were invited. An article and photos were sent to the local press but were not published.

This display was generally very well received – it certainly made an impact as people walked in, and many people have since made favourable comments.

RESULTS

1. Eight people have signed the register and been referred to VASL. We understand that about one person a month asks to join the register.
2. VASL's representative was most impressed and hoped something similar could be done elsewhere
3. When the display was moved to Forest Edge Surgery in May a lady from another surgery contacted Rosebery to ask if we could help their PPG to do a similar campaign. We have agreed to be contacted and to help if we can.