Involving Family, Friends and Carers in Your Care.

Our mission is to help you improve your mental health.

We are caring, thoughtful and scientific.

BLOOMFIELD HEALTH

Bloomfield Health

Patient Information Leaflet: Involving Family, Friends and Carers in Your Care

At Bloomfield Health, we recognise that family members, friends and carers can play an important role in supporting your mental health and wellbeing.

We understand that everyone's circumstances are different. Some people find it helpful to involve those close to them in their care, while others prefer to manage their treatment independently.
We respect your individual preferences and will work with you to ensure that you feel supported throughout your care.

1. Who is a carer?
A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to a family member, partner, friend, neighbour or another person who may need additional help because of their physical or mental health.
A carer does not necessarily need to live with you or provide support every day.

Carers may help with:

- Providing emotional support and reassurance.
- Helping you attend appointments or manage treatment.
- Recognising changes in your mental health or wellbeing.
- Supporting you during periods of distress or crisis.
- Helping with practical activities and everyday responsibilities.

You may also have family members or friends who provide valuable support without identifying themselves as carers. 'Carer' might not be the term you use – you may think of them as a 'supporter' or similar.

2. Involving family, friends and carers in your care
At Bloomfield Health, we encourage patients to consider whether involving someone they trust could be beneficial to their care and recovery.

With your agreement, we may be able to:

- Invite a family member, friend or carer to attend appointments with you.
- Involve them in discussions about your treatment and care planning.
- Share relevant information about your care, where you have given consent.
- Discuss how they can support you during periods of increased distress.
- Involve them in developing a safety plan or relapse prevention plan, where appropriate.
- Provide information about relevant support services and resources.

You remain in control of who is involved in your care and what information you agree to share.
You can change your preferences or withdraw your consent to sharing information at any time.

3. Confidentiality and sharing information
Your privacy and confidentiality are extremely important to us.

We will not routinely share information about your health, diagnosis, treatment or appointments with family members, friends or carers without your consent.

If you would like us to involve someone in your care, we will discuss what information you are comfortable sharing and record your preferences.

There may be exceptional circumstances where we need to share relevant information without your consent, for example where there is a serious risk of harm to you or another person, or where disclosure is otherwise required or permitted by law.

Any decision to share information without consent will be considered carefully and limited to what is necessary and proportionate.

Even where we cannot share confidential information, we can still listen to concerns raised by family members or carers and provide general information about mental health and available support services.

4. Support for your family, friends and carers
Supporting someone experiencing mental health difficulties can sometimes be emotionally challenging.

We recognise that family members, friends and carers may also benefit from advice, information and support.

We encourage carers to consider their own wellbeing and access support when needed. This can include having an assessment and further sessions with our service – if this seems helpful, we would aim to keep the clinician seeing them and you separate so that confidentiality can be maintained.

The following organisations may be helpful:
Carers UK
Provides practical information, advice and support for unpaid carers, including information about carers' rights and accessing support.
Website: https://www.carersuk.org
Rethink Mental Illness
Offers information and advice for people affected by mental illness, including families, friends and carers.
Website: https://www.rethink.org
Mind
Provides mental health information and guidance, including resources for supporting someone experiencing mental health difficulties.
Website: https://www.mind.org.uk
NHS – Support for Carers
Provides information about carers' assessments, practical support and accessing local services.
Website: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/
Samaritans
Provides confidential emotional support for anyone experiencing distress or struggling to cope.
Telephone: **116 123** (free, 24 hours a day)
Website: https://www.samaritans.org

5. Supporting someone during a mental health crisis
If you have a safety plan or relapse prevention plan, you may wish to discuss with your clinician whether sharing relevant parts of this with someone you trust could be helpful.

This may enable them to recognise warning signs, understand how best to support you and know where to seek assistance.

If you or someone supporting you is concerned about an immediate risk to life or safety, please call **999** or attend the nearest Emergency Department.
For urgent mental health support that is not immediately life-threatening, you can contact **NHS 111 and select the mental health option** in England.

Bloomfield Health is not an emergency or crisis response service.

6. What if I do not want my family or carers involved?
We respect your right to decide whether you would like family members, friends or carers involved in your care.

You are not required to involve anyone, and choosing not to do so will not prevent you from accessing our services.

Your clinician may discuss the potential benefits of involving someone you trust, particularly where additional support may be helpful, but your wishes will be respected wherever possible, subject to any relevant legal or safeguarding

obligations.

7. How can I arrange for someone to be involved?
If you would like a family member, friend or carer to be involved in your care, please speak to your clinician or contact our administrative team.

We can discuss your preferences, including:

- Who you would like involved.
- Whether you would like them to attend appointments.
- What information you are comfortable sharing.
- Whether you would like them involved in your safety or care planning.

We will record your preferences in your clinical record so that the team is aware of your wishes.

8. Contacting Bloomfield Health
If you have any questions about involving family members, friends or carers in your care, please contact our team.

Bloomfield Health
Website: https://bloomfieldhealth.com

Our team will be happy to discuss the available options with you.

At Bloomfield Health, we believe that involving trusted people in your care, where appropriate and with your agreement, can provide valuable additional support Our priority is to ensure that you feel informed, respected and supported throughout your treatment.