

A decorative graphic consisting of several colorful hexagons arranged in a cluster. The colors include light blue, red, green, purple, yellow, and magenta. The hexagons are of varying sizes and are scattered across the upper left and center of the slide.

Carer Awareness in General Practice



CARER AWARENESS IN GENERAL PRACTICE

CASE STUDIES

Examples of the diversity of carers



Amanda is 36

a single mum and her father has cancer. He is a widower so Amanda is trying to juggle work, looking after her daughter and providing practical and emotional support for her father who lives 100 kilometers away.



Omar is 62

and has rheumatoid arthritis. His wife has just been discharged home from hospital following a stroke.



Amy is 14

Her mother has multiple sclerosis. Her father has given up work to look after her mother but relies on Amy to give him a break and help out when she comes home from school.



Paul is 27

and lives with his partner, Michael, who has bipolar disorder. They receive no support from either of their families, and Paul is not comfortable disclosing his relationship to his employer so does not feel he can access carer's leave.

Case study – Aisha

Aisha is 20 years old. The last time she was seen in your practice was nearly 4 years ago, even though she has been registered with you for over 10 years.

Aisha comes into the appointment very tearful. She tells you that she is struggling to cope with university and looking after her mother who is disabled following a head injury two years previously.

Her mother is also registered with your practice, but you do not see her frequently either, and you were under the impression that she was largely self-caring.

What are some ways you might help Aisha?



Case study – Aisha *continued*

There are many ways you can help Aisha. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Record that Aisha is a carer on her file
- Record that Aisha is a carer on her mother's file
- Find out exactly what Aisha is doing for her mother – does her mother need further medical assessment or additional care?
- Consider bulk-billing Aisha's appointments
- Provide Aisha with information about being a carer and supports available for carers.



Case study – Aisha *continued*

There are many ways you can help Aisha. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Provide Aisha with information about the NDIS and organisations supporting people with acquired brain injury
- Monitor Aisha's low mood through regular review appointments, provide a mental health plan, medication and/or referral, as appropriate
- Suggest that Aisha speak to her university about the problems she is having with her studies and the reasons for this.



Case study – Linda

Linda is 64 and has terminal breast cancer. She is losing weight and becoming more and more reliant on her partner, Julie. They have been together for 6 years and Julie is very supportive and clearly cares for Linda.

During a routine review, you ask Linda if you can share her medical information with Julie but she refuses.

How might you approach this situation?



Case study – Linda *continued*

**There are many ways you could approach this situation.
Here is one scenario:**

- It is important to establish the reasons why Linda does not want to share her medical information with Julie.
- You discuss with Linda the benefits of sharing medical information with Julie to enhance her care. Linda responds that she understands the reasons for sharing her information and would like Julie to be involved in her care.
- However, Linda has not told Julie about a string of overdoses she took when she was in an abusive relationship in her 20s. She feels very embarrassed about these episodes and does not want Julie to know about them.



Case study – Linda *continued*

There are many ways you could approach this situation. Here is one scenario:

- You explain to Linda that it is possible to only share information with Julie about her cancer and the care that she needs currently, without allowing access to any information about Linda's past medical history.
- Linda welcomes this suggestion. Written and signed confirmation is supplied by Linda and a notice put on her medical record to this effect.





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