**Quality Standards**

Derbyshire Carers Association (DCA) endeavours to provide a quality service to meet the needs of Carers as defined by Carers. This involves the Charity making every effort to ensure that:

* Carers have an effective voice in the design of the service, its management, delivery, monitoring and continuous improvement.
* Carers have the opportunity to be involved whatever their age, gender, sexuality, disability, ethnicity or religion.
* The service liaises with other local voluntary, statutory and private agencies and is part of a joint approach to ensure Carers obtain co-ordinated support and are not continuously passed around.
* DCA is dedicated to the principles of:
  + Sensitivity to individual needs
  + Treating people with courtesy and respect
  + Recognition of Carers as partners and making no assumptions that Carers wish to provide care
  + Confidentiality
  + Promoting determination and not creating dependency
* DCA offers a service which has:
  + Clearly defined aims and objectives
  + Specific details of how these will be met
  + Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation, which included obtaining regular feedback from Carers
  + A system to record any shortfall or preferences which cannot be met
  + A complaints procedure so that the service can respond promptly to any problems and take corrective action

**Our Standards**

* All staff are appropriately trained and supported, all inclusive of staff delivering the service, reception staff, volunteers and trustees, including What it is Like to be a Carer
* DCA offers comprehensive information, health, social, financial, legal and practical information about local services and the rights of Carers to have an assessment. Where we do not have the appropriate expertise we offer easy signposting to other sources of expert information
* Information is accurate, reliable, consistent and up to date.
* Different methods of information giving, including face to face discussions are offered.
* The service is publicised to the whole population it serves and in a way which attempts to reach people who have never associated themselves with the title of Carer.
* It is clear how and when the service is available and where to go to for information if out of hours.
* The service is pro-active and information can be delivered to Carers in their own homes and communities, which may include using the internet, post or telephone.
* Information is jargon-free, easy to understand and any abbreviations are explained.
* Information can be conveyed in a variety of ways suited to Carers for whom English is not their first language.
* The service can arrange access to interpreters and signers.
* Carer’s personal records are open to them (for statutory services this is within the limits of Client Access to records legislation) and wherever possible are written together with Carers. The service complies with Data Protection legislation.
* Telephones, texts or other multimedia messages, minicom, letters, e-mails and indeed all forms of communication including via social media platforms are answered promptly and courteously and answering services only provided as a backstop. The services standard response time is within 3 days.
* DCA offers emotional support to Carers on a one-to-one and/or a group basis, it is sensitive to individual’s needs, confidential, offers continuity and is accessible to all Carers.
* The service offers a safe and non-judgemental environment where Carers have the opportunity to talk over important decisions, to share feelings and confidences and to exchange information and knowledge with people they can trust.
* Support and encouragement is given to Carers to run their own support groups if they prefer.
* The service is confidential and has a code of practice to ensure there is not a breach of confidentiality which includes agreed protocol for disclosure in relation to abuse and matters of public safety.
* The support groups are publicised especially to new and isolated Carers, venues and times of groups are planned with local Carers.

**Quality Accreditations;**

* Derbyshire Carers Association commits to gaining the appropriate Quality Standards Accreditations eg Cyber Essentials Plus, Dignity in Care Awards, Race Equality Matters and Charity Excellence In order to reflect our quality of service.