Formal and Informal care: Importance of Help and Assistance

Formal carers transpire in different forms such as doctors, nurses, health care assistants, Radiographers, sonographers, physiotherapists, phycologists, chaplains, occupational therapists social workers, general practitioners, and many other amazing people in the hospital setting, social care setting, and a community care setting. These people all have a particular job and are all professionally trained with relevant qualifications to do their specialist job some formal carers can cover lots of different areas in their workplace but all have the same values and that is to be kind, caring, compassionate, empathetic and put their patients needs first.

Formal carers are people who provide care and get paid for it, they all have obtained qualifications and have undertaken specific training for them to be classed as professional carers. They look after anyone who needs support anyone with a physical or learning disability, long-term illness, mental illness, or elderly.

Examples of formal care in different settings are set out as follows; care home staff, medical staff, in a hospital and community care staff visiting people in their own homes will undertake such duties as personal care such as washing, dressing, and brushing hair. Domestic care, laundry, cleaning, cooking, and preparing meals are also part of a daily job. Medical care that certain staff are trained for includes, changing catheters, changing dressings and tending to wounds, and taking blood and observations such as blood pressure, oxygen levels and glucose levels.

Formal care can also be in the form of daycare centers for children and babies duties include changing nappies, providing meals and feeding children and babies food and milk, educational needs such as playing with children and babies and educating them.

People that require formal care could be people with medical needs ie, long term conditions such as dementia or Alzheimers, people with cancer, heart disease, COPD, asthma, people who can’t look after themselves who are elderly, a young children or a baby or have a physical condition that requires help and assistance. People with mental health conditions need counseling and such things as cognitive-behavioral therapy.

Informal carers are people who look after a friend or relative they may be elderly or have a physical or learning disability or a physical or mental illness. They do not get paid for this 6.5 million person in the uk are informal carers (find this to reference) worth an estimated £119 billion a year (find info to reference)

Examples of informal care include practical help such as preparing meals and feeding, laundry, washing and dressing, checking they’ve taken medication, shopping and keeping an eye on them and making sure they are ok. Taking them out for walks to keep them mentally and physically fit , helping them socialize by also taking them to bingo or social events or taking them out for coffee. Helping them by contacting care providers for appointments, and dealing with paying for bills. Helping with filling out forms for benefits and applying for insurance.

People requiring informal care, people with cancer, Alzheimer's or dementia, the elderly or a parent with mental illness that also needs help caring for their own children as well or generally people that cannot care for themselves.

Being an informal carer can impact your life in many ways, you may have to cut your hours in a day to day job to look after the person your caring for, or give a job up altogether so you could be financially worse off with regards to work, you may not be able to take on extra hours, promotions or job opportunities and extra study opportunities because of care commitments. You could use of your annual leave to look after the person you are caring for. The cost of paying for extra fuel to go and see the person you are caring for. Informal carers may only be able to do low-paid unskilled jobs so it can fit in and around caring for someone. Informal carers can suffer with ill health themselves such as mental illness and other physical conditions, back problems, depression etc.