



**Report on the 3-Day Training Programme for  
Carers and Staff to Prepare them to Deliver a  
Programme of Information Sharing, Coping  
Strategies and Support to Families and Friends of  
People Experiencing Alcohol or Drug Difficulties**

**Dr Gráinne Fadden and Michelle Palmer**

**The Meriden Programme  
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Trust  
Tall Trees  
Uffculme Centre  
Queensbridge Road  
Moseley  
Birmingham B13 8QY**

**[www.meridenfamilyprogramme.com](http://www.meridenfamilyprogramme.com)**

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## **Executive Summary**

1. Training was commissioned by Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team in order to develop skills for delivering Carers' Education and Support to families and friends of people experiencing alcohol or drug difficulties in the West Midlands
2. The training was delivered over three days by a team consisting of two Meriden Programme Clinical Specialists and two carers, both of whom were also Meriden trainers
3. There were thirteen course participants, eleven professionals and two carers
4. Demographic measures revealed that the majority of participants were staff members (85%); female (77%) and that the average age was 43 years (range 31-55 years)
5. The participants were relatively inexperienced in delivering training prior to the three-day Caring for Carers training course, with 50% having no experience of offering training to others
6. Only one participant reported any prior experience in delivering training to carers or family members
7. Overall levels of reported knowledge and confidence in training across a variety of topic areas were reasonably high following the course. Individual reports show a mean average knowledge score of 41 out of a possible 60, while confidence scores averaged 39 out of 60.
8. Participants felt that they had developed a better understanding of families' and friends' needs and the importance of sharing information and developing networks to support this
9. Overall, the course rated very well in terms of meeting its objectives (the average rating given of 8.6 out of 10). Participants also commented very positively on the benefits of group work and the facilitation skills of the trainers
10. Participants reported very positive feedback following the course commending the relevance of the course content, the positive impact of hearing an alcohol user's experiences and the benefits of having carers involved in facilitating the training
11. Overall, participants remarked that they valued the group-work and being supported to develop their skills in a very practical way
12. Participants rated the Workbooks and course materials that they received as excellent and noted that they were clear, well structured and a good guide for future training
13. Participants commented that they would value regular updates/refresher days in order to share their experiences of going on to develop and deliver local training courses
14. On-going support will be provided to ensure roll-out of support programmes for families and friends of those with alcohol and substance misuse problems over the coming year

## **Introduction**

The 'Caring for Carers' training course detailed in this report aims to prepare staff and family members to deliver an eleven-week programme of information-sharing, coping strategies and support to families and friends of people experiencing alcohol or drug difficulties. The programme is designed to bring together small teams of staff and family members/friends in order that they can develop their skills in training and supervising others in a highly collaborative, practical way over three-days. It is expected that by using this cascade model of training, participants on the three-day course will go on to deliver locally tailored carer support and education packages that specifically meet the needs of their local communities.

The training programme for families and friends affected by alcohol and substance misuse was developed by the Meriden Programme following a request by Lorna Ferguson, Commissioner at Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT). This was an initial pilot developed in partnership with workers from Warwickshire drug and alcohol services including the Community Alcohol Team, Swanswell Charitable Trust; the 'Family and Friends' service and Carers in Partnership. Following initial consultation, the programme was extensively adapted to meet the needs of families and friends of those misusing alcohol and other substances. Funding, venue and follow up support were provided by the local DAAT.

The aims of the course were achieved through experiential learning and the provision of an extensive range of written materials. A detailed manual was prepared detailing eleven modules covering the following topics:

- Introduction – the experience of alcohol and substance misuse problems in a family
- Experiences of having a family member or friend with drug or alcohol difficulties
- Education and information sharing – understanding addiction and treatments
- Information on local alcohol and substance misuse services
- Communication in families
- Communicating with professionals
- Problem solving
- Dealing with crisis and relapse management
- Recovery and hope
- Taking care of your own health
- Each of the modules detailed above contained information specifically relevant to families and friends of people experiencing alcohol or drug difficulties

In terms of learning outcomes for the course, it was anticipated that by the end of the course, participants would:

- Develop a knowledge base for sharing information with family members of people who misuse alcohol and other substances
- Develop the practical skills to help family and friends develop a range of coping strategies
- Demonstrate the presentation skills required to share information with significant others
- Demonstrate ability in planning, organising and delivery of courses, delivery of presentations and facilitation of group learning
- Have an understanding of the resources available to support the planning and delivery of courses
- Develop an overview of the programme to be delivered to family and friends and consider how the programme may need to be adapted to meet the needs of specific SMS families
- Consider the impact of substance misuse upon the service user and family experience, and how these impact on care pathways and access to treatment services
- Be aware of the issues that can arise for families where substance misuse and mental health difficulties co-exist

The course was delivered through Meriden, the West Midlands Family Programme which is known both in the UK and worldwide as a programme that has expertise in relation to carers' issues and the implementation of family work. The course was delivered by Steven Cox (Family Work Service Co-ordinator and Meriden Trainer), Paula Conneely (Clinical Specialist & Trainer, Meriden Programme), Peter Woodhams (Carer and Meriden Trainer, Carers in Partnership) and Eve Thompson (Carer, Carers in Partnership). It was considered essential to have carers as members of the training team who would act as a model for the family members on the course who were being trained as trainers. The format of the course was, although some didactic material was presented, primarily skills-based training. Participants had to practice the skills that were introduced, receive feedback, then practice again, thereby developing their skills.

### **Course Evaluation Measures**

In order that a course evaluation could be carried out participants were given a number of questionnaires both at the start and finish of the three-day course. These were as follows:

- 1) Background Questionnaire (Demographic Measure) – Appendix 1
- 2) Background Questionnaire on Previous Training Experience (pre-course) – Appendix 2
- 3) Knowledge and Confidence Questionnaire (pre- and post-course) – Appendix 3
- 4) General Feedback Questionnaire on three day course (post-course) – Appendix 4
- 5) General Evaluation of three day course (post-course) – Appendix 5
- 6) A Feedback and Evaluation Summary is also included – Appendix 6

### **Course Participants**

There were thirteen participants on the course, eleven staff (employed in a range of roles including: Support Worker; Alcohol Worker; Nurse; Counsellor; Clinical Psychologist) and two family members. Of the thirteen participants, ten were female and three were male (all staff members) and the age range was 31-55 years with the mean age of participants being 43 years old.

Participants on the course were from statutory and non-statutory organisations across Warwickshire including local drug and alcohol teams, Swanswell Charitable Trust, Guideposts Trust and Family and Friends - Drugs. Pleasingly, in addition to the two family members, there were also two people currently employed in substance misuse services who had experience of caring for people with drug and alcohol problems on the course. In order to ensure that the carer education and support programmes could be successfully rolled-out, fully implemented and mainstreamed, collaboration between carers and service providers seemed advantageous.

All but one of the eleven staff members filled in the background (demographic) measure. All ten of these staff members reported that they currently work with those with alcohol and other substance misuse problems, with eight of these reporting that their job specifically focuses on this client group. Nine members of staff reported that they were currently working with families. However, of the two staff members who reported that they were not currently working with families, one did state that they did have some contact with families through the client.

In terms of motivation to take part in the course, participants reported that they wanted to increase their confidence in working with the families and friends of those misusing alcohol and other substances. They wanted to develop a better understanding of the issues faced by these families and friends and to increase their knowledge and improve their skills in working with them. On-going professional development and learning were also cited.

## **Results**

Because we are dealing with small numbers, most of these results will be presented as figures rather than percentages.

### **a) Background Questionnaire on Previous Training Experience**

Much of this dealt with participants' previous experience and training in running training courses. Of the thirteen participants, one did not respond to this questionnaire. Of the twelve participants who completed the questionnaire, four (three staff, 1 family member) reported that they had received some previous training in how to train others whilst eight said they had not. When reporting experience of training others or running training courses the group showed the opposite tendency with eight participants (six staff, two family members) reporting that they had had some experience of this and four (all staff) reporting that they had not.

When asked if they currently offered training to others there was an even split with six reporting that they did and six saying they did not. Of the six that did (all staff), reports of the frequency that they were required to do so varied from once a month to once every six months. Five staff had experience of training multidisciplinary professional groups whilst five participants (three staff and two family members) reported having no experience of training such groups (three staff did not answer this question). With regard to offering training to unqualified/care staff/ volunteers and carers/family members, four staff reported having experience of this whilst four reported not to (two staff, two family members), with five participants not answering the question. When asked to report on experience of training carers and family members only one participant reported having done this (a staff member), nine participants reported having no experience of doing so (seven staff, 2 family members) and three participants did not answer (all staff). When asked to report the topic areas that they most commonly presented on these included: alcohol awareness, substance misuse, Drink Drive Programme, service provision/integrated care pathways, depression/anxiety, counselling skills, listening skills, stress management, relaxation, healthy lifestyle and drug and alcohol workplace policy.

In summary, only four participants had received previous training on how to be a trainer (all of whom were staff members). Eight had some experience of training others/running training courses, six whom were staff members, two being family members. Only one participant (a staff member) reported having any experience of delivering training to family members.

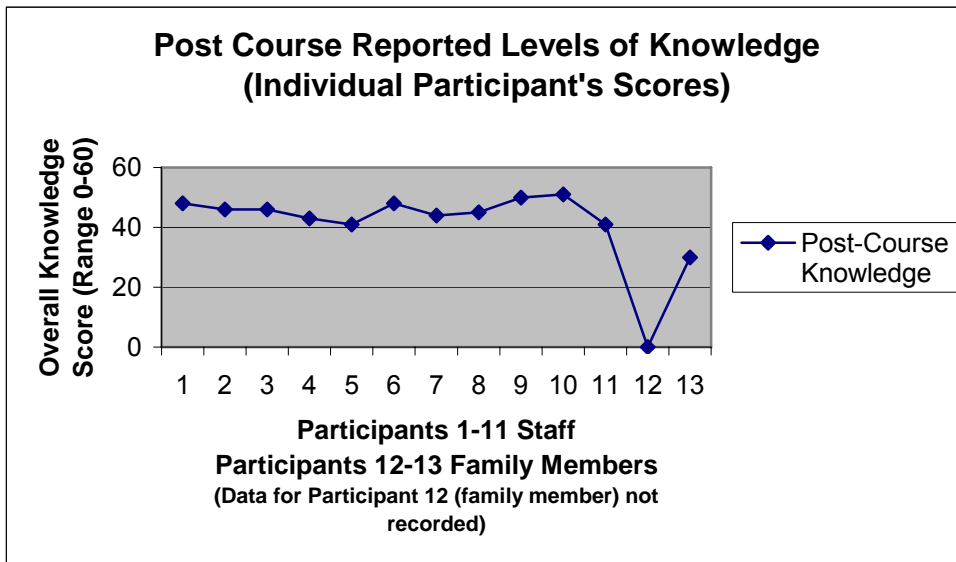
### **b) Knowledge and Confidence Questionnaire (Pre- and Post-course Measure)**

A questionnaire (Appendix 3) assessing the participants' knowledge of and confidence in delivering training on the different relevant topic areas such as provision of information, problem-solving, communication skills etc. was distributed to participants at the end of the three day training. The possible range of scores was from 0 to 60 for each construct (knowledge and confidence). It was hoped that pre and post-course measures could be compared but, due to an administrative error, none of the participants completed the pre-course measure. It may therefore be worthwhile repeating this measure at a follow-up stage to explore how knowledgeable and confident participants feel some time following the course, and the impact that this might have on subsequent roll-outs of the carers' education and support programme.

Individual Participant's Knowledge and Confidence Ratings

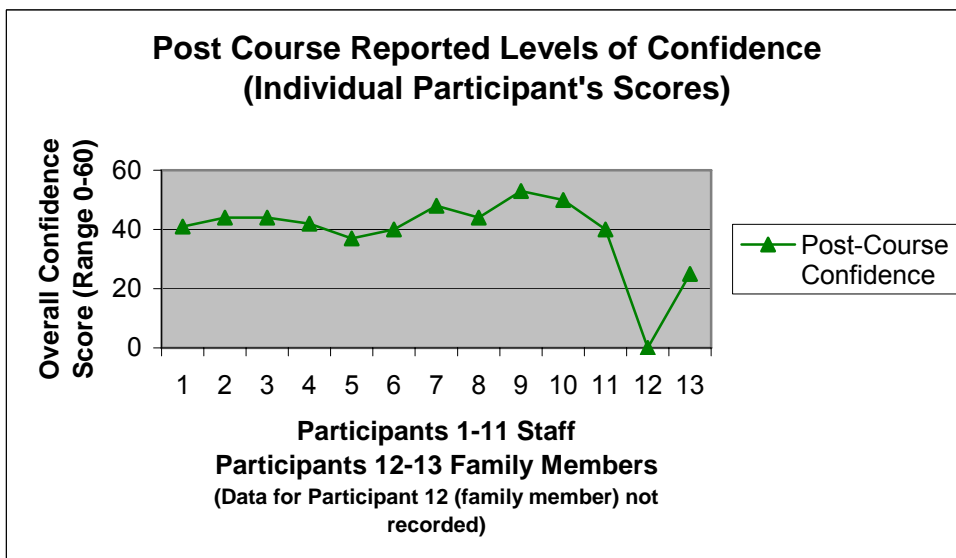
Individual participants' knowledge ratings post-training can be seen in Table 1. Where participant 12 appears to have a score of 0 on the post-course measure, this is because no data were reported. The data show that of a possible top score of 60, the mean average score reported was 41 (range 30 - 50) indicating that participants felt reasonably knowledgeable overall, though it would seem that staff reported feeling more knowledgeable than the family member who responded to the measure.

Table 1



Individual participants' confidence ratings post-training can be seen in Table 2. Where participant 12 appears to have a score of 0 on the post-course measure this is because no data were reported. The data show that of a possible top score of 60, the mean average score reported was 39 (range 25 - 53) indicating that participants felt reasonably confident overall. As with reported knowledge, it would seem that staff reported feeling more confident than the family member who responded to the measure.

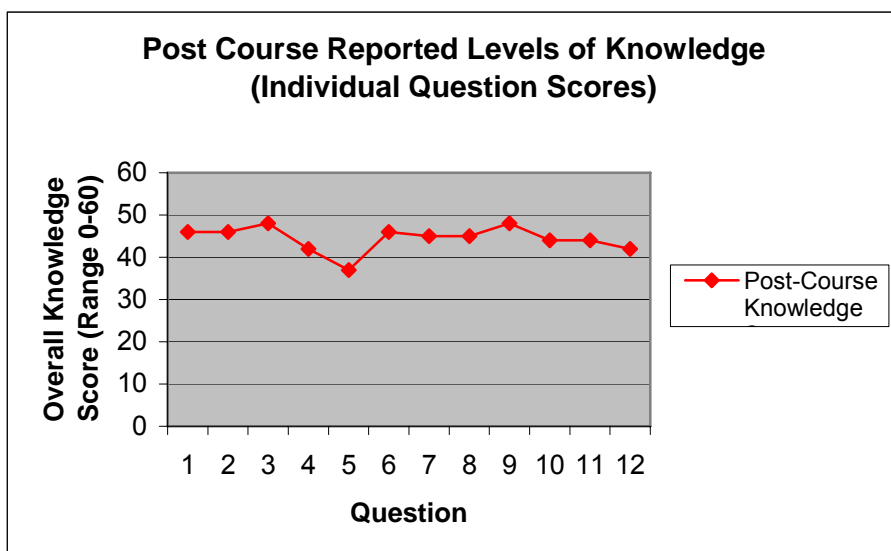
Table 2



## Knowledge and Confidence Ratings Across Topic Areas

Individual question knowledge ratings can be seen in Table 3. The data show that of a possible top score of 60, the mean average score reported was 44 (range 37 - 48) indicating that participants felt reasonably knowledgeable across all topic areas. The areas that participants felt most knowledgeable about were, information about alcohol and drug problems (question 3) and the importance of carers looking after themselves (question 9) while they felt less confident about knowledge of local services (question 5). This is curious given that participants were drawn from the local area.

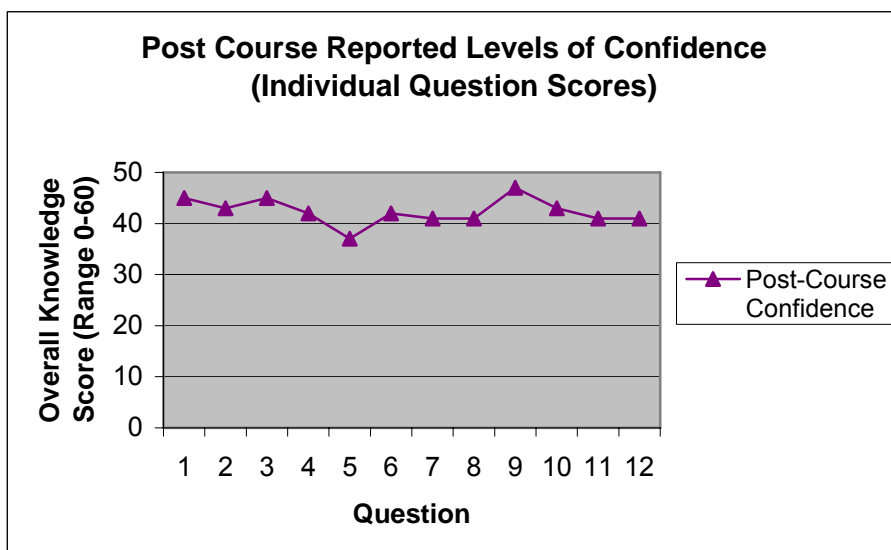
Table 3



**Key -** Rate both your knowledge and confidence in the topic areas below: **1.** The experience of carers who have a relative with alcohol or drug difficulties; **2.** The specific issues facing SMS families and friends; **3.** Information about alcohol or drug problems; **4.** Communication skills in families; **5.** Knowledge of local services; **6.** Problem-solving skills; **7.** Relapse prevention strategies; **8.** Hope and the Recovery Model; **9.** The importance of carers looking after themselves; **10.** Skills for making presentations to carers; **11.** Skills for facilitating group activities with carers; **12.** How to plan a carers support programme

Individual question confidence ratings can be seen in Table 4. The data show that of a possible top score of 60, the mean average score reported was 42 (range 37 - 47) indicating that participants felt reasonably confident across all topic areas. The areas that participants felt most confident about were, the importance of carers looking after themselves (question 9), the experience of family members and friends who have a relative with alcohol or drug difficulties (question 1) and information about addiction problems (question 3) while they felt less confident about knowledge of local services (question 5). This links with their reported lack of knowledge of this area.

Table 4



**Key -** Rate both your knowledge and confidence in the topic areas below: **1.** The experience of carers who have a relative with alcohol or drug difficulties; **2.** The specific issues facing SMS families and friends; **3.** Information about alcohol or drug problems; **4.** Communication skills in families; **5.** Knowledge of local services; **6.** Problem-solving skills; **7.** Relapse prevention strategies; **8.** Hope and the Recovery Model; **9.** The importance of carers looking after themselves; **10.** Skills for making presentations to carers; **11.** Skills for facilitating group activities with carers; **12.** How to plan a carers support programme

### **c) General Feedback Questionnaire**

A general feedback questionnaire was distributed to participants at the end of the three-day training course (Appendix 4). On a scale from 0 (very poor) to 4 (excellent), the mean rating of the content of the course was 3.8, with participants commenting on its relevance and usefulness. The mean rating for the presentation of the course was 3.4, with participants noting the relaxed approach by trainers and clear informative aids as being particularly beneficial. The mean rating for the content of the written materials and workbooks was 4 with comments that they were clear, easy to read and use, comprehensive, and an excellent tool for future training.

Participants noted numerous gains from attending the course including learning new skills/enhancement of existing skills, raised awareness and better understanding of carers' experiences and perspectives, changes in attitudes and increased knowledge and confidence in training others. Participants also felt that the course was beneficial in terms of developing networks through which to share information and develop better ways of working.

### **d) General Evaluation Form**

An evaluation form was also distributed to participants at the end of the three-day training course (Appendix 5). Firstly participants were asked to rate the extent to which they felt the course met its objectives on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely) for which the mean rating was 8.6. On a scale of 0 (poor) to 3 (excellent) participants were asked to rate: Pre-event notification and administration (mean 2.2); Quality of trainers (mean 2.7); Event facilities (mean 2.4) and Information packs (mean 3.0).

Participants remarked that they found the use of role-play beneficial in learning new skills and valued the creation of a supportive learning environment. Participants found family members' and friends' involvement in the course to be particularly useful. With regard to follow-up, participants said that they would value follow-up/review meetings to share how they had progressed and explore the impact of rolling out the 11-week education and support training programme. Staying in contact with other trainees and Meriden trainers to help maintain enthusiasm and momentum also appeared to be important to participants.

## **Summary**

The evaluation demonstrated that this training was very well received by participants who found it to be interesting, informative and enjoyable.

The report describes the outcomes in relation to the impact of the training course only. Evaluation of the implementation of the training will follow as those trained begin to deliver support to family members and friends.

**Family Interventions Training Programme  
Background Questionnaire  
Families and Friends SMS**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Base** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sex:** Female  Male

**Ethnic Group:**

- Asian - Indian
- Asian - Pakistani
- Asian - Chinese
- Asian - Other
- Black - African
- Black – African Caribbean
- Black - Other
- White British / European
- White Irish
- Other

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**Designation:**

- Nurse
- Social Worker
- Occupational Therapist
- Clinical Psychologist
- Psychiatrist
- Counsellor
- Substance Misuse Worker
- Social Worker
- Support / Project Worker / Care Assistant
- Drug Worker
- Alcohol Worker
- Carer
- Service User
- Other (Please State)

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14

1. Do you have a clinical or professional qualification? If yes, please give details (eg. type and length of time held):
  
2. Please list any relevant health/care-related training you have received (if different to above):
  
3. Have you personal experience of being in a caring role for someone who is unwell? If so, how long have you been in this role?

4. Have you had any specific training in working with families? Yes  1  
No  2  
If yes, please describe below:

5. Are you currently involved in working with families? Yes  1  
No  2  
If yes, in what capacity?:

6. Do you currently work with those with substance misuse problems? Yes  1  
No  2

If yes, is your job specifically focused on this client group? Yes  1  
No  2

7. What motivated you to participate in the training?

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION**

Please return this questionnaire to: Your Course Trainer or  
The Meriden Programme  
Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health NHS Trust  
Tall Trees, Uffculme Centre  
Queensbridge Road  
Moseley  
Birmingham  
B13 8QY

**PRE-TRAINING COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE ON**  
**PREVIOUS TRAINING AND SUPERVISION EXPERIENCE**  
**(Families and Friends SMS Course February 2007)**

**Name:**

**Date:**

- 1. Have you attended any courses/received any previous training on YES/NO how to be a trainer?**

**If yes, please describe**

- 2. Have you had any experience of training others/running training YES/NO courses?**

**If yes, please describe**

- 3. Does you currently offer training to others? YES/NO**

**If so, how frequently? (please tick one)**

**a) Once a month**

**b) Once every 3 months**

**c) Once every 6 months**

**d) Once a year**

4. If you have had training experience has it involved the following:  
(please tick all that are relevant)

	YES	NO
a) Training multi-disciplinary professional groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Training unqualified/care staff/volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Training carers and family members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. List the top 3 topic areas you most commonly present on:

i)

ii)

iii)

**Families and Friends SMS**

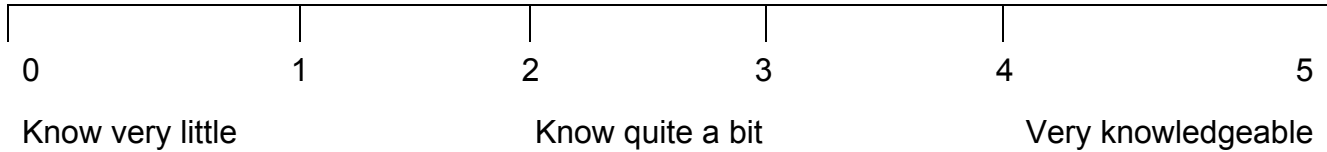
**PRE/POST-TRAINING EVALUATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE**

**Name:**

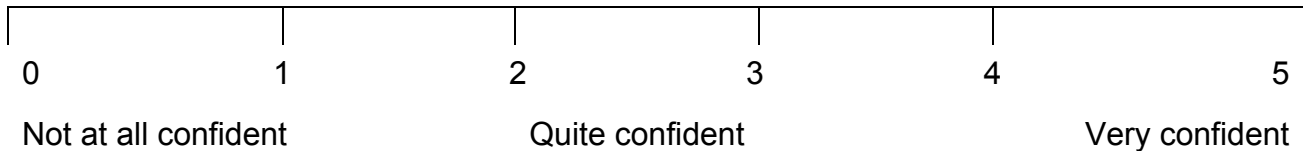
**Date:**

Please note both your knowledge of the topic areas below, and your confidence in training others on the following scale

**Knowledge**



**Confidence in Training Others**



**1. The experience of carers who have a relative with alcohol or drug difficulties**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**2. The specific issues facing family members and friends of those experiencing alcohol or drug difficulties**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**3. Information about mental health problems**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**4. Communication skills in families**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**5. Knowledge of local services**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**6. Problem-solving skills**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**7. Relapse prevention strategies**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**8. Hope and the Recovery model**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**9. The importance of carers looking after themselves**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**10. Skills for making presentation to carers**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**11. Skills for facilitating group activities with carers**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**12. How to plan a carers support programme**

Knowledge:

Confidence:

**SMS Families and Friends Feedback on 3 Day Training**

27, 28 February, 1 March 2007, Warwickshire

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**RATING SCALE**

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Very Poor/ Inadequate</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Average/ Acceptable</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

Please use the above rating scale to rate the content and presentation of the training.

- A**    **CONTENT** -                    irrespective of presentation, to what extent was the content relevant, appropriate and useful?    Rate (0-4):

**Comments:**

- B**    **PRESENTATION** -            irrespective of content, to what extent was the material appropriately and clearly presented?    Rate (0-4):

**Comments:**

- C**    **WRITTEN MATERIALS, WORKBOOKS ETC**

Please rate the quality of the material you were provided with on the course.  
Rate (0-4)

**Comments:**

- D**    List 3 key things you gained from being on the course. This can include knowledge, skills or changes in attitude.

- E**    Is there anything else you would have liked to have covered on the course?

- F**    Any other general comments

**EVALUATION**

**Three Day Training for Staff & Carers to Deliver a Programme of Information-sharing, Coping Strategies and Support to SMS Families and Friends**

**28, 28 February & 1 March 2007, Warwickshire**

**Did this event meet its objectives?**

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Not at all</b>					<b>partly</b>					<b>completely</b>

**How would you evaluate the following? Please circle**

**Pre-event Notification & Administration**

**Excellent**    í    **Good**    í    **Satisfactory**    í    **Poor**    í

**Quality of Trainers**

**Excellent**    í    **Good**    í    **Satisfactory**    í    **Poor**    í

**Event Facilities**

**Excellent**    í    **Good**    í    **Satisfactory**    í    **Poor**    í

**Information Packs**

**Excellent**    í    **Good**    í    **Satisfactory**    í    **Poor**    í

**Remarks**

**Which parts of the Training did you find most useful?**

**Which parts of the Training did you find least useful?**

**What follow up do you think would be useful to build on this Training Event?**

**Any other comments:**

**Thank You**

**Feedback Evaluation for Caring for SMS Families and Friends on 27, 28th February and 1st March 2007, at Warwickshire**

Content	Comments	Presentat-ion	Comments	Written materials workbooks etc	Comments	List 3 things you gained from being on the course	Anything else you would have liked covered on the course	General comments
4		4		4	Good for future	Change in attitude Learning new skills Meeting other professionals		
4	Relevant 100% to cater for recognised need	3	Being dyslexic - colours of sessions - number of pages - clear text all helpful	4	A static guide - essential - well put together - easy for users	Increased confidence Networking Tools	Step by step from session 1 - 11 but understand that time was a factor	
3		2	Could use more visual aids to keep attention	4	Workbooks very clear and professional	Greater understanding of carers perspective Skills for communication Enhanced group work skills	More time to practice facilitator role	Enjoyed feedback - constructive and did not feel critical
4		4		4	Excellent tool for the future	Confidence of group work How to deal with conflict (within the group) Reinforced skills	No	
4		4		4		Enhancement of skills Confirmation of current knowledge		
4		3		4		Users recovery perspective Carers perspective Practice skills	More on group management skills and therapeutic group work skills	
4		4		4		More aware of carer issues Revisited and enhanced skills that I already had Networking and change in attitude - realise the importance of carer involvement	No, the course was very comprehensive	

Content	Comments	Presentat-ion	Comments	Written materials workbooks etc	Comments	List 3 things you gained from being on the course	Anything else you would have liked covered on the course	General comments
4		3		4		Update of skills sharing experience enhanced knowledge		Good focus group
4	Perhaps useful to go into slightly more depth regarding individual sessions? Felt all the sessions were relevant and useful	4	Relaxed, informative	4	Material looked clear and professional. Useful to have exercises can utilise outside of the programme to, eg: crisis management plan	Insight into carers own experiences, gained from the carers in our groups, and Peter and Eve. Confidence presenting. Learnt from watching others present	Can't think of anything!	
3		3	Very clear	4	Very good worksheets	Awareness of skills Learning new skills Confidence to facilitate		Overall a good balance
4		4		4		Knowledge		
3		4		4	Comprehensive materials issued	Skills to deal with difficult situations. Knowledge re; perspective of service user. Skills in using practical tools		Overall a generally interesting and informative course.
4		3		4		Comprehensive pack with great information Confidence in self	No	Very enjoyable training
<b>Total - 49</b>		<b>Total - 45</b>		<b>Total - 52</b>				
<b>Average - 3.8</b>		<b>Average - 3.5</b>		<b>Average - 4</b>				

0 = Very Poor/Inadequate    1 = Poor    2 = Average/Acceptable    3 = Good    4 = Excellent