

Adult Carers Voice Meeting

Held on 22 April 2024

at the Falkirk Carers Centre

Chaired by Sharlene Ramage, Carers Centre Participation and Engagement Worker

Notes by Justine Wilson, Adult Carer Support Worker.

Apologies by Carol Ann IJB representative.

Attendees

There were 14 carers with a variety of caring situations.

Jaynie from the Coalition of Carers.

David Miller from the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Kaela Taylor and Kirsten Harrower Carers Centre Staff.

Sharing of Information

Following on from carers requests for information regarding Carers Rights and Self-Directed Support, Sharlene invited Jaynie Mitchell from the Coalition of Carers to share her expertise in Carers Rights and Self-Directed Support.

Jaynie

Jaynie introduced herself and explained a little about her role and experiences of supporting Carers from rural areas to be informed of their Rights as Carers and how they can use Self Directed support in a way that “makes sense to them”.

During the voice Jaynie discussed: -

- Carers Rights & Legislation
- The Carers Act 2016
- Self-Directed Support
- The National Care Service

The Carers Act 2016.

Jaynie spoke about Carers Rights, including the right to request support.

Jaynie stated that carers have no “right” to respite, however, Local Authorities need to consider carers having a break from their caring role.

The National Care Service

Jaynie discussed plans to have a national care service by 2029, she shared her frustrations that the implementation of the National Care Service has been delayed, stating that many carers cannot wait until 2029 for these changes to happen.

Self-Directed Support (SDS)

Jaynie spoke about self-directed support and the different ways that this support can be used. There was continued discussion around the 4 different options of SDS.

Jaynie went on to have discussions around her own personal circumstances and how she used self-directed support to work for her and her family.

Self-Care

Jaynie asked the carers in the room for examples of how they make time for themselves, how they relax, and how they would spend their time if they had some time without the cared for person.

Guardianship and Power of Attorney

Jaynie discussed the importance of having this in place and for carers to find out if they are eligible to apply for legal aid.

Other

Mention was made of Creative Breaks and Respite and how these can also be used to ensure carers have a break. Sharlene stated that the Carers Centre can support with Guardianship and Power of Attorney advice. A carer stated that she enjoys knitting and Sharlene shared information about central wellbeing's group.

Points Made by Carers and some Carers views.

- Thornton Gardens - this offers respite for young adults. During and immediately after COVID this was opened up for respite for older people but has now reverted to offering respite just for young adults. Very positive feedback about this service overall, however there was discussion around paid carers wearing work uniform when in the community with the cared for person, a carer has already raised this point with staff at Thornton Gardens and she is saddened that her views have not been respected.
- SDS - some carers seemed surprised that SDS could be used in a variety of ways, carers spoke about how they would really benefit from using SDS to have a separate space in their own home to have some free time whilst being

very close by if the cared for person required support. Carers are keen to find out more about SDS.

- Self-Care- carers shared their hobbies and interests such as knitting, land rover racing, walking, reading, having time alone, going to concerts, meeting friends, and going for lunch.
- Carers and Employment - the difficulties of managing paid employment and caring and other financial issues were raised by a variety of carers. The lack of services to support working carers was mentioned as was the issues of Carers Allowance only being paid till retirement age was raised.
- Guardianship- Carer stated that they were charged for this, discussion around if this should be paid for by the carer.
- Hospital discharge- Carer mentioned that the person that they care for was in hospital, the carer was unaware that they can ask for a discharge plan, the carer felt that there was no communication between hospital staff and himself (FVRH), the carer was unaware that there is carer support in hospital, some other carers were unaware of these hospital supports.
- Many carers said that they have to "fight" to get support- one carer felt "exhausted" trying to get supports in place for respite and mentioned that the cared for persons benefits were stopped on hospital admission which caused additional stress and financial pressure.

Justine Wilson and Kaela Taylor 22 April 2024.

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