

Adult Carers Voice Meeting

Held on 26th October 2026

at The Carers Centre Falkirk

Chaired by Sharlene Ramage (Carers Centre Participation Development Worker)
Online option facilitated by Yvonne Muirhead (Adult Carer Support Worker).
Notes by Dana Horsburgh Carer Representative, Sharlene Ramage and Zoom assistant.

Attendees

There were 26 people in attendance, Carers with a variety of caring situations, Carer Representatives, staff and staff who are also unpaid Carers.
Yvonne Muirhead (Adult Carer Support Worker).
Lyn McKay- Citizens Advice.
Elaine Nicholson- Citizens Advice.
Sarah Patrick- Caeser and Howie.
Rosie Connor- Dollar Park Dementia Service.

Quick recap

The meeting focused on providing information and support for carers. Sharlene opened with administrative reminders, including zoom recording for minute taking purposes and announced upcoming consultations with the MECS (Mobile Emergency Care) team, Central Advocacy Partners and Nurse Consultant for Dementia and Delirium Yvonne Carins.



Rosie Connor from Dollar Park Dementia Service informed carers of their one-to-one, day group, and evening/weekend services, explaining referral processes and options for support. A carer shared a personal experience of struggling to access support. The discussion then shifted to legal protections, where Sarah Patrick from Caeser and Howie explained the differences between power of attorney and guardianship, including costs, registration timelines, and the role of the Public Guardian. The session concluded with a discussion on advanced directives and the importance of documenting end-of-life wishes.

Carer Services Updates and Consultations

Sharlene provided updates and shared information about upcoming consultations for carers. Sharlene announced that NHS Palliative Care is reviewing out-of-hours palliative care services and requested carers to complete a 10-minute questionnaire if they have experiences of palliative care that they would like to share (please contact Sharlene for the link to this).
Sharlene provided an update from the NHS Keep Well Service, the team is transitioning to a text message service for annual health check reminders, therefore letters will not be sent to everyone, if you think you may be due a check-up, please phone 01786 434 044.
Upcoming events include consultations with Lynne Adams and Rachel McIntyre on November 6th 1pm to 3pm, Bob Thomson from Central Advocacy Partners on November 13th 10am to 12noon, and a dementia session with Yvonne and Emma Douglas on November 19th 10am to 12noon, along with a Carers' Rights Day drop-in session from 12.30pm to 6pm.

Dollar Park Dementia Service Overview

Rosie presented the Dollar Park Dementia Service, explaining their mission to support people with dementia to remain at home well for as long as possible. Rosie outlined four main services: one-on-one support in people's homes or in the community, day groups at Dollar Park, evening/weekend services, and a chill and chat service (chill and chat is a peer support group for those who are living in the earlier stages of Dementia, this groups currently runs on Wednesday mornings at Morrisons café, you can phone



the service to register your interest in attending). The one-on-one service requires social work referral and involves tailored support plans with dedicated support workers; reviews are carried out regularly to ensure the service is meeting everyone's needs. Carers are involved in the conversations about the supports and services which may work best.

During the initial conversation Rosie explained that the staff team will try to discover hobbies/interests etc so that they can plan activities to meet the persons needs/interests. Sharlene asked if carers whose cared for person is using the Dollar Park Dementia Services can ask staff for dementia specific advice, Rosie said that carers can and do ask for advice. Rosie explained that common things that carers and family members ask are things such as changes in the cared for persons behaviours/ toilet needs etc.

Rosie shared more information about the one-to-one and day group services at Dollar Park and Dundas Resource Centre (dependant on where you live depends on the service that you would attend), require a referral from social work. Rosie explained that the day group service includes activities like intergenerational work with nurseries and runs from 10am to 3pm, while the evening/weekend service offers respite and support and there is no need for a social work referral for this part of the service. Rosie mentioned that some of the services operate on a self-referral basis with no social work referral needed, there is currently a waiting list for some services. A carer asked if there were any age restrictions, Rosie explained that most people are aged 65+, this led to a discussion around young onset dementia and the lack of services and supports in Falkirk for carers and people of a younger age who are living with dementia.

Dementia Services Access Challenges

Some carers discussed challenges with accessing dementia services, a carer in the room asked why their social worker did not tell them about the Dollar Park Dementia service. Rosie explained that there may be new staff that are learning about all the services. Rosie explained that the Dollar Park Dementia Service provides presentations to social work staff to inform their staff about their services and supports.



Rosie went on to discuss pricing details, with day group services costing £10 per week and one-to-one services costing £20 per hour, this cost in some cases can be covered if you have an allocated self-directed support budget. Rosie will share information/carers views from today's session with her manager and provide an update to Sharlene

Power of Attorney/Guardianship

Sarah discussed the differences between powers of attorney and guardianship, explaining that powers of attorney (POA) are generally quicker, cheaper, and less stressful than going through court for guardianship. Sarah highlighted that powers of attorney are currently taking around 13 months to register, however in urgent cases can sometimes be registered within 2-3 weeks if expedited. Guardianship applications take approximately 18 months at this moment in time. A carer mentioned that this process seems to be quicker if you care for a child and are reviewing your Guardianship rather than initially applying for this.
Sarah emphasised the importance of registering powers of attorney. Carers in the room suggested that carers should also register this power of attorney with relevant organisations like banks and HMRC, noting that Scottish powers of attorney require different registration processes than English and Irish ones. The discussion also covered legal aid eligibility for powers of attorney and guardianship and the importance of checking if you are eligible for this, not all solicitors can provide legal aid.

Sarah spoke about the need to have power of attorney in place, she explained that some people think that having a will in place is suffice, however if someone is alive and has lost capacity a will does not equate to power for the carer to make decisions on behalf of the cared for person, only power of attorney and guardianship can do this. Being married does not grant you powers to make decisions on behalf of the cared for person either. Sarah explained the importance of appointing a power of attorney who will have your best interest at heart and explained that you can have more than one power of attorney too. Sarah finished by discussing advanced directive, this is a plan that is made should you become extremely poorly, it explains what you would like to happen and takes the pressure of family members.



Carers views/comments/experiences

- A carer shared that they did not know about the supports and services that the Dollar Park Dementia Service provide, they had been caring for their cared for person for 4 years before they moved to live in a care home.
- A carer asked what happens when the person is no longer suitable for the service, Rosie explained that, the Dollar Park team would work with the family and the social work team to plan for next steps.
- A carer wondered if there is a limited amount of time that people can use the Dollar Park Dementia Services, Rosie explained that people can use the service for as long as it is meeting the person with dementia's needs.
- A carer asked about support with going to the toilet, Rosie explained that they can support people to go to the toilet.
- A carer rep mentioned that carers coming to consultations have shared that there has been long waits for social workers to carry out assessments, they explained that this is causing carers to miss out on supports and services that they need to prevent burnout, other carers in the room agreed.
- A carer asked if Dollar Park provide groups and activities for the carer to attend with the cared for person, this is not something that is currently provided, however Rosie will feed this back to her management team.
- A carer asked how many hours the cared for people can access the one-one service, Rosie explained that this depends on the person and can be anything from 1 hours to 3 hours per day.
- A carer explained that Guardianship seems to be a quicker process for parent carers rather than someone who is seeking this due to the likes of dementia progression.
- There was discussion around the responsibilities of being someone's power of attorney.



- A carer shared their experience with HMRC and how difficult it was for them to try and speak with someone about their cared for persons benefits, this carer urged people to let HMRC know as soon as possible if they are someone's POA.
- A carer shared that a cared for person they know, does not want POA in place and the carer is aware of how important this is, Sarah said that the carer can only try their best.
- Lyn at CAB explained that many carers are struggling when the cared for person is unexpectedly admitted to hospital and no power of attorney is in place, this makes this situation even more stressful for the carer.

Upcoming consultations

- We will welcome Yvonne Cairns Dementia and Delirium Lead from NHS Forth Valley and Emma Douglas who is the Lead for the Adult Community Mental Health Team. Yvonne and Emma will continue conversation about how they are using your views to make NHS services and supports better for carers and people who are living with Dementia. We hope that you can join us on Thursday the 19th of November from 10am to 12noon.
- On Thursday the 19th of November from 12.30pm to 6pm we will host Carers Right Day, this session will be a drop- in session where carers can learn more about the fantastic services that we provide here in the carers centre, are more about your rights as a carer too, we do hope you can join us, there will be light refreshments too!
- The next Carers Voice is on Monday the 30th of November 10am to 12noon, we will welcome Tena Cochrane from Headway and organisation who support people who have survived a traumatic brain injury/stoke etc and Justine Wilson from the Carers Centre Adult Carer Support Team who will tell you everything that we can do at the centre to support you in your caring role.