

Meeting Note – Carers’ Panel

Title	Carers’ Panel
Venue	Zoom
Date	16/12/2021
Attendees	Jacki Aston, Dorothy Barbour, Helen Wedgwood, Lorraine Sandie, Kirsteen Powell (CoEL)
Apologies	Agnes Stevenson, Anne Bisset, Patricia Gordon

Agenda

- Introductions
- Review of last months’ meeting note and actions
- Any issues Panel members wish to raise / Panel member updates
- Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) feedback request – what volunteer roles could RVS develop that would help carers?
- Carer engagement opportunities
 - Carers Reps to help with options appraisal for building based services for adults under 65 (redesign of services for Adults with Complex Needs)
- Any other business

Summary of discussions

Panel members approved meeting note for November – no changes made.

Appealing benefits decisions

Kirsteen updated Panel members on conversation with Lisa McIlwraith, Welfare Rights Coordinator at CoEL, about support for carers with the appeals process. CoEL can support carers and the people they care for up to stage of mandatory reconsiderations but no further – the organisation does not have the resources to help with tribunals. Citizens Advice or the Welfare Rights Team at East Lothian Council may be able to offer support at the tribunal stage. There are also self-help resources produced by the Child Poverty Action Group <https://cpag.org.uk/scotland/welfare-rights/appeals-toolkit/self-help-level>. However, Lisa’s advice was to seek support with the original application to reduce the need for an appeal at a later stage. Helen commented that CoEL had helped her to apply for entitlements for her mum. Dorothy said another carer had spoken highly of the Welfare Right Team’s drop in service at Brunton Hall, Musselburgh.

National Care Service

Helen asked about next steps for the National Care Service. Kirsteen explained that the Scottish Government was due to publish a summary of consultation responses in January 2022, with the aim of putting a National Care Service Bill before Parliament in summer 2022. Kirsteen suggested Panel members might wish to ask MSP Paul McLennan to comment on the National Care Service and the consultation and development process when he speaks to the group in January.

Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) volunteers

Kirsteen asked if anyone had ideas for possible roles for RVS volunteers. Lorraine and Jacki suggested a volunteer escort for people who need support to attend appointments. Lorraine

explained her elderly mum needed someone to accompany her to appointments to offer her reassurance in the waiting room, to be her ears in the consulting room and to remember or record what was said. Jacki said her husband also had difficulty processing and retaining information and needed someone with him for this purpose. Patient transport offered support getting to and from an appointment, but not with the actual appointment itself, so there was a gap in services. Dorothy wanted to know what roles RVS volunteers currently fulfil. Kirsteen agreed to find out.

Carers' Rep for options appraisal

Panel members discussed call from East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership (ELHSCP) for carers to help them with an options appraisal of building based services for under 65s as part of the redesign of services for adults with complex needs. Neither Lorraine nor Jacki had heard of the resource centres (Fisherrow, Tynebank and Port Seton). Panel members agreed that Carers' Reps should have direct knowledge of the services from their experiences of loved ones accessing or trying to access the resource centres. Kirsteen agreed to speak to Panel Member Patty Gordon to see if she would be interested in being a Carers' Rep as her daughter attended Fisherrow prior to the pandemic.

Carer's card

Panel members discussed a focus for next year to raise awareness of carers' issues. It was agreed that a Carer's Card (with discounts from local businesses and a feature in the East Lothian Courier to coincide with Carers' Week) would be a positive project that different stakeholders could rally round. Helen suggested asking MSP Paul McLennan to support a national and/or local Carer's Card scheme. Jacki shared her husband's Headway Card and Just Can't Wait Bladder and Bowel Card as examples of how such cards can support carers and/or the people they care for. Kirsteen highlighted the sunflower lanyard scheme. Lorraine said she had used the lanyard for her son with additional support needs when travelling and found it very helpful. Jacki asked where carers could obtain sunflower lanyards in East Lothian for the people they care for.

Next steps/ Key decisions

- Carers' Panel to focus on Carer's Card as project for 2022, with article in East Lothian Courier to coincide with Carers Week (June 2022).

Actions		
Who	What	By when
Kirsteen	Arrange date with Jess to speak to Panel RE: CoEL business plan.	12/11/2021 Outstanding
Kirsteen	Ask Panel member Patty Gordon if she would be interested in getting involved in options appraisal for building based services for adults under the age of 65 / Redesign of services for adults with complex needs.	23/12/21
Kirsteen	Ask RVS what roles volunteers currently perform to help identify potential gaps in services.	23/12/2021

Kirsteen	Find out how/where carers can access sunflower lanyards in East Lothian	23/12/2021
Kirsteen	Invite Carers' Lead/Strategy Officer back to speak to the Panel in early 2022.	31/01/2022

Carer engagement opportunities – December 2021

Immediate (next 4 – 6 weeks)

#1 Guest speaker MSP Paul McLennan – Carers’ Panel January 2022

MSP Paul McLennan will join the first Panel meeting of the New Year, from 10:30 to 11:30 on Wednesday 12th January, to hear from you and discuss issues affecting carers.

Medium term (next 3 months)

#1 Carers’ Reps – Adults with Complex Needs

East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership (ELHSCP) is in the process of redesigning services for adults with complex needs (adults with learning disabilities, adults with severe mental health difficulties). They are looking for carers to help them with an options appraisal of building based services for under 65s. The options appraisal will explore and evaluate different models for delivering the services currently provided by the three resources centres, Port Seton, Tynebank and Fisherrow. Would any Panel members be interested in getting involved? Unfortunately, I do not have any more details at this stage.

#2 National Care Service (NCS)

The Scottish Government’s National Care Service consultation closed on 2nd November. A summary of the outcomes of the consultation will be published in January 2022. Work on drafting the Bill to bring in the NCS will begin shortly. The Bill is expected to be introduced to Parliament in summer 2022. There will be an ongoing programme of engagement over the next 18 months. I will share with you opportunities for carers to give their views on the developing plans as they emerge.

#3 Haddington Farmers Market

I will continue to see if we can get a slot for an information stall. As I explained previously, availability depends on a regular stallholder cancelling their booking.

Hot Topics in November

COEL is still actively pursuing the following topics with ELHSCP and elected officials but there are no updates to share at present:

- Difficulty seeing GPs especially Riverside Medical Practice
- Difficulty accessing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Re-opening of resource centres for adults with complex needs
- Shortage of packages of care/ temporary changes to existing package of care in light of this shortage