**Carers Panel meeting 26.4.23**

*Hybrid meeting CoEL office and Zoom*

*CoEL staff member: Gemma Twells-Davison, Volunteer and Training Coordinator.*

*Guest: Louise Kennedy*

**Meeting Agenda**

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| **Louise Kennedy, Haddington Carer Support Worker – guest speaker** | Panel members heard a presentation from Louise Kennedy (CoEL Carer Support Worker and Photographer) about the different ways in which carers' stories can be conveyed. In the discussion that followed the presentation, panel members discussed ideas about how to utilise photography, film and audio. Members came up withs striking images representing something pertinent to them about their caring role. The examples given were as follows:* Anne shared a story about a photograph of her husband when he was smiling. She described this photo as a 'rare treasure', because smiles were not common when he was unwell.
* Jacki described a broken measuring jug, that she had smashed at a time of feeling frustrated due to her caring role.
* Mary shared an image of a calendar with all of the dates crossed out, to represent how all-consuming a caring role can be.

It was decided that we will move forwards with this idea in the following way: Each carer/ panel member who wishes to be involved will choose something that will be photographed that represents their experience of caring. The image will be overlayed with an audio of their voice sharing why the image was chosen and what it represents. The image should represent something that the carer/panel member would like to convey to professionals in health and social care. *Gemma to write up summary of plan, circulate it to wider panel to establish who wishes to be involved. Louise will remain involved in terms of development of photography, Gemma to organise audio. Photographs can be taken in setting of carers’ choice.*  |
| **Last meeting note review** | Any comment or update on actionsLibraries – feedback to be sent next Tues. *No further comments added in todays meeting.*InfluencersUpdated panel members that Jess Wade is meeting with Paul Mclennan and asked if panel members would like anything to be raised. Members to send points by email to Gemma FAO Jess.Panel members keen to meet with Paul Mclennan following the meeting with Jess (15.5.23). Anne to refer to notes from hustings. ACSP – Comments due 27.4.23.Some additional comments were provided which have now been collated and sent to Maria Burton. Short breaks – on todays agenda.  |
| **Update – Jess Wade** | Headlines only this month – more detailed report for Mays meetingmeeting booked in with Paul McLennan MSP along with local council officials (Maria B, Laura K) so if there is anything the panel would like me to raise, please do let me know. Also, if everyone hasn't seen this yet:<https://tfn.scot/news/national-care-service-delayed-by-scottish-government> |
| **East Lothian Short Breaks Statement**  | Panel members are invited to give their views on Short Breaks Services Statement review. Information below from Maria Burton. Draft statements are also included in panel papers for April’s panel meeting. Please use questions to focus feedback.*The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 places a duty on all local authorities to prepare and publish a Short Breaks Services Statement. A short breaks services statement is a****statement of information about what short breaks services are available locally and nationally to give carers a break from their caring role****.**We are now reviewing these in East Lothian and would be grateful for your help in doing so. There are separate statements for adult carers of adults and parent carers of children with additional needs, please feel free to review the one most relevant to you.**The draft statements are attached, please could you review the information in them and answer the following questions:**1. Is there any information that is either out of date or inaccurate?**2. Are there any other resources you are aware of for accessing breaks from caring?**3. Do you have any case studies and/or images that could be included to illustrate the range of breaks from caring?**4. How do we make these a useful resource to carers, where should they be available, to who, in what format?*Panel feedback as follows:Specific points to be sent by email. No points were noted as out of date or inaccurate. No additional resources were suggested by panel members. Panel member Mary received a grant in 2021 to enable her to take a break from caring. She used this to purchase wool. Mary’s outlet is knitting and she sees this as very therapeutic. Mary offered for a case study to be included about this to illustrate an alternative kind of break from caring utilising a grant through BFC grant through Carers of East Lothian.Carers made suggestions that the statements are in libraries and doctors surgeries. Format was discussed at length, as many carers may not be IT literate/ may not wish to engage with a digital resource. Members felt that ideally a booklet form resource would be accessible to all. However, members referred to historical conversations about how difficult it is to keep a document like this live. Discussion also focused on the breadth of the statements. One member shared that she feels she does not have an ‘academic’ brain and that the statement is complex, long and overwhelming. Another panel member confirmed that they feel the resource is long and that it is not helpful for carers to be presented with too much information. Discussion around how carers could have access only to the information that is relevant to their situation. Members did not know how this could be achieved, but felt that it would be less overwhelming for carers. |
| **Carers survey** | No additional suggestions. |
| **AOB** | May meeting cancelled due to training. Next meeting July 12th.Informed panel of library roadshow in Carers’ Week. |