**Agenda Carers Panel 27.3.25**

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| **Matters arising from last meeting**   * GP Practice Work   GTD Updated panel that BR chair of the GP Practice network meeting no longer chairs this forum and that this is now owned by the GP’s themselves. Suggested that I email someone in the network with regard to panel visit to the network. GTD followed up by emailing Pracitce Manager where there has already been some interaction. Response as follows:  “Some time last year we had a very good presentation by CoEL and we changed a bit of our registration process and ensured that Carers were better highlighted/signposted to services.  I appreciate that you will be coming from a slightly different perspective.  Can I suggest we leave this a little longer before progressing?”  This may be referring to a presentation from HSCP. GTD responded to manager to clarify this and to ask if the panel could hear more about the changes that have been made as they will be delighted to hear about this. Also, asked that we arrange a date in future that panel can work towards. Awaiting a response.   * Update on former carer membership CoEL groups   GTD thanked panel for their useful feedback about former carers accessing groups. Informed them that feedback had been taken on board and that changes have now been made to group agreement enabling former carers to attend groups should capacity allow this. All singing group members have now been informed of this, and capacity has now been increased to 30 for this group. Rule applies to all groups across the board allowing consistency.   * Carers Week   GTD updated the panel with the programme for Carers Week 2025 which was finalised. |
| * Organisational updates   GTD read updates from Jess Wade.  CoEL have been awarded the contract to deliver Adult Carer Services across East Lothian following a successful tender process. We are delighted to have been selected as the preferred provider and will start work on the new contract from July 2025. The contract is for two years, with the option of two additional two-year extensions, so a potential total of six years. Whilst this is excellent new and provides a good level of financial security, the overall contract value remains fixed at £492,000 per year for the whole period, which, of course, represents a real-terms cut year-on-year. So, as an organisation we will need to work creatively to ensure we can continue to deliver high quality services for local carers throughout the lifetime of the contract.  In other news, I have recently been offered a new role elsewhere in the voluntary sector and will be leaving Carers of East Lothian early in May. I am so grateful to everybody for the chance to work with you all and to support the development of the organisation in my time here. It really has been an incredible opportunity and I am extremely proud of what we have achieved together. The establishment and growth of the Carers Panel is definitely one of the highlights; it was a key priority when I came in to post in 2020 and it is wonderful to see how much the Panel has grown and the strength you now have as a group of local carers working together to improve things for carers and the people you care for locally. I wish you, and the organisation, all the very best and will no doubt keep in touch. |
| * East Lothian Carers Strategy 26 – 29 development work   Explored HSCP proposed consultation questions for the local carers strategy with the panel. Following the discussion, shared the following feedback with Maria Burton.  *There was an overall consensus that the questions are suitable. [The panel members] made the following points/ suggestions on the wording:*   1. *What is the biggest issue for you as a carer?*   *Suggestion that you consider: what is the most serious issue for you as a carer/ what is the most common issue for you as a carer.*   1. *What would make the biggest difference to you?*   *Suggestion that you include 'as a carer' at the end of this question as well, as carers are likely to default to answering about the cared for person.*   1. *What improvements to support for carers do you think could be made in East Lothian?*   *……important to clarify within this question that you are not asking for how the carers centre could be improved.*  *Some felt the open nature of the questions might leave carers unsure of where to start. They also raised the point that you will likely find yourself with a huge variety of answers that are difficult to theme. I explained what we discussed about pulling themes out in the same way that the pops work did. Some members asked if it would give you more quality data it you used multiple choice/ steered carers with possible answers.*  *There were lots of questions about how you will reach hidden carers/ carers who might not engage with traditional consultation methods/ carers who do not speak English as a first language, young adult carers, elderly carers, carers who may not be comfortable completing forms, carers where there are digital literacy issues. I explained that you will engage with a variety of methods including focus groups, 1:1 conversation,  questionnaires, our survey, via other organisations. I felt that they would like a wider conversation about how the engagement will be carried out. Since you are visiting in May, perhaps the session could focus 50 per cent on updating on the current strategy and the other half could focus on their questions around the future strategy engagement.* |
| * Working for Change Collecitve   Working For Change Collecting visited the panel and shared information about their current stigma campaign. |
| * CoEL Annual Survey of Carers |
| Any other business |
| Next meeting date: 8.5.25 |