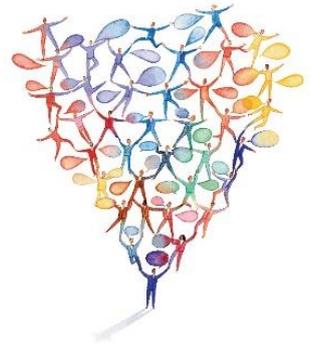




Angus Carers Centre
supporting carers



Carer's Conversation Day
12th June 2019
Angus Carers Centre

This will have an impact on my work – I will be more aware of carers and their needs and how I can help in signposting and listening

I thought Angus Carer's Centre was just about people getting together to knit and gossip instead of providing a much needed lifeline

Thank you for the opportunity to feed into the process – it makes me nostalgic for my previous working life and is so good to feel useful

Good to hear real life experiences, thanks for people's honesty and sharing

It is important that we reach the people who do NOT recognise they are carers and can access support as / when required

Facilitators

Peter Burke, Carers Rep IJB & ACVN Rep
Alison Myles, CEO Angus Carers Centre

Participants

24 unpaid carers and paid workers
(including some people who are both) attended

Ruth Bergen

Joy Dean

Lindsay Cook

Lenny Gunning

Hannah McDade

J Forteath

Gillian M Officer

May Clark

Krissy Raffan

Alison Russell

Carol Torrance

Sandra Russell

Isla Torrie

Julia Bell

Abbi Jackson

Linda Lamond

Jane Skene

Lesley Alexander

Janet Owers

Sharon Bandeen

Caroline Petrie

Evelyn McLennan

Irene Thompson

Sandra Dorward

Rationale

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 gives each local authority and relevant health board a duty to publish a carer's strategy which includes:

- (a) Plans for identifying relevant carers and obtaining information about the care they provide or intend to provide to cared-for persons in the local authority's area,
- (b) An assessment of the demand for support to relevant carers,
- (c) The support available to relevant carers in the authority's area from— (i) the authority, (ii) the relevant health board, (iii) such other persons and bodies as the authority and relevant health board consider appropriate,
- (d) An assessment of the extent to which demand for support to relevant carers is currently not being met,
- (e) Plans for supporting relevant carers,
- (f) Plans for helping relevant carers put arrangements in place for the provision of care to cared-for persons in emergencies,
- (g) An assessment of the extent to which plans for supporting relevant carers may reduce any impact of caring on relevant carers' health and wellbeing,
- (h) The intended timescales for preparing adult carer support plans and your carer statements,
- (i) Such other information as the authority and relevant health board consider appropriate.

Angus Health & Social Partnership (AHSCP) have overall responsibility for ensuring the 2019 – 2022 Carers Strategy in Angus is published, monitored and reviewed. The AHSCP has delegated this authority, which means that they have given this work to the Angus Carers Strategic Partnership Group (ACSPG), which used to be called the Carers Planning & Development Group. The ACSPG is made up of representatives from Angus Council, AHSCP, Angus Carers Voice Network and Angus Carers Centre.

Introduction

This report covers the second Carers Conversation held before the Carers Strategy is published in Angus. Following a very successful event in August 2018 Angus Carers Voice Network (ACVN) decided to host a second event as part of their contribution to National Carer Week which is arranged in June each year by Carers Scotland. The theme for this year's Carers Week was "Getting Carers Connected". Carers Scotland released a report on 7 June 2019 the report compares carers' experience of loneliness and well-being compared with the rest of the population. Findings supported a common perception that the numbers of adults providing unpaid care could be significantly higher than previously thought (A copy of the "Getting Carers Connected" Report is available at carersweek.org, or by contacting Angus Carers Centre).

This aim of the day was to bring together workers with unpaid carers; to have a review of the Carers Conversations 2018; to check that the priorities that had been written up on that day were ok and to

get some practical ways of encouraging people who care for someone to get the support they may need and how we can make it ok for them to ask for help.

Before the conversations started people were asked to read over this poem which had very kindly been given to us by a carer who was not able to attend. It was agreed that this would help set the focus and the importance of our task.

Just for one day

Being a carer
 Tough and hard
 A different life I've never had
 One of blessings and of joy
 One of sadness and destroy
 Helplessly trying to do your best
 Strength and sorrow, a mighty test
 On your knees and battling hard
 Reaching out for something they've never had
 Trying to give them all you can
 Only to be stolen by the misinformed man
 Fighting every basic need
 In a world caught up in shameful greed
 A care system that is caving in
 Only love will conquer and seize a win

Snared in a trap, that's lost direction
 What happened to love and mutual affection?
 Barriers that are often all man made
 Oh how I wish that they would all just fade
 Shinning bright are those that need us most
 Humanity, love, they do not cost
 You can't put a price on life and wellbeing
 If only our politicians would *all* start agreeing
 Why can't they see what we are all seeing?

At the heart of it all are the people no less
 The ones that survive this shameful mess
 Those who deserve so much more
 They are the ones that pick you up off the floor
 They are the loved ones that ensure you don't give up
 Even when they're down on their luck

A developed county that's broken and bruised
 Leaving people hurt, lonely, lost and confused
 A right to life, health and well being
 If only everyone could see what a Carer is seeing

Walk in my shoes just for one day
 Then you will see cuts and reform don't pay
 Lives shattered and relying on desperate hope
 It is no wonder carers and the cared for just can't cope
 Let's make a stance now and stand up and fight
 Carers.....and those we care for - we all have a RIGHT!

For info on the author see Page 11



Angus Carers Voice Network
Invites you to take part in their

2nd Carers Conversation

Wednesday 12th June 2019

10.00am – 2.45pm

Angus Carers Centre, 8 Grant Road, Arbroath, DD11 1JN



Programme

10.00 - 10.30	Register and Refreshments Welcome
10.40 - 10.50	Progress from 1 st Carers Conversation in August 2018 Morning Task Intro “Caring from an unpaid carers perspective”
10.50 - 11.00	Break
11.00 - 12.00	“Caring from an unpaid carers perspective” How will we embed this into the Angus Carers Strategy 2019 -2022?
12.00 - 13.00	Lunch
13.00 - 14.10	“How to identify hidden carers” or should the question be - “How to support unpaid carers who are hiding in plain sight?” <i>What’s your contribution to changing the way we support those who look after someone else.</i>
14.10	... Tasks to take forward in 2019/20
14.30	Summing Up ... Invitation to 3 rd Carers Conversation in 2020

The morning concentrated upon the role of a carer and the toll it takes. The room was divided into five table groups, each working a different strand of the Angus Carers Strategy 2019-2022.

These were:

Grownups: Carers are recognised and supported as key partners in the planning and delivery of care.

Cuddles: Carer's needs are fully assessed and ongoing support offered.

Wealthy: Carer's financial needs are addressed. is improved.

Fun: Carers are supported to have a life outside caring.

Happy: Carers wellbeing and mental health.

Each table was to discuss what they felt the priorities of the strategies needed to be for each group. The results were as follows.

Grownups:

Carers are recognised and supported as key partners in the planning and delivery of care.

1. Greater focus on quality of life and supporting carers to continue in their role.
2. Sympathetic assessment and timely action to meet physical and mental wellbeing.
3. Discharge from hospital, carers need to be a part of the conversation, communicating the diagnosis with the carer.
4. Easier access to advocacy
5. Carers should be recognised as a diverse population and the role suitably rewarded.
6. The future should be planned for earlier to avoid crises, need to work ahead of time on the emergency plan.



Cuddles:

Carer's needs are fully assessed, and ongoing support offered.

Sympathetic action as and when physical adaptations are needed.

1. Greater focus on quality of life and supporting carers to continue in their role.
2. Planning for the future for individuals and for the wider picture.
3. Emergency planning needs to include post bereavement support and what happens when the carer is ill.
4. Diversity of caring role – whose needs are we meeting – children and young people do not come under the IJB and there needs to be transitions put into place.
5. Caring for young - planning for the future, changing roles – can be caring for the elderly and young at the same time.
6. Opportunity to enhance support through adult protection – A safety net provided (groups like Men's Shed, U3A, etc. need to be encouraged).



7. Discharge at hospital – carers need to be part of the conversation; diagnosis needs to be communicated with carers and families.
8. Regular reviews of assessments / support plans (with support if needed) and carer integral to process.

Wealthy:

Carers' financial needs are addressed

Greater focus on quality of life and supporting carers to continue in their role.

1. Carers should be suitably rewarded for their caring role.
2. Planning for the future – for individuals and for the wider picture.
 - a. Prior to crisis point
 - b. Information needs to be available and consistent
 - c. Family links identified
 - d. Possible volunteer link
3. Caring for young – planning for the future, changing roles, bereavement is difficult and can be caring for the elderly and young at the same time.



Fun:

Carers are supported to have a life outside caring

1. Greater focus on quality of life and supporting carers to continue in their role.
2. Reframe the myth that a break from caring is a 'reward'! It is about wellbeing and allows the carer to continue in their caring role.
3. Respite from caring is something to look forward to
 - a. There is a desire to provide it
 - b. Possible lack of availability of suitable facilities for the cared for
 - c. Information needs to be clear and available to carers
 - d. Registered carers need to access available services
4. Carers need time away from caring role, social outings are necessary for mental and physical wellbeing.
5. Carers need friends outside of the caring role.
6. Carers need time away from caring role out with paid work.
7. Not only should information be available, but there should be a target to help those who do not identify themselves as a carer.



Happy:



Carers wellbeing and mental health is improved

1. Mental health of carers needs to be taken as seriously as the carer's physical health. This is still not happening.
2. It is vital to have Emergency Plans in place in order to relieve stress and worry for carer and cared for person.
3. Support for families to have more open conversations about the future and their wishes and aspirations.
4. Need to have pro-active engagement with carers opposed to crisis management.
5. Employers need to be more supportive to carers to keep them in employment.

At the end of the session we found that no matter what strand was being discussed there were some areas which were headlines for all the groups:

These were:

1. All reports and policies should be checked for carer impact under the Equalities Act.
2. Income Support for those when not able to work because of caring role and GP support and understanding was really important.
3. Knowing the rights of the person being cared for versus the rights of the carer.
4. Easier access to consistent information to meet the needs of both carer and cared for person by phone.
5. Employers need to recognise carers, allowing them to do the job, realising personal needs, and supporting them to keep them in employment by offering:
 - a. Flexible working hours
 - b. Communicating with employer without feeling of punishment for doing so
 - c. Knowing what support is available for flexible jobs – job seeker organisation understanding.

The afternoon session was a discussion on how to identify carers, how we could help the carers and what the results would be.

How to identify carers.

1. Anyone in a professional role that includes home visiting needs to keep a look out for the carer.
2. Employers need to be on the lookout for carers.
3. Neighbours and friends can help identify carers.
4. Specialist support groups need to be alerted to look for carers.
5. Have a flowchart of what to look for.
6. Talks in the schools helping children to identify themselves as carers.
7. Schools and workplaces need to be asking questions of people who are absent, encouraging conversation, not interrogating, but keeping the conversation open.
8. Signpost and offer information to identify caring roles:
 - a. GP surgeries
 - b. Volunteer Organisations
 - c. Care Providers
 - d. Workplaces
 - e. Schools
 - f. Colleges
 - g. DWP
 - h. Community Buildings and Hubs
 - i. Website, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
 - j. Online screening
 - k. Buses
 - l. Banks
9. Awareness raising within workforce teams.
10. Online Screening / quiz to self-assess.
11. Overcome the barrier and fears of organisation's lack of understanding.
12. Actively listen to people we are in touch with:
 - a. How much 'me time' do you REALLY get?
 - b. Help with referrals
 - c. Be alert to trigger points, medical conditions, behaviour changes
13. Clinical staff having proper conversation about next stages of permanent conditions of person cared for.
14. Aim for equity of information and services.

What will you do for the carers?

1. Listen
2. Support and encourage
3. Refer to Angus Carers Centre and other organisations that can be of help
4. Encourage self-identification
5. Encourage to speak to their HR department
6. Have flexible working hours
7. Workplaces keeping the conversation going about people's caring needs
8. Provide pathways (leaflets / other formats) of information
9. Recognise unpaid carers working alongside paid carers
10. Carers inclusion / honesty and language
11. Promote carer support with peer support groups, public events, support agencies
12. Acknowledge other carer responsibilities and when support can be accessed
13. Make a carer's checklist / and care worker checklist

How will we know we are having a positive impact?

1. Carers are happier and healthier
2. Receive feedback from carers and carer's network
3. Need to speak to those who are caring
4. Number of identified carers would increase
5. Ask what works for people
6. Share good practices and success stories

What next?

The draft Angus Carers' Strategy 2019 – 2022 will be available for comment before it is recommended to the Health & Social Care – Integrated Joint Board on 30th October 2019.

For details of how to take part in engagement feedback sessions during August 2019 please email listening@anguscarers.org.uk.



Save the Date. The third Carers Conversation event during this week will be on **Wednesday 10th June 2020** at Angus Carers Centre. If you would like more information about this day nearer the time please email listening@anguscarers.org.uk with the header **Carers Week 2020**.

Written Comments from participants at the end of the day:

1. A lot to be done.
2. Resources – how can we meet the demand?
3. Wasn't sure what to expect but it was really good. Enjoyed meeting new people and hearing other experiences.
4. This will have an impact on my work – I will be more aware of carers and their needs and how I can help in signposting and listening.
5. Very good forum for discussion and learning on 'carers' issues past, present and future.
6. Multi agency and carers mix ideal for discussion and ideas to take forward.
7. Good to hear real life experiences, thanks for people's honesty and sharing.
8. Look forward to 2020 meeting.
9. Definitely benefitted from the event and will incorporate the learning with VAA and homelife.
10. It is important that we reach the people who do NOT recognise they are carers and can access support as / when required.
11. Partnership working to identify support, financial loneliness, etc.
12. Venue and the team were very helpful and knowledgeable.
13. Thank you to Joy for being open and honest and supporting our group to complete the AM and PM tasks.
14. Good to network and find out what other organisations do.
15. Really worthwhile event – networking, new ideas generated and lot of positive energy.
16. I think people really appreciate the opportunity to have time devoted to carer's issues and hopefully carers who attended felt validated in this role and as a citizen.
17. Thought the day went very well.
18. Well done!
19. Would have liked to have seen more carers here.
20. Like the online screening / quiz idea – almost a triage process.
21. Many thanks for a very valuable day.
22. As a carer, I felt the day was set up like a work briefing and for someone who speaks to someone with dementia all day long, struggled to follow.
23. I was unfamiliar with the original priorities that were reviewed at the morning session, it might have helped to have had sight of those in advance of the meeting.
24. I thought Angus Carer's was just about people getting together to knit and gossip instead of providing a much needed lifeline.
25. Thank you for the opportunity to feed into the process – it makes me nostalgic for my previous working life and is so good to feel useful.

From Page 4 - Just for one day

This poem was written by Lois Speed. It was created by Lois a few years ago at a time when she finally realised that she was a "carer". The poem describes Lois when she was quite literally down on her knees trying to cope with all the demands that Carers experience day to day before she became a prominent member of our community. Some of you may know Lois in her current roles as Councillor for Arbroath East & Lunan and Chair of Angus Integrated Joint Board.