

# Shared Care Scotland AGM and Have Your Say event Dunoon, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2009

## Responses from Talking Points exercise & issues raised in final plenary discussion

*In this 'icebreaker' exercise delegates were asked to write their responses to a series of questions posted on flipcharts around the walls of the meeting rooms.*

### What Types of Respite Care Provision Should Be Available?

- Create a choice. In North Ayrshire Council we offer: a new 8 bedded residential unit, holiday breaks with 24 hour support, holiday fund (you can apply to support a holiday break), choice through direct payments, a range of other providers to use, choice of day, night, week, weekend or more.
- Some respite which would allow for a full nights sleep. After a full days work a cupboard being emptied at 3am is not helpful for next days work!
- Stage appropriate to match early preventative needs as well as at later stage – opportunities to get support for holiday type option (ie B & B), placement in families, support in the home so carer can go out, option to do a care home exchange for those needing high level care who might like a break, options for group/couple/family breaks. Just a flexible approach to avoid “not at that point yet” response.

### How Important is Respite To Carers?

- A vital necessity.
- Vital
- Essential but different needs at different times – will not be accepted early on if resource seen as “late on” resource.

### What Do You Think About Carers Having a Guaranteed Entitlement To Respite?

- Yes, a very good idea.
- Don't think it will make a difference unless it is set around 6-8 weeks per year.
- Need to define what is meant by “respite”. Like the idea as it is a “right”. Service users without carers also need respite from time to time as well.

### What Do You Think About People Being Given Money By Local Authorities So That They Can Organise And Manage Respite Themselves?

- This will modernise our service quicker than the current pace.
- This needs to be the choice of carers. Could be positive for some but another worry for others.
- Great idea but also other help to manage the budget. Sometimes it is the access to a personal fund that is important – use it how you want – rather than physically having it in your hand.

### What Do You Think About The Quality And Choice Of Respite Provision Currently Available?

- Needs to be improved upon. Citizen leadership can change this.
- Virtually no respite available for mental health carers particularly BME. Need to think “outside the box”.
- Lack of options for carers with mental health needs overnight in own home.
- For some it is very good, others very limited. Would love to see the same “sky the limit” approach shown to older adults as younger adults to increase choice and flexibility. There is no “national” standard.

### What Would You Like to Say To The Government On The Matter Of Respite Care?

- Prioritise it, give the carers more decision making opportunities, use the concept of citizen leadership.
- Break up the system currently if need be – something to move and make change possible.

### Do You Prefer The Term Short Break Or Respite Or Something Else?

- I believe both should be retained as it is a two part equation – Respite is for the carer, the cared for person then receives a Short Break.
- Respite is an aim. Short Break is the service or experience – I think it would be good to gradually lose the term respite as it can be off putting. At present though people know it – maybe if we changed the term we would get the new approach.

### What Do You Think About Volunteers Playing A Greater Role In Supporting People With Respite and Short Breaks

- Volunteers make a valuable contribution that is underused. Volunteers can help in the cost effective climate in a positive way.

### What Do You Think About The Use Of Telecare As A Potential Means Of Giving Carers More Time For Themselves?

- No responses to this

### **Points raised in final plenary session**

- Importance of communication to ensure that all carers have easy access to information, advice and support about short breaks and respite care.
- Concerns that the money being spent is a/not enough and b/not being used in the most effective way. Needs to be greater accountability.
- Important role for Shared Care Scotland to collect and disseminate good practice.
- Very little respite available for people with mental health problems and their carers. Very few services that can provide effective support in this area. Little recognition of the importance of respite for people with a mental health condition.