**Edinburgh Carer Network**

**Minutes**

**Wednesday 15th May 2024, 10:00am-12:00pm**

**MST**

**Chair: Sarah Pandey, Carer Service Development Manager**

**Minutes: Gavin Hay, Administrative Assistant**

**Welcome, introductions & plan for the meeting. Agree minutes and review actions from 11th Oct.**

Attendees:

* Becca Freeden
* Gloria Lau – Hospital Discharge Carer Support Worker, EHSCP
* Julie Turner – Dementia Awareness Trainer, Age Scotland
* Kathleen Taylor – Engagement & Participation Officer (Carers), Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland
* Kyle Oram – Planning and Commissioning Officer, EHSCP
* Leesa Mackintosh – Carer Support Practitioner for Southeast Locality, VOCAL
* Lucy Butterworth – Edinburgh Carer Services Manager, VOCAL
* Neil Riley – CCA, EHSCP
* Olivia Nathan – Training and Capacity Building Officer, MECOPP
* Rachael Cramer – Information & Resource Worker, Edinburgh Carers Council
* Rosie Moorhead – Adult Carer Services, Capital Carers
* Rubeela Umar – Carer Adviser, The Action Group
* Ruth MacLennan - Manager, Care for Carers
* Ryan Watson – Project Support Officer, EHSCP

**Guest Speaker: Kathleen Taylor, Engagement & Participation Officer (Carer), Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland.**

Kathleen Taylor presented on the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland and Carers’ Rights.

Action: Gavin Hay to share the following resources with attendees:

* Presentation from Kathleen Taylor
* Carers, Consent, and Confidentiality booklet
* Webinar on the AWI act for carers from the MWC and Office of the Public Guardian

Additional discussion points:

* Guardianship can be quite onerous in terms of paperwork and court visits. If the carer is unable to take on this responsibility it then falls to the chief social worker involved.
* The MWC for Scotland are monitoring changes in England and Wales whereby police will no longer attend most mental health emergency calls.
* Assessment of capacity:
  + A doctor, GP and lawyer can all assess if someone has now lost capacity.
  + If establishing Guardianship after capacity has been lost then two doctors are required.
  + When setting up POA the cared-for person should specify in advance as part of the paperwork who can determine that the POA can become activated, for example family members or doctors.
* Please send any information on carer support resources to Kathleen as the carer’s rep at the MWC for Scotland.
* MWCS run a forum for carer support workers several times a year. Please do provide contact details to Kathleen to be added to the mailing list and receive optional invites to these meetings.
* The Edinburgh Carer Strategic Partnership Group may be a suitable venue for Kathleen or her successor.

**Carer Strategic Partnership Group update (standing agenda item)**

Kyle Oram provided an update from the CSPG to ECN members:

* The CSPG are now meeting on a quarterly basis as the key aspects of the Edinburgh Carer’s Strategy have been implemented.
* Performance and Evaluation:
  + Another meeting has been introduced, held, to track the EHSCP carer contracts’ performance and evaluation.
  + Year three of the carer contracts has now finished so Kyle will be working with partners to develop a report for this.
    - Partners have been working with Matters of Focus to use Outnav for reporting on outcomes. This is a new area of reporting.
    - The report should be released around August to September.
    - The report will also give an overview of the CLEAR project, surveying carer support across Edinburgh outwith the EHSCP carer contracts.
* Adult Carer Support Plans:
  + These were launched across third sector partners in July 2023. There will be further reporting in the year-three report.
  + Feedback on ACSPs has generally been very positive.
* Carers survey for 2022 to 2023, run by VOCAL:
  + Kyle met with partners recently to discuss preliminary survey results and some of the challenges facing carers. The aftermath of Covid and the cost-of-living crisis were key areas identified. Work is ongoing to address these areas.
    - Ruth: While the results of the survey are poor, we can see greater decline on a national level. My reading is that all our investment is allowing us to hold the line and without all our hard work the results would have been much worse.
* Future areas of work:
  + The Young Adult Carer Action Plan is being developed with young carer organisations.
    - This should be issued towards the end of 2024.
    - This group of carers can be hard to reach and retain through this transitional age range and in order keep them supported and engaged with services.
  + Short breaks are going to be a major focus going forward.
    - This is the number one area of support raised by carers.
    - There will be an implementation plan created to enhance the short breaks available to carers. Kyle is creating terms of reference to form a group to create the implementation plan.
      * Keith: Will the short breaks implementation plan address replacement care? Lack of SDS options outside Option 1 (direct payments) is still a huge area of stress for carers.
        + Kyle: Terms of references are still to be finalised but we expect replacement care to be the primary issue discussed.
      * Ruth: Cost of living is also affecting carers ability to take breaks for themselves. Please do invite C4C to the short breaks implementation plan group.
        + Kyle: C4C will be added to the short breaks implementation plan group.
    - Carers are being given a budget in lieu of replacement care or a short break, however they are often in crisis when this is provided and they are unable to use this. We will considering how to provide short breaks at an earlier stage in the carer’s journey.
    - Neil Riley: Carers are being told to “be imaginative” for short breaks when they are already under a lot of stress. Even when funding is provided it often works out on average less than 50% of what it would take for a week’s break. When money is not used it can also end up being taken back or reduced. We’re finding that carers say they can cope using a direct payment, but then EHSCP may find six months later that it’s not being used.
      * + We’re currently performing a lot of DP reviews. From a worker’s perspective the carers are giving good feedback regarding their knowledge of how to use a DP.
        + Where are the high costs coming from for replacement care coming from?

Kyle: For direct payments the carer can use these themselves, so carers are left having to access what they can afford. Private services do seem to have increased their prices. We’ll be considering this along with all other aspects of replacement care.

**Project Updates from all members including Carers Week events.**

* EVOC:
  + EVOC can publicise events for carers in Edinburgh including Carers Week
  + The Edinburgh Carers Forum for voluntary organisations is meeting on 21 May 1-2.30pm on Teams, contact [hugo.whitaker@evoc.org.uk](mailto:hugo.whitaker@evoc.org.uk) for information.
  + Developing a brokerage project looking at direct payments and service providers.
* Age Scotland
  + National lottery funding has been granted to develop further carers training.
  + Carer engagement will be taking place with carer organisations across the country to see if Age Scotland are offering the support that carers want. The policy team will then utilise this feedback.
    - Action: Gavin Hay to distribute feedback survey from Age Scotland.
  + Carers Week:
    - Tuesday 11th of June: Online carers wellbeing event.
    - Friday 14th of June: Body-boosting bingo session taking place in the central belt. Can be done seated or standing, for people over 50.
* Edinburgh Carers Council:
  + Eating disorder services:
    - Individual advocacy for adults and children and young people with an eating disorder.
    - Peer support groups for carers, running in Tipperlinn ward at REH, the regional eating disorder unit at St Johns and at ECC offices.
  + General peer support groups are running monthly, one at Redhall Walled Garden and one at the ECC offices.
  + A collective advocacy group runs at the ECC offices bimonthly where carers can raise issues they’re facing.
    - At the next event on Thursday 23rd of June there will be a guest speaker from the Edinburgh Crisis Centre.
      * Action: Gavin Hay to share collective advocacy forum information with members.
  + Carers week:
    - ECC will be sharing carers’ own hints and tips on how they keep themselves well.
    - Friday 14th of June: Canal Boat Trip and lunch for carers.
* Care for Carers:
  + Current services:
    - One to one support worker which can encompass any areas of support for adult carers.
    - Short breaks from caring:
      * Respitality
      * Multi-night residential breaks through Stepping Out breaks,
        + Programme published yearly, giving carers a chance to organise replacement care well in advance.
        + Breaks fill very quickly but they hold cancellation lists as there are often cancellations.
      * Still Caring programme offers day and evening breaks through days out with a range of activities.
  + Carers Week: Foraging and belly-dancing events. There will also be a big carers’ open day the week before.
* Capital Carers:
  + Adult carers can access one to one support and a programme of events.
    - Events are mostly aimed at older people caring for someone with dementia or frailty. It can be very difficult for people to get breaks from the caring role, so we put a focus on finding activities that the cared-for people can attend as well.
    - Barge trips often organised where cared-for person can attend.
  + Young carers and young adult carers services are partnership funded, however adult services are not so can feel overlooked.
  + Carers Week: a programme has been organised with a barge trip, a social event for carers, music and entertainment.
  + Capital Carers have had no office space for some time but may have now secured this. If finalised they will be able to expand their offering by having a venue to offer support and events.
* MECOPP
  + Providing support for BEMAS carers, mostly working with Arabic speaking, Chinese speaking and south-Asian language speaking carers, as well as Gypsy/Traveller communities.
  + Recently events included a Chinese New Years celebration and a Gypsy/Traveller event.
  + Recent resources released:
    - Domestic abuse support resources available [here](https://www.mecopp.org.uk/blog/mecopp-sheds-light-on-domestic-abuse-for-international-womens-day).
    - A new briefing sheet is available [here](https://www.mecopp.org.uk/s/MECOPP_Briefing_Sheet_17.pdf) on using intersectionality to improve EQIA outcomes for unpaid carers,
    - Research report on the Gypsy/Traveller communities’ views of vaccination information resources (COVID-19 and influenza) available [here](https://www.mecopp.org.uk/blog/launching-our-latest-research-report-and-good-practice-guide).
  + Community-led cultural competency training launched. Participants can learn about the lived experience and how to help Gypsy/Traveller carers.
  + MECOPP will be launching a best practice guide on 12th of June and celebrating minority ethnic carers. Flyers will be passed to ECN members.
* The Action Group:
  + Rubeela works within the Parent Carewell project, giving help to parent carers. A main area of support is income and benefits, e.g. changes in circumstances or new benefits for the cared-for person. Also helping with information on employment and education for the cared-for person. Will help in completing forms for people who struggle with IT. Can help translate forms where possible.
  + Groups and activities twice a month e.g. yoga, zoo trip, tapestry sessions at the TAG offices. Lots of BME women attend.
  + Soon they will be working in partnership with LCIL, who are looking to shadow and find what carers are interested in.
  + Carers Week: event on 11th June taking place at the TAG offices at the Prentice Centre:
    - Stalls, including a rep from Edinburgh College providing info on getting back into education
    - Henna
    - Head and hand massage.
* VOCAL
  + Current supports discussed:
    - A Parent Carers Practitioner post has been created.
    - Peer support groups and in-person meetings available in different localities.
      * Eric Liddle Community Centre
      * Gilmerton
      * Libertus
      * Allermuir health centre
      * Pilton social care hub
      * South Queensferry
      * Leith Walk
    - One to one support
    - Wee breaks surgeries
    - Counselling
    - Money Matters benefits/income advice
  + Pilot areas being considered:
    - Coping strategies and emotional support to bridge the lack of counselling services. This has previously been successful so VOCAL may look to roll these out further.
    - Five-minute byte-size information videos that carers can access even if they can’t attend a whole training session.
  + Currently recruiting in Edinburgh and Midlothian for brokerage practitioners in partnership with LCIL, to support carers with SDS packages. Will look to offer phone support and surgeries.
  + There is a high demand for ACSPs.
  + Carers week: Tuesday 11th with Edinburgh Food =roecjt – wellbeing crafts afternoon with poerty, collaging. Drop- in and out. Taking place at the thistle foundation.
* EHSCP
  + Carer Support Team:
    - For Carers Week will be holding information stands will be running at EHSCP hospital sites. We were previously unable to run these due to lack of staff and Covid restrictions.
      * WGH, RIE and AAH will have carer information stands.
      * EHSCP social media accounts will be providing further Carers Week updates and articles.
  + Neil Riley – CCA
    - There is a very high chance in his area of work to come across someone looking after the client, always try to help support them or signpost on.
    - We are currently reviewing direct payments for accessing respite and POC (sometimes to facilitate hospital discharge). Lack of POC available for discharge is a real issue, so sometimes families will elect to take a direct payment in lieu.
    - At the first point of contact when producing the first assessments to apply for POCs and the like we’re finding it hard as hospital discharge is the priority. We can help to signpost and create the assessments for clients in preparation, even while hospital discharge cases will come first.

**AOCB**

* The Royal Edinburgh Hospital have a carers support group running on the last Wednesday of every month, 5.15pm – 6.15pm at the Broch, MacKinnon House.
  + Action: Gavin Hay to share REH support group info.
  + For further information contact Ellie Frankish, Occupational Therapy Team Lead at REH, [Ellie.Frankish@nhs.scot](mailto:Ellie.Frankish@nhs.scot)

**Date of next meeting: TBC**