

Cross Party Group on Carers

22nd September 2020

Zoom meeting

Present: Kelly Munro – Carers Trust Scotland; Tom Arthur MSP; Jamie Livingstone – Oxfam; Ruth Rooney – Edinburgh Carers Council; Alison Walker – Carer; Alison Wright – Carers of West Lothian; Andrea Coburn – Life Changes Trust; Anne Wilson – Children’s Health Scotland; Arvind Salwan – Care Inspectorate; Cath Purdie – PASDA; Christine Farquhar – Carer; Claire Cairns – Coalition of Carers in Scotland; Claudia Beamish MSP; Fiona Pirrie – East Ayrshire Carers Centre; Geoff Kitchener-Centrica Carers Network; Jean Campbell - Support in Mind / Soroptimist International Scotland North; Johann Lamont MSP; Justina Murray – SFAD; Kate Hogarth – Shared Care Scotland; Andrew Muir – Psychiatric Rights Scotland; Colette McDiarmid – MND Scotland; Moira McWhinnie – Carer; Murdo MacDonald – Church Of Scotland; Celia Sweeney – Carer; Paul Traynor – Carers Trust Scotland; Raveena Sajjan – Alliance Scotland; Susan Docherty – Falkirk & Clackmannanshire Carers Centre; Tom Wightman – PASDA; Karen Maloney – Carers Trust Scotland

1. Welcome and Introductions

Paul Traynor (Co-Secretariat) welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the Co-Convenors were tied up in another meeting but would be joining shortly to take over the Chair.

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising.

The minutes were agreed and proposed by Celia Sweeney and seconded by Alison Wright.

Andrew Muir asked if Barry Gale could be readmitted to the group after being asked to leave at the last meeting. Paul informed him that as the convenors were not present, he would have to take this to them. He asked Andrew Muir to send an email that we could forward to the convenors.

3. Coalition for Carers in Scotland – 'The use of SDS by unpaid carers during Covid-19'

Claire Cairns spoke about the report that they had compiled on how Self-Directed Support (SDS) had been affected by the COVID 19 pandemic. She covered the additional guidance that had been put in place for SDS, 208 carers responded to the survey and from that they were able to see that 70 had requested flexibility.

There had been varying responses from local authorities on what they offered carers with some getting flexibility and some being told it was not available. What the survey did show was that there was inconsistencies across the country.

A copy of Claire’s presentation and report is attached to the minutes. If anyone does want more information on the survey and report please contact Claire at coalition@carersnet.org

Tom Arthur Co-Convenor joined the meeting during Claire's presentation, Paul passed over the Chair of the meeting to Tom.

4. Carers Trust Scotland – Impact of COVID 19 on Young and Young Adult Carers

Kelly Munro presented on the survey and report carried out by Carers Trust Scotland on the impact of COVID 19 on young carers (YC) and young adult carers (YAC).

Kelly spoke about how many YC and YAC had been affected by the pandemic and how it had affected their mental health and wellbeing. There were several asks that came from the report and Kelly asked if the Cross Party Group would endorse and support these asks. There was some positive responses to this. A copy of the report and presentation are attached and if you need more information please contact Kelly at kmunro@carers.org

Some members also stated it would be good to see how many Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carers Statements had been completed during the lockdown. There had been a relaxation of the requirement in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 during lockdown for these assessments.

5. Oxfam – Making Carers Count

Jamie Livingstone spoke about the research and report that had been compiled by Oxfam on paid and unpaid carers and poverty. He spoke about how the work done by carers is not valued as it should be.

Jamie highlighted several statistics that had come from the research which showed that several carers had been under increased pressure, it also showed the costs to Government if unpaid carers were not providing the care that they provide.

There were recommendations in the report and Jamie asked for support to these. The report and presentation are attached to the minutes. For further information, please contact Jamie at JLivingstone@oxfam.org.uk

The members also raised the issues of replacement care costs, highlighting there were the same concerns as for childcare costs in Oxfam's report.

There was also a request that the Cross Party Group looks to get carers representation on the Renewal Advisory Board.

It was agreed that we would write to Ministers on the issue of costs of replacement care. It was also agreed to write to Ministers on carer representation on the Renewal Advisory Board.

6. AOCB

There was an issue raised on the access that carers have to family who are resident in residential / care homes, especially during the current pandemic. They were concerned that they were not being involved or consulted on the care of their family members or allowed to have face-to-face visits with them. This was especially concerning where the family member had dementia. There were requests that Scottish Government look at creating bubbles like they have for childcare.

Karen Maloney (Co-Secretariat) agreed to liaise with some members on gathering information for the letters that we have agreed to write to Ministers on behalf of the group.

These letters are on the following topics

- Carers rights where they have family in Residential / Care homes.
- Getting Carer representation on the Renewal Advisory Board

7. Date of next meeting

8 December 2020 Committee Room 3, 1- 2:30pm

Note: The next Cross Party Group on Carers meeting (8 December 2020) may be another online meeting, this will depend on restrictions at that time. The Secretariat will inform members closer to the meeting date.