Carers Strategy for Fife
2018 – 2021

Summary

“Carers will have access to high quality information at a time and place that best meets their needs, which enables them to make positive choices to thrive and flourish as a carer for as long as they want to, and to live a happy and fulfilling life alongside their caring role”.

Supporting the people of Fife together
Fife Carers Centre Hospital Carer Support Worker Liaison Service

Since the introduction of Hospital Carer Support Worker (Sandra) in April 2017 there has been an increase in the number of carers being supported in Fife from within the Victoria Hospital setting with 252 carers supported in the first year. Sandra’s role is to link with the Discharge Hub in the hospital to provide support for carers of patients who are currently undergoing treatment and discharge planning. On a daily basis the Discharge Hub sets pathways for patients who are medically ready to leave Victoria Hospital but who may need further support or rehabilitation at home or in the community.

Although carers along with the patients are included in deciding the plans for a successful discharge carers often need support that focuses on them and their concerns in addition to the support for the cared-for person. Sandra has been instrumental in providing this support. The Discharge Hub Team have received very positive feedback from carers about Sandra giving emotional support and a listening ear to carers when they have needed it the most as well as helping them to identify areas in which they are entitled to help and support.

Jacqueline told us “Having Sandra step into my life was like a light bulb going on in a very dark tunnel. I’ve been coping for years with my Mum and Dad’s progressively deteriorating health. When mum was diagnosed with a terminal illness and I was already supporting my Dad with his ailing health, I hit an all-time low. I was no longer coping. I was just surviving but I never thought to ask for help or even consider why I would, let alone have the time or energy to arrange it.

I met Sandra at my mother’s hospital bedside and the difference, even in the first few weeks, is immeasurable. She navigates the forms, finds out my entitlement to allowances, helps arrange carers and importantly she asked what mattered to me; she said “I hear you”. This is powerful and way beyond just support. It’s personal. I realised that I too was entitled to have ‘me’ time – even if it’s just a quiet cuppa.

I urge anyone who is in a carer role to take up the help available. It’s the difference between struggling and having a life to live.”
Introduction

Unpaid carers have always made a major contribution to supporting people in need in Fife. We have a long tradition of involving carers to achieve the good outcomes that carers want and deserve. We know we can do more to support carers and in partnership with key stakeholders we commit to making further improvements.

In 2011 the Scotland Census reported that there were 34,828 unpaid carers in Fife. We know there are many more ‘hidden’ carers who do not define themselves as a carer. We also know that nearly half of all carers in Fife spend over 20 hours a week providing care on an unpaid basis.

Fife has an ageing population with more older people living for longer. As a result the demand for care will increase and place greater pressures on public resources and health and social care budgets. It is estimated that Fife’s overall population will increase by 31,769 (9%) by 2037. And in the next 25 years it is estimated that the largest increases will be persons aged 65 and over with the number of persons aged 65-74 is expected to be 12,000 higher than in 2012.

Most carers take on their carer role as they want to support their family and friends to remain independent and in their own home. However, loneliness and financial hardship remain major issues for many carers. Caring can exclude people from employment, education and social activities and can have a detrimental effect on the carer’s own health and well-being.

This is a summary of the Carers Strategy for Fife for 2018 – 2021. In it we have summarised the key factors which will help carers to make positive choices about their caring role. Our strategy is to tackle these issues and support carers to live fulfilling lives alongside their caring role for as long as they want to. More information is available on the Fife Health & Social Care Partnership web-site (www.Fifehealthandsocialcare.org) or through one of our partner organisations.

1. Scotland’s Census 2011; the percentage of the population who provide unpaid care expressed as a % of the total population.
The Scottish Government has published a Carers’ Charter. This summarises your rights as an adult carer in Scotland. Fife Health & Social Care Partnership has fully endorsed the Charter which is available on the Scottish Government web-site and the Fife Health & Social Care web-site carer’s pages. The Charter is available on the Fife Health & Social Care Partnership web-site www.Fifehealthandsocialcare.org.

Who is a carer?

A carer is anyone of any age who provides, or intends to provide, care for another person on an unpaid basis.

An adult carer is anyone who identifies themselves as a carer and is over 18 years old and no longer at school. This summary strategy applies to adult carers.

A young carer is anyone who provides, or intends to provide, care for another person and is under the age of 18 or over 18 but still attending school. A separate young carers’ strategy is being published.

Case Study

Beth is 41. Both of her parents have life-limiting conditions. She has spent 18 months caring for them on her own. Colleagues at Victoria Hospital had concerns about Beth’s emotional and financial well-being as a result of her parents’ increasing need for care and Beth’s increasing commitment to caring for them, which was a big change to everyone’s life. She was referred to Sandra, the Hospital Carer Support Worker from the Fife Carers Centre who is based at Victoria Hospital when her mum was due to be discharged from hospital with a terminal diagnosis.

Sandra worked closely with Beth by supporting her to complete benefit applications and arrange a Power of Attorney to provide some financial security. She was referred to support sessions to enable her to better understand her dad’s dementia. And importantly, Beth was assisted to plan the respite care she needed now and in the future to support her to look after two frail parents.

When reflecting on the support she received Beth said “I did not realise I could get support, this is great. It’s reassuring to know you are there when I need you as this is difficult for me. Thank you for helping me and letting me talk everything through.”

3. Except if that care is only because the cared-for person is under 18 years old.
In Fife we understand that not all carers will require help, but some do.

We have multi-layer model of support for adult carers. This starts by offering all carers access to general information through public and community venues and online. In most cases this will be all the help a carer might need.

Some carers will want a bit more direct help and advice. We will work with local carer organisations to provide information and advice to carers with moderate or substantial needs. This may include indicating to the carer where they can get information or direct help for themselves.

For adult carers with critical needs, for whom their caring role will fail quickly without additional support, we will offer a carers support plan to identify what they require to meet their needs.

Whichever level of support is required, carers will be at the centre of the planning and delivery of support to get the best outcomes to meet their identified needs.
Our strategy for carers is based on working in partnership with organisations and communities across the kingdom of Fife. Through these strategic partnerships, particularly with voluntary organisations, we will reach into more parts of Fife, offer the right types of support to more carers in locations that work for them best, and at times when they most need it.

Some of the support we offer is through our investment in independent services for carers throughout Fife, in partnership with the voluntary sector. Organisations such as the Fife Carers Centre and Fife Young Carers will continue to play an important part in the mix of services which carers can have confidence in. More information about our partners is on page 13 of this booklet.
Eligibility

Eligibility criteria are “the criteria by which the local authority must determine whether it is required to provide support to carers to meet carers’ identified needs.”

It is important that we use our limited resources to support those most in need. The eligibility criteria helps us make this happen. In Fife our understanding of the pressures on the local resources means we know that the demand could outstrip the supply. Therefore we have decided that the threshold for receiving additional tailored support services, beyond those available to all carers, will remain set at critical risk. The preventative support available to all carers plays a vital role in managing the demand for support and in preventing carer’s experience and role from escalating to critical or crisis point.

To determine the level of need an assessment will be made which will relate to the impact of the caring role on the carer. It will address the following questions:

- Is the carer able (and willing) to continue in their role?
- What is the risk of the caring role breaking down?

The intention of providing support is to help carers move further down the scale of need in order that they are better able to manage their caring role independently and with the minimum of necessary support.

Universal service - open to all
Available to self-serve advice and support

| Access to general information about carer support |
| Self guided assessment of needs |
| Initial self-assessment of eligibility |
| Offer of assessment by voluntary sector if requested by the carer |
| Support needs met through own efforts |
| Guidance to prepare emergency plan |

Voluntary sector initial assessment and minor support for low/moderate and substantial needs carers

| General advice about carer support |
| Detailed assessment and ACSP if appropriate |
| Detailed assessment of eligibility for support |
| Minor support to achieve support plan outcomes |
| Referral of critical cases to Social Work |

Enhanced assessment and tailored support for critical needs carers

| Detailed assessment of needs and eligibility - prepare full ACSP |
| Identify sources for support based on personal assets |
| Deliver support services as outlined in ACSP - review impact and ongoing needs |

Figure 2 - Fife’s Carers’ Assessment and Support Model
We commit to close partnership working with public and voluntary sector organisations to collectively support carers. We will focus on achieving the best results for carers and best value to the public purse. Our approach will consist of the following broad principles:

• Access for all carers to appropriate information.
• Focus on de-escalating crisis situations and more preventative future planning.
• Work with the voluntary sector to provide carers with an assessment of their needs for support.

For non-critical support, we will commission an appropriate voluntary partner to offer an Adult Carer Support Plan with the carer.

For carers with critical support needs we will offer to prepare with the carer a detailed assessment of their needs of support and an individual outcomes based Adult Carer Support Plan.

All carers will have access to support to prepare an emergency plan.
What help is available?

Carers in Fife benefit from access to a broad range of support from many providers. The voluntary sector plays a particularly strong role. There are many general and condition specific agencies able to focus their time and effort on providing sometimes quite intensive support for carers.

We know we can do more and do it better, building on the expertise and support that already exists. And we are committed to making this investment and improvement over the next three years. Some of the key supports available are:

**Adult Carer Support Plans**

A support plan starts with a conversation about you, your caring role and your goals as a carer. It helps focus on what is important to you and where you might need some guidance and help. Every carer has the right to ask for and receive a support plan; but sometimes a full plan may be too much. An initial carers’ conversation will help you to decide what level of help you need, a full support plan or perhaps just a couple of bits of information to help yourself.

**Emergency Planning**

An emergency plan is a document which lets people know what needs to be done to support the person you care for if you are unable to carry out your caring role. Having an emergency plan can help to prevent an emergency becoming a crisis.

All carers in Fife will have access to support to prepare an emergency plan. They are simple documents to prepare and you might not need help to write one. We have adopted the ENABLE Scotland toolkit to emergency planning. To find out more, or to get started on your own plan visit www.enable.org.uk/emergencyplanning.

*If you need help contact us or one of our partners.*

**Hospital Discharge Service**

Being involved in discussions and decisions before the person you care for is discharged from hospital means you can get information about when and how the discharge will happen. It also means you are clear about what support will be available to support the person you care for, and you as their carer.

The Fife Carers Centre has been commissioned to develop an approach that works for carers and places them as equal partners in the care of the person they care for. This successful project is now expanding from Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy to include Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline. And our strategy aims to expand that service to include the community hospitals and Stratheden over the coming year. For more information about this service contact Fife Carers Centre.
Advocacy service

Some carers want independent help to have a stronger voice. For this reason we have expanded the nature and range of support available to include a specific advocacy support service for all carers who want it. This support is in addition to other advocacy services which have been commissioned for other vulnerable groups such as for carers of people with dementia.

This service is free at the point of access, for anyone who defines themselves as a carer, and is intended to support their experience as a carer. And it is delivered through our partnership with voluntary organisations.

Short breaks

A short break enables you to have time away from your caring routines or responsibilities, to refresh your batteries and have time for yourself and the other people and things that are important to you. A short break could be a regular break from caring or a one off, and it could be for only a very short amount of time, for example an hour every week, or for a longer period. The important thing is it is time for you! As part of your carer conversation and Adult Carer Support Plans we will discuss with you whether the support you need should be provide as a break from caring.

Shared Care Scotland’s Short Breaks Directory gives more ideas and examples of the wide variety of short breaks carers have benefitted from in Fife and beyond.

www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk

Case Study – Maureen

Maureen is a returning carer who first became known to the Fife Carers Centre in 2015. After a brief period where no support was required, she contacted the centre again in August 2017 seeking advice and support.

An introductory visit to meet Maureen and her husband at their home was arranged. Maureen said she was feeling very isolated and frustrated by her husband’s apathy as a result of his diagnosis of dementia. This manifested itself through outbursts of anger and tears.

The Fife Carers Centre Support Worker suggested that Maureen’s husband might like to join the newly formed Men’s Dementia Toolshed at the Ecology Centre at Kinghorn Loch. Maureen was very reluctant at the thought of her vulnerable husband travelling there unaccompanied every week. To help manage this anxiety the Support Worker agreed to take Maureen’s husband to visit the Toolshed and spend some time there. He loved it – he was desperate to become part of a new project. Therefore, the Support Worker helped Maureen to organise a weekly taxi transfer to the Toolshed. This time gave Maureen a regular break from her caring role, important time her herself. And it was only possible as a result of the extra mile the Support Worker from the Fife Carers Centre was able to travel.

For more information about any of help mentioned above please contact us or one of our partner organisations using the contact details on the back page.
Carers are at the centre this strategy. They are equal partners in care and the experts as to what support they need. Their thoughts and views are at the forefront of our action plan. Through our consultation we asked carers to tell us what makes a difference to them. Our action plan is based on feedback from carers and the requirements of the Carers Act. We have developed improvement actions based around the five vision statements.

Each outcome is made up of a broad range of actions which when combined together will result in a specific improvement for carers. This booklet provides the key information about the Carers Strategy for Fife. The full Carers Strategy for Fife is available on the Fife Health & Social Care Partnership web-site www.Fifehealthandsocialcare.org.

If you would like to find out more about our approach to supporting carers, or to share your views, please e-mail CarersActSurvey@Fife.gov.uk
Carers Consultation

“Choice and control. Time. Rest. Sleeping well. Having adequate time to be with them, and be with them well, not being rushed. Regular respite. Having time to do the little things that matter, not just deal with someone’s basic needs.”

What information do you feel you need to maintain the feeling that you are valued as a carer in Fife?

“I would like to know more about activities available in Fife as I would take the people I care for out and get them engaged in many different communities”

“A proper assessment of the person when coming home from hospital so the carer can decide if they would be able to care for the person and not find out, as in my case, that after a massive stroke my partner was doubly incontinent, has extreme behaviour and I was a 24 hour carer”

What would make a real difference in supporting you to feel in control in your caring role?

“Knowing there are people out there who really care about carers so that we don’t feel lonely and isolated.”

What information do you feel you need to maintain the feeling that you are valued as a carer in Fife?

“I’m not aware of any help for carers in Fife. If there is any then maybe more advertising as I have never seen anything specifically for carers.”

“What the information that allows me to access services for mum’s benefit. Currently there seems to be no cohesive group or agency. Everything is fragmented or separate. A ‘one-stop-shop’ would be good.”

“Choice and control. Time. Rest. Sleeping well. Having adequate time to be with them, and be with them well, not being rushed. Regular respite. Having time to do the little things that matter, not just deal with someone’s basic needs.”

“Being actively and meaningfully involved in the design, planning, delivering and assessment of services for the person I care for. The knowledge and skills I have acquired as a carer being recognised and valued, being treated as an equal partner in care, recognised as an expert by experience and engaging in co-production projects. This used to happen in Fife but increasingly I feel that carers are being excluded from decision making processes”

what you told us
### Our Key Local Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Partner</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
<th><strong>Website</strong></th>
<th><strong>Contact</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fife Carers Centre</strong></td>
<td>Fife Carers Centre will support carers in their caring role with relevant and straightforward information as well as practical help. They give information and the means to use it to carers on a wide range of topics from applying for benefits to learning more about the condition affecting the person they care for.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fifecarerscentre.org">www.fifecarerscentre.org</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:centre@fifecarers.co.uk">centre@fifecarers.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fife Young Carers</strong></td>
<td>Fife Young Carers supports children and young adult carers aged 8-25 years who look after someone in their family who are ill or have a disability. It is a local charity committed to improving the support and information provided to young carers in Fife.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fifeyoungcarers.co.uk">www.fifeyoungcarers.co.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admin@fifeyoungcarers.co.uk">admin@fifeyoungcarers.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Homelands Trust-Fife</strong></td>
<td>The Homelands Trust-Fife is an independent Fife based charity working to improve the quality of life of individuals affected by disability, people with life limiting conditions and their carers, through the provision of luxury holiday accommodation.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.homelands-fife.co.uk">www.homelands-fife.co.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@homelands-fife.co.uk">info@homelands-fife.co.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Crossroads Fife Central</strong></td>
<td>Crossroads Fife Central are a registered charity operating across Central and North East Fife, providing high quality person centred support to carers who are caring for someone of any age with any disability or illness. Support is provided in the form of Short Breaks.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.crossroadsfifecentral.org">www.crossroadsfifecentral.org</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:June@crossroadsg.co.uk">June@crossroadsg.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kindred</strong></td>
<td>Kindred is for parents of children with complex needs. Kindred provides practical information, advocacy, emotional support and guidance. They support families of severely ill and/or disabled children.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kindred-scotland.org">http://www.kindred-scotland.org</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:fifeenquiries@kindred-Scotland.org">fifeenquiries@kindred-Scotland.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LinkLiving Fife</strong></td>
<td>LinkLiving Fife have three services that can help and support Carers. Their social cafes run by their Older Persons’ service, in Torryburn and Rosyth, their Carers’ Self-Help Project provides support for carers of children, young people and adults with autistic spectrum conditions, and their Fife Support team provides respite to carers as part of its Care at Home Service.</td>
<td><a href="https://www.linkliving.org.uk/get-support/support-for-carers">https://www.linkliving.org.uk/get-support/support-for-carers</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:enquiries@linkliving.org.uk">enquiries@linkliving.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>On Your Doorstep Fife</strong></td>
<td>On Your Doorstep Fife is a searchable database of community groups, organisations, information and support in local communities across Fife.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.onyourdoorstepfife.org">www.onyourdoorstepfife.org</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Respite Fife</strong></td>
<td>Respite Fife is a small local charity providing short break respite care to adults with learning difficulties in ordinary domestic housing. Respite is provided within two bungalows in Kirkcaldy and two ground floor flats in Kinglassie.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.respite-fife.org.uk">www.respite-fife.org.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:respitefife@blueyonder.co.uk">respitefife@blueyonder.co.uk</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The National Carer Organisations (NCOs) can provide a range of advice and support to help you be more informed about the Carers Act legislation. The organisations making up the NCO are listed below. We have also indicated areas where they have particular knowledge and expertise:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Carer Organisations</th>
<th>Areas of Expertise</th>
<th>Web Links</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carers Scotland</td>
<td>Carers rights, benefits, employment support, policy briefings</td>
<td><a href="http://www.carersuk.org/scotland">www.carersuk.org/scotland</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carers Trust</td>
<td>Links to local carer support network, carers’ rights, benefits</td>
<td><a href="http://carers.org">carers.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition of Carers in Scotland</td>
<td>Carer engagement, campaigning, policy briefings</td>
<td><a href="http://www.carersnet.org">www.carersnet.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossroads Caring Scotland</td>
<td>Respite and carer break services, local services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.crossroads-scotland.co.uk">www.crossroads-scotland.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECOPP</td>
<td>Support and information to carers from black and minority ethnic communities</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mecopp.org.uk">www.mecopp.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance</td>
<td>Network of services supporting young carers and young adult carers</td>
<td><a href="http://www.facebook.com/SYCSA">www.facebook.com/SYCSA</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Care Scotland</td>
<td>Policy, planning and practice development in Scotland related to short breaks and respite provision</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk">www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Fife Health and Social Care Partnership Board would expressly like to thank all those carers who participated in the consultation and the strategy’s development.

Thanks also is extended to the many voluntary sector organisations from across Fife who supported the consultation. We look forward to working closely with you in the future to deliver this strategy and the improved support for carers.
Alternative Formats

The information included in this publication can be made available in large print, Braille, audio CD/tape and British Sign Language interpretation on request by calling 03451 55 55 00.

Language lines

English: 03451 55 55 77
Polski: 03451 55 55 88
Polska: 03451 55 55 44
Arabic: 03451 55 55 99
Bengali: 03451 55 55 99

Fife Council and NHS Fife are supporting the people of Fife together through Fife’s Health and Social Care Partnership. To find out more visit www.fifehealthandsocialcare.org