

EDINBURGH CARERS COUNCIL



**EDINBURGH CARERS COUNCIL
STRATEGIC PLAN
2017
“OUR VISION, VALUES AND PURPOSE”**

CONTENTS

FOREWARD	2
OUR VISION, VALUES AND PURPOSE	3
OUR PEOPLE	4
IMPACT	5
OUR ENVIRONMENT	6
OUR OUTCOMES	6 -7
APPENDIX 1: The Declaration of Rights	8 - 9
APPENDIX 2: Relevant Legislation	10



Foreword

We are a local charity that provides advocacy services, information and training opportunities to mental health carers. Our services are free, confidential and completely independent.

We have been helping carers for over 17 years and our goal is for carers to be respected, valued and their views to be taken seriously.

The services we offer help carers access the support and information they need to maintain their caring role and their own health and wellbeing.

Edinburgh Carers Council (ECC) is a locally based organisation that aims to provide independent advocacy for carers with someone who experiences mental health issues, learning disabilities and dementia or acquired brain injury. Caring for someone can be stressful, confusing and isolating, our services aim to help carers access the support, information and services they need to help them take control of their own caring situation.

ECC is an independent organisation, informed by carers, that is supported by a management committee comprising of people with direct or indirect experience of caring and those who are passionate and committed to the enhancement of mental health carer information, advocacy and services.

OUR VISION, VALUES AND PURPOSE

Our vision is for carers to be:

- Respected and valued
- Have their views and opinions to be heard
- Taken seriously
- Recognised for the importance of their contribution

We strive for carers to:

- Have opportunities for breaks from caring
- Receive practical and emotional support at different stages
- Have access to information on things that will assist them to care effectively while maintaining their own health and quality of life
- Have access to information about services which reflect cultural, religious and racial differences and values
- Be consulted at all levels of planning, development and implementation of services

Values

- We value and celebrate the contribution that carers have within the caring role and the wider community.
- We believe that all carers should be taken seriously and respected.
- We will deliver our services in partnership with a range of key partners and we will ensure that our staff and members are supported to develop.
- We will ensure that we provide a platform for carers to be heard and listened to.
- We will deliver robust and dependable services that make a difference.
- We fully endorse 'Rights for Life'; a declaration of rights for mental health in Scotland (Appendix 1) <https://rightsforlife.org/downloads/>

Purpose

We are a membership led organisation and our work is to benefit carers ensuring that they can access free, confidential and independent advocacy. We pride ourselves on supporting carers and helping them to stay informed and in control of decisions that affect their own personal caring situation.

OUR PEOPLE

Staff

Our staff team are passionate about carer's rights and have a vast amount of experience in supporting individuals. The team work extremely hard to ensure that we deliver a positive and proactive service. The team have a strong commitment to ensuring that the organisations mission and vision is achieved.

The team currently comprises of:

- Co-ordinator (FTE)
- Transitions Carer Advocacy Worker (PTE)
- 2 Advocacy Workers (PTE)
- Resource and Information Worker (PTE)

Trustees

Our trustees bring a wide range of perspectives and experience from their personal and work life. They have a shared desire to ensure that the staff team are supported and ensure that the organisation maintains robust governance and has a clear focus on achieving its mission. Our Trustees are made up predominantly of carers and others with an interest in carers and mental health. We currently have 7 volunteer Trustees who meet monthly as the Management Committee with the ECC Co-ordinator in attendance. Trustees have experience as family carers and also bring professional experience of roles in education, health, public services and third sector.

Members

Edinburgh Carers Council is an organisation which is carer-led in its developments. It provides an individual advocacy service, collective advocacy and training opportunities to those who support someone with mental health difficulties, learning disabilities, dementia and acquired brain injury. Membership of the ECC is open to anyone with an interest in the work of the organisation, carers and professionals alike and free to all. ECC runs many carers events throughout the year including the quarterly Carers Forum, Creative days and Fund raising music events.



IMPACT

Since the organisation was established we have achieved wide ranging successes that have collectively and individually made a significant impact on the lives of carers. Here are some of the views that people have expressed about our services.

Thanks for all the support you gave me when my problems with my daughter seemed impossible to solve. You were able to give constructive advice and allow me to be able to cope and also for me to find helpful solutions. The situation has now improved immensely...she is getting the financial help and support that she needs and is with a team which is helping her back to work. At present all is much easier and I can only say I valued your support greatly. Thanks again."

"Keep up the good work! Thanks for helping me over the years!"

"Your services have consistently exceeded expectations on several occasions."

"Excellent. A lifesaver. The only support available at a crucial time. Without it things might have been very different."

"Throughout the past 6 years my advocacy worker was able to offer me support in person; attended meetings which I felt unable to go toand attending them with me when she could. She gave support via email and on the phone. I knew I could count on her 100%. Edinburgh Carers Council is a vital organisation to all of those who suffer mental health problems or care for those with mental health problems....I will never forget the help and support you gave me."

"Finding the Support and Advocacy help from the Edinburgh Carers Council saved my mental health and enabled me to continue to support my very ill daughter with clarity and perspective and hope. I was new to Edinburgh and Scotland and had no support system in place. It gave me strength and the knowledge that I was not alone. Thankfully my daughter is very much better now but if she relapses I know I can return for more help at any time. This is invaluable."

"I don't feel so alone and isolated when it comes to caring for my son due to the relationship I have with ECC and other carers. They understand and care. Thank you so much"

"For me the individual sessions and advocacy help were hugely important, invaluable"

100% fantastic service!"

"ECC gave more involvement and spent more time than I expected. Very helpful to have someone with knowledge of services, rights and practice, for guidance in my situation"

"Following one session at ECC everything started to fall into place and move on. To know that there was somebody out there willing to support our case was invaluable and we are immensely grateful for everything ECC has offered us"

OUR ENVIRONMENT

Legislative context

In order for NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council to fulfil their statutory obligation to provide independent advocacy services within the legislative context and to meet their local policy priorities, they are required to ensure that advocacy services are adequately funded and locally accessible. Under the advocacy contract with NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh Carers Council is required to prioritise the provision of advocacy services to carers of people who are subject to the following legislation:

- The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003.
- Adults with Incapacity Act (Scotland) 2000.
- Adult Support and Protection Act (Scotland) 2007.

Edinburgh Carers Council also provides advocacy services to carers within a much broader legislative framework. Appendix 2 details the legislation and how it relates to the provision of advocacy services



OUR OUTCOMES

We strive to achieve the best outcomes for carers using the service. These are based around carers' rights, wellbeing and empowerment. We always try to listen to individual outcomes which carers want to happen as a result of advocacy support and these often involve living well and experiencing reduced stigma and inequality. We are always mindful that carers need support with their own mental health and wellbeing and we introduce them to strategies to maintain these.

The outcomes which we measure are:

- Carers feeling listened to and understood
- Carers being better informed and more involved in decisions which affect them
- Carers feeling able to develop their own level of independence and resilience; to self-advocate
- Carers feeling more able to influence and improve services through collective advocacy

How we deliver progress?

We deliver a quality advocacy service to over 250 mental health carers each year through one to one work and collective groups. Edinburgh Carers Council is the only independent advocacy service specifically for carers in Scotland and we are members of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance which sets principles and standards for our work. For the past five years we have delivered the Mental Health and carers' advocacy contract in Edinburgh with our partner organisations, AdvoCard and The Patients Council. We have also developed partnership work with PASDA (parents of adults with autistic spectrum disorder) and MECOPP (Minority Ethnic Carers of Older People) and are active members of the Edinburgh Carer Network. We also work in Partnership with Edinburgh Napier University to deliver carer training to mental health nursing students.

How we measure progress?

We actively seek feedback from carers who use the service through feedback forms, our Carers Forum and group consultations. This helps to shape our planning for service delivery as well as developing annual carer events such as a music event and Carers Week workshops, which encourage wellbeing and resilience.

Formal reporting on progress is made six monthly to our funders, City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian. This measures service levels, referrals and outcomes for carers.



What we're working towards

As an organisation we are working towards the following priorities:

- Securing the future of our advocacy services
- Develop greater capacity through new funding awards
- Influencing the local and national carer networks
- Improving mental health services through collective advocacy and through partnerships under the Lothian Joint Mental Health Strategy 2016 to 2019
- To work with City of Edinburgh Council in assisting with its priorities for carers, Self-Directed Support and respite care

Appendix 1

The Declaration of Rights

PEOPLE WITH EXPERIENCE OF MENTAL-HEALTH ISSUES AND THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHO CARE FOR THEM HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS.

1 The right to be treated with dignity and respect and be free from any form of discrimination including because of mental-health status.

2 The right to the highest possible standard of physical and mental health. This includes timely access to a range of quality care and treatment, without discrimination.

3 The right to meaningful and active involvement in decisions at all levels, using co-production (see below) as standard and independent support if needed. This includes taking part in decisions about:

- developing and putting into practice laws, policies and budgets;
- designing and delivering services and support, including health and social care, welfare, education, employment and housing; and
- care, treatment and support, with 'informed consent' (see below) given for any action taken.

Co-production is a process of discussion and agreement through an equal partnership of those delivering services and those using them. This is done in a way that draws on the knowledge, skills and resources of everyone involved.

Informed consent is when permission is given in full knowledge of the possible consequences.

4 The right to information that is provided in a clear and accessible format, tailored to the needs of each person. This includes information about rights.

5 The right to hold to account the people and organisations responsible for protecting and respecting people's rights, to provide feedback without fear of reprisals and to have access to justice when their rights are affected.

6 The right to independent advocacy, both individual and collective.

Advocacy can happen on a one to one basis as well as collectively. With one to one advocacy an advocate will help an individual to find out about their rights, ensure their voice is heard and support them to make informed decisions and choices. Collective or group advocacy is about a group of people with a shared agenda coming together to lobby, campaign and influence legislation, policy, practice and services.

7 The right to equal treatment and recognition by the law and to the law's equal protection and benefit.

8 Access to the full range of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. In terms of mental health this includes a particular emphasis on:

- being involved in the community and society on an equal basis;
- a good standard of living and legal and social protection (preventing and managing negative situations that affect people's well-being);
- access to lifelong education and learning opportunities;
- employment and work opportunities;
- freedom, privacy and the right to a family life; and
- security and the right to be free from torture and abuse

Appendix 2

Relevant Legislation

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 also imposes a duty to provide advocacy services for children under 16 years of age who have a mental disorder and their carers. Therefore, there is also a statutory basis for advocacy provision for carers under:

- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995.
- The Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011

The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 places firm duties on local authorities in relation to carers. Local authorities are required to tell people about advocacy services and how to access them. Carers must be informed about their right to request a carers assessment and, they must be allowed to choose one of the four options for self-directed support.

Provision under The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 will take effect from 2017 to 2018 and will introduce:

- A duty on local authorities to provide support to carers, based on the carer's identified needs which meet the local eligibility criteria.
- A specific Adult Carer Support Plan and Young Carer Statement to identify carers' needs and personal outcomes.
- A requirement for each local authority to have its own information and advice service for carers. This service must provide information and advice on, among other things, advocacy, employment and training, and carers' rights.

Scottish Government guidance on NHS continuing healthcare, Hospital Based Complex Clinical Care DL (2015) 11, states that:

- patients, families and their carers are involved throughout the discharge process and all options and decisions fully explained.
- they should be provided with clear written information about how hospital discharge procedures operate.
- information should be made available on how to appeal the decision to discharge.

Edinburgh Carers Council is a charity in Scotland; SCO28469.

It is jointly funded by the City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian

