

CARERS OF WEST LoTHIAN

Newsletter

Winter 2005 Issue 42

Providing information, support, and a voice for carers in West Lothian

The Future of Unpaid Care in Scotland - Care 21 Project Report -

Lewis McDonald, Deputy Minister for Health and Community Care, launched a report of major significance on 30th September in Inverness – “**The Future of Unpaid Care in Scotland**”. 5,000 carers and former carers (including 246 from West Lothian) took part in the research work of the report, creating robust evidence on which to base the report and its recommendations.

The report supports two underlying principles:

- **Greater recognition of and respect for unpaid carers as key partners and providers**
- **The development of a rights based policy framework to support unpaid carers**

A total of 22 recommendations are made for the Scottish Executive, UK Government, statutory and voluntary sectors.

They are grouped under the following headings:

- Recognition and status
- Information and training

- Partnership and planning
- Benefits, entitlement and employment
- Services and support
- Resourcing
- Implementation and performance

Deputy Minister, Lewis McDonald, told delegates at the conference that the Care 21 Report will be sent to all NHS Boards, local authority Chief Executives and voluntary sector organisations over the next few weeks. He has already written to Ministerial colleagues at Westminster to draw their attentions to the UK recommendations and to the project. The recommendations from the report will be carefully considered by Scottish Ministers and, where appropriate, in discussion with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), the NHS and the independent sector.

The recommendations with significant resource implications will be looked at in the context of the next Spending Review.

(Cont. overpage)



**Management
Committee,
Staff & Volunteers
at Carers of West Lothian
wish you all
a Merry Christmas &
Best Wishes for
the New Year**



Holistic therapy training, breaks for Carers & Carer's Rights Day - details inside

Care 21 Project Report

(Cont. from frontpage)

In his speech, Lewis McDonald, stated that *"I am keen to maintain the momentum of the work...by responding as quickly as possible to the report, which I think probably means early next year. I welcome this report. Its very existence sends a clear signal of the Executive's continued commitment to carers. This is a crucial agenda and one we need to get right. We have made a good start here in Scotland, as this report recognises. I want us to keep leading the way. I want Scotland to value its carers more and to support them in the valuable work they do"*.

You can download the report from the Scottish Executive and OPM website on www.opm.co.uk/scottishcarers If you do not have access to the website and would like a copy of the report, you can contact the **Carers Centre on 01506 771750**.

A summary version of the report will be prepared by the Coalition of Carers in Scotland (COCIS), and should be available from mid November. Please contact the Carers Centre on the above number if you would like a copy of the summary report.

Chairman's Remarks

I spoke in the last issue of Christmas trees on sale in July and now I cannot believe that Christmas is fast approaching. It has been a long summer and I hope you have all been able to enjoy it.

As you will know Carers of West Lothian is part of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers network. Many changes of personnel have taken place throughout the year within the Trust. In Scotland we have said goodbye to Colin Williams, the PRTC Director for Scotland. Colin has worked with us in West Lothian for some years now and was one of the main instigators of our tripartite agreement with the Trust, the Council and the Health Board. We wish both Colin and his wife a long and happy retirement.

In June, Elaine McGonigle, was appointed as the new Director of the PRTC in Scotland. Elaine has worked in the "not for profit" sector for several years with both charities and educational institutions. She has a strong fundraising and management background and enjoys challenges faced by the profession. Elaine has already visited with us here at Strathbrock and we look forward to working closely with her in the future. Welcome Elaine. Changes have also taken place at the Trust headquarters in London. In January of this year Sian Nicholas was appointed Chief Executive for the PRTC. Sian's experience spans over 20 years in the public and voluntary sectors. Welcome to Sian. You may be interested to know that the Princess Royal Trust for Carers was first established in Scotland then spread throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Ena Murray, our past Chairperson and present Board member has decided to retire this year. We once again thank Ena for the sterling work she has carried out on our behalf both here in West Lothian and nationally. We wish you a long and happy retirement.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a good New Year.

Anna McGill
Chairperson

Anna & Ena (right) at a past AGM meeting



Flu Inoculations for Carers

NHS Lothian adopted a 'good practice' policy in 2002, following successful lobbying by local carer organisations, to offer free flu immunisation to unpaid carers. In July 2005 the Department for Health adopted flu inoculation for carers in England and Wales. Letters from Scotland's national carer organisations, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Carers Scotland, to Andy Kerr, Minister for Health, have resulted in a recent Scottish Executive announcement extending free flu immunisation to include those who are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person, whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill. The final decision on who is offered flu immunisation is for the patient's doctor who is familiar with their medical background and social circumstances.

If you are a carer please make sure that you ask your GP about the flu inoculation to help you remain a healthy carer. You can also contact Carers of West Lothian if you would like information and support to help you in your caring role. Tel 01506 771750 or e-mail office@carers-westlothian.com

Volunteering with Carers of West Lothian

We now have a small group of volunteers who regularly give their time to support staff in providing a service to carers. Our volunteers help in a variety of ways e.g. accompanying a staff member at an information stand, helping with clerical tasks within the office, helping with the distribution of our newsletter, contacting carers by phone and offering them some support and also some IT work. As Carers of West Lothian is in contact with an increasing number of carers we rely on the additional help and support from volunteers to allow us to continue to provide a high quality service.

Some of the personal qualities our volunteers have include enjoying meeting people, being a good listener, sympathetic to needs of carers, being able and willing to work alone and as part of a team. If you feel you have these qualities and have a few hours a week to spare then contact **Annamarie Keast on 01506 771750 for further information and an application form.**



Yvonne Macdonald – At the end of August 2005 I joined Carers of West Lothian as a volunteer and straight away I have enjoyed being involved in an Office Away Day, the Newsletter distribution, a training course and database input. I have three children and care for my thirteen year old daughter who has Down's Syndrome. My mother has had multiple sclerosis for thirty years, and while my father has been the main carer, I am aware of many of the issues surrounding caring in this situation.

My family commitments mean that employment needs to be flexible and volunteering seems to fit the bill. Over the years I have been extremely grateful to the many volunteers who have helped out my family and I hope that I can use my caring experience, as well as my pre-family office experience to help other carers in West Lothian.

Ron Raymond - Born in 1936. My passion has been the Royal Navy, which I first joined after leaving school. I completed three years boy's service and nine years man service, the latter seven years being in the submarine service, in communications. After the Royal Navy I completed nearly twelve years as a prison officer at Winchester in Hampshire, leaving to bring my wife and family back to Scotland. I then worked as a quality controller and in management. My last twelve years before retiring at 60 was spent working for the Bank of Scotland. One of my interests is the submariners association and has been for eleven years, I have been on the committee and served twice as chairman, which I still am. I have spent seven years since my retirement as a full-time carer for my wife. After her loss I wanted something else to do to help close the void in my life and decided to look into volunteering with Carers of West Lothian who I joined in November 2004. I enjoy very much the variety of work with them and of course the company.



Norwich Union Breaks for Carers June 2006



Following on from the success of last year's initiative where three carers and their companions spent a week at Pontins in Blackpool, Carers of West Lothian is delighted to offer the same opportunity to carers again this year. The break for carers will run during Carers Week from Monday 12th until Friday 16th June and aims to provide a much deserved break to carers from their caring role.

Carers interested in this break should contact the Carers of West Lothian office on 01506 771750 by the end of February to receive further details about the holiday and register their interest. All application forms are usually issued to interested carers in early spring.

Please note:

We cannot guarantee a place to all carers who apply, as we are only allocated a small number of places each year. However, all applications are considered individually on receipt by the Carers of West Lothian staff.

Holistic Therapy Training

Carers of West Lothian is providing informal training to carers on how to administer holistic therapy techniques to other carers and to their cared-for person. There are 4 courses planned (see diary dates on back page) and each training course will consist of 3, two hour sessions and will cover basic massage (head, neck, back and general massage) and also the applied use of selected essential aromatherapy oils. There has been a good response to these courses and as a result there are only a few places remaining. There are a few home visits available, which can be arranged where there is difficulty in leaving the home to attend a course. For further information or to book your place please contact the Carers Centre on 01506 771750 or e-mail office@carers-westlothian.com



*Wilma Philpot,
Young Carer
Development
Worker*

Hi again, it doesn't seem all that long since I wrote the last article for the newsletter. I also cannot believe its nearly Christmas, what a quick year we've had! As usual we have been very busy working with the young carers.

Our age group this year included those aged thirteen and seventeen. This term we have had a mix of various fun and activities, which has included, developing self-esteem and giving and receiving compliments. We also went out one night for a meal to Frankie and Benny's in Livingston and another night at Lazerquest. We had a night where we played fun and messy games, and another where we evaluated the group with the young carers and a night where we made smoothies and had a quiz.

(pictured right) The ceramic YC 2005 plate painted by all the group



The group is now finished and we spent our last session at 'The Ceramics Experience' in Linlithgow. This was absolutely fantastic and we all loved it. This is a very new place that has opened in Linlithgow. We went along and spent half a day there, painting an item of your choice. There was a lot to choose from and you could paint ornaments, cups, plates and frames. We had the choice to glaze it or not but most of the young carers chose the ornaments which didn't need glazing, so they could take them home. Lunch was also provided and we all helped to paint a plate that said 'Young Carers 2005'. This was a great way to end the group and have a memento to remember the group by as we got everyone to sign it. We hope to have a wee reunion or meeting again with the group before Christmas so it will be good to catch up with everyone. The staff will also be making a date soon to go out and see the young carers and their families to evaluate the group with everyone involved.

This week we are starting the home visits for the next group. We hope to complete them before Christmas and start in the New Year. The workers for the next group will be me, Tracy Waddell and Nicola Davies Jenkins. We have eighteen referrals twelve of whom are in the same age group so we should have a group out of those. I really enjoy the group work and cannot wait for this one to start.

The individual work also keeps me busy and I am currently supporting eight individuals. All have very different needs and they all keep me on my toes. The ages range between ten and sixteen and its good to have such a mix of young people. As well as the face-to-face work we are currently looking at different funding possibilities, I have attended various Young Carers Alliance meetings, and all the usual promoting the service that goes on.



(pictured above) the young carer group painting their choice of ceramics to take home



Fun & messy games night for the group - yes boys do washing up!

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank everyone for their support this year and wish you all

A very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**Wilma Philpot
Young Carer Development Worker**



Alzheimer Scotland

– supporting people with dementia and their carers.

Dementia is more common than you might think – over 63,000 people in Scotland have dementia. So most people will know someone who has dementia, or neighbours or friends who are caring for someone who has the illness.

Dementia is a progressive illness of the brain, affecting memory, thinking, behaviour and personality. Although it mainly affects older people, it is not an inevitable part of ageing. There are around 1700 people under 65 in Scotland with dementia. Proper diagnosis of dementia is extremely important. If you know someone who is forgetful or confused, don't just assume it is dementia or 'old age'. There can be other reasons for memory loss such as infections, wrongly prescribed medicines or depression. If you have any doubts, make an appointment to see the doctor.

There are many types of dementia, the most common of which is Alzheimer's disease. The second most common is vascular dementia, which is caused by strokes and damage to the blood supply to the brain. There are also many other different types of dementia but what they all have in common is that they damage and kill brain cells. Dementia has a devastating impact on the person with the illness and also on their carers. Yet with help, support and understanding, people with dementia can continue to live a normal life for as long as possible. That is where Alzheimer Scotland can help.

Alzheimer Scotland is the leading Scottish charity working with anyone, including carers, family and friends who are affected by Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Across Scotland, we provide practical help, information and emotional support via local day care centres, home support, courses for carers, carer support groups and information services – including our 24 hour **freephone Dementia Helpline 0808 808 3000** staffed by trained volunteers, and website www.alzscot.org

Phoning the Dementia Helpline means you can gain access to relevant information, be referred to local Alzheimer Scotland services, health and social work services, or simply talk with someone who truly understands. Caring for a person with dementia can be physically and emotionally exhausting. Our carer support programmes provide information and training that helps reduce carer stress. In conjunction with training, carer support groups provide a chance for people to share their experiences in a sympathetic environment.

Services in West Lothian the Lothian Early Onset Support Service provides specialist support throughout the Lothians for younger people with dementia (up to and including age 65) and their family carers. Our Family Outreach Workers can give information and advice about the illness, the services available, and any benefits and concessions to which you might be entitled. They can also offer emotional support on an ongoing basis and help you to arrange the services and support you need. Our Community Support Service can provide direct one to one support for the person with dementia either in the home or out and about in the community. The tasks or activities undertaken will vary according to your individual needs and preferences. We also run a regular monthly Carers' Support Group locally in West Lothian for those caring for a younger person with dementia. The group meets in the Carmondean Ability Centre in Livingston. If you would like to come along, give us a ring on 0131 555 6866 for dates and times of forthcoming meetings.

Dementia is a serious illness that profoundly influences people's lives. However, Alzheimer Scotland exists to ensure that everybody affected by this illness can access the right kind of information and support. We want people with dementia and their carers to know that they are not alone and can get help.

Maureen Thom, Information Manager, Alzheimer Scotland

Carers of West Lothian Monthly Drop-in Support Group

Offering mutual support, advice and information to carers of people suffering from Dementia

We recognise the demands made on you if you are looking after someone. We realise it's important for you to have time for yourself. Also if your caring role has come to an end, or lessened, you may still value the support of others in a similar situation. To help you to do just that, we are holding informal get-togethers for carers and former carers of Dementia sufferers on the first Friday of the month. This support group is jointly facilitated by Carers of West Lothian and the Occupational Therapy department at St Johns Hospital in Livingston.

VENUE: St John's Hospital, Howden Road, Livingston, Occupational Therapy Department, 1st Floor, Group Room.

TIMES: Between 10a.m. and 12noon **DATES:** Fridays – 2nd December 2005 and 6th January, 3rd February and 3rd March 2006. **For information please contact:** Mhairi O'Byrne, Senior Occupational Therapist – 01506 419666 Ext. 2941; **OR** Carers of West Lothian, Carers Centre – 01506 771750

Carers Rights Day 2nd December 2005

There are 660,000 people in Scotland who look after a partner, friend or family member who cannot manage without help. They are missing out on £60 million a year in unclaimed benefits, yet they save the government £5 billion each year.

The sixth annual Carers Rights day will take place on Friday 2nd of December 2005.

The aims of Carers Rights day are to:

- Increase take up of benefits available to carers and their families
- Ensure that carers access their rights under relevant legislation
- Raise awareness of the needs of carers
- Help individuals recognise themselves as carers

The theme of Carers Rights Day is on older carers, with particular emphasis on the take up of pension credit. Carers of West Lothian will have an information stand at Strathbrock Partnership Centre on the day. As well as Carers of West Lothian staff there will be representatives from Pension Service and Disability and Carers Directorate.

Help us to improve the Occupational Therapy Service in West Lothian

The Occupational Therapy service in West Lothian helps people with physical disability, frailty, mental health problems and learning disabilities. We improve independent living at home through treatment, rehabilitation and through the provision of equipment and adaptations to the home. Services are provided by social work or hospital.

We would like to ensure the Occupational Therapy Service meets the needs of people in West Lothian and are asking you how we can improve our service. We need feedback from people who may have used this service. We would like to know what you think of occupational therapy and how you would like to see the service improve. Your comments and suggestions are essential to allow this service to meet the needs of people in West Lothian.

If you wish to contribute, please send your comments to:

Anne Sherriff,
Occupational Therapy Team
Manager,
Strathbrock Partnership Centre,
189A West Main Street,
BROXBURN, EH525LH



West Lothian
Council
Community Services

'Who Cares?' Training

For Carers of those who are Elderly

This Autumn the Who Cares? training course for carers is in its final stages and has been highly successful. The course began in September for seven weeks and was tailored to meet the needs of those caring for an elderly person. The course took place in the Strathbrock Partnership Centre and was attended regularly by the carers concerned. The carers attending the course have all given very positive feedback and felt that the course has given them an opportunity to discuss in detail the issues affecting them as carers, as well as make new friends. The group was diverse but all members seemed to really benefit from chatting and relating to each other.

All the guest speakers on the course were very interesting and informative and it was good to find out about what services were available locally to carers in this situation. After each session, lunch was provided of home made soup, sandwiches or sometimes a buffet, yum! During the lunch carers were able to chat informally to each other and the professionals and to relax.



Carers from the last 'Who Cares?' course with their certificates of attendance. (Back row L to R) - Molly Hamilton, Mary Douglas, Joy Dawson, Liz Burrows & Paul Weddell. (Front row L to R) Martha Delaney, Mary Wilson, George Walker & Hazel Alderson.

But what about the next 'Who Cares?' Course?

There will be another Who Cares? course happening in 2006. It is hoped that the next course will again be over six weeks and will be tailored to meet the needs of a particular group of carers. So far I have in mind carers of those with a specific mental health problem such as schizophrenia or depression or carers of teenagers and those entering adulthood with additional needs. So, if you are a carer in either of these groups and are interested in receiving training or if you have suggestions for topics for the next course, please contact the Carers of West Lothian office on 01506 771750.

Developing a Public Partnership Forum (PPF)

NHS Lothian is entering an exciting new era in which Primary and Community Health Services will be planned and managed locally by Community Health Partnerships (CHPs).

CHPs will enable Primary Care Services, Hospital Services, the Council, voluntary sector, patients and carers to work together more closely. There are five CHPs in Lothian of which one is in West Lothian. The CHP in West Lothian is known as the Community Health & Care Partnership – **CHCP**.

The CHCP is required to develop a Public Partnership Forum (**PPF**) to involve patients, public and carers in the planning and development of services. The role of the PPF is to:

- Inform local people about the responsibilities of the CHCP and the range and location of services
- Engage local service users, carers and the public in discussions about how to improve health services and raise health issues in the community
- Involve local people in planning and decision making processes

The PPF will be built on the many existing networks in West Lothian, and it is envisaged that it will have a core membership with additional members who are involved in issues that are particularly relevant to them. This will allow for flexibility within the membership.

One member representative from the PPF will sit on the main CHCP sub-committee. This representative will be formally selected to fill this role. PPF members will also be invited to be active participants in a wide range of committees and working groups in West Lothian.

Anyone living in West Lothian who wants to get involved can be a member. Membership is open to anyone who:

- Receives services
- Cares for someone who receives services
- Is a potential user of services provided by the CHCP

It is also open to all:

- Voluntary sector organisations
- Community groups
- Support groups
- Self-help groups
- Community councils
- Local forums
- Any other group with an interest in the services provided by the CHCP and how they are delivered to local communities.

The PPF should be fully established by 31st March 2006.

If you are carer with an interest in becoming involved, please contact **Mary-Denise McKernan at Carers of West Lothian Carers Centre on 01506 771750.**

Carers of West Lothian's AGM



Pictured at the AGM, Mary Mulligan MSP, in conversation with Ian Buchanan, a carer and Epilepsy Scotland Chairman.

The 3rd Carers of West Lothian AGM since incorporation was held in Strathbrock Partnership Centre on Tuesday 1st November. It was well attended by members, staff and supporters.

After a welcome and introduction by Chair Anna McGill, Carers Centre Manager Mary-Denise McKernan brought everyone up to date with recent progress. There are now 2,000 carers on the database, Newsletter circulation has increased to 3,000 copies per issue and a number of projects are making good progress. Funding is being sought for an extension of the Outreach Project and for further work with Young Carers.

Retiring Treasurer John Aitken presented the accounts, which are in a healthy state, and proposed that David Rowe FCMA be re appointed as examiner. John has handed over the Treasurers role to Michael Chappin, who took over from the start of the new financial year on 1st April.

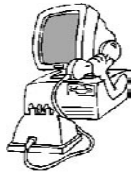
Lyn Aitken, Alex McGill and Ena Murray retired as Directors, by rotation. Ena had decided to retire and the chair thanked her for her outstanding contribution to the development of Carers of West Lothian. Lyn and Alex offered themselves for re-election and were duly re-appointed.

After the formal meeting, Julie Haslett, Manager of the Care21 Project, made an interesting presentation on the Care21 Project and its report, which contains a number of sound recommendations relating to improving the future of unpaid caring in Scotland.

The meeting was brought to a conclusion by Councillor Alex Davidson, himself a former young carer, who proposed a vote of thanks to everyone who had helped or supported Carers of West Lothian.

**John Aitken,
Secretary**

Carers on Line



Carers of West Lothians' own website- www.carers-westlothian.com where you can browse our information pack, respite directory, photo gallery, news items and links to other relevant carer sites.

Care 21 Project - full report can be found on <http://www.opm.co.uk/>

Alzheimer Scotland website – <http://www.alzscot.org/>

Disability West Lothian (learning disability) – <http://www.dwl.demon.co.uk>

Carers invited to take part in new research project:

How is 'Opening Doors for Older People' impacting on informal carers?

Are you a carer for someone who receives West Lothian's **Home Safety Service**, or has smart support technology in his/her own home? Or Are you a carer for someone who lives in one of the new **Housing with Care** complexes?

Either way, you may have views on how new support technologies are affecting the home care of older people. **If so, would you like to contribute to PhD research for Edinburgh University?**

Why this research? ...

It is expected that smart care packages such as those pioneered in West Lothian will increasingly become support tools for informal carers, as well as for the older people they care for. However, more needs to be found out from carers in their own right!

What is needed ...?

Initially, I am looking for carers who can respond to a short questionnaire on how the smart care technologies are impacting on them. At a later stage, I will be inviting a small number of carers to a more detailed interview, lasting about an hour. **The research will be conducted to the highest ethical and professional standards throughout.**

If you want to find out more, here's how to get in touch ...

Telephone: 0771 935 9747 or 0131 442 3202;

Voice mail: 0131 651 3207;

Email: patrickhorgan@hotmail.co.uk; Patrick Horgan



The Carers Centre will be closed for the Christmas Break from Friday 23rd December and re-open on Wednesday 4th January

Diary Dates

Carers Rights Day - 2nd December 2005

Holistic Therapy Training -

Wednesdays, 2pm-4pm (**Male only**)
- 11th, 18th, 25th January 2006

Thursdays, 10am-12noon (**Female only**),
- 2nd, 9th, 16th March 2006

Tuesdays 6pm-8pm (**Female only**)
- 2nd, 9th, 16th May 2006

Dementia Course for Carers –

Thursdays, 10am–12 noon
November 24th, December 1st, 8th & 15th

Arthritis Support Group - Monthly on a Tuesday
Dementia Support Grp - Monthly on a Thursday
Stroke Support Group - Monthly, days vary
for information on any of the above please contact Carers Centre, Tel: 01506 771750

Useful Telephone Numbers

Advice Shop	01506 776444
Benefits Agency Enquiry Line	0800 88 22 00
Disability West Lothian	01506 774030
Handicabs	01506 633953
Volunteer Centre West Lothian	01506 650111
NHS Helpline	0800 22 44 88
Samaritans	0131 2219999
Social Work Centres	
Livingston	01506 777777
Bathgate	01506 776700
Broxburn	01506 775666
Out of hours Emergency Service-	01506 777401
	01506 777402
	01506 777404
Voluntary Action West Lothian	01506 634115
West Lothian Council -	01506 777000
West Lothian Connected	
NHS Help Desk	01506 777664
NHS 24	08454 24 24 24

Carers of West Lothian Carers Centre

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Web: www.carers-westlothian.com

Opening Times

Monday to Friday 10.00am - 3.00pm



Please note that views expressed throughout this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Carers of West Lothian. We cannot endorse recommend any service advertised within this publication