



KEY PARTNERS IN CARE CARERS INVOLVEMENT WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND PUBLIC SECTOR BODIES

This document produced by South Lanarkshire Carers Network Limited enhances our commitment to Carers as **Key Partners in Care**. The Network supports the development of mechanisms within Local Authorities and Public Sector Bodies, which enable Carers full recognition and involvement. The Princess Royal Trust for Carers support the principles contained within this document. South Lanarkshire Council have accepted the document and support the principles, as do Primary Care Operating Division, Acute Care Operating Division and Health Board.

1. Holistic Carer Involvement

Carers are **the** major providers of services within Scotland. Their inclusion and involvement with other stakeholders is **essential**. A more holistic approach which engages Carers from consultation to decision making needs to be adopted within **all** areas of **Health and Social Care** to reflect Carer issues and concerns.

2. Early Involvement

Any initiative, which affects Carers, must include their involvement from an **early** stage **not** inclusion when structures or policies are already formed. Avoidance of a fragmented approach is only possible if future procedures of Health & Social Care adopt this approach. New attitudes and frameworks need to be developed to reflect meaningful inclusion.

3. Supported Involvement

Measures need to be taken to assist the involvement of Carers. These could range from practical assistance: travel costs, assisted communication or translation, to more general assistance: information briefings, changing the format of meetings, adopting alternative ways of working etc.

4. Networking

Communication with major Carer Organisations and networking would identify and highlight areas of concern or gaps in resource provision, which enable the Carer to continue caring. Meaningful feedback would enable short/long term planning on Carer issues and concerns.

5. Partnership Working

Carers are part of a wider community. A partnership approach within meetings and discussions, which include Health, Community, Social Work and other involved Agencies would offer an integrated approach and maximise the effectiveness of any initiative.



6. Meaningful Process

The engagement of Carers at **all** levels from consultation, planning through to decision-making is essential. Tokenistic involvement to satisfy 'consultation' should be avoided.

7. Quality Structures for Meetings

Any Carer meeting or discussion should provide adequate advanced information, sensible timeframe to enable Carers to attend, recorded minutes, provision of minutes and when necessary Carer inclusion in construction of the agenda.

8. Sensible Timeframe

In order to engage Carer representatives in meaningful consultation and their subsequent networking with other Carers, sensible timeframes for feedback need to be considered. It is **essential** that Carers are informed of start **and** finish times of meetings and that these times are sensible and reflect caring responsibilities and adhered to.

9. Inclusion

Mechanisms should be developed to ensure inclusion and feedback from Carers who are not involved with Carer Organisations. Some thought should be given on how this can be achieved.

10. Recognition

The skill and expertise of Carers as service providers **needs** to be recognised, ensuring connection with the consumers' **experience** of service provision not merely the perception.

11. Representation

All the major Care Organisations should be notified and included in discussions with Local Authorities to avoid duplication, omission or lack of representation.

12. Adapting Structures

Meaningful Carer representation enables growth and inclusion. Conserving a tradition or a form of authority or prestige does not necessarily reflect the experience of the Carer, or the person they care for.



I hereby accept the principles of the foregoing document

Signature

Robert Anderson

Position

Chairperson

Date

South Lanarkshire Carers Network Ltd.

Signature

David Murray

Position

Chief Executive NHS Lanarkshire

Date

17 June 2004

Signature

Harry Stevenson

Position

Head of Strategic Services

Date

17 June 2004