Older People Providers Forum

Wednesday September 25th at 10am

Chair: Susan Scott (MIST)

Note Taker: Victoria Isbister (VSGWL)

Present: Andrea Gourlay (Answer House), Jolene Lornie (Stroke Association), Billie Hamilton (OPAL)

Apologies: Linden Raeburn (WLC), Tracy Kerr (VSGWL), Jennifer White, Esther Lynn (re-engage), Sylvia Forshaw (Cyrenians), Graham Stevenson (Home Instead)

1. Welcome, apologies, introductions: Susan welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. Previous minutes and outstanding actions: Minutes approved
3. Guest speaker – Jacqui Marqui (Cruse)

Thanked the group for the invitation. Jacqui manages all of Lothians which includes around 70 volunteers in the South. Staff are Councillors or students on placement. Services are free of charge and popular.

Around 60,000 people die every year, leaving behind approximately 4 people bereaved which can include spouses, partners, friends, sons, daughters. Grief is part of everyday life, and it is important to understand this natural process. It can take 6 months for people to start to recognise they are bereaved, and some people can cope on their own, where some need support. Support generally not in first 6 months however can offer early support sessions which are intense as the grief is raw. Counsellors work with them to give clients toolkit to carry on, to get to place of acceptance. Waiting list is 6 months for people over 6mths grief. Fast track children - youngest client 6yrs old. Kids articulate grief differently.

Referrals – [Contact Us : Cruse Scotland](https://www.crusescotland.org.uk/contact-us/). Immediate listening service not a crisis service but available for people to talk. Chat online function also. [0808 802 6161](tel:08088026161).

Clients receive 6 sessions, 1 every week, same time and day. Dementia clients difficult to work with due to limited ability to build on sessions, they can be unable to remember what was spoken about previously. Online, Phone, Face to face. Face to face challenges involve difficulty for carers finding time and office space. They are looking for venues in different areas, inc WLDAS and the Bridge. This is easier also for volunteers who live and work in WL.

Variety of symptoms – all feelings are normal, part of how we react and how we start to recover. Often about listening. Cruse can offer extra professional help. People instinctively do what they need to do e.g. go back to work or take additional time off. Everyone has different ways of coping. Not skilled to deal with intense mental health issues. Would signpost GP or Samaritans.

[Training Calendar : Cruse Scotland](https://www.crusescotland.org.uk/training/training-calendar/).

Some questions about resources in relation to individual groups such as bereavement groups and volunteer supports for stroke survivors. Susan spoke about how full-time carers can suffer loss of identity when the person they are caring for dies.

1. What’s on Where Directory update

Autumn guide ready for collection. Tracy will collect some for The Gateway today – let us know if you need some.

1. Senior People’s Forum update (and any other relevant) - No updates
2. VSGWL Update

* Communities’ mental health funding opens at the end of the month. Full guidance will be published. Like last year only 1 round with small and large grants likely to be 2-10K and over 10K
* For anyone not remembering, details of the forum are here on our website including previous minutes <https://www.voluntarysectorgateway.org/working-together/older-people-provider-forum/>
* A number of events are coming up in the Gateway, keep an eye on socials.

1. Service updates

**Answer project** – No waiting list currently, services full on all days. Just awarded £4000 funding by the Wester leigh Group through WL crematorium fund for metal. Not many people apply. [West Lothian Crematorium, Livingston](https://www.westlothiancrematorium.co.uk/index.php) Also awarded from Ant and Jurgen foundation, Lottery and Arnold Clark. Two students coming from Armadale academy 2 days a week. This came from event.

**Stroke Association** – Jolene covers a wide area. 1st Oct new campaign. Connecting people. Have also received lottery funding to support work with volunteers and trying to set up something specific in WL for stroke survivors. Volunteers work in Lothian hospital acute waiting rooms, not yet in St Johns. End of October world stroke day, various events in Scotland. Stroke month. New tagline “Finding strength through support”.

**Opal**

* Official opening of the community hub next week. Have been working since January to develop an open accessible community space and grateful to have support of B&Q staff who completed full renovation free of charge. Pick one charity project a year. Also had YPI grant £3000.
* Resource library is full of different games and activities inc Dominos and I pads which anyone can sign out to use.
* In partnership with Ageing well, Opal and Xcite games, with 28 teams across WL – got quite competitive! All together award ceremony tomorrow Howden Park with tea coffee scones and a singer. Funding from SMILE adventure with dementia for trophies.
* Monthly coffee morning open to anyone over 60, free of charge, Tuesday 1st October, Speaker: Sybil Cavanagh Lost villages of WL. Really popular and includes warm cup of tea and a biscuit.
* Working closely again with SPN energy who last year supplied winter packs which included blanket, gloves, hat, hand warmers, torch. They are in partnership with LEAP who can make referrals. Lots of OPAL clients benefitted. They can assess homes to see how energy efficient they are. Scott’s details from SP Energy Scotland: [sgraham@spenergynetworks.co.uk](mailto:sgraham@spenergynetworks.co.uk)

**COWL**

* Team expanding. 15-18 members of staff. Interviewed for school worker for young carer service. National falls prevention week last week, various events inc Strathbrock Tuesday. Around 7000 unpaid carers approx. in WL. Regular referrals coming in. Home visits. 1:1. Signpost.
* MIST (memory information support team), who launched in March, are in partnership Opal, Food train, NHS Lothian memory and Generation arts. 55 carers. Attended event on Friday at Fauldhouse information day promoting all our services. Advice shop, Caesar and Howie, Home Instead all attended too.
* Drop-in sessions start tomorrow East Calder. Craigs farm October. Bathgate November.

1. West Lothian Council updates – none
2. AOCB
   1. Tracy wondered whether anyone was involved in any campaigns or support in any way regarding loss of Winter fuel payment. Susan said COWL very aware of how it will affect carers, some of whom may be powering additional machines in home. Answer project knows that users are worried about increasing costs. OPAL December coffee morning speaker will be on income maximisation as pension credit qualifies for the payment. Chat about Community hubs which are warm – however some people may have issues getting out e.g. mobility and are still faced with increasing costs and staying warm.
   2. Susan mentioned Disrupter award which is a niche pocket of funding and requires a creative unique application.

Actions

* If anyone would like anything shared round the network or relevant Gateway mailing list please email Victoria. Posts can also be shared on our social media (run by David)