



Minutes of the August 4, 2008 meeting of the Older People's Forum in Tynepark Resource Centre.

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Who was there:

June Rumbles	Forum Member
Joyce Gordon	Social Work
Sally Drysdale	Dunbar Day Centre
Don Lester	Carers of East Lothian
Vanessa Strong	SSA Edenhall
Jill Mackay	Communications East Lothian Council
Fiona Stratton	ELC Older People's Strategy Implementation Manager
Eileen and John Brown	Forum Members
Laurelle Edmunds	Forum Member, JPG Representative
Gordon Gray	Forum Member
Lesley Aitkenhead	ELCCF Development Manager
George Paterson	ELCCF Communications Worker

May Report:

Forum members accepted the reported minutes of the May 5th meeting.

Presentation on Older People's Strategy

Fiona Stratton, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, described the processes involved in the building of the Joint Strategy for Older People in East Lothian.

The strategy takes up directions and ideas raised during the **Looking Forward** (pdf) conference held at the end of 2006. It uses the method of having the local authority and health services work together - a joint thinking approach promoted by the Scottish Government as **Better Outcomes** for Older People.

The strategy has passed through several stages of development. Work has now reached a point where it is being presented to Councillors and officials of ELC and NHS Lothian.

It's expected the strategy should be put into action at some unspecified time in the future when then the budget is worked out.

At its heart it gives direction on communication, responsive and appropriate services, staff, training and resources.

The strategy aims to shift the balance of care with less reliance on care homes. with rehabilitation to support independence, better carer support, and a more personalised, flexible approach.

Forum members said:

"We have to have staff who talk to each other across the great divide."

"We need services to be more flexible."

"It's important to get better support for carers."

Fiona reported that another aim was for 40% intensive home care packages - currently the level was up to 34%. The range and quality of community based services were to be developed, while ensuring care homes provide higher quality.

Detailed finance plans were to be made and better use made of resources. Overall the implications were fewer NHS continuing beds, and shorter stays in care homes. The emphasis of the strategy, she said, was to shift the balance of care and to support people for longer in their own homes.

Overall, the strategy would be put into effect in four stages, or workstreams. Some other tasks not allotted to workstreams included a review of respite, development of local area co-ordination, advocacy, training and workforce development, palliative and terminal care services and self directed care. To deliver the new strategy, some services would need to change and resources reviewed.



The strategy would help East Lothian cope with demographic need.

"In East Lothian, we have more of an ageing population than in any other part of Scotland," Fiona pointed out.

"What about the people with mental health problems and the physically impaired who are also getting older and living longer?"

"You're going to have to beef up your overnight services."

"Where are you going to get the staff, the nurses, the social workers? You'll have to make the jobs and positions more attractive."

"Better integration of services have been promised for years."

"We need to see the strategy to see how you're going to deliver."

Fiona stressed that the planning partners acknowledge the need for improved, integrated overnight services and for services which particularly meets the needs of older people with mental health problems and with more complex needs.

Single Shared Assessments*

"I think it was dismal and was disappointed by the quality of assessment."

Vanessa Strong explained her work and success so far in training community care workers achieve a better standard of **Single Shared Assessments** (pdf). Vanessa has been working with **Carers of East Lothian** on training packages designed to tease out more accurate information for care needs through a more person-centred approach and improved interview technique.



So far the training has resulted in remarkable success, creating a new gold standard. Cutting bureaucracy alone speeded up the process of assessment by up to a week.

* Single Shared Assessment is for people with community care needs seeking help from social work, health or housing authorities, and who may require the services of more than one professional discipline or agency to serve a level of need.

It recognises many people have health, social care and housing needs and that agencies must work together.

And Vanessa said staff involved in the training have responded well: "I think they're more incredibly enthusiastic and willing."
She is now to carry out the same job of training on community care workers in Midlothian.

Reflecting on her training experience, Vanessa said there was a need for basic communication skills for General Practitioners, and for a redrafting of the assessment forms.

She said: "The carers assessment form used in East Lothian is useless. It's very difficult to record a good interview on a form."

And she added: "It's important we see the service user as a partner in care - and that should be stated at the start of the assessment meeting. GPs have a great deal to gain by this practice and as time goes on more will see the light"

Members welcomed the new development but were concerned that the SSA should also show unmet need should be recorded on the assessment form.

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**Remember to look in at the ELCCF website if you can.
You'll find it - and these latest minutes
of East Lothian Old People's Forum - at
www.elccf.org**

**The next meeting of the Older People's Forum will be held
once the Strategy is out for consultation.**

We'll tell you of the next meeting date in due course.