

MSPs: Claudia Beamish (chair), Johann Lamont, Alison Johnstone

Individuals: Alexis Hay, Standard Life Carers Network; Amanda McCarren, tide; Arvind Salwan, Care Inspectorate; Charlie Bowie, Fife Young Carers; Elizabeth Morrison, Life Changes Trust; Jayne Lennox, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre; Jean Campbell, Support in Mind Scotland/Soroptimist International Scotland; Josh McCandlish, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Young Carers; Kaden Stewart, Fife Young Carers; Kaitlin Paterson, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Young Carers; Lindsey Currie; Lucy Brogan, Fife Young Carers; Nicole Bell, Support in Mind Scotland; Nina Collins, Fife Young Carers; Steven Smith, Fife Young Carers; Nancy Loucks, Families Outside; Lauren McGowan, Renfrewshire Carers Centre; Jamie Pizzey, Renfrewshire Carers Centre; Louize Irvine, Renfrewshire Carers Centre; Christine Farquhar, Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board carer representative; Greig Kennedy, Edinburgh Young Carers; Tom Wightman, Pasda; Lorraine Bairstow, tide.

Apologies: Michael McMahon, DAS; Lesley Jeffrey, Dumfries and Galloway Carers Centre; Abigail Jackson, Broomhouse Young Carers; Jan Noble, Borders Carers Centre; Paul Edie, Care Inspectorate; Kelly Munro, Enable Scotland; Stacey Webster, Edinburgh Carers Council; Carolynne Hunter; Colette McDiarmid, MND Scotland; Moira Fenning, Edinburgh North West Carers Centre

Claudia welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly the young carers in attendance.

The minutes from the meeting on 9 November 2017 were accepted.

Young Carer Identification Cards (YCID)

There was a discussion about the differences in use of YCIDs between local authority areas. In Fife, young carers reported that the card was well used and could be used to access free travel and leisure memberships. Services from NHS Forth Valley (another of the original pilot sites) said that their YCID was recognised by schools and some services but did not provide discounts or free services, and there were still some issues with some pharmacies recognising young carers. Renfrewshire had not been part of the pilot but young carers and workers had heard about YCID use in other areas and could see its value for allowing collection of prescriptions, as some young carers had experienced difficulties with this. The young carers' service could be proactive in securing discounts on services and support for prescription collection – this had happened in Fife and went beyond the original pilot scheme. In Edinburgh, not all young carers had found the card useful as it wasn't recognised by services and there hadn't been enough explanation of what it was for. Young carers from other areas also had some experience of this.

It was agreed that although the pilots had been organised by specific health boards, the rollout of YCIDs going forward needed to be on a national basis to ensure parity. The benefits of identification cards for adult carers was also briefly discussed. Support and expertise from Young Scot, who provide Young Scot National Entitlement Cards to 11-25-year-olds, was highlighted as necessary for the success of national roll-out.

Johann Lamont asked why the scheme was not more widespread if there had been several successful pilots and learning from these was clear. Services identified a lack of funding to take the learning forward.

Action: The CPG will write to the Scottish Government and outline the benefits of YCIDs highlighted by the pilot projects and the need for funding to sustain the learning from the pilots.

Young Carer Grant (YCG)

The Scottish Government are planning to introduce a Young Carer Grant from 2019, payable to 16-18-year-olds who are caring for at least 16 hours a week and who are still at school (further information can be found here: <https://news.gov.scot/news/more-support-for-young-carers>) The finer details of this grant are currently being finalised through the Scottish Government's Young Carer Grant Working Group along with the Social Security Experience Panels, Young Scot and other stakeholders.

Renfrewshire young carers wanted to know whether the grant would be paid on cash or on pre-paid cards, and how young people without a bank account would be able to access the grant. They also highlighted situations where young carers had left school before the age of 16 and had struggled to access support including free school meals, education maintenance allowance and concessionary travel. Problems for hidden young carers in accessing the YCG were also discussed, with young carer services noting the strain on their capacity if they had to identify, support and verify young carers' access to the YCG. Young carers also highlighted that it could be difficult to quantify the hours of care provided, particularly if care provision was emotional support or variable, and that all educational settings (including apprenticeships) should be included. There was also discussion of the frequency of the grant, with preferences and opinions on monthly, quarterly and biannual awards all discussed. Some young carers preferred the frequency of their EMA payments but could see the benefit of a larger payment less frequently. Some young carers spoke about how the money they received was an important contribution to the family finances and so would prefer a smaller amount more frequently. All young carers and young carer services agreed that choice and flexibility was the most important aspect of a grant.

Johann Lamont asked how young carers should be identified. Young carers and workers agreed that people and agencies who are in contact with young people and their families should be aware of their potential caring roles and able to identify and signpost if necessary. Interaction between these agencies is also important; signposting to relevant services does not have to be onerous for schools, healthcare professionals or others. There was some discussion of young carers in more complex situations, such as those caring for a family member with an addiction, a mental health issue, or when a family member is in prison, and whether parental consent for young carer support or the YCG would need to be considered. Young carer services stated that their approach to supporting a family in complex circumstances was often received more positively than statutory interventions. Young carers from Fife spoke about partnerships that the young carer service had developed with local addiction support services to help identify young carers who did not recognise their own caring roles or who were potentially facing stigma, and a video resource that had been developed by young carers (<http://www.fixers.org.uk/news/14718-11208/helping-hidden-carers.php>).

Young carers' mental health was also discussed, with acknowledgement that CAMHS was frequently very busy and not always the best way of supporting those with low level mental health issues. Problems were also identified with young carers who were supported by CAMHS or other youth services reaching adulthood and being unable to transition to adult services because they were not eligible or because services did not exist. Young carers whose caring role had ended through

bereavement must also be supported and not forgotten. Young adult carer support services were praised, particularly those that offered one to one support for young carers who were struggling with transitioning to an adult caring role. Funding for these services could also be inconsistent, which meant having to prioritise existing service users without the opportunities for outreach and hidden young carers. The loss of staff expertise through inconsistent funding was also noted.

Claudia Beamish thanked everyone for their contributions and offered to ask Parliamentary Questions about some of the issues identified.

AOCB

Motion S5M-10527 tabled by Anas Sarwar was noted. This motion highlights the lack of funding for the Carers (Scotland) Act which is due to be implemented from 1 April. This motion has achieved cross-party support and will be debated in the coming weeks.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10527&ResultsPerPage=10>

A Parliamentary Question about uprating of carers' assistance asked by Claudia earlier in February was noted

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5O-01734&ResultsPerPage=10>

Uprating amendments are due to be discussed at the Social Security Committee meeting on 1 March and a letter on behalf of the CPG will be sent to the Social Security Minister before her appearance at the Committee to urge the Scottish Government to commit to uprating carer benefits in line with inflation.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the CPG will take place on **16 May at 1:00pm** in Committee Room 1. Topics for discussion include caring for someone with acquired brain injury (ABI) and discussion of the new Health and Social Care Standards.