



August 2013

The Scottish Older People's Assembly is a "voice" for older people. It is a collaborative way to promote concerns to the Scottish and Westminster Governments, and to support or challenge legislation and policies which have a bearing on the quality of later life in Scotland.

Welcome

Welcome to the second newsletter from the Committee of the Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA) to keep you abreast of activities over the summer period.

Chair Handover



Tom Berney, SOPA's new Chair, presents the retiring Chair Agnes McGroarty with a token of appreciation for her two years at the helm.

Chair Introduction

It is both a great privilege and a considerable challenge to take over from Agnes. As Chair of the Scottish Seniors Alliance she had a breadth of experience in issues facing older people. I hope that my own background as a civil servant and national trade union representative will allow me to play as effective a role as she did. The strength of SOPA is that our committee includes a wide spectrum of organisations representing

every aspect of the concerns of older people. For example, I am Chair of the University of the Third Age in Scotland. We organise educational and leisure activities to help overcome some of the isolation often experienced in later life. But, as we know, there are a lot more issues to address. Many older people are themselves carers and are excluded from social activities. In this newsletter we have referred to some of the recent representations that SOPA has made.

We have now established regular communication links with the Scottish Government, and it must be a two-way process. Our duty is to press for improvements and effective monitoring of existing and new proposals. The misgivings we raised over the operation of the Liverpool Care Pathway appear to be borne out by reports from England. Our worry is that, while new initiatives like 'Reshaping Care' and the proposed legislation to integrate health and social care may be well intentioned, they require a cultural change in staff at all levels to become less territorial and more focused on individual needs. We must ensure that the changes are not used simply as a means of reducing spending to meet 'austerity' budgets.

Vice Chair

This position will be filled from within the current Committee. Members have been invited to put themselves forward, and in the event of multiple candidates a vote will decide the matter.



Care Concerns

Alex Neil, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing Committee members Tom Berney, Cathy Hewit, Mike Liddle, Bashir Malik, Agnes McGroarty, Joan Turner and John White met with Alex Neil in June.

The following concerns were raised:

1. Medical interventions at home instead of in hospital.

A recent British Medical Journal (BMJ) report suggested that 'Reshaping Care' does not lower overall hospital admissions. It was thought that admissions may indeed increase, especially for people with multiple conditions.

In response, Mr Neil described new work by the Government on person-centred care, integration of health and social care, and patient safety. (See Seminar Report on page 4). He highlighted pilot projects including 'Telehealth' where people use iPads to speak with staff to manage their conditions in a better way. He stated that as a result of this work, admissions to hospital had significantly reduced.

He added that the Government intends to roll out this innovation throughout Scotland in the next 2-3 years, to ensure that good practice is universal. He acknowledged that there will always be need for hospital care, and that the Government is looking at how patients' admissions, discharges and readmissions are better managed.

2. Untrained nurse practitioners.

Mr Neil stated that concerns should be reported through the UK's independent feed-back platform for health and social care - '[Patient Opinion](#)'.

3. Access to GPs.

Some GP surgeries will now not treat minor injuries, creating greater pressure on A&E. Mr Neil stated that this was being considered in the work on unplanned admissions to hospital.

4. 15-minute care at home visits.

Mr Neil promised further consultation on the new National Care Standards and a drive towards closer working between the Care Inspectorate

[Patient Opinion](#) is a web platform for users of NHS Scotland. Tell the story online of your experience of health care in confidence, as a patient, a carer or friend. How was it? What could have been better? Voice your appreciation or concerns. Patient Opinion will pass your story to the people in the health service who should know. Browse others' stories and compare experiences.



and Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and improvement in monitoring and inspection.

SOPA suggested that reporting poor care should include the person and their family or the use of a named contact or telephone number at the local GP surgery. Mr Neil suggested SOPA gives its view on the National Care Standards, and return in three months' time with clear proposals concerning these.

5. The Francis Report on the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust.

The Cabinet Secretary reported that Ministers are conducting unannounced visits to A&E departments, and this is to be extended to hospital wards. He was also considering a parallel system to the Hospital Standardised Mortality rates for care homes.

6. Liverpool Care Pathway and end of life.

SOPA suggested use of a 'Health Passport' – a brief individual health document for a medical emergency. Mr Neil responded that accountability was in place on the [Liverpool Care Pathway](#), but he would ask the Chief Medical Officer to write to SOPA to respond to its specific request.

Scotland Patients Association (SPA)

[SPA](#) provides patients with an opportunity to raise concerns about health care. It is an independent association established in 1982.

News Flash

Redesigning Care: The [Care Information Report](#) is now available online. It will be implemented to deliver a service for all care groups and carers. The service will become more user-friendly and interactive, and will allow people of all ages to share their own care stories and journeys.

Scottish Older People's Assembly Committee Business

The way the Committee conducts business was discussed at the July meeting. Procedures will be developed for consideration in September. Downloads of meeting notes will be available at: <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/SOPA13>.

Recent Assemblies and Conferences attended by Committee Members

Northern Ireland Pensioners' Parliament - Agnes McGroarty was a delegate at the third Parliament organised by the [Age Sector Platform](#) - a two-day event, also involving politicians.

National Pensioners' Convention staged a Pensioners' Parliament in Blackpool. Alan Sidaway and Cathy Leech attended the Parliament on behalf of SOPA. [NPC](#) is the largest pensioner organisation in the UK.

Shaping Our Age is a three year partnership project between Royal Voluntary Service (formerly WRVS) and various other bodies. Agnes McGroarty attended the London briefing. A key finding was that social interaction is one of the most important factors to improved well-being and quality of life.



Awards
Official recognition
of excellence

[Jewish Care Scotland](#) received this accolade as recognition of volunteers' time and commitment. They help older people live independent and rewarding lives in the community, within a familiar Jewish framework. Dianna Wolfson, SOPA Committee Member, who represents ['Faith in Older People'](#) affirms, "It's so important to maintain familiar foods and festivals for people in later life as a way of reinforcing identity, and getting the best out of every day." Around 500 families and older people living in the community turn to JCR for help each year. 130 volunteers have been trained to work in partnership with professional social work teams.

Quotation from *New York Times* article by Oliver Sachs, neurology professor and author:

'[The Joys of Old Age - No Kidding](#)'.

'My father, who lived to 94, often said that the 80s had been one of the most enjoyable decades of his life. He felt, as I begin to feel, not a shrinking but an enlargement of mental life and perspective.'

Committee member receives British Empire Medal for dedication to her community



Barbara Barnes has been awarded the BEM for her longterm voluntary services in West Dunbartonshire. Apart from being a Justice of Peace for several years, Barbara is involved with [Alzheimer Scotland](#). She raises funds, represents AS on local

Community Care Forums, attends Local Authority strategy groups and the Public Partnership Forum. Barbara's fundraising sounds quite hair-raising!

"I've done numerous zip-slides, abseils, a fire-walk, a skydive, and also a wing-walk for my 70th birthday. People made generous donations to Alzheimer Scotland in lieu of presents", she said.

Men's Sheds

At the 2012 Assembly during his Skype call from Brisbane, Dr Rick Swindell highlighted the impact in Australia of [Men's Sheds](#) on the quality of life of thousands of older men. The organisations operate at community level and promote social interaction and healthier lifestyles through a wide variety of practical pursuits. Through their success the concept has spread worldwide and been adapted to different cultures. *Age Scotland* has sought funding from the Scottish Government to develop the idea here. Look out for Men's Sheds in your area.



Napier University Mapping Exercise

The report identifying priorities and gap areas in engagement and co-productive activity involving older people will be available on the [SOPA Downloads page](#).

Care Quality and Care Systems Seminar in June

The seminar arose from the meeting with the Cabinet Secretary in January. In view of SOPA's concerns about care, he was eager for the Committee to connect with the Government's Chief Nursing Officer Ros Moore. In preparation for the seminar which she arranged, the NHS Scotland document 'A Route Map to the 20:20 Vision for Health and Social Care' was distributed to the Committee. It set out the Scottish Government's priority areas for action to achieve sustainable improvements in care.

The paper identified three critical aspects of quality care – that it is safe, effective and person-centred. This shift to person-centred care will involve building a new interpersonal culture among allied health professionals (AHPs), and patients can expect to be involved in the supported self-management of their condition. The presenters elaborated on the reforms in the '20:20 vision' document and their realisation. The '20:20 vision' strands involve :

- prevention** - supporting and promoting personal responsibility for healthier living
- anticipation of problems** – intervention and collaboration by a social care and health team
- supported self-management of health** - an interpersonal NHS approach to supporting people
- tackling serious health inequalities** in the population at the highest governmental level.

During discussions heart-felt concerns emerged among the SOPA Committee. These centred around achieving the culture change required to avoid paternalistic, patronising or defensive attitudes among AHPs delivering home care. Troubling questions or comments were submitted at the close and the NHS team will respond to these. It was agreed that the seminar had been a valuable knowledge exchange for the SOPA Committee and NHS Scotland, and a dialogue which should continue.

Scottish Older People's Assembly
Edinburgh International Conference Centre
Thursday 5 December 2013



Regional Assemblies

Age Scotland has 780 local member groups and is holding four assemblies. Welfare reform and citizenship will be high on the agenda:

- 28 August - New Lanark (South)
- 8 October - Livingston (East)
- 15 October - Inverness (North)
- 23 October - Glasgow (West)

The experience and opinions of people at these regional assemblies will form the foundation of discussions at SOPA. (See details below).

DATE FOR THE DIARY

Scottish Older People's Assembly 2013

Thursday 5th December

Registration 9.30 for 10.30 - 16.00

Edinburgh International Conference Centre

Booking

Committee members will arrange for invitations to be sent to groups across Scotland through their networks. Individuals can also register an interest at acfaa@edinburgh.gov.uk. Supply contact details and any link to an organisation. With a maximum of 200 attendees you will be informed in November if you have a place. If you find you cannot attend, please let us know or nominate someone who can replace you.

The Assembly Live

The Assembly will be streamed live on the day. You may wish to organise a group to watch the event on the Internet at a suitable location.

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