



THE 2007 SPENDING REVIEW: HOW TO MAKE IT WORK FOR CARERS

‘I hope that we can work together to improve the position of carers in Scotland, who play a significant and often underappreciated role in health terms. We want to make rapid, significant and sustainable improvements in support for carers, including in respite care. I hope that there will be a cross-party consensus on that.’ (Nicola Sturgeon, June 2007)

**A GUIDE FOR UNPAID CARERS AND
LOCAL CARER ORGANISATIONS**

The Purpose of this Guide

This guide has been produced to provide carers and carer organisations with information and advice which will help them to influence the provision of carer support services in their local areas. As explained in this guide, the relationship between the SNP led Scottish Government and local authorities is changing, creating new challenges and opportunities for all of us engaged in the campaign for better services for carers. Understanding and adapting to these changes will be critical if we are to be successful.

This guide contains:

- Background information on the Comprehensive Spending Review
- A summary of the Scottish Government's key targets and commitments relating to carers and carer support services
- Advice to carer organisations and carers on local campaigning
- Contact details for organisations that can provide further information, advice and practical support

The Comprehensive Spending Review

Every three years, the UK government determines Scotland's share of the UK budget, a process guided by an agreement called the 'Barnett Formula'.

Once Scotland's share of UK resources is known, the Scottish government determines Scotland's budget and spending priorities for the next three years. This includes spending on all devolved issues, such as education, justice, the environment, health care and social care services – including support for carers. The final three-year budget for Scotland is ratified by the full Scottish Parliament.

Public services are not delivered directly by the Scottish government, but by local or regional authorities. The Scottish budget therefore determines how much is passed on to NHS Boards and local authorities to deliver health, education, policing and other public services.

This whole process is also known as the *Comprehensive Spending Review*.

The Concordat explained

In November 2007 the SNP government announced Scotland's budget for 2008–2011, and at the same time set out a new relationship with local councils (often called local authorities). This relationship is explained in a *Concordat* agreement.

Essentially, the *Concordat* sets out a deal between the SNP and local councils which offers councils an enhanced financial settlement against a promise that they will not increase Council Tax for three years. It also gives local councils greater freedom to manage their own budgets and make decisions about their spending priorities.

In the past, much of the money councils received from government was 'ring-fenced' – earmarked for specific services. For example, the additional £5 million to support the Carers Strategy in 1999 had to be spent specifically for that purpose.

Under the new deal, most 'ring-fencing' has been removed. It will be replaced with national and local *outcome targets*. This means, in future, councils don't have to prove they spend money on services, instead they have to provide evidence that people get better services. How they use their money to achieve *better outcomes* will be up to each local council.

What the Concordat means for carers

'Most of us need more health and social care in older age. As the population ages, we need to plan approaches to health and social care that allow people to remain happy, safely and free from poverty in their own homes and communities for as long as possible, and that help carers look after family members.' (Spending Review 2007, 'Delivering a Healthier Scotland')

In signing up to the concordat local councils have agreed to dedicate additional support to carers in the following areas:

Specified Set of Commitments

- ❑ Carers support – progress towards delivering 10,000 extra respite weeks per annum at home and in care homes (care settings)

Policy Development

- ❑ Providing respite and support for an additional 1,000 young carers, along with additional resources for local carers centres

In addition to these specific commitments, the concordat contains some general outcomes which relate indirectly to carers. Effectively supporting carers will assist councils in meeting the following **National Indicators and Targets**.

- ❑ Reduce proportion of people aged 65 and over admitted as emergency inpatients 2 or more times in a single year

Research has shown that providing appropriate training and support to carers strengthens their ability to manage their caring situation, prevents unnecessary hospital admissions for the person they care for and reduces the cost of patient care.

- ❑ Increase the percentage of people aged 65 and over with high levels of care needs who are cared for at home

Lack of support means an increasing number of carers are forced to give up caring every year due to the detrimental effect caring has on their own health, resulting in expensive admissions to long term residential care. This can be prevented through investment in respite, training and emotional support services for carers.

- ❑ Decrease the proportion of individuals living in poverty

Many carers are economically disadvantaged, with over 50% of carers leaving employment as a

result of their caring responsibilities. Carers need access to appropriate respite and short break services to enable them to combine work with their caring responsibilities, thereby avoiding financial hardship and poverty.

Why local authorities need to recognise and support carers

We need to support and sustain the carer population by investing in services for the tens of thousands of carers who currently go without breaks or adequate support. Consideration must be given to carer's own health needs, with early identification of carers leading to access to dedicated carer services.

Scotland needs healthy carers

- There are 480,000 unpaid carers in Scotland, more than Scotland's total paid care workforce. Of these, 115,000 care full time, without pay, for over 50 hours a week.
- One in five carers suffer from poor health and they are a third more likely to become permanently sick or disabled than non-carers.
- Half of carers who provide substantial care have suffered a physical injury due to their caring role or have received treatment for anxiety, depression or mental ill health.
- Investing in carer services will result in better health and wellbeing for carers and a better quality of life for both carers and the people they care for.

Scotland must invest in carers

- Carers save the government £7.6 billion pounds every year, equivalent to three quarters of the entire budget of NHS Scotland.
- If just five carers out of every 100 were unable to care, Scotland's public services would be faced with an additional bill of over £280 million a year.

- Research has shown that supporting carers results in measurable economic benefits resulting from fewer admissions to hospital and long-term care and a reduced cost of patient care.
- With our increasingly ageing population, the number of unpaid carers is set to grow, with society becoming ever more dependent on their contribution to health and social care delivery

Scotland's young carers deserve the right to be children first

- There are more than 17,000 young carers in Scotland, yet less than 3,000 are currently receiving support.
- As many as half of all young carers miss some schooling and a quarter leave with no qualifications.
- A third of young carers self-harm due to stress and over half experience sleep problems

Shaping Local Services – What You Can Do to Help

Local councils have many commitments within the concordat. We want to make sure that the

needs of carers are identified as an early priority and are given due consideration when councils come to make decisions about their local spending plans. We also want to ensure that carers are fully involved in the development of carer services in their area. Carers and carer organisations can work together to make sure this happens in the following five ways:

1. Send your local councillors a copy of this guide with a letter explaining why it is important for them to invest in carers.
2. Visit your local councillors, give them a copy of this guide and speak to them in person about the needs of carers in your local area.
3. Develop a good relationship with local councillors by inviting them to attend your local carers support group or forum.
4. Ensure that there is a carer representative at local strategic planning meetings. For example at meetings of your local Community Health Partnership.
5. Find out who the representative for carers is within the council. Tell them you wish to be consulted about the development of new services for carers in your area, for example the development of additional respite weeks.

This briefing has been produced by the national carer organisations. For further information or advice, contact any of the organisations listed below. Further copies of the Guide can be obtained by contacting the Coalition of Carers in Scotland or downloaded from the websites listed below.

Carers Scotland

91 Mitchell Street, Glasgow, G1 3LN
Tel: 0141 221 9141
Email: policy@carerscotland.org
Website: www.carerscotland.org

Coalition of Carers in Scotland

10 Kinnoull Avenue, Dunblane, FK15 9JG
Tel: 01786 825529
Email: coalition@carers.net
Website: www.carersnet.org

Crossroads (Scotland) – Caring for Carers

24 George Square, Glasgow G2 1EG
Tel: 0141 226 3793
Email: info@crossroads-scotland.co.uk
Website: www.crossroads-scotland.co.uk

Princess Royal Trust for Carers

Campbell Hse, 215 West Campbell Street,
Glasgow G2 4TT Tel: 0141 221 5066
Email: infoscotland@carers.org
Website: www.carers.org

Scottish Carers Alliance

91 Mitchell Street, Glasgow, G1 3LN
Tel: 0141 221 9141
Email: alliance@carerscotland.org
Website: www.scottishcarersalliance.org.uk