

Care and Connect *for families*



June 2024 Issue #27



Welcome!

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2024 Carers' Survey

With a new 'right to a break' in development by the Scottish Government, it has never been more important to put carers' voices at the heart of decision-making. That's why Shared Care Scotland, the national carer organisation with short breaks and respite at its core, is undertaking a comprehensive survey on unpaid carers' experiences of short breaks and respite services in Scotland.

The survey will help Shared Care Scotland to understand the needs and experiences of carers as they build a picture of short breaks and respite across Scotland.

You can find out more about the survey and complete it at surveymonkey.com/r/carerb企业s24.

Recent News Article

We became aware of financial irregularities in the finances of a small number of individuals supported in two of our Fife services in October 2022. We immediately undertook a financial audit of the services and reported our findings to the police and other relevant authorities and regulatory bodies, working closely with these bodies to assist with their inquiries.

Following an internal investigation, the staff member responsible for these irregularities was dismissed by Sense Scotland in November 2022. Shortly after this, Sense Scotland spoke with the families and guardians of the individuals affected and committed to repaying all funds.

We reviewed our policies, procedures and systems to ensure robust management of the finances of the people we support, and are confident that this was an isolated incident.

If you have any queries regarding this matter, please email joanneodonell@sensescotland.org.uk.

Strategic Priorities 2024/25

The Senior Management team and the Board of Trustees recently confirmed Sense Scotland's strategic priorities for 2024 and 2025. These are as follows:

1) Establish Sense Scotland as a leader in the provision of specialist services for people with complex communication support needs associated with learning and/or sensory disabilities.

We will accomplish this by offering specialised assessment(s) for people with sensory impairments and learning disabilities to improve their independence and quality of life.

2) Ensure our social care services are sustainable and evolve to meet demand.

We will accomplish this by:

- Establishing innovative engagement methods to connect with families, commissioners and others to ensure need and demand is understood and met.
- Embracing technology and digital systems to improve the efficiency of our organisation and services.

3) Support carers to access breaks and explore new short break models.

We will accomplish this by working with others to influence government and decision makers to ensure carers' right to a break is upheld and properly funded.

4) Deliver programmes and projects to enhance the lives of people with communication support needs and their families across Scotland.

We will accomplish this by:

- Striving for greater geographical equity in the delivery of our offer.
- Working in partnership with local authorities, particularly education, to enhance statutory provision and support at key transition stages.

5) Generate new and sustained sources of income.

We will accomplish this by initiating new fundraising programmes and campaigns to grow direct debit giving, increase corporate donors and sponsors, expand our trusts and grants income and encourage legacies.

6) Nurture social care leaders of the future and value, recognise and reward our staff and volunteers.

We will accomplish this by:

- Extending our staff training programme to offer a wider range of courses, mentoring and secondment opportunities, and enhanced induction.
- Reviewing staff pay to ensure these are competitive and show staff they are appreciated.

Fundraising Opportunities

Sense Scotland is a charity. Many of our services rely on funding from trusts, foundations and the public. We need to raise at least £1million every year. Can you, your family, friends or employer help? To find out more about our fundraising activities and opportunities, please sign up to our

fundraising newsletter at bit.ly/sense-scotland-fundraising, give the team a call on 0300 330 9292 or email us at fundraising@sensescotland.org.uk.

Easy Fundraising

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations for Sense Scotland with easyfundraising?

There are over 7,000 brands on board ready to make a donation – including eBay, Argos, John Lewis, ASOS, Booking.com and M&S – and it won't cost you a penny extra to help us raise funds.

All you need to do is:

1. Go to easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/sense-scotland and sign up for free.
2. Every time you shop online, go to the link above first to find the site you want and start shopping.

OR

Download the donation reminder on your laptop, iPad, iPhone or Android phone at easyfundraising.org.uk/donation-reminder. Every time you visit a website which offers a donation, you will receive an alert to trigger that donation when you purchase. After you've checked out, the brand will make a donation to Sense Scotland at no extra cost to you whatsoever!

There are no catches or hidden charges, and Sense Scotland would be really grateful for your donations.

Mecoco

Our Fundraising team are now responsible for Mecoco - the non-profit enterprise providing workplace experiences for disabled adults and young people, especially those with additional support needs, supporting them to produce high-quality candles and other fragrance products. Mecoco recently underwent a rebrand, with its new logo and brand colours matching Sense Scotland's and welcoming our Mecoco volunteers and staff into the Sense Scotland family.

Our Fundraising team are looking for volunteers for quality control and candle testing – could you help us out? If you fancy giving it a go, and making your home smell nice in the process, give us an email at hello@mecoco.org.

In the meantime, you can always check out Mecoco's products at www.mecoco.org.

Upcoming Events

Music Bingo Night – Saturday, 6 July – 7pm – 11pm

Come along to the Ellon Royal British Legion at Lower Victoria Hall, 70 Station Road for a night of fun with bingo, a buffet, a live DJ, raffles and games.

Connect and Sensory Play – Thursday, 11 July – 10am – 12pm

Join us at Lochgelly Centre from 10am - 12pm, check out our sensory toys, and meet other families and social care professionals.

News From Your Service

[SERVICE NEWS GOES HERE]

Please let us know what you think of Care and Connect. Send your feedback to communications@sensescotland.org.uk.

You can find past issues at sensescotland.org.uk/care-and-connect.