Your Contribution

We would welcome your views on the priorities that the Carers Strategy should address and on what actions and developments are necessary to ensure that all partners work more effectively together to better support carers, to sustain appropriate levels of caring, whilst enjoying a good quality of life outwith caring.

If you would be interested in contributing, please forward your suggestions in writing by 26 February 2010 to:

The Scottish Government
Community Care Division
Policy for Unpaid Carers
Floor 2ER
St Andrew’s House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

carers.strategy@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
Our Aims
The Carers Strategy will build on the considerable progress that has been made in recent years in identifying, recognising and supporting carers in Scotland.

Early development work, which has involved key partners and taken into account the views of unpaid carers, has confirmed the need for the new Carers Strategy in Scotland to:

• reflect the needs of unpaid carers and recognise different groups of carers;
• promote positive outcomes for unpaid carers and the people that they care for;
• highlight the main issues for unpaid carers – as identified by carers themselves;
• promote awareness and understanding of unpaid carers across a range of services;
• promote the delivery of personalised services, that better meet people’s needs;
• develop short-term and long-term priorities for unpaid carer support;
• support and inform the development of local carers’ support services;
• include a separate, ‘lift out’ section on young carers, focusing on their specific needs; and
• monitor implementation of the Strategy to ensure improvements in services/outcomes.

A Partnership
The Carers Strategy will be developed by the Scottish Government in partnership with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and this work is being informed by the work of a Steering Group.

The Steering Group includes representatives from the National Carers Organisations, including the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Carers Scotland, Crossroads Scotland, Shared Care Scotland, and The Coalition of Carers in Scotland. We are also working with the Social Work Inspection Agency and the Association of Directors of Social Work.

To support the development of the Carers Strategy we have also set up a Carers Reference Group. This comprises a number of carers with different caring experiences and from across different parts of Scotland. The Reference Group will be reviewing the work that is being carried out and ensuring that the strategy reflects carers’ experiences, needs and priorities.

Our Commitment
There are estimated to be over 660,000 unpaid carers in Scotland, providing support, care and assistance to family members, friends and neighbours affected by illness, disability, frailty, substance misuse or ill-health. The Scottish Government acknowledges the significant contribution that these carers make to those for whom they care, but also to their local communities, to wider Scottish society and to the economy.

We recognise unpaid carers as key partners in the delivery of care in Scotland, and acknowledge their expertise and the quality of care they give.

However, the Scottish Government also appreciates that caring can have an adverse impact on the physical, mental and emotional health of carers. Without appropriate and timely support and information carers can be at risk of experiencing a crisis.

Recognising this, and aware that with Scotland’s ageing population the contribution of unpaid carers is set to grow over the coming years, the Scottish Government has committed to develop a new Strategy for Unpaid Carers in Scotland, during 2009 and early 2010. This Carers Strategy will then be published in 2010.