

Support Choices Evaluation Summary

Support Choices is a free community based independent service helping people organise social care and Self- directed support across Perth and Kinross. It aims to give people and unpaid carers the information they need to make informed choices. It was established in 2018 and funded by the Scottish Government through the Support in the Right Direction Programme.

The services Support Choices offers includes working with communities, individuals, and families to:

- provide information about care and support options including self directed support
- request and prepare for an assessment for care and support
- identify what is important for them for care and support
- explore other ways to fund and find care and support options
- connect with community supports and useful organisations.

Over the last few months, Outside the Box has been carrying out a qualitative review of the impact of Support Choices for people and unpaid carers.

We have done this by listening to people and unpaid carers who have used the service, and by collecting the stories and experiences around the difference it has made to their lives.

Magic Moments

The collection of Magic Moments have been collected from conversations with people, families and unpaid carers who have used Support Choices. Magic Moments highlight small but significant changes in people's lives.

People and carers are more informed, listened to and less stressed

Family member: "The help and advice we have got from Support Choices has been a godsend. I don't think we would have got very far without them. Its mind blowing the difference it has made to our lives. We are less stressed because we know mum is being well looked after so we can relax for a bit."

Family member: "Talking with Support Choices staff was like talking to a really well-informed friend, who understood what packages and support were available. They helped me work out what we wanted for my dad and what things would make our lives easier."

Person getting support: "After my first meeting with my designated worker, I immediately began to feel supported and less anxious. There was a glimmer of hope."

People and unpaid carers have easy access to information and advice that helps them plan and access social care services

Unpaid carer: “Working with Support Choices was the first time I thought someone is going to do something practical that will make a difference for us both and it did.”

Family member: “Before your visit, supports were in place but it wasn’t the right supports. It didn’t work for me or my sister. It’s there at last and its really working now and I think mostly because you listened and helped me think about what I needed.”

Family member: “The kind of support a family needs takes quite a bit of thinking about and organising and often involves a range of organisations to make it work. This is where Support Choices really makes a difference - they have the information and know who can help.”

People and unpaid carers know how social care and community supports can help them achieve the quality of life and service they want

Unpaid carer: “It’s so good, I can hear him laughing while he is being helped to shower and get dressed and he is in such a better mood. It makes my day and it’s a simple thing really.”

Partner organisation: “Support Choices are really thinking about quality of life. They think about the whole community and what’s going on for people. Like what community supports and assets are available, and what additional services there are and how these can fit together to work well for people.”

People and carers are able to manage social care packages and make changes

Unpaid carer: “I know where to go for help now to make changes for the supports my husband needs. Before Support Choices it was always a worry when I thought his supports needed updating.”

Support Choices Staff Member: “I supported a family who were trying to manage a care package for their elderly relative. I gave the family information, so they knew about different care options and this helped them. When things need to change they are better placed to manage it well for their relative and for themselves.”

OVERALL

The assessment of the impact of the Support Choices is based on how well the four outcomes are being achieved. Support Choices as a new project is working very well towards achieving the four key outcomes.

People and unpaid carers

- are more informed, listened to and less stressed

- have easy access to information and advice that helps them plan and access social care service
- know how social care and community supports can help them achieve the quality of life and service they want
- are able to manage social care packages and make changes.

All the feedback in this report points to a service that is high quality, well respected and valued by the people and families that use it and by partner organisations in Perthshire.

The comments from people, family members and unpaid carers show that the work of Support Choices is making a positive impact on the lives of the people and families they work with and also partner organisations.

GOING FORWARD

As Support Choices continues into its next stage of development, it has the potential to benefit and reach more people, families and communities. To support this work future plans should include

- Building upon existing relationship and partnerships and seeking to build new partnerships
- A systematic approach to
 - capturing feedback around the impact of the service for families and people
 - sharing the impact and feedback using a wide range of approaches, such as participating in events, producing leaflets and social media.

For more information

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