

Service users as lay assessors – how do we make it work?

The Care Commission:

- is the national regulator of care services in Scotland
- was set up under the '**Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001**'
- started operating in April 2002.

Our purpose

- to regulate for improvement

Our principles

- keeping people safe
- promoting dignity and choice
- supporting independence



Our overall aim

To raise standards of care by involving people who are cared for, their carers and families, and working with people who provide care:

- engaging people who use care services in the work of the Care Commission
- providing the right information at the right time for people
- being an effective regulator for improvement
- informing social and healthcare policy.

Why lay assessors?

- Commitment to support the involvement of people who use care services and their carers
- Dedicated resource for engaging people who use care services, and their carers
- ‘Peer engagement’

The basic theory ..

- ‘peer research’ approach - namely that people who have had specific experiences can be particularly well placed to understand the specific needs of people with the same experience and engage with them
- It adds value

Who are the lay assessors?

- lay assessors are volunteers with the Care Commission
- They have a personal experience of being, or having been, a service user or a carer
- We currently have around 85 lay assessors

What do lay assessors do?

- about 6 inspections a year
- talk to people – inspection, focus groups, telephone interviews, stakeholder events and therapeutic activities
- observation
- provide verbal feedback
- contribute to the final written report

How are lay assessors supported?

- Training – induction and ongoing
- Allocated worker
- Supervision and appraisal
- Contact before and after inspections
- Group meetings

How do lay assessors add value?

- “been round the same block”
- a unique insight
- devote time to talking with service users and carers