

Our priorities for the future

In 2015-16 VOCAL developed a new five-year business plan to respond to demographic change and growing carer demand. By 2021, we seek to support up to 10,000 carers and their families in Edinburgh and Midlothian, representing an increase of over 30% over the next five years.

To reach this ambitious target, we are taking several initiatives to strengthen carer identification and our capacity to deliver more support.

VOCAL developed the **carer support model** to reinforce strength-based and outcome-focused care planning and carer support. We will continue to support carers to maximise self-directed support and strengthen emergency planning as an integral part of care planning and prevention.

VOCAL intends to identify up to **2,000 new carers** each year through partnerships with employers, NHS and health and social care agencies, private and third sector partners and through mainstream and social media.

Under our banner **Caring in the City** we plan to develop Carer Cafés in different sectors of Edinburgh to promote local peer and community support and offer carers local opportunities to meet with others.

We will strengthen our focus on **economic wellbeing** by reaching over 100,000 employees and students by 2021 through partnerships with

employers and higher education providers. We will invest in the development of an employer network to develop best practice.

Up to 1,000 carers will benefit from **financial planning and income maximisation**. Subject to successful funding applications, we hope to develop a dedicated Carer Finance Team to offer more financial advice, welfare benefit and debt support, welfare rights advocacy and a range of finance-related surgeries in different localities.

VOCAL developed the **Wee Breaks service** in Midlothian in 2012 to increase opportunities for carers to take regular short breaks from their caring role. We will seek additional funding to expand this service to Edinburgh. With support from Shared Care Scotland and local partners, VOCAL will lead the expansion of Respite provision and increase the short breaks grant fund allowing carers to take a break from their caring role and supporting individuals to continue to care.

To increase the number of carer beneficiaries to 10,000 a year by 2021, VOCAL will need to place even more emphasis on **income generation and fundraising**. We will seek to maximise contracts with statutory partners from the implementation of the Carers' (Scotland) Act and, at the same time, increase fundraising from self-generated events by creating a new post of Partnership Development Officer for community and corporate fundraising.



Our funders and supporters

VOCAL's carer support services are funded by several major contracts with NHS, Edinburgh and Midlothian health and social care partnerships and the Big Lottery. VOCAL raises additional project funds from over 20 different sources including a range of trust funds and from many individual donations and fundraising initiatives.

We gratefully acknowledge all financial support, in particular the many donations we receive from trust funds and from carers and supporters in cash and kind. Many of these help VOCAL fund new initiatives as funds are not tied to specific projects.

VOCAL's audited accounts are submitted annually to all main funders, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and Companies House. They can be accessed by the public through these agencies.

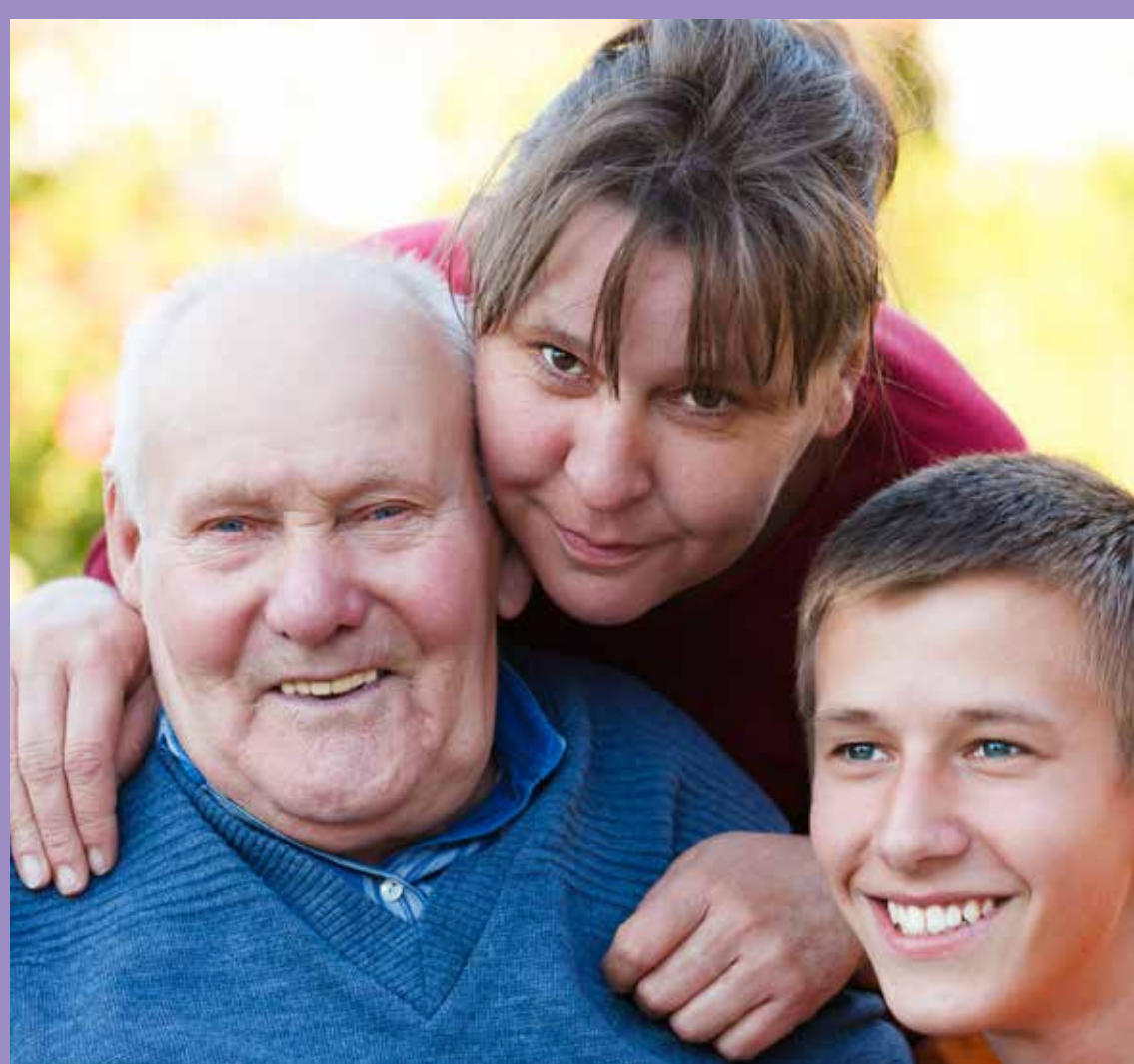
We thank all our supporters for their invaluable help!

About VOCAL

VOCAL is governed by a Board of Directors primarily consisting of carers and former carers. Carer services are managed and delivered by a team of 35 part-time and full-time staff and over 70 volunteers, including those who run the VOCAL Carer Centre reception areas, facilitate carer courses and peer activities and who work with carers as counsellors in Edinburgh and Midlothian.

Our finances for the year ending 31 March 2016

Statement of Financial Activities		2016	2015
Total incoming resources		1,374,411	1,210,530
Total resources expended		1,269,998	1,149,967
Net income for year		104,413	60,563
Net gain on investments		97	540
Net movement in funds		104,510	61,103
Funds at 1 April 2015		653,745	592,642
Funds at 31 March 2016		758,255	653,745
Balance sheet at 31 March 2016			
Fixed Assets	Tangible	314,586	318,275
	Investments	47,229	47,132
		361,815	365,407
Current Assets	Debtors	66,004	11,261
	Cash at bank	556,437	488,776
		622,441	500,037
Creditors due within one year		226,001	211,699
Net current assets / (liabilities)		396,440	288,338
Net assets		758,255	653,745
Funds	Restricted	154,093	126,724
	Designated	564,586	498,275
	General fund	39,576	28,746
Total funds		758,255	653,745



VOCAL's work in 2015-16 and our priorities for the future

11,300

 carer contacts

Over the course of the year VOCAL recorded 11,300 one-to-one carer contacts. Our carer centres provide free, confidential support on all aspects of caring including benefits, financial support, short breaks and community care.



3,350

 carers

VOCAL provided individual support to 3,350 carers, offering a person-centred service delivered through home visits, appointments at our carers centres and local support in the community.

665 carers attended VOCAL's legal and benefits surgery appointments, including support for setting up Power of Attorney.

Over 7,500 carers were supported through regular e-bulletin and newsletter communication, and personalised information on training and events.



23,819

 unique users

23,819 people visited VOCAL's website www.vocal.org.uk in 2015-16.



£980,000

VOCAL assisted carers in receiving a total of £980,000 in additional financial support.

1,552

 new carers

We identified and supported 1,552 new carers during 2015-16. VOCAL works in partnership with GPs and health and social care teams to improve early identification and referral of carers.



1,565

 counselling sessions

VOCAL received 242 referrals for counselling and offered 1,565 counselling sessions to 177 carers in 2015-16. We were able to secure continued funding for carers of someone with dementia as well as new funding for counselling for older carers.



1,001

 carers

1,001 carers registered for our *Caring with Confidence* training programme and groupwork sessions. These offer courses, seminars and workshops designed for carers in different caring situations to enable carers to develop skills and knowledge to improve their confidence in their caring role.

Groupwork sessions included dealing with guilt, changing relationships, loss & bereavement and stress management. VOCAL also supported several hundred carers to access leisure and healthy living courses and events.



VOCAL Carer Centre

Registered address: 8-13 Johnston Terrace,
Edinburgh EH1 2PW T: 0131 622 6666
E: centre@vocal.org.uk W: www.vocal.org.uk

VOCAL: working with carers

VOCAL manages two carer centres in Edinburgh and Midlothian and provides local carer support in communities across Edinburgh. Our services include:

- person-centred support, information and planning for the future
- emotional support, stress management and counselling
- training and learning opportunities
- benefits, legal, long-term care and power of attorney surgeries
- support for people affected by someone else's addiction
- health, social and leisure activities
- gateway to many other services.

Making an impact

The number of carers reporting positive outcomes following support from VOCAL increased to 1,388 from 988 the previous year.

63% of carers reported an improvement in their **economic well-being** whilst 84% reported feeling **more informed about their caring role**. 94% of carers reported either an improvement or no deterioration in their **health and well-being**.

In addition, 561 carers undertook service evaluations following attendance at VOCAL training and surgery events including legal and power of attorney surgeries. Over 80% of these carers reported feeling more **confident in caring**, **more informed about their caring role** and **improved health and well-being**.

Making it work for carers

Supporting carers to balance work with caring responsibilities can deliver real benefits to employers as well as helping individuals and their families. More and more carers are combining paid work with growing caring responsibilities. Many feel under pressure to reduce or even give up employment, but could continue with recognition and support from their employer. By supporting carers in the workplace employers can also retain experienced staff, reduce absences and make huge savings on recruitment costs.

Over the last year VOCAL has worked with some of Edinburgh's largest employers to develop carer friendly workplaces. In partnership with Carer Positive and The Open University in Scotland, we have worked with over 30 employers to '*make carers OUR business*', and to develop positive approaches to supporting carers at work. Rachel, whose story is included below, heard about VOCAL through her employer and went on to receive support which helped her to balance her work and caring responsibilities.

Rachel's story

Rachel* cares for her mum and dad whilst working full time. Her father has dementia and was recently admitted to hospital following a stroke, and her mum has arthritis.

Rachel contacted the VOCAL Carer Support Team to explore ways in which she could maintain her own life alongside her caring role, reduce her stress and anxiety and meet people in a similar situation to herself. Rachel was supported by a Carer Support Worker to identify what works well for her, including spending time with friends and family and being able to plan ahead. She was encouraged to think about her best hopes which included finding ways to manage her stress and to plan for the future

Rachel accessed VOCAL's counselling service, and was matched with a peer mentor who also worked full-time and had an intensive caring role. Following three months of support, Rachel now feels she is more on top of things and is managing her stress and anxiety better. She feels she is getting back to her usual self and is more confident she can maintain this with the tools and resources she now has.

(*carers name has been changed)