



Carers of West
Dunbartonshire
"the place for every carer to turn to"

The SEARCH Project

(Support and Education for Alcohol Related Challenges in the Home)

Evaluation Report 2015-2017



**Foundation
Scotland**

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FOREWORD

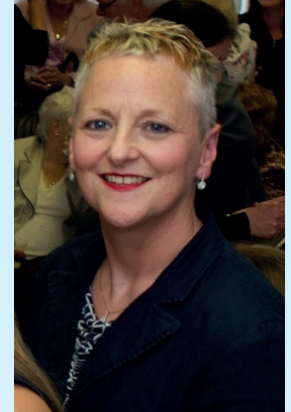
I am both proud and delighted to present this evaluation of Carers of West Dunbartonshire's SEARCH Project (Support and Education for Alcohol Related Challenges in the Home) which launched in February 2015.

When we embarked on the SEARCH Project, we set ourselves a target of identifying and supporting 50 carers. Prior to the work commencing, we knew that not only would the Project support carers looking after someone who was misusing alcohol, but also carers who may be using alcohol to cope with their stressful and challenging caring responsibilities. In two years, the project supported 74 carers and when you read their stories in this evaluation, you will appreciate the impact that the Project has had on their lives.

Such has been the success of the SEARCH Project it is now a key service in Carers of West Dunbartonshire's portfolio of information and support. With West Dunbartonshire having the second highest number of carers per head of population in Scotland, it is important that the services offered by the Carers' Centre, like the SEARCH Project, meet a wide range of carers' needs.

The Project received a resounding endorsement from the Trustees of the Board of Carers of West

Dunbartonshire and I know that they would wish me, on their behalf, to thank the funders who made the SEARCH Project possible – the Scotch Whisky Action Fund (administered through Foundation Scotland) and the Robertson Trust, together with additional funding provided by West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership.



On their behalf, I would also like to say a huge thank you to Elaine Milne, the dedicated SEARCH Carer Support Worker, who delivers the Project on a day to day basis, and also to Kim McNab, Carers' Services Manager, who never lost faith that the Project would be a success.

Lindsay Lockhart

Lindsay Lockhart

Chairperson – Carers of West Dunbartonshire

INTRODUCTION

Carers of West Dunbartonshire (CWD) was granted funding from the Scotch Whisky Action Fund (SWAF), which is administered through Foundation Scotland, and the Robertson Trust in 2014. Additional funding was provided by West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership (WDHSCP). The grant funded the establishment of a two-year project which supports unpaid adult carers affected by alcohol misuse. **The SEARCH Project (Support and Education for Alcohol Related Challenges in the Home)** commenced in February 2015. With the funding period ending in February 2017 the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) commissioned an external evaluation of the project.

Following a tender process, Changing Mindz was commissioned to carry out this work. Changing Mindz is an independent training provider offering bespoke design, CPD accredited courses, e-learning, coaching, mentoring and consultancy services since 2007. A team of three were identified to carry out the evaluation which would be led by Tony Stevenson.

The evaluation would assess:

- The impact of the SEARCH Project on the beneficiaries.
- The degree to which the project had been successful in reaching its aims, objectives and outcomes.
- Whether the project affected any changes in patterns of alcohol-misuse in West Dunbartonshire relating to carers.
- Whether the project influenced any changes in alcohol-related behaviours amongst this client group.

The evaluation report would **“capture the story of the SEARCH Project and its impact”**¹

A variety of methods were used to gather information and to establish the impact of the SEARCH Project. These included:

- Desktop research including a review of the original application documentation and subsequent progress reports.
- One to one Interviews with individual stakeholders, beneficiaries and project staff.
- Focus groups and surveys for carers and practitioners.
- Analysis of the data which was gathered throughout the duration of the project.

¹ Scotch Whisky Action Fund - Carers of West Dunbartonshire, Consultancy Brief.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

According to the '2012 -2017 Strategy for Carers' produced by West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership "A carer can be a person of any age who provides help and support without payment to a relative, friend or neighbour who has problems with activities of daily living and needs help from the carer because of physical or mental illness, frailty, learning or physical disability, impairment or addiction."² The Scottish Government estimates that 788,000 people are caring for a relative, friend or neighbour, this includes approximately 44,000 young carers under the age of 18.³

As the degree of caring responsibilities varies considerably from one situation to another, the precise journey is unique to each carer and caring situation. That said, the caring role often comes with a 365 days a year, 24/7 sense of emotional responsibility. Without the carer contribution the demands on health and social care delivery would be overwhelming yet much of what carers deal with day-to-day goes unseen or is under-recognised by services and professionals.

The recorded population of West Dunbartonshire in 2016 was 89,860 - an increase of 0.3% from 2015; this accounts for 1.7% of the total population of Scotland. The 2011 census recorded that at 23%, West Dunbartonshire has the second highest number of carers per head of population in Scotland. It also has the highest proportion of people who have one or more long term health conditions. Many of these will be carers who are managing their own health needs as well as their caring role.⁴ It is projected that by 2039, the 75+ age group will increase the most in West Dunbartonshire, from 6,987 in 2014 to 12,258 in 2039⁵. An astonishing increase of 175% and as the number of people living longer lives increases; it is highly likely that the number of people taking on a caring role will also increase.

Carers of West Dunbartonshire (CWD) offer a range of information, advice and support to carers in the local area. Founded in 2007, it is a well-established service and a hub for carer support. Complementing a wide range of in-house services, CWD also provides access for carers to other relevant services. The organisation is a key partner of WDHSCP and carries out carer assessments and support planning on behalf of the WDHSCP.

The value of care provided by carers in Scotland is £10,347,400,000 a year. 3 in 5 of us will become carers at some stage in our lives.

(Carers' Trust, Scotland)

"Doing carers' assessments was not without its challenges but I wanted us (CWD) to do it for several reasons. There was a lot of misinformation about carers' assessment, we were able to streamline the process and ensure that it was a meaningful experience for carers; the intention always being to influence good practice."

(Carers' Service Manager, CWD)

In the year prior to the SEARCH project funding application (2013), 870 carers were supported by CWD. Of this number only 2% identified alcohol related issues as a concern. Evidence that a greater need may exist came from the results of a carers' health survey conducted that same year. Alcohol was highlighted by carers as a way of coping to a far greater extent than any other data had previously suggested. Discussion with local Community Addiction Teams confirmed that 729 active cases where alcohol dependence was the main diagnosis at that time. The apparent disparity between the scale of the problem across the local area and the number of carers being supported suggested that a significant number of carers affected by alcohol related issues did exist but were not getting the support that they were entitled to.

Further discussion with other agencies and projects both locally and nationally strengthened the view that a significant level of unmet need existed. In many cases family members were caring by definition but were neither self-identifying as carers nor being identified as such by services. It meant that their needs were therefore not been taken account of and their views were not involved in care planning.

Statistics tell us that for every client with alcohol issues there will be 4-6 family members that are directly affected and that it is highly likely that someone from the family will have taken on the role of the primary carer.

(CWD SEARCH Project Grant Application to Foundation Scotland, 2014)

The main concerns expressed by carers affected by alcohol related issues were:

- Anxiety around not understanding their loved one's condition in relation to both alcohol misuse and other health conditions some of which resulted from alcohol misuse.
- Financial worries.
- Safety, especially fire safety and anti-social behaviour.
- A reluctance to disclose alcohol-related issues due to the stigma.

From this preliminary work, CWD identified two issues:

1. Carers may be using alcohol to cope with a stressful and challenging situation. The risk being that this may escalate and become problematic.
2. Carers of those with an existing alcohol problem were not accessing support for themselves.

² Strategy for Carers 2012-2017 West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

³ Unpaid Carers. Scottish Government (accessed Mar 2017). <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Unpaid-Carers>

⁴ National Records of Scotland Statistical Bulletin, Sept 2011. <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/documents/censusresults/release2a/StatsBulletin2A.pdf>

⁵ National Records of Scotland. West Dunbartonshire Council Area - Demographic Factsheet. <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/west-dunbartonshire-factsheet.pdf>

“People who care for problem drinkers sometimes have to struggle to get the recognition and support they’re entitled to; they have not always been perceived as ‘legitimate’ carers. The stigma will affect both the alcoholic and the carer and it can affect their ability to ask for and get help.”

Drew Lindon, Carers’ Trust

The barriers that prevented people from knowing about or accessing help and support were identified as:

1. People are reluctant to identify themselves as a carer due to stigma or a sense of being disloyal to the cared for.
.....
2. People may be unaware of their rights e.g. to a carers’ assessment or what support might be available to them.
.....
3. Some people are reluctant to engage with services.
.....
4. Non carer services may not be adequately identifying carers.
.....
5. Referral pathways to carer-focused support were limited or confusing.
.....
6. Specialist services tend to focus on the person with the alcohol problem and were often lacking the capacity or knowledge to support this hidden group of carers.
.....
7. Knowledge and monitoring of this carer group by other agencies was limited.

ALCOHOL MISUSE

A psychoactive substance with dependence-producing properties, alcohol has been widely used in many cultures for centuries. Legitimate, socially acceptable and readily available, alcohol is widely seen as an integral aspect of Scottish culture whether it is to socialise, celebrate or commiserate. Responsible drinking is now widely promoted and many people enjoy a responsible relationship with alcohol. Yet, there is another side to alcohol. According to the Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO)⁶ excessive alcohol consumption is a major concern for public health in Scotland leading to a wide range of health problems.

Long term excessive alcohol consumption can cause irreversible damage to parts of the body such as the liver and brain. Alcohol misuse is a contributory factor in many other diseases including cancer, stroke and heart disease and increases the risk of developing mental health problems including alcohol dependency.

Reportedly, almost a fifth more alcohol is sold per adult in Scotland than in England and Wales.⁷

92% of alcohol-related hospital stays are the result of emergency admissions to general acute settings in Scotland.

When comparing those living in the most deprived areas of Scotland to those living in the least deprived areas of England, there were approximately eight times as many stays (per 100,000 population) and approximately seven times as many people (per 100,000 population) with at least one alcohol-related admission to hospital each year.⁸

The harm done affects not only the drinker. Alcohol Focus Scotland research found that:

- **1 in 2 people in Scotland reported “being harmed as a result of someone else’s drinking”**
- **1 in 3 reported “having heavy drinkers in their lives.”**

Heavy drinking is reportedly a common factor in family break-up. Marriages where one or both partners have an alcohol problem are twice as likely to end in divorce.¹⁰

Social problems associated with alcohol misuse include anti-social behaviour, crime, violence including sexual assault and domestic abuse, family breakdown and child neglect.

⁶ Alcohol: Introduction. The Scottish Public Health Observatory (accessed Mar 2017) <http://www.scotpho.org.uk/behaviour/alcohol/introduction>

⁷ Alcohol. Scottish Government (accessed Mar 2017) <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Services/Alcohol>

⁸ Alcohol-Related Hospital Statistics Scotland 2015/16 (25 October 2016) Information Services Division, NHS National Services Scotland (accessed Mar 2017): <https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Drugs-and-Alcohol-Misuse/Publications/2016-10-25/2016-10-25-ARHS-Report.pdf?12266176940>

⁹ Unrecognised and under-reported: the impact of alcohol on people other than the drinker in Scotland. Authors Hope, A., Curran, J., Bell, G. & Platts, A. (2013) Glasgow, Scotland: Alcohol Focus Scotland. www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

¹⁰ Harm to others. Alcohol Focus Scotland. <http://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/campaigns-policy/harm-to-others/>

Legal and Policy Context^{11, 12}

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act, 2014 sets out the framework for health and social care integration. The arrangements bring Local Authorities, NHS Boards and other public and voluntary sector partners together under one partnership arrangement for each Local Authority area. The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 will commence on 1 April, 2018¹³ with a package of provisions designed to support carers' health and wellbeing.

These include:

- A duty on local authorities to provide support to carers who's identified needs meet the local eligibility criteria.
- A specific adult carer support plan and young carer statement to identify carers' needs and personal outcomes; and
- A requirement for each local authority to have its own information and advice service for carers providing amongst other things, emergency and future care planning, advocacy, income maximisation and carers' rights.

The effects of alcohol misuse on families are well documented. It can contribute significantly to the breakdown of family relationships which can often lead to family dislocation and homelessness. This, in turn, can have a corresponding impact on local communities.

Carers in families affected by alcohol misuse frequently lack the information on which to base appropriate caring decisions. They are often, therefore, ill prepared to protect themselves and the person they care for from the practical consequences of the alcohol misuse.

At the same time, carers often lack insight into the steps they might take to support the person misusing alcohol and inappropriate responses from them to the person misusing alcohol may contribute to the exacerbation of the situation.

CWD SEARCH Project Grant Application to Foundation Scotland, 2014

¹¹ The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act, 2014 (accessed Mar 2017); <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Policy/Adult-Health-SocialCare-Integration>

¹² The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Integration Joint Boards) (Scotland) Order 2014 (accessed Mar 2017); http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2014/285/pdfs/ssi_20140285_en.pdf

¹³ Carers (Scotland) Act, 2016 (accessed online March 2017); <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Unpaid-Carers/CarersBill>

THE BIRTH of the SEARCH PROJECT

Having established the need for a project specifically focusing on carers affected by alcohol misuse and having secured funding for two years, Carers of West Dunbartonshire set about developing the SEARCH Project.

The organisation provided in-kind resources including access to the other support, systems and processes. This ensured that the SEARCH Project was not a stand-alone service but rather a key aspect of the support being offered by the origination.

The SEARCH project set out four key outcomes:

1. **Improving the identification of carers affected by alcohol related problems.**
2. **Ensuring this group of carers are offered appropriate support to sustain in their caring role; this is done through increasing their level of awareness about alcohol and improving skills and knowledge in dealing with alcohol related issues.**
3. **Reducing the instances where alcohol is used as a coping mechanism and providing access to healthier alternatives.**
4. **Creating safer communities through education and support.**

Three aims were identified as a means of how these outcomes would be achieved;

- **To develop an education programme.**
- **To establish an emotional support system.**
- **To positively influence policy and practice among health and social care partners.**

It was estimated that the project would benefit fifty carers over the two-year funded period; anticipating twenty referrals in 2015-16 and thirty referrals in 2016-17. Access to the SEARCH Project was available to any adult aged 18 and over although two groups thought to be at risk of alcohol related harm was identified.

These were:

- **Younger Adults (18-25 years) who are at risk of using alcohol as a coping mechanism for carer related stress.**
- **Older Adults (65+) who are emerging as a 'hidden' group of people with alcohol related issues.**

Referrals would be accepted for any adult carer living in the West Dunbartonshire area. However, the project intended to focus the service on four areas (Dalmuir, Whitcreek, Bellsmyre and Brucehill) as these bore the highest recorded rates of alcohol related hospital admissions in West Dunbartonshire at that time.

To deliver the project, CWD recruited a dedicated [SEARCH] Carer Support Worker for 18 hours a week. The Support Worker would have day to day responsibility for delivering the project with additional resources being provided by other staff within CWD and via partnership working with statutory and voluntary organisations. It was anticipated that in some instances the carer and/or the cared-for may require help from addiction services and the SEARCH Project would refer on where appropriate to other forms of support.

EVALUATOR'S FINDINGS

Carers with alcohol related issues could be referred or self-refer to the SEARCH Project. Referrals are firstly assessed by the Senior Carer Support Worker and then allocated to an appropriate member of the Carer Support Team. Where alcohol related issues were identified in the referral process or within the carers' assessment process the referral was passed on to the SEARCH Carer Support Worker. CWD standard is that within one week of referral, the carer is sent a Carers' Information Pack with an introductory letter which advises them that they will be contacted within seven days by the allocated Carer Support Worker. At the initial meeting, carers are provided with information about Carer Services, offered an income maximisation check and a carers' assessment.

The purpose¹⁴ of the carers' assessment is to allow carers the opportunity to discuss what practical help and support they may need to cope with their caring role. This includes maintaining their own health and balancing work and/or family commitments. The carer assessment and support plan (CSP) is a written record of the carer's needs, and a plan of what support has been identified, actions to be taken and outcomes agreed.

A wide range of support is available within the organisation, including:

- Information and advice.
- Emotional support.
- Group support, by way of the SEARCH Support Group and/or other CWD groups.

“All carers have a legal right to an assessment of their needs. It is an opportunity for carers to discuss what would help them to cope with their caring role.”¹⁴

Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

- Learning opportunities for carers affected by alcohol related issues and other carer workshops and training programmes provided by CWD.
- Complementary therapies and stress management.
- Short breaks.
- Replacement care.
- Social activities and outings.
- Support with future planning.

The SEARCH Project would also refer or signpost carers to other services including specialist addiction and other health and social care services where this need is identified.

¹⁴ Carer Assessment and Support Plan, West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership

Developing an Education Programme

Carers' Training is overseen by CWD Learning and Development Co-ordinator. A variety of learning and training opportunities were already in place. These range from formal ten week training programmes to the more "informal discussions" around a specific topic. The training is user led and works organically with the needs of carers. Those affected by alcohol misuse were invited to complete a learning needs questionnaire. Feedback from this formed the SEARCH project's first training programme. The issues it covered

were carer's health and wellbeing, using alcohol responsibly and coping mechanisms, making healthy choices and staying safe. During interview the Learning and Development Coordinator explained that the CWD approach to carers' learning is to deliver in partnership with other voluntary and statutory organisations, "we believe it is in everyone's best interests to work that way"

Carers are asked to complete a self-assessment prior to and post training session; the results are then compared. This offers carers a measure of their progress in terms of knowledge, awareness, skills and confidence and provides CWD with useful data illustrating the positive impact of any learning opportunity.

Over the course of the project, three training programmes were designed and delivered specifically for carers supported by the SEARCH project;

- **'Coping with Christmas'** this weekday workshop was facilitated in partnership with Scottish Families affected by Alcohol & Drugs (SFAD). (Dec 2016)
- **'Learning Opportunity for Carers Affected by Alcohol Related Issues'** this six-week programme was facilitated in partnership with a range of local services. It focused on understanding and managing alcohol and keeping safe. (Apr-May 2016).

"I was really impressed by the carers training. We had a great response and some were surprised the fire service would offer them free fire safety checks. I walked away feeling it was a very worthwhile session"

(Jim Devaney, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)

- **'Your Wellbeing in Mind'** this series of six workshops was facilitated by CWD L & D Coordinator and the SEARCH Carer Support Worker. It focused on health and wellbeing, coping mechanisms and stress management techniques. (Sept-Nov 2016)

The training programmes for carers provided opportunities to improve knowledge and understanding, gain increased awareness and insights, develop or refresh skills and rediscover strengths. We asked carers via a survey whether they had developed skills and discovered (or re-discovered) strengths:

- 82% felt they had discovered/rediscovered strengths
- 76% felt that they had new or improved skills

Carers who participated in the training programmes¹⁵ reported significant improvements in knowledge and confidence in relation to their caring role:

- Before the training **23%** felt “fairly knowledgeable” and **31%** “fairly” or “totally confident”
- After the training **69%** felt “fairly knowledgeable” and **91%** “fairly” or “totally confident”.

Carers described a range of “healthier alternatives” in the form of new coping strategies and self-caring techniques that help sustain them in the caring role.

“Stress relief is a massive one! I was turning to drink to relieve stress; I turn away from it now.”

(carer)

“I do voluntary work in the community now. I realised that I must keep busy, which also helps my confidence and increases my own self esteem.”

(carer)

“It’s taught me how to cope better through peer support.

I have learned strategies to cope better with the situation and look after myself.”

(carer)

Other benefits noted by carers who accessed the learning opportunities include, improved communications, listening skills and greater confidence.

“It has helped me regain my confidence and allowed me to understand that it is healthy to ask for help.”

(carer)

“I’m more patient. I can deal with difficult situations better.

My confidence has improved and my listening skills.”

(carer)

“I know I am entitled to some me time.

I’m more independent and feel this has helped make my husband a bit more independent too.”

(carer)

¹⁵ Carer data provided by CWD covering the period May–Nov 2016.

Establishing an Emotional Support System

Face to face emotional support is the most discreet form of support provided by the SEARCH Carer Support Worker. Informal in nature, emotional support ranges from phone calls to more regular meetings. A SEARCH project Carers' Support Group offering peer support, social activities and less formal learning opportunities was established. The group provided an opportunity for carers to get information and advice from staff and helped reduce isolation. The support group is attended by carers who have their own alcohol issue and those who were caring for some-one who is misusing alcohol. This was a decision taken by the group itself and is supported by the staff. The initial anxiety about how this would play out has been replaced with a confidence and acceptance of different life experiences.

Commencing with an introductory lunch in June 2015, the group became firmly established as a regular monthly meeting. Dates are published in advance for the year ahead and include a programme of quarterly outings/social activities.

The group agreed its own guidelines about being respectful and non judgemental; these are re-visited regularly. This appears to provide safety and trust within the group for its members to share and learn, support and gain strength each other. The Senior Carer Support Worker who co-facilitates the SEARCH Support Group with the SEARCH Carer Support Worker described the culture of the group as "respectful" with members willing to hear from each other and sharing without fear of judgement.

"I felt before the SEARCH Project that I couldn't turn anywhere. I look forward to the SEARCH Support Group. I have a life now, I love it!"

(carer)

"At first I wasn't sure where I sat on it, especially as the Support Group included carers with an alcohol problem. It was good as they had something that helped them to examine their choices and there are people who had recovered (are still in recovery) - it's powerful."

(carer)

"I know I'm not on my own. Hearing other people's situations has helped."

Having a great laugh with people. I feel less isolated - and can discuss my own situation with others.

Talking things through with other carers has helped emotionally"

(carer)

"Don't know how I would have coped without the SEARCH Project and CWD."

It has had a great impact on me. The Carer Support Worker is great.

I cope much better with my own feelings and situations arising through the alcohol issue"

(carer)

Influencing Policy and Practice

“Back in 2010 a lot of work was going on, but there wasn’t as much communication between everyone – everyone was too busy, didn’t seem to have the time. When we introduced our community health and care partnership though we made a point of taking a step back and dedicating time to honest discussions with partners about everyone’s respective roles, responsibilities and contributions – what was working and what wasn’t.

From that we began a de-cluttering process, with the intention of streamlining ways of working, removing barriers and providing greater clarity around what outcomes we were intending to deliver by working together. Today everyone is probably more busy than back in 2010, but we can see – and I hope local carers do feel – that joint endeavours like these are making a positive difference.”

(Soumen Sengupta, Head of Strategy, Planning & Health Improvement, WDHSCP)

Moves were afoot as early as 2010 in establishing West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership (WDHSCP) that is now in place.

CWD are represented on the WDHSCP Integrated Joint Board (IJB) by the Carers’ Service Manager. A Partnership Agreement sets out the aims of the partnership and the roles and responsibilities of CWD and the WDHSCP as respective partners. CWD’s aims and objectives are well aligned with those of the partnership particularly, but not exclusively in relation to carers. Formal arrangements are supported by informal lines of contact and communication.

“Serving a small population of circa 90,000, with levels of deprivation mirroring Glasgow City and Inverclyde, we are working to a common purpose in West Dunbartonshire. Discussions are ongoing and organic between WDHSCP partners. An issue can be raised by any party.”

(Wendy Jack, Planning and Improvement Manager & Carers Lead Officer, WDHSCP)

To reach a hidden group of carers like this the project needed to overcome the barriers that prevented them from coming forward for support. The project demonstrated that it has helped people to understand that the role they perform is that of a carer. It has met this challenge without in any way diminishing their sense of family identity.

“There is sometimes resistance to accepting the “carer” label; but I’m his mum/sister.”

(Community Addiction Team Practitioner)

“I would never have thought of myself as a carer; the SEARCH project helped me see that I needed support”

(Carer)

A track record of collaborative partnership working including prior experience of co-located arrangements in West Dunbartonshire paved the way for the SEARCH Project. The support of West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership and key individuals helped enable the SEARCH Project to deliver on its agreement.

The depth and quality to the working relationships between partners allows for honest and robust discussions. This approach appears to have guided the partnership well retaining an apparently high-level and mutual respect.

“We expect partner providers to maintain good standards of quality - to demonstrate an evidence-base for their practice, monitor outcomes, deliver what is needed and be able to adapt. We also encourage our partners - such as Carers of West Dunbartonshire, Y Sort-it and West Dunbartonshire CVS - to expect the same of our services, and indeed to feel comfortable constructively challenging us too.”

(Soumen Sengupta, Head of Strategy, Planning & Health Improvement, WDHSCP)

“There’s a two-way nature of involvement.

Addiction Staff have provided alcohol awareness input at Carers’ Training sessions.”

(Community Addiction Team Practitioner)

“It was difficult for staff to be sure of what was appropriate at first but the SEARCH Carer Support Worker is great, She’s doing more than just taking referrals - we can run things by her.

A good trusting relationship has been formed.”

(Community Addiction Team Practitioner)

“CWD have influenced policy. They sit at the top table, use their voice well and hold us to account if we are not thoughtful. They see the bigger picture, and are easy to work with. The SEARCH Project provides a practical and useful resource for hard-pressed frontline staff. I am very happy indeed with how things have gone”

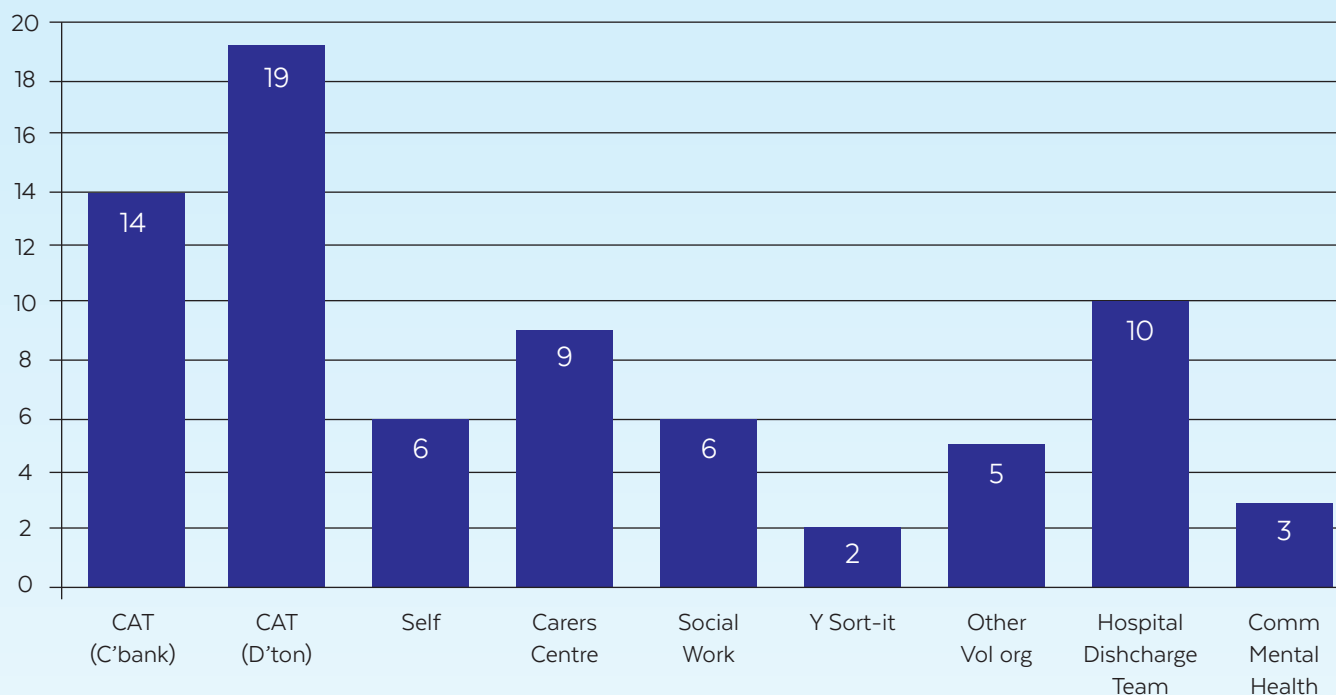
(Chris McNeill, Head of Community Health and Care Services, WDHSCP)

“I cannot speak highly enough of my experience of working in partnership with Carers of West Dunbartonshire and the Search Project work has been of a similarly high standard.”

(Marie Rooney, Integration Manager WDHSCP)

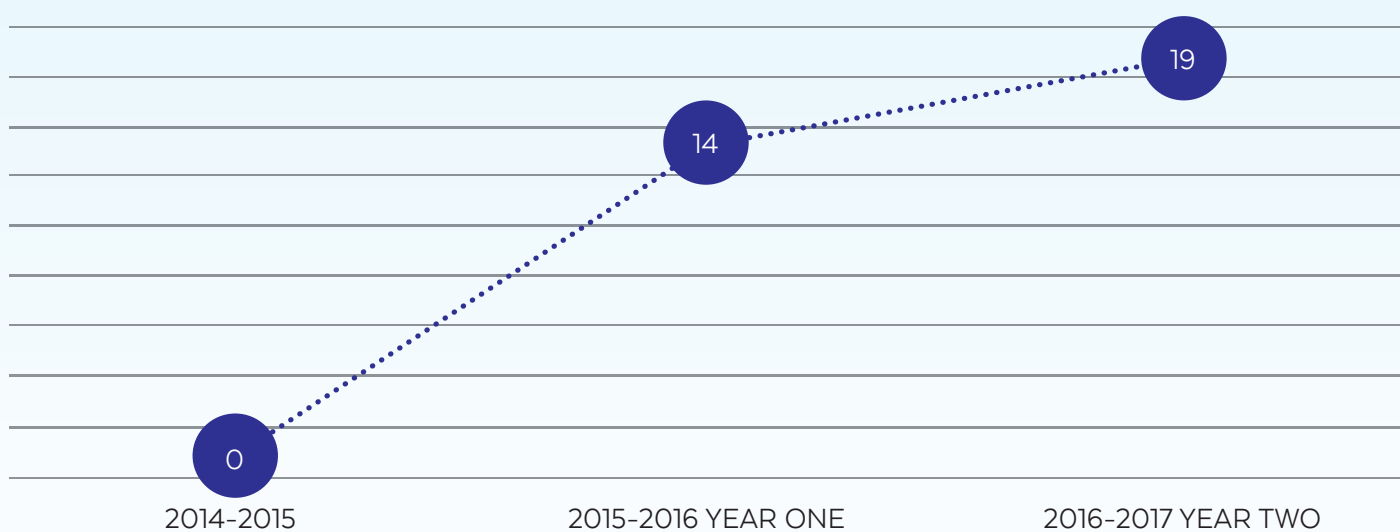
The identification of carers¹⁶ was significantly improved with 74 referrals received by the SEARCH Project between February 2015 and March 2017.

Source of referrals



Of the 33 Community Addiction Team Referrals, 14 were received in 2015-16 and 19 received in 2016-17.

CAT Referrals Annually



PRIOR TO THE SEARCH PROJECT NO CARER REFERRALS HAD BEEN MADE BY COMMUNITY ADDICTION TEAMS TO CWD.

¹⁶ Carer data provided by CWD covering the period Feb 2015 - 07 Mar 2017

¹⁷ Carer data provided by CWD covering the period Feb 2015 - 07 Mar 2017

Using the co-location model within Community Addiction Teams afforded the SEARCH Carer Support Worker the opportunity to have a regular physical presence with the teams. She got to know practitioners and explained how the SEARCH Project could support the work of the CAT teams. It also afforded the worker the opportunity to gain an understanding of the practitioner role. Essentially these early days were about building trust.

During the evaluation process, two focus groups were held with members of the Community Addiction Team; practitioners from Clydebank and Dumbarton attended. The evaluators explored whether the practitioners felt that the SEARCH Project, as a co-located service, had been of benefit.

Various points were made by several practitioners in response to this:

- **“It provides access to additional support.”**
- **“It reduces barriers to engaging with new services in an environment the client may already know and trust”.**

- **“It makes it easier for carers whose time can be very restricted to access services at the same time and place”**
- **“It ensures a more efficient referral and appointments system on-site”.**
- **“It serves as a good prompt, keeping the team mindful of carers’ needs”**
- **“Identifying the carer’s issues is now much easier”.**

Practitioners explained that “are you a carer?” is now a regular question asked of clients during the assessment process. One practitioner noted that “if carer’s needs are identified we have a duty to act.” The co-located arrangement was said to be “timely” as Health and Social Care Integration meant “there is encouragement to open our doors to other agencies.”

“The SEARCH Carer Support Worker has added value to the service. Got workers considering if people are Carers – we’ve changed our approach to people who may be carers – we pitch things differently. Also, one less layer of need we have to worry about. The SEARCH Project has added value to our work – something good for the patients. Another support to aid recovery”

(Community Addiction Team Practitioner)

SEARCH PROJECT - CARER PROFILE¹⁸

Of the 74 carers referred to the SEARCH Project between February 2015 and February 2017;

- 70% were female and 30% male.
- 66% were in the 24-64 age group, 27% were in the 65+ age range, 4% were 18-24 years of age. No age was recorded for 3%.
- 50% lived in Clydebank (G81), 32% lived in Dumbarton (G82), 16% lived in Alexandria (G83) and 3% lived in Old Kilpatrick (G60).
- 67% were caring for someone affected by alcohol related issues, 23% were carers affected by their own alcohol related issues and 10% were carers who reported they and the person cared-for were affected by alcohol related issues.

The cared-for were often affected by other health conditions. The most common recorded were:

- Mental Health Issues 17%
- Physical Ability 16%

“The SEARCH Carer Support Worker was proactive across both addiction team localities, attending team meetings and taking the time to speak with staff to explain the project and also what the project could offer to people with caring commitments.

She established herself by interacting with all staff and agile working around the teams to ensure that she was visible to staff.

This definitely helped her establish her working relationship across the services.”

(Julie Lusk, Head of Mental Health, Addictions and Learning Disability, WDHSCP)

¹⁸ Carer data provided by CWD covering the period Feb 2015 – Feb 2017.

CARERS' STORIES

“Recovery is founded on hope and the belief that things could be different.

The sense of hopefulness comes across strongly in the testimonies of carers”

(Changing Mindz, March 2017)

“I use to not care if I lived or died, the SEARCH Project changed that”

(carer)

CARER A's STORY

Carer A has been married for 55 years to her civil servant husband, he retired at age 55. When he was working he “only drank occasionally with work colleagues as alcohol was expensive and not readily available back then.”

Following retirement, they bought a static home in a remote area. This had been a retirement dream although it was when her husband's “drinking increased”. As the problem escalated she felt “increasingly isolated” and considered leaving her husband. She approached Citizens Advice Bureau for advice and support and informed her husband of her intentions. However, during this time she had a heart attack. During her recovery, she hoped that her husband would stop drinking, but “it didn't make any difference”. After another “heart scare” she made the decision to move to West Dunbartonshire. Her husband became seriously ill soon after the move and was “diagnosed with Cirrhosis of the liver and needed intensive care”. Whilst arrangements were being made for her husband's discharge the Ward Sister asked her how she would cope with the demands of caring for her husband as he would require ongoing treatment and care. After they had talked, Carer A gave the Ward Sister permission to make a referral on her behalf to Carers of West Dunbartonshire.

“Thank God we moved to West Dunbartonshire, we've had access to great support”

She was “relieved and thankful” when the Carers' Centre contacted her. She “enjoyed and benefitted” from attending the Long-Term Conditions (LTC) group and “appreciated the help and support” she received. It was whilst attending the LTC group that she met the SEARCH Carer Support Worker, who had visited the group to tell them about the new SEARCH Project. She “signed up straight away”, and was among the first to do so. The SEARCH Support Group is “very different” to other groups she has attended. It provides “a safe space ... a supportive environment” where she and others can talk openly about their needs and concerns without fear of judgement. Carer A reported that her social network “has increased dramatically” and that her husband is doing well. “He has stopped drinking alcohol and started doing things again” and he encourages her attendance at the SEARCH Support Group.

She still worries “that he is suffering in silence... he's a man's man”. She picks up information that is relevant to her husband and has patiently been passing it on in the hope that in the future he will feel able to approach some support services himself.

“I am looking after myself much better than I was”

CARER B's STORY

Carer B is 63 years old. He and his wife had cared-for “both sets of parents for more than 30 years”. He is now caring for his wife. This is the first time he has been a carer without her support. 2012-14 was a particularly difficult time. He became aware of changes, “mood swings, forgetfulness” in his wife’s behaviour. Her drinking increased and she “wasn’t eating”. Things eventually broke down and she was admitted to hospital with “dehydration” in late 2014; to which time she was diagnosed with “early-onset dementia and osteoporosis”. The dementia is thought to be alcohol-related. A care plan was set up on discharge which included follow-up visits from the Hospital Discharge Team for a period of 6 weeks. Carer B was referred to CWD by Dumbarton Area Council on Alcohol (DACA). Following a carers’ assessment at CWD a referral was made to Alzheimer’s Scotland. This resulted in a Case Worker being assigned to support them and this has provided access to regular respite provision which has “been great”.

“I am more relaxed and able to cope with life. I have built up a strong network of friends/family and support”

Carer B met the SEARCH Carer Support Worker at one of the CWD Carer Groups and was invited to a meal (introductory lunch, June 2015). As his wife was no longer drinking at that point he didn’t think the SEARCH Project was for him but he was reassured it was as he was “now coping with the effects of his wife’s alcohol-dependence”. He has since come to realise that he is “recovering from the fallout.” The support he has received has enabled him to deal

“Things are ok just now but I know if there was a crisis, I have support and know where to go.”

with social situations. The group outings have been particularly beneficial for “bonding” with other carers. He enjoys the “camaraderie” and has particularly fond memories of one trip that saw him rediscover his talent for singing (he was in a band when he was younger).

The “support, understanding and honesty” of the SEARCH Support Group members has helped him to realise that he had to look after himself to ensure he was healthy enough to support his wife. “If anything goes wrong with me – where does that leave my wife?”

The SEARCH Project has helped him to develop new coping strategies, most especially Mindfulness. He has become more sensitive to his wife’s dependency and he and his friend are far more discreet about having a drink. He feels the SEARCH Project has given him direction and that he would be “lost without it” given the demands and challenges he currently faces.

“I look at situations with more of a smile than a scowl these days; I can be human”

“There was a big difference in the help and support”

CARER C's STORY

According to Carer C her 43-year-old daughter “was a very successful woman” who, because of a series of life traumas (including a marriage breakdown), developed mental health issues and a dependence on alcohol. Her daughter lost her job after being “sectioned following a suicide attempt”. Since then her daughter has been unable to sustain employment. Her daughter “came home” at that stage and “was in hospital nearly every weekend for a year.” Things came to a head in November 2015 when her daughter spent 10 days in an Intensive Care Unit.

An attentive GP and Practice Nurse picked up on what Carer C was coping with and referred her to the SEARCH Project. Due to the SEARCH Carer Support Worker’s “ability to engage with people” she has learned a lot from shared experiences. She feels that the SEARCH Project is “the best thing I’ve ever joined, I felt comfortable straight away”. She has used a range of carer services although she feels the SEARCH Support Group has been particularly beneficial in helping her to “open up” and realise that she is not alone. There were “so many others in the same boat and even worse situations”. Her social network has expanded with friendships formed with carers both through the SEARCH Project and CWD.

She feels Mindfulness has benefitted her greatly and she is now more able to cope with her daughter’s demands and behaviour. She has realised that she can remove herself from volatile situations by taking time out without feeling the same sense of guilt. She has also learned more about her daughter’s situation and has a better understanding of alcohol dependence.

Carer C passed on information about Dumbarton Area Council on Alcohol (DACA) gained through the SEARCH Project. Her daughter followed this up and she continues to receive support from DACA. She feels that her daughter’s situation has improved and she is taking more responsibility for herself. Carer C feels this is a result of her stepping back a bit and her daughter having to deal with more on her own. It was a “wake-up call for her”.

“This Project saved mine and my daughter’s life”

“When I first joined the Group all I did was cry, I don’t cry so much now”

“There’s a line now, I take time for myself. Better able to cope with my daughter’s demands, I’ve learned to let go what I can’t change”

CARER D's STORY

Carer D has been looking after her 58-year-old son for the past 10 years. "He was a successful mechanic who had his own business, but complex physical and mental health issues" aggravated by his alcohol dependency badly affected their relationship over time becoming "very fraught and volatile". He is reluctant to engage with services.

She understands that her son's condition will worsen over time. He is already having "problems with his memory" and "the tendons in his hands are shrinking and unfortunately due to his dependency on alcohol and the damage to his liver the NHS can't operate." Carer D feels she is now "the last man standing" for her son as she is still "battling with family dynamics as the extended family lost patience and empathy for him" due to his "erratic and disruptive behaviour." Her daughter had started up a Carers group in Arbroath and through this heard about the SEARCH Project. She encouraged her Mum to get in touch. At the point that Carer D first met the SEARCH Carer Support Worker she was "at the end of her tether and in a desperate situation." She has engaged with all services the SEARCH Project has offered, the Support Group and the social opportunities have been particularly beneficial. A 3-day short break to Arran has been one of the highlights. "I've never laughed so much for a long, long, time. We laughed from start to finish!"

She used to get angry and argue with her son which only aggravated the situation. She has found the Learning and Development Workshops hugely beneficial to her and her son. Mindfulness and therapies have taught her how to cope with her son in a more compassionate way. The information sessions facilitated by DACA helped her understand what her son is going through and how to help him.

"I feel joyful when I come to and when I leave the Support Group"

"I know how to handle him better, I don't fly off the handle now and try to steer him in a different direction without escalating the issue and there's been an improvement in mine and my son's relationship. I'm more compassionate towards him"

"I wanted to slap him then I wanted to cuddle him. He's my son."

CARER E's STORY

Carer E is a mother of two who is caring for her estranged husband who has a dependence on alcohol. Carer E has her own health challenges as she described “battling” Fibromyalgia, Rheumatoid Arthritis and longstanding mental health difficulties, anxiety in particular. In 2005 her husband’s drinking escalated as did his “aggressive behaviour”. As her father was “an alcoholic” she could see a pattern of behaviour forming in both her and her husband. Looking back she recognises there were learned behaviours from both families.

In 2010 she supported her husband fully in stopping drinking but was devastated to learn that he had started drinking again in 2012. At that stage she decided that he should find his own place to stay and with support from other agencies they would “try to work things out”.

She felt that she needed to change as she could not change her husband’s behaviour. She heard about the SEARCH Project through the West Dunbartonshire Mental Health Forum. However, due to her husband’s “controlling behaviour” she was afraid that people would find out about her involvement with the SEARCH Project. The SEARCH Carer Support Worker “could not have been more accommodating” and showed great understanding of her concerns and needs. They arranged to meet in the park where Carer E walked her dogs regularly so “not to raise suspicion” with her husband. She had never thought of herself as a carer. The SEARCH Carer Support Worker helped her to understand and accept that she is.

“I was at the end of my tether - going off my head - my behaviour was getting as bad as his”

She feels she now understands her mum’s behaviour towards her dad when she was growing up. Concerned not to “pass this on to her children” she wants to “break the cycle”. She remembers that people who are drinking are “dealing with demons”, and feels she has developed more empathy towards people who abuse alcohol. She believes alcohol is the most powerful drug and is the one that is freely available. The support, advice and learning she has received from the SEARCH Project “has been phenomenal”. She feels less isolated and has someone to turn to. Through regular contact, she has learned to trust again.

“It was like walking on egg shells all the time but the family used to say it was me, that I had a thing about alcohol”

“Things don’t just come on their own, lots of things affect family. I lost me; but I’m finding me again.”

CARER F's STORY

Carer F and her husband have a long history of caring ("spanning the last 30 years") for parents and other family members who were "alcoholics". She also found herself in a caring role for her husband's uncle who died 2 years ago, "I couldn't say no."

It was while she was caring for her parents she realised her husband, although he remained supportive of her, had developed a "problem with alcohol". The initial "trigger" was coping with his own diagnosis of cancer although he did get some support and stopped drinking at that time. When his mother fell ill she and her husband took on the caring role again. It was after his mother died that he began drinking again. This was further aggravated by the loss of his father and then his job "because of his alcohol problem".

She now realises that she had been "extremely isolated socially" as caring for others meant her and her husband's lives had been "put on hold". Since then they have been trying to pick up the pieces. They have both experienced mental health issues which led to her becoming an active member of the local Mental Health Forum where she met the SEARCH Carer Support Worker who was giving a talk about the SEARCH Project. She took the opportunity to engage and she has used a wide range of the services and support offered.

The SEARCH Project has helped her realise that she is important too and that she must take care of herself. She feels that attending the Support Group has "reduced the stigma and the shame" she felt around the issue of alcohol. She is determined now to enjoy her life and has started socialising and feels that the project "has almost given me permission to live my life, kick-started it again!" She feels that her confidence and self-esteem have grown hugely. She has learned to be more understanding and patient and now has strategies for dealing with her husband's alcohol problem without aggravating the situation further. According to Carer F her involvement with the SEARCH Project has had a positive impact on her husband too. She feels as she has grown stronger and more able to cope so her husband has also become more independent and he has learned what things may "trigger" his need to self-medicate.

"All our lives we've looked after people. Now we are looking after each other"

"I felt I was lost forever"

"It was like walking into a little paradise, I'm recovering thanks to Carers of West Dunbartonshire and the SEARCH Project.

It's brought joy to me and benefits my husband"

CARER G's STORY

“My world was turned upside down”

Carer G cares for her husband who has “early onset dementia”. This led her to “giving up a successful career” and “shattered” the plans they had made together of a life in Spain.

She was “struggling to find her place as a carer” and dealing with her “own issues with alcohol.” She met the SEARCH Carer Support Worker through Alzheimer’s Scotland. The SEARCH Carer Support Worker is outside the “worry circle”. She has helped and supported Carer G through her journey and been there whenever she has needed her. She feels “accepted” and this has helped to reduce her “embarrassment.”

The SEARCH Project has taught her that her needs are as important as her husband’s. She now feels more in charge of situations. This has helped her to cope with her caring role, appreciate what she has learned and recognise the value of education as it

“If I do screw up there is someone at the end of the phone...someone who doesn't judge”

“It was nice to find somewhere that does not label you; it doesn't matter why you are there.”

I never felt I needed to apologise”

“helps Carers who can't see the wood for the trees”.

She feels the support she has received from the SEARCH Project is not available elsewhere. The project “gives great support to her and her husband” She and her husband are advocates for carers and those suffering from dementia and they want to help educate others.

Carer G feels they still have a “very strong relationship but it's a tough gig – you're dealing with someone who is a different person”

WHAT DID NOT GO TO PLAN

It would be expected that some of the intentions laid out for the SEARCH Project didn't go to plan. The Project was open to any adult carer in West Dunbartonshire. However two particular groups were identified as being at risk of alcohol related harm, young carers (18-24 years) and older carers (65 years+).

Young Adult Carers (18-25 years)

Reaching young adult carers was a particular challenge and CWD reported on this in August 2016.¹⁹ "Identifying young adult carers has been challenging. Young Carer Services are set up in such a way that although not necessarily for accessing carer support, young adult carers tend to continue to access the services until they are 25 years old"

Despite the challenges, positive things have come from this:

1. It has allowed CWD to build stronger links with Young Carer Services and highlighted how they can work with them to improve the transition process.
2. There is reassurance knowing that young adult carers are still being supported.
3. The reduced number of young adult carers referred allowed CWD to support more carers in other age groups."

Older Adults

Twenty carers in the 65+ age group were referred to the SEARCH Project. However, but it was striking to note that the large majority of carers were recorded in the 25-64 age group. Further enquiry revealed that of these, almost all fell within the 55-64 age groups.

Volunteer involvement

The Grant Application indicated an intention to involve volunteers in the SEARCH Support Group, however at the point of evaluation this had yet to be achieved. It may have seemed feasible at the conceptual stage but in reality the service developed so quickly and was in such demand that the resources needed to identify, train and support volunteers were required elsewhere.

¹⁹ CWD SEARCH Project 18-month Progress Report to Foundation Scotland.

Geographic Focus

The Grant Application proposed that the service focus on four areas with the highest recorded incidence of alcohol-related hospital admissions in West Dunbartonshire; these being Dalmuir, Whitecrook, Bellsmyre and Brucehill. The Project exceeded its referral target for year one within six months and as the volume of service and support work grew the original intention to target these areas was put to the side.

“Longer respite break”

“More training would be appreciated. Keep up momentum - education makes a big difference to people.”

“More information being available about the SEARCH project”

What could have been done differently?

Carers and other respondents were asked what, have been done if anything, could All respondents felt that the project had achieved what it set out to do and more. However, some carers did make some requests.

“I’m a full-time student. The support group was not appropriate. Caring responsibilities can also make it difficult to attend.”

CONCLUSIONS

The view of the evaluators [Changing Mindz] is that the aims and objectives set out by the SEARCH Project were successfully delivered and clearly evidenced.

- An education programme was delivered through formal workshops and training sessions as well as informal learning opportunities.
- An emotional support system was established which included one-to-one emotional and practical support, social outings, short breaks, replacement care service and access to complementary therapies. A key aspect of emotional support is the peer support aspect of the project.
- There has been a substantial impact on policy and practice through establishing co-location with local Community Addiction Teams. Building relationships with practitioners, raising awareness of the carers' issues and eliciting almost 80% of referrals to the SEARCH Project from the WDHSCP and other partner agencies is clear evidence of this.

The impact of the SEARCH Project has been significant. As a result of the SEARCH Project there have been considerable improvements in the identification of carers affected by alcohol related issues. The high percentage of referrals from WDHSCP sources is a strong indication that the SEARCH Project has established itself as a credible and helpful addition and complements the work of Community Addiction Teams.

Carers report to feeling better able to cope. They have received appropriate and varied support suited to their individual needs and concerns including emotional and practical support (face to face), group and peer support, training, outings and short breaks.

Carers report increased knowledge and skills. They have a greater awareness and more confidence to sustain their caring role. Carers also talked about feeling calmer, more in control and less reactive to situations that previously resulted in conflict.

Carers describe a wide range of healthier alternatives to how they had previously been coping with alcohol related issues. Alternative coping mechanisms include talking, time-out, Mindfulness, outings, groups (laughter, camaraderie), learning and offering peer support as well as receiving it have all contributed.

Education and support has contributed to safer communities. A number of carers reported to being introduced to services and support that they did not know were available to them prior to the SEARCH Project e.g. advice from Scottish Fire and Rescue and Police Scotland. Following these training programmes, contributors from Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue reported the benefits to their own service of meeting this group of carers, informing them of the services available, and learning themselves from the encounters.

Carers describe gaining new insights and perspectives. Hopefulness has in many cases replaced despair and that is testament to both the SEARCH Project and the carers themselves.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Then and Now

Evaluation is a process not an event. Interviews with carers involved asking what things were like before contact with the SEARCH Project, what had happened since and how things were now. The case studies provide powerful testaments to the carer's journey (from then to now) and in our view their impact would be all the more compelling if a baseline could be captured in some way but clearly this should not be onerous for carers.

The evaluator recommends giving consideration as to whether the 'Life of Your Own' discussion (a key part of the Carers' Assessment and Support Plan) could be creatively adapted to capture this baseline

Capture the Learning

Carers affected by alcohol-related issues were, prior to the SEARCH Project, a hidden group of carers in West Dunbartonshire. The SEARCH Project is from our findings the first in Scotland to focus solely on carers affected by alcohol related issues. There are from our enquiries two other Carers' Centres in Scotland providing similar services for carers but in both cases the remit includes alcohol and drugs. Both services reported being in demand but neither had been able to establish referral pathways with Community Addiction Teams. Therefore

Mind the Quality

With a currently active caseload (as of March 2017) of 25 carers there may well be tension in balancing the variable demands of support with sustaining co-location, processing new referrals effectively and efficiently and continuing to raise awareness of the project. It is understood that a newly established post of Assistant Carer Support Worker within CWD will provide valuable additional support to the project

information in a visual way that could both serve the carer (an aide memoire). This process could involve carers who are using the SEARCH Project in developing some creative methods and options (that may enhance the carer experience as well as provide authentic "Then and Now" information that can more clearly demonstrate the journey travelled. As so little is known about the needs of carers affected by alcohol related issues these developments would also help inform policy and practice improvement in what appears an emerging area of work with carers in Scotland.

the co-location model being used within West Dunbartonshire appears to be a unique arrangement in Scotland.

The evaluator recommends exploring the possibility of bringing projects together to share the learning. The lack of research into carers affected by alcohol-related issues does suggest there could be a great value in this and it may be of interest to policy-makers, practitioners and researchers invested in improving outcomes for carers.

and CWD as a whole. This would be a valuable development as, given the complex issues relating to this group of carers, the workload carried by the SEARCH Carer Support Worker could be a heavy one to bear.

The evaluator recommends this post be developed with this in mind.

Supervision

Emotional support is widely used and greatly valued by the majority of carers we spoke to or heard from. The regularity of contacts and intensity of support varies from one carer to another. Debriefing and support are readily available from the Carer Services Manager and CWD colleagues and additional efforts are made to ensure the SEARCH Carer Support Worker does not carry things alone. There is another dimension to emotional support.

The evaluator recommends that the SEARCH Carer Support Worker be supported by an external supervisor to complement the existing in-house systems. As well as adding a layer of professional accountability supervision provides the practitioner with the opportunity to properly process feelings and thoughts and be constructively challenged (motivations, projections and transference) and to learn, develop and continue to grow as a practitioner.

Share the Good Stuff

Good news rarely makes the front page. While privacy is always a consideration the impact of the SEARCH Project is worthy of sharing with partners, practitioners and potential funders.

The evaluator recommends more of it.

Tip of the Iceberg

The view that the seventy four carers who were referred represented only “the tip of the iceberg” was shared by many of the carers and professionals. The high proportion of referrals from Community Addiction Teams and other agencies support the premise that a hidden group of carers does indeed exist.

We strongly recommend continuation of funding for the SEARCH Project as the work has only just begun and there is a compelling case for its continuation.

“This project reduces stigma; it reduced my shame. People need a safe space to talk. It’s changed my life for the better”

(carer)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are indebted to many people who contributed to the SEARCH Project evaluation, in particular the carers who gave their time to share their stories.

The Carers' Service Manager, the SEARCH Carer Support Worker and the staff team at Carers of West Dunbartonshire who were generous and helpful with their time.

Y Sort-It Manager and Senior Youth Support Worker who gave up their time and facilitated an interview with a young carer.

Heads of service at West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership who were extremely responsive to the evaluation.

Community Addiction Team frontline staff who took time to take part in a focus group.

Representatives from Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service who willingly contributed to the evaluation.

The Network Co-ordinator at the Coalition of Carers in Scotland.

The Head of Programmes at Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs who hosted our visit to SFAD.

Staff at other Carers' Centre who responded willingly to our enquiries.

Head of Policy, Scotch Whisky Association and the Client Services Executive, Foundation Scotland who gave their time.

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CWD and SEARCH Project Data and Papers (reviewed)

- CWD Operational Plan 2017-20
- SEARCH Project Workplan 2015-17
- Carer Assessment & Support Plan (CSP) West Dunbartonshire HSCP
- SEARCH Project service data provided by CWD covering the period Feb 2015-Feb 2017.
- SEARCH Project Grant Application (2014)
- SWAF Grant Application (Carers of WD)
- Foundation Scotland Grant Assessment
- Grant Offer & Acceptance
- Job Advert and Job Description
- SEARCH Project Progress Reports (2015-2017)
- SEARCH Project 6-month Progress Report to Foundation Scotland
- SEARCH Project 12-month Report to the CWD Board
- SEARCH Project 18-month Progress Report to Foundation Scotland
- SEARCH Project Learning Opportunities (Dec 2015-Nov 2016)
- SEARCH training evaluations, Mar-Apr & Sept-Nov 2016
- CWD pre-post training carer needs assessment
- Planning Handout (Coping over the Festive Season / Support Network Contact Numbers)
- SEARCH Support Group (July 2015-Feb 2017)
- SEARCH Support Group guidelines
- SEARCH Support Group dates 2015-16
- SEARCH Support Group dates 2016-17
- SEARCH Project Publicity (2015-2017)
- Carer of West Dunbartonshire Carer Information Booklet
- Newsletter introducing the SEARCH Project Jan 2015
- Letter of Introduction to organisations about the SEARCH Project
- SEARCH Project info & referral insert (Older Carers Information pack)
- SEARCH Project factsheet May 2015
- SEARCH Project Training dates & outline (2016)
- SEARCH Project Training Poster (late 2016)
- CWD Provision of Alcohol Policy
- CWD Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy
- CWD Confidentiality Policy.

APPENDICES

Evaluation introduction and invitation to carers

Dear

As you may already know:

- The SEARCH Project started its work in 2015.
- Current funding for the SEARCH Project comes to an end in March 2017.
- Carers of West Dunbartonshire are seeking to secure continued funding.

Changing Mindz has been asked to carry out an independent evaluation of the SEARCH Project. The purpose of the evaluation is to build a full a picture of what the project has achieved.

Demonstrating the value of the SEARCH Project is most important when it comes to influencing potential funders. The more evidence we can gather the better. This involves hearing from carers and other stakeholders who have had involvement with the SEARCH Project.

It is of particular importance that we speak to people who have used the SEARCH Project for carer advice, guidance and/or support, as we want to find out what difference the project has made to your life.

Ways of getting involved

- One to one conversations with either of the evaluators. This is a very informal discussion either in the Carers' Centre or if you prefer, it can be a telephone call.
- An online survey
- A paper survey
- Via a focus group

Expenses

The Carer's Centre will reimburse carer's travel expenses. For one to one conversations the evaluation team will offer carers a goodwill gesture.

Reassurances

We have adopted the CWD Confidentiality Policy in full, and we can give you an absolute assurance that the information we gather will be treated with great care. We won't have any details about you other than what you choose to share with us.

In reporting our findings carer contributions will be anonymised and any notes made will be destroyed.

What happens next?

The findings will be presented in a Final Evaluation Report at the end of March 2017.

Best wishes

Tony Stevenson
Changing Mindz

CARERS' SURVEY

| | |
|---|--|
| Name/Initials/Anonymous | |
| Postcode (first part only) | |
| Preferred Contact if you are happy to be contacted again. | |
| Age | |

Are you;

- Supporting someone who is using alcohol | Using alcohol yourself |
 Both supporting someone using alcohol and using alcohol yourself

1. How did you find out about the SEARCH Project?

- Word of Mouth | Referral | Poster/Newsletter/Leaflet | Social Media | Other

2. How easy was it to access/engage with the SEARCH Project

- Very Easy | Easy | OK | Not Easy | Very Difficult

3. When I first came into contact with the SEARCH Project, I felt my situation was....

- Good | OK | Difficult | Very Difficult | Crisis

4. What involvement have you had with the SEARCH Project? What services have you used?

- Support Group | Learning & Development | Outings/Breaks |
 Support Planning | 1:1/Emotional Support

5. Do you feel you have learned anything?

- Yes | No

5a. If yes, can you tell us what you feel you have learned?

6. Have you improved on or developed new skills?

- Yes | No

6a. If yes can you tell us what skills have been gained or improved?

7. Have you discovered/rediscovered strengths you have?

- Yes | No

7a. If yes, can you tell us what strengths you have discovered/rediscovered?

8. How would you describe your situation now?

Good | OK | Difficult | Very Difficult | Crisis

9. What is it about the SEARCH Project that worked well for you?

| | N/A | Not really | | | Somewhat | | | Very much | | |
|--|-----|------------|---|---|----------|---|---|-----------|---|---|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| Emotional support | | | | | | | | | | |
| Practical advice and information | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning & Development | | | | | | | | | | |
| Outings and breaks | | | | | | | | | | |
| Support group | | | | | | | | | | |
| Access to other services and contact with other Carers at CWD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Support from other carers | | | | | | | | | | |
| Meeting other carers using CWD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Referral to other Services not solely focussing on Carers (DACA etc) | | | | | | | | | | |

9a. Is there anything you'd like to say about any of your answers

10. Was there anything that didn't work so well for you?

10a. What could have made it work better for you?

10. Have we missed anything?

11c. What impact has the SEARCH Project had on you practically and emotionally?

Has it had any impact on your own attitudes towards alcohol, awareness, actions, behaviours)?

11d. What else would you have liked the SEARCH Project (and/or CWD) to provide?

11e. What 3 words would you use to describe the SEARCH Project to others?

MANY THANKS FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY!

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED WITH THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

PROFESSIONAL ONLINE SURVEY

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Job title | |
| Organisation Place of work | |
| Contact details | |

What has been the nature of your involvement with the SEARCH Project?

- I made a referral(s)
- I/we work in partnership with the SEARCH Project
- I am a frontline worker who has direct contact with the SEARCH Project
- I/we have had informal professional contact with the SEARCH Project
- We provide funding for the SEARCH Project
- I am aware of the SEARCH Project but have had no direct involvement
- I work for CWD
- I volunteer with CWD
- I am a Trustee of CWD.

1. What has been the nature of your involvement with the SEARCH Project?

2. Emerging themes

In the course of the evaluation, we have identified a number of factors that have influenced directly or indirectly the delivery of the SEARCH Project. Please score only those that feel relevant for you. If you have any comments to make on any of your responses, please do so in the following section. From your own perspective, what have been the key factors in the delivery of the SEARCH Project?

2.1 Effective leadership is evident in different ways and at different levels ...

- Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.2 The SEARCH Project has established excellent working relationship with partners

- Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.3 Co-location with Community Addiction services has proven to be an effective approach

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.4 There has been lots of learning for all partners

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.5 The collaborative advantage (mutually beneficial) is there for all to see

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.6 The actual delivery of the SEARCH Project has been well-aligned with its aims and service outcomes

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.7 SEARCH Carer Support Worker job/role design appear to have been relevant and realistic to the delivery of the Project

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.8 Preparation, planning, doing, reviewing and improving has been evident in the course of delivering the SEARCH Project

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.9 The SEARCH Project is well integrated within CWD

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.10 CWD is a well-regarded service and team, and this has enabled the SEARCH Project to hit the ground running

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.11 Carers of WD's organisational values and culture have aided the delivery of the SEARCH Project.

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.12 The appointment of the SEARCH Carer Support Worker was a 'masterstroke'

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.13 The Carers Assessment is a meaningful process with tangible outcomes for carers

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.14 Referrals to the SEARCH Project were dealt with efficiently and effectively

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.15 Referrals from the SEARCH Project were appropriately detailed

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.16 The SEARCH Project has been clear about boundaries, and helpfully involved with carers

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2.17 Carers are enabled, empowered and encouraged to move on from the direct support of the SEARCH Project

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Not Applicable

2a. Are there any factors we have not mentioned that you would like to tell us about?

2b. Any other comments?

3. SEARCH Project Delivery (from your perspective)

What has had the greatest impact?

1 to 9 scale, with 1 being minor, 5 moderate and 9 major

3.1 Emotional support for carers

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Major |

3.2 Practical advice and information for carers

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| Minor | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Major |

3.3 Training opportunities for carers

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Major |

3.4 Outings and breaks for carers

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Major |

3.5 Support group for carers

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Major |

3.6 Access to other Carers of WD services

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Major |

3.7 Contact with other carers through the SEARCH Project

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Major |

4. And Finally

4.1 Is there anything else about the SEARCH Project that worked well?

4.2 Is there anything that didn't work so well? What in your view could have made the SEARCH Project more effective?

4.3 Has the SEARCH Project had an impact on you practically, professionally, personally?

4.4 Have we missed anything?

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SEARCH PROJECT WORKPLAN (commenced February 2015)

| AIM | TASK | TIMESCALES | WHO ELSE |
|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Orientation to CWD. | Induction Time with individual team members Team meeting | 18-25 Feb 2015 | Carers' Service Manager, CWD Senior Carer Support Worker (Groups, Events, Volunteers) CWD Carer Support Worker (Out of the Blue) CWD Carer Support Worker (Training Co-ordinator) CWD Carer Support Worker (Hospital Discharge) CWD Carer Support Worker (Time for Me) CWD |
| Publicise SEARCH Project. | Develop publicity material Letters, leaflets, articles, webpage. | 25 th Feb-Mar 2015 | Carers' Service Manager, CWD Admin Worker, CWD |
| Establish a successful support network. | Liaise with and work jointly with Alcohol addiction services-building relationships and sharing resources. Also other Health organisations. | Mar-Apr 2015 | CWD team Addiction services Healthcare organisations |
| Provide an opportunity for learning. | Develop six-week training course for carers. | Mar-Apr 2016 | Carer Support Worker, Training Co-ordinator, CWD |
| Work with other Alcohol related organisations. | Email-calling-meetings, attending groups and events | 25 Apr-May 2015 | DACA, CAT, AL-ANON, other healthcare professionals. |
| Promote and publicise the work of SEARCH. | Raising awareness, advertising the SEARCH project. | 25 May-Jun 2015 | CWD team |
| Develop an effective network to meet the needs of SEARCH. | Creating a safe and comfortable environment for carers. | June 2015 | CWD team |
| Identify and reach out to target audience 18-25-65+ | Proactively identifying these age groups within the community. | June 2015 | CWD team |
| Develop and maintain a definitive project and action plan. | Support-Educate-Advise Reassure- Care and Help. | June 2015 | Carers' Service Manager, CWD Senior Carer Support Worker (Groups, Events, Volunteers) CWD |

| | | | |
|--|---|-------------------|--|
| Set up and facilitate an effective support group for carers. | Identify needs and learning requirements for the carers. | July 2015 ongoing | Carers' Service Manager, CWD Senior Carer Support Worker (Groups, Events, Volunteers) CWD Carer Support Worker (Training Co-ordinator) CWD |
| Provide an outing for carers to have a break from their caring role. | For Carers to enjoy time away from their caring role. | Aug-Sept 2015 | Senior Carer Support Worker (Groups, Events, Volunteers) CWD |
| Work alongside Community Addiction Team | [Improve the identification of carers affected by alcohol related issues] | Sept 2015 ongoing | WD HSCP Head of Service for Mental Health, Addictions and Learning Disability Carers' Service Manager, CWD |
| Develop a contact list and emergency planning for carers. | To offer information and help with coping over the festive season. | Dec-Jan 2015 | Senior Carer Support Worker (Groups, Events, Volunteers) CWD |
| Develop training for carers. | Your Wellbeing in Mind | Sept-Oct 2016 | Carer Support Worker (Training Co-ordinator) CWD |



Carers of West
Dunbartonshire
"the place for every carer to turn to"

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