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For Immediate Release

Civic Voice the Way Forward for Fife

The countdown is on to having joined up health and social care services for the first time in a generation. With transformation across Scotland on a scale never seen before, what say do the people who receive health and social care services have.

In one of the first joint session of its kind, Fife’s joint ‘Way Forward’ workshop gave over 60 carer, charity group, public and patient representatives an opportunity to come together to discuss, describe and start to shape the future of public engagement in Fife.

Welcoming delegates and giving the opening remarks, Allan Burns, Chair of NHS Fife and Chair of Fife’s Patient Focus, Public Involvement Committee stated. “I am delighted that we had such a fantastic turn out. It demonstrates the appetite people have to get involved and be heard.

“Public engagement is high on the Scottish Government’s agenda and central to the new Integration Act. I believe we need to create a civic voice in Fife. One that can truly influence the way services are designed and delivered.

“We must listen, and keep listening, so that the ‘voice’ does not get lost in the red tape of management.

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“When it comes to participation and engagement, we already have a lot of networks and people representative agencies in Fife. We must build on the bits that work whilst be realistic and challenge the areas where we must improve. The voice of communities, groups and representatives for the most lost, little and least in our society are vital to achieving this.”

Ella Brown, carer for her father, who attended the event said: “Coming here today has let us have a common voice, ask difficult questions and challenge the current system. I am really pleased there is such a proactive attitude being taken and want as many people to get involved as possible.”

Speakers at the event included Christine Johnstone, Community Engagement and Improvement Support Manager with the Scottish Health Council: “This event is an example of how Fife is grasping the nettle of addressing the challenges raised when bringing two large public sector institutions together. The Way Forward event is a good demonstration of how to involve people and ensure they are at the heart of every decision made. I was delighted to be a part of the day and that the Scottish Health Council was able to support the event.”

For more information on Health and Social Care Integration in Fife visit www.fifedirect.org.uk/integration

Notes to editor:

Contact: Connie Flint, Lead Communications Officer (Social Work), Fife Council: 01592 583673

Ruth Lonie, Communications Manager, NHS Fife: 01592 647971

Issued: Local media

Website: www.fifedirect.org.uk

Out of hours: 07985 718 254