DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER



FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE

is a small voluntary organisation which aims to enhance the quality of life and well-being of older people by working with those providing practical, pastoral or spiritual care



A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO EVERYONE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON, SU MILLAR



Around this time each year I feel a deep-rooted and spontaneous need to reflect on the year's happenings. I can't really explain why that is. It just is! Even when some years have been especially challenging. It's comforting to turn over the year, like turning the pages of a novel I'm reading - even with the scary bits! For when the dark nights are long and the days so short, with the birth of a new year imminent in the final moments of the old one, one of my favourite scriptures reminds me to be fixed on the positive; choose 'those' memories to dwell upon; think principally on the good things, even if it means that you have to dig really deep to find them, 'whatever' they are! Ephesians 4:8 talks about that.

"Finally, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things."

Now I think daily on these 'good things' as Blessings that greet me. I choose to embrace them fully! Whether they be people in my life, or part of a train of events, or the briefest of moments. I give thanks for them all. Day and night. Whilst busy or in quiet times, being 'still'. As Psalm 46:10 says, "*Be still and know that I am God*". There is great comfort to be had in that! Whatever is happening in my life, He's got me! I am content knowing that. I reflect on the year that's almost gone with this in mind. I have pure gratitude for all the 'good things' that have come my way and witnessed. Abundant Blessings. And that includes Faith in Older People (FIOP).

Despite the challenging times, FIOP's work continues to build upon itself and to gain traction across all eight activity themes:

- Spiritual Care.
- The Gift of Age Research Project.
- Loneliness and Isolation, a key issue which underlies most of our work.
- One Step at a Time Dementia Resource for Faith Communities.
- The Malcolm Goldsmith Annual Lecture.
- Anna Chaplaincy.
- Mental Health in Faith Communities.
- End-of-Life Matters.

FIOP's activities are motivated by care, compassion, respect, and love: they represent other ways to 'love thy neighbour'.

In 2024, our aspirations are to advance each of our themes in carefully considered 'next steps'. Our aim, to expand our reach, influence thinking, implementation, and practice. Ultimately, we seek to see the potential of positive returns for this work become a reality for older people, and care and support staff too, who live in and who are part of and contribute to life in our communities.

I hope you join us on this journey. Register for our online events. We so appreciate your support.

For now, I wish you all Peace, Joy, Love, and 'good things', 'whatever these are' for you in 2024.

Abundant Blessings! Su Su Millar, Chairperson, Faith in Older People

Caregivers: You Have to Care for Yourself A view from the USA

If you are just beginning your caregiving journey, thank you. Caregivers, and especially those who care for family and friends as an unpaid helping hand, take on a huge burden.

And this burden, despite all the love that comes with it, can take a toll. Today's post is brought to you by <u>Faith in Older People</u> as a reminder that you have to take care of yourself just as much as you take care of your loved one.

Unpaid caregiving is not a problem singular to the UK. In the US alone, around 17% of adults – 75% of whom are women – provide care for loved ones <u>in lieu of working a fulltime job</u>. There is a similar situation in France, where the older population <u>continues to grow each year</u>.

Why Care for Yourself

In short, you must take good care of yourself so that you can take good care of those who rely on you. Caring for yourself starts at home, but it also includes things like socializing, getting enough sleep, and fostering your platonic and romantic relationships.

Changes At Home

There's a good chance that you'll experience stress as an unpaid caregiver. As such, it makes sense to take pre-emptive measures at home that will impact your overall mood. Seemingly simple changes around your house, <u>like getting rid of clutter</u> or adding a bit of greenery, can go a long way toward improving how you react to stressful stimuli.

The Importance of Friends

As a caregiver, much of your time will be spent giving care to others. But you must also care for yourself by spending quality time with people who don't rely on you for their everyday needs. According to Psychology Today contributor Susan Krause Whitbourne, PhD, our friends help us <u>better understand</u> <u>our priorities</u> and can keep us grounded in reality when we need it the most.

Take Care of Your Spirit

Something else you likely do as a caregiver is help your loved ones <u>maintain their own</u> <u>sense of spirituality</u>. How often do you dig deep into what cleanses your own soul? Probably not enough. Remember to prioritize your connection with your higher power, no matter who or what that might be. This could be a great opportunity to attend church or pray with your loved one.

Seek Respite Care

A crucial part of caring for others is caring for yourself enough to walk away when you need it. Consider finding a source of respite care, <u>which you may have to pay for</u>, at least if you live in the US, according to the National Institute On Aging. Your respite caregiver could be someone that comes in for a day, or it could be somewhere that you leave your loved one at for a few days while you relax and enjoy a moment to breathe.

Watch For Caregiver Burnout

Health In Aging explains that caregiver burnout happens <u>when you become</u> <u>overwhelmed</u> with the sheer enormity of taking care of another human being. It can happen to everyone, from new parents to adult children taking care of their own parents. You may feel hopeless, depressed, and like you're drowning at times, especially if your loved one has dementia or another mental or emotional problem. Pay attention to your emotions and how you feel and take action to intervene with yourself before you or your ward suffers because of it. The goal as a caregiver is to be the best you can be. But that should never mean sacrificing yourself along the way. Make changes at home that create a peaceful environment, and don't forget to take time for yourself when you need it!

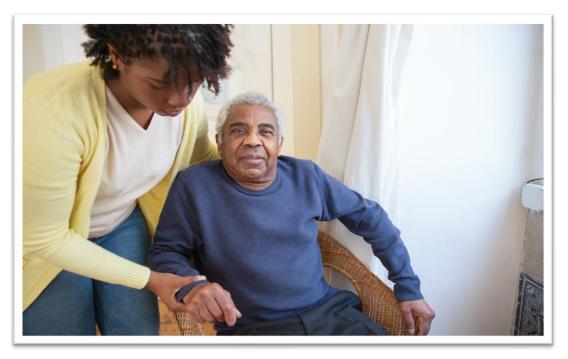


Image via Pexels

Richard Wright

State of Caring 2023: Carer's Scotland

A health and social care crisis for unpaid carers in Scotland"

'This report is the second of our State of Caring in Scotland reports and is called *"State of Caring 2023: A health and social care crisis for unpaid carers in Scotland"*. This report focuses on health of carers and support from social care and the NHS and highlights the ongoing and significant struggle that carers face in accessing the services and support they need to provide care and to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to take regular breaks from caring.

The report found that over a quarter of carers (28%) said that their mental health was bad or very bad, rising to 37% for those in receipt of Carer's Allowance, reflecting evidence that those

on low incomes are struggling more. Alongside this, most respondents were experiencing continuous low mood, feelings of hopelessness and regularly feeling tearful. Shockingly over a third of carers (36%) said that they had thoughts of suicide or self-harm.

Carers also reported significant challenges with their physical health, with over half (54%) saying that their physical health had suffered because of their caring role and one in 5 suffering a physical injury from caring.

With these significant findings of poor physical and mental health, concerningly, four in 10 (41%) carers have put off healthcare treatment because of their caring role telling Carers Scotland that they simply do not have the time, or cannot secure replacement care, to enable them to seek treatment or recover.

The majority of carers told us they experienced loneliness - over a quarter (29%) always or often felt lonely, with a further 59% sometimes feeling lonely. Carers who were struggling to make ends meet were almost twice as likely (50%) to say they were always or often lonely and half of all carers (49%) said loneliness was affecting their health - evidence that carers' financial wellbeing, loneliness and poor health are closely linked.

The report also found large gaps in the support that carers need – both to support their caring role and to maintain their own health. A third of carers (35%) have not had any break from caring in the past year with many carers reporting this having a detrimental impact on their mental health. More than half (58%) said that getting a break was critical to improving their health and wellbeing. Just a third (38%) of carers said that they or the person they care for were receiving any support from formal social care services and, of those, a third (37%) said that it did not meet their needs or those of the person they care for and a similar proportion (30%) that this care was not consistent.

Of particular concern, is the lack of involvement and support on hospital discharge. Six in 10 (60%) were not involved in decisions about the person they care for being discharged from hospital, with only 18% saying that the services provided on discharge were sufficient to protect the health and wellbeing of the person they cared for as well as their own health.'

The link to the full report https://bit.ly/SOC2023H_

RECENT EVENTS

FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE AND INTERFAITH SCOTLAND JOINT EVENT: TACKLING LONELINESS AND ISOLATION IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Wednesday 15 November 2023

This online conference was held to highlight the issue of loneliness by discussing the Scottish Government Policy on Loneliness; the action that faith communities do and can take to tackle loneliness and to explore proposals for the future.

The Government Strategy has been updated and the link is below.

We know that faith communities play a significant role in supporting people who feel lonely and isolated, so it is important we take this opportunity to consider the issues and differing roles.

Our speakers included:

- Maureen Sier, Interfaith Scotland
- Maureen O'Neill, Faith in Older People
- Paul Okroj, Chest Heart, and Stroke Scotland
- Susan Siegel Chair of West of Scotland Council of Christians and Jews and Garnethill Hebrew Congregation, Glasgow
- Srihari Vallabhajousula Hindu Community
- Corin Pilling Sanctuary Mental Health

• Susan Hunter - Befriending Scotland and representatives of faith communities in conversation

Social isolation and loneliness: Recovering our Connections 2023 to 2026

THE POWER OF THE POSSIBLE:

examples of local community action by older people from faith groups

(Gift of Age research) THE GIFT OF AGE CONFERENCE Thursday 30 November 2023



Faith in Older People undertook a major and unique survey of the contribution of older people within and from our faith communities.

The overall aim of the research was to identify and better understand the contribution made by older people in faith communities to volunteering, community well-being and citizenship, highlighting the voluntary 'ministry' which lies at the heart of Christian faith, and is also echoed in all other faiths. To achieve this, we had the following objectives:

• Understand the extent to which older people sustain faith communities through voluntary service

- Learn about the impact from the experience of the current 'lockdown' on older people undertaking voluntary service
- 'Map' the needs, contribution, and potential of older volunteers in faith communities

• Identify examples of innovative and challenging practice, particularly ones which have developed in response to the pandemic, exploring how sustainable they are in practice

The research was supported by the TOR Christian Foundation, and we want to ensure that the research is disseminated as widely as possible, and that individuals and different faith communities can learn about the outcomes and to hear about a range of initiatives that are undertaken across Scotland, and we are sure that many are replicated and that there are many more activities being undertaken.

<u>https://www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/The-gift-of-age.pdf</u> The aim of this Zoom conference is to share the research with you and to invite you to share your faith community's experience and initiatives.

Examples of the work undertaken by older people within faith communities was beautifully illustrated by Susan Siegel and Rev Helen Jamieson in conversation with the FiOP Researcher, Mike Nicholson. Additional, reflections were given by Sally Jaquet, FiOP researcher. Those attending had the opportunity to have discussion in small groups.

Sarah Latto, Policy Officer with Volunteer Scotland, concluded the session by highlighting the importance of this research in the context of the strategic approach to volunteering in Scotland. A joint Policy Statement from FiOP and Volunteer Scotland was launched at the meeting and will be widely circulated by both organisations.

The Joint Policy Statement can be found at <u>The Gift of Age: Older People, Faith Communities, and</u> <u>Volunteering (faithinolderpeople.org.uk)</u>

PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCES

Faith in Older People was invited to submit a poster to two recent conferences:

- Scottish Partnership on Palliative Care 'Out of the Shadows' and
- NHS Education conference on Bereavement 'The Grief we Carry'.

We chose to focus on the impact of death and dying on those who care for us and how they might be supported.



MALCOLM GOLDSMITH LECTURE 2023

FiOP was delighted to welcome The Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as our 2023 Lecturer

The title of the Moderator's talk was "A 'with, not to' community: Valuing our older people." Our thanks to Sally for a wonderful, thoughtful range of reflections on ageing and older people. Comforting and inspiring. The link to the recording is below PLEASE CLICK <u>HERE</u>

"a fascinating lecture and discussion" (Attendee)



FORTHCOMING EVENTS FOR 2024

A 2-part event Led by Grant Fraser King, Lecturer in Nursing (Mental Health), Mediator for the EDR Team, School of Health Sciences, University of Dundee

The Place of Hope -*The spiritual care needs of people experiencing mental illness within a church community <u>part one</u> (concepts) Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 4.30pm*

The Place of Hope - *The spiritual care needs of people experiencing mental illness within a church community <u>part two</u> (application) Wednesday 13 March 2024 at 4.30pm*

Each seminar will cost £10. More detail about each seminar will follow soon.

ONE STEP AT A TIME - LEARNING RESOURCE TO SUPPORT PEOPLE EXPERIENCING DEMENTIA IN OUR CONGREGATIONS

The resource is practical and can be considered in groups which include those who are experiencing dementia. It is not intended to be prescriptive but to ask questions to find out what might be helpful to all those wishing to be inclusive.

We hope that you will find the resource helpful, and we would welcome your feedback. We would be pleased to discuss the resource with you as we recently did with Interfaith Scotland Council so that we can consider the way forward as we feel this is a resource which needs to evolve.

FIOP-One-Step-at-a-Time-MAY-2023-version-for-website-etc.pdf (faithinolderpeople.org.uk)

Faith in Older People's workbook can be downloaded free of charge from our website.

Please click <u>HERE</u> to download a copy.



SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

ANTICIPATORY CARE PLANNING AND FUTURE CARE PLANNING

The Scottish Government has issued a letter confirming that the term "**anticipatory care planning**" is being replaced with "**future care planning**". The letter (link given below) also indicates a national programme of work in this area, which will be getting underway soon. https://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/cmo/CMO(2023)17.pdf

This change will require action on the part of many Third Sector organisations providing care and information to the public.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Keeping Edinburgh – Coorie in for Winter Booklets

Coorie In for Winter. As well as lots of tips and advice on a range of support and helpful contacts, across the city we've also invited friends and colleagues to share warming winter recipes - cooking and sharing food together is a great way to Coorie in. This booklet has been produced in partnership by Thrive Edinburgh and Health in Mind. Many thanks to our colleague sacross Edinburgh who have contributed to the booklet and shared their ideas and resources. Thank you to Robertsons for their generous contribution which supporting the printing of this booklet. We will be distributing these across libraries and health and social care sites across the city. If you

would like copies of the booklet please email <u>loth.moregooddays@nhslothian.scot.nhs.ukg</u>et in touch with

Small Grants

In partnership with EVOC this year we have a small amount of funding to support constituted community groups and organisations to support Corrie in for Winter activities. We are very mindful that for our smaller organisations £500 can really make a difference. The maximum we can allocate is £500.

There is a short application form (attached) to complete and to be returned to us by **5.00 pm on 8 December**. We will commit to letting you know if your application was successful by Monday 11 December. Please send to <u>linda.irvinefitzpatrick@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk</u>

Dr Linda Irvine Fitzpatrick, Strategic Programme Manager, Thrive Edinburgh, Substance Use and Homelessness, SRO, Edinburgh Wellbeing Pact, Community Mobilisation, Prevention and Early Intervention Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Strathclyde and Queen Margaret Universities

Working week - Tuesday to Friday Tel: 07815592362

FESTIVAL OF AGEING 17TH JANUARY 2024 AT VERITY HOUSE, COSLA, HAYMARKET, EDINBURGH <u>https://www.eventbrite.com/e/festival-of-ageing-tickets-759602119387</u>

An opportunity to hear from several speakers on aspects of ageing and innovative practice.





Offering spiritual care in later life

We would like to highlight the following blog – <u>The story of Anna Chaplaincy is 'phenomenal' - Archbishop Justin Welby</u> Read more blogs at: <u>Anna Chaplaincy blog</u> **Debbie Thrower and the Anna Chaplaincy team at BRF** <u>annachaplaincy@brf.org.uk</u> | <u>annachaplaincy.org.uk</u> | <u>brf.org.uk</u> James Woodward tackles the topic of spiritual pain (annachaplaincy.org.uk)

Debbie Thrower



FiOP has worked closely with Anna Chaplaincy over the past two years and have appreciated the enthusiasm, knowledge and inspiration of Debbie Thrower who founded Anna Chaplaincy. Debbie retired in September and we wish her well and give thanks for all her support. We look forward to continuing to work with her successor Debbie Ducille.



Safer Ageing Week 2023 is here!

This year, our theme is ALONE VOICE, to highlight Hourglass as the only organisation standing up for and supporting older victimsurvivors of abuse, who too often are voiceless and isolated.

We're proud to announce a new service for Wales –a Community Response Hub with a specialism on Financial or Economic Abuse. This is thanks to funding from the Community Fund for Wales. More information about this will be released throughout the week.

We are also launching a key policy paper on the ongoing lack of vital data coming from Scotland, reflecting on the charity's 30th anniversary and rolling out a series of messages of support from politicians and other influencers.

We hope that you will join us in supporting Safer Ageing Week 2023 to ensure that the voices of older victim-survivors are elevated and that this year, our voices are louder than ever.

Richard Robinson CEO of Hourglass





Festive Greetings, lain Stewart

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a wonderful festive break. Whether you have just celebrated Diwali or Bandhi Chhor Divas or the Ascension of Abdulor are currently celebrating Channukah or counting down to Christmas I wish you a year of love, joy, happiness and good fortune.

I would especially like to thank you for supporting us this past year whether it be through attending our in person or online events, reading our newsletter and for taking the time to share messages of encouragement and support.

TO READ THE FULL BULLETIN please click HERE

SCOTTISH CARE AND CCPS

Joint statement: Scottish Government's Winter Plan 'offers no hope for social care'.

As the CEOs of Scotland's two major umbrella bodies representing providers of care and support in the third and independent sectors we are dismayed to see yet another <u>Winter Plan</u> which purports to be a whole system response for Scottish citizens but in fact offers almost no hope for social care.

Read the whole joint statement through the link below Joint statement: Scottish Government's Winter Plan 'offers no hope for social care' - Scottish Care



Are you living with dementia? Or is someone you know? Do you want to help create a more positive future for people living with dementia?

A society where people with dementia are valued and don't just survive, but instead, they thrive.

A community where people affected by the disease – both those with dementia, unpaid carers and wider family members – are supported every step of the way to continue to live their best life through their dementia journey.

A world eradicated of dementia stigma, where every person is celebrated and measures are in place to enable everyone to do what they enjoy.

Get involved

We work closely with the Scottish Government to create change and directly improve the lives of people living with dementia. Input from people affected by the disease is essential to this work.

We pride ourselves on focusing our work around the opinions of people with lived experience, creating a bottom up structure to our policy work, and giving people in the community a powerful voice to influence the direction of the future.

I called up my niece and said, 'Guess what, I'm an activist' she said, 'Auntie Margaret, you always have been!'

We're looking for new dementia activists





Our activists told us how important community-led support was to them - so we campaigned for that to be at the heart of the Dementia Strategy. Carers shared with us the struggles they face getting information around access to social support, and this too is a firm commitment in the new strategy.

You set the pace

The level of involvement is up to you – no one will be asked to take on any more than they feel they can manage. Current Dementia Activists say it has given their life a 'new purpose' and others have <u>made 'friends for</u> <u>life' through their involvement</u>.

If this sounds like something you would be keen to take part in, please get in touch. Email us at <u>aboutdementia@agescotland.org.uk</u>. Or if you simply just fancy a coffee and a chat then <u>we host events for that too</u>.

Dr Kainde Manji, Head of Dementia, About Dementia, Age Scotland





We would like to begin this e-newsletter by first stating how heart-broken everyone at Interfaith Scotland is by the terrible conflict in Israel/Gaza. International events always have an impact on communities living here in Scotland and we are working with our Community and Scottish Government Partners to ensure that there is not a rise in hate incidents or crimes here in Scotland because of the conflict.... **READ MORE ...**

Interfaith Scotland October E-Newsletter

Christians on Ageing - Conference paper on Ethics and Dementia

Julian Hughes is an Honorary Professor at the University of Bristol. He was previously Honorary Professor of Philosophy of Ageing at Newcastle University and Consultant in North Tyneside, before becoming Professor of Old Age Psychiatry at Bristol. He is an authority with a unique experience as an ethicist with training in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, (first degree at Oxford University and PhD in Philosophy from Warwick) medicine and psychiatry, practice as a clinical Old Age Psychiatrist and with a formidable academic record. He is the world leader in the field. His recent book is already acknowledged as a classic: Dementia and Ethics Reconsidered by Julian Hughes. Open University Press

Extract

In this book, there were four mentions of "religion": (i) ethical understanding is influenced by religion (ii) religion is one of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (iii) if there are doubts about treatment at the end of life because of religion it may be useful to consult someone from the same religion (mentioned twice). "Faith" is mentioned 3 times: (i) Faith traditions stress the intrinsic importance of life (ii) Faith traditions allow that resuscitation is not compulsory when it is likely to be futile (mentioned twice) "Christian" is used twice in connection with virtue ethics. "Spirituality" and "Christianity" are not used at all.

Link to the report: <u>https://christiansonageing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Conference-</u> <u>Call-November-23.pdf</u>

LET'S BE HEARD

The closing date for this period of national engagement is now 20 December 2023.



Catherine Evans Public Engagement and Participation Manager Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry

Freepost SCOTTISH COVID-19 INQUIRY www.covid19inguiry.scot

AGE SCOTLAND ABOUT DEMENTIA STORYTELLING RESOURCE

The new Storytelling Resource is aimed at people who run groups and organisations working with people living with dementia.

For more information on the Storytelling Resource, or to register an interest in receiving a pack and training, email <u>aboutdementia@agescotland.org.uk</u>

NEWS FROM LUMINATE

We have two training opportunities already in the diary for 2024 that are both now open for expressions of interest. They are for artists who are already working within the Creative Ageing sector, and both aim to enhance your existing skills to allow you to take your arts career further.

Thursday, 22nd February, Dumfries:

Artists' Training Day: Dementia and Imagination

For artists with experience of working in creative ageing contexts and who would like to increase their confidence in working with older people, and those living with dementia, in care settings.

Ideally, you will have professional experience in leading or assisting with creative activities for older people and those living with dementia or have supported people living with dementia in a professional or personal capacity. During the session, we will explore the importance of Dementia and Imagination approaches, using multi-sensory activities and Relationship Centred Care in planning creative ageing activities. With a blend of practical and theory-based work, this will also be an opportunity for personal reflection and learning from others to support your own work.

Read more, and apply <u>here</u>. Applications due by midday, Monday January 15th.

Thursday, 7th March, Edinburgh:

Creative Facilitators' Development Day

This training day is offered to artists, experienced in creative ageing delivery, who would like to develop their skills in order to facilitate reflection opportunities with other artists.

We are keen to support artists who have worked on recent Luminate projects – including Arts in Care – as well as creative ageing projects led by other organisations and individual artists. While we are offering this event to widen the pool of facilitators available to support Luminate's work, our aim is that the skills developed through this training will also be valuable to participants when working in other professional contexts.

Read more, and apply here. Applications due by midday, Monday January 8th

Faith in Older People's ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023 is now available on our website. Please click <u>HERE</u> to read it



IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY – we'd like to ask you to become a FRIEND OF FIOP

Although, currently, most of our events are held by ZOOM – and are FREE - we still have overheads to cover from our limited budget. An annual contribution of, say £25, would make an enormous difference to our small organisation. As a Friend you will receive our regular eNewsletter and invitations to our regular events. PLEASE CONTACT US FOR AN APPLICATION FORM – info@fiop.org.uk You can find out more about our work at www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk

OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY BECOME A FRIEND

IF YOU WISH TO UNSUBSCRIBE FROM OUR NEWSLETTER, PLEASE EMAIL <u>info@fiop.org.uk</u>



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