

## Scottish Community Safety Network



# Practice Note 15

### Fife Cares

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### Project Background and Aims

Fife Cares offers a comprehensive service allowing vulnerable clients to access a range of safety, security and welfare services. Under the umbrella of Fife Community Safety Partnership, Fife Cares was developed to address vulnerable people's concerns about their safety and security in the home. It provides a partnership model for delivering services to older people, vulnerable families and other people who are vulnerable or isolated.

Many of the services offered were already available; Fife Cares brings the services together, raises their profile and provides a single point of access for clients. The service focuses on three key areas – home safety (including fire safety), home security and child safety.

Qualifying clients include vulnerable older people, families with children under 5 years, and repeat crime victims, including victims of hate crime and domestic abuse.

Clients are visited at home and offered home safety, child safety and security advice and, when appropriate, the free installation of equipment. A needs assessment is undertaken, allowing clients to benefit from follow-up visits from partner agencies.

As well as self-referrals, referrals come from a range of partner agencies, including Social Work, NHS, Fire, Police, and local community groups. There is no form filling, no waiting list and all the equipment is fitted free of charge.

The Fife Cares service is client centred and holistic in approach, it does not offer the same package of equipment or advice to everyone. The main aim of the service is:

‘To educate and raise awareness, as well as offer access to important elements of safety and security equipment. We know there is always a need for both’.

The Fife Cares service benefits from strong strategic and operational leadership and support. Strong links exist between the service and the strategic Safer Homes Task Group and this entails that not only does the service benefit from strong strategic and partnership support, but also that policy changes and/or changes in working practices can be initiated quickly as result of feedback. The Safer Homes Task Group oversees the work of Fife Cares and identified *Making Homes Safer and More Secure* as key outcomes.

The work of Fife Cares also links directly to the Community Safety Partnership’s *Making Fife Safer Strategy* and Fife’s Community Plan, which include the outcomes *making homes safer and more secure, reducing accidents and injuries and reducing fear of crime*.

### Resources

Funding: Scottish Government, Fairer Scotland and Fife Community Safety Partnership.

Partners: NHS, Fife Council Housing, and Fife Community Safety Partnership

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Quantitative and qualitative data from the service is collected and analysed. Thus, the benefits of the service are measured using a range of outcome measures, such as the number of people visited, as well as feedback from clients and partner services.

### Activities

The Fife Cares service focuses on two key areas – Home Safety (including fire safety) and Home Security. The service was extended in 2006 to include child safety visits. Through this element of the service families are offered a free child safety home risk assessment. All Fife Cares clients are visited in their own homes and offered advice and where appropriate equipment, tailored to their own individual needs.

Individuals can refer themselves to the service, or referrals may come from a variety of sources including Social Work Service, community groups and local Housing Associations.

During every initial visit a questionnaire is completed with all clients, which allows the visiting officer to assess whether any follow up visits would be useful. Where

appropriate — and with the clients permission — referrals are made to partner agencies.

Fife Cares requires close partnership working between Fife Community Safety Partnership's Fife Cares team and Fife Constabulary, Fife Fire and Rescue Service colleagues. This is clearly evident with regard to client referrals. However, Fife Cares staff also work closely with community safety colleagues within Police and Fire Service to raise awareness of the key home safety and security issues. This involves attending community groups as well as organising and resourcing large scale events such as 'Be Safe Be Secure' promoting key issues- home safety, fire safety, personal safety and home security. It is also worth noting that, in addition to the dedicated Home Security Adviser, Police Community Safety Officers undertake Fife Cares home security visits.

Fife Community Safety Partnership has managed and delivered Fife Cares since the end of 2002. In that time the service has grown and developed considerably, not only in terms of staff numbers, we currently have a team of 3.5 home safety advisers and a home security adviser, but more importantly with regard to the scope of the service offered and degree of partnership working.

Partnership working with partnership analysts provides accurate information on housebreaking, attempted housebreaking, sneak-in theft and domestic fires. The data is analysed at a datazone and area committee level and allows resources to be targeted towards the areas of greatest need.

Effective targeting has been necessary due to a reduction in the number Fife Cares home security staff - from two members of staff to one in 2008. Fife Constabulary Community Safety Officers have continued to support home security related projects and assisted with additional referrals when required.

Partnership working with an NHS Fife analyst has provided accurate information on hospital admissions following home accidents, including breakdowns for age and area (both at datazone and area committee level) and by type of accident. This data allows resources to be targeted towards the areas of greatest need. Information to date indicates that home accidents are much more prevalent in the datazones that are within 15% most deprived in Scotland, compared to those that are in the 15% least deprived.

As a result, additional funding was sourced in 2009 and 2010 from Scottish Government's Fairer Scotland Fund to provide a targeted service in the Fife datazones that are in the 15% most deprived in Scotland, as well targeting isolated and vulnerable communities within rural settings such as the West Fife villages and North East Fife.

## Impact

Fife Cares has worked hard to access useful home accident data for several years now. The community analyst has been working with the NHS analyst to break down the information into home accident only data so that Fife Cares can continue to target the service more effectively.

The evidence so far indicates that more accidents happen within the most deprived areas of Fife. For example, the admission rate per 1000 in Fife's 15% most deprived areas was 9.9, compared with 7.7 for other areas (2009/2010).

Benefits of the service are measured using a range of outcome measures, including the number of people visited and feedback from clients and partner services. Table 1 below shows the number of home visits carried out in 2009/2010. During the visits 92 ten-year smoke alarms were fitted and 648 homes received free home security equipment.

**Table 1: Home Visits 2009/2010**

Home Safety	1,621
Child Safety	1,043
Home Security	720
Total	3,384

Fife Cares clients have been consulted both formally and informally over the length of the service to date. Feedback has been positive, with clients welcoming the opportunity to access home safety and security advice and equipment. Most importantly, client feedback shows that the service promotes peace of mind - helping vulnerable, older people and families feel safer and more secure in their own homes. One client stated:

*'Feeling that you're not completely alone, you know about services if you need them, and it's good to feel that someone cares and is taking an interest in older people.'*

Referral agencies have previously been consulted and feedback has also been positive. The feedback from partner agencies suggests that the service is both effective and highly valued. Most importantly, client feedback shows that the service promotes peace of mind among clients - helping them to feel less isolated, safer and more secure in their own homes.

Fife Cares launched a customer survey form in 2010 for home safety, child safety and home security clients. Feedback from the survey has helped improve existing service delivery. For example, improving processes such as equipment orders for installation.

The change in Fife domestic fire, crime and hospital admission statistics since Fife Cares launch suggests the service has had a positive impact. Since 2000 the proportion of Fife's residents who are very or fairly worried about being a victim of crime has fallen from 56% to 37%, whilst recorded housebreakings have declined by 33%. The number of primary fires, including dwelling fires, has decreased by 31% since 2005 - with a decrease of 12% in 2009/2010 alone. Hospital admissions involving older people (aged 60 years or over) fell by 4% between 2002 and 2008 and, over the past five years, hospital admissions involving children aged 5 and under fell from 11.0 per 1000 population to 7.0 per 1000 population

Fife Cares is leading nationally, providing an effective model for addressing the safety and security concerns of vulnerable groups and victims in a cost-effective and targeted way. In 2010 the service won a Safer Communities Award in the Personal Safety Category.

### Lessons Learnt and Sustainability

In March 2008, following changes to the funding of the service, a comprehensive review of was carried out to identify *whether* the Fife Cares service should continue to be delivered, *how* it should be delivered, *what if any changes were needed* to the service delivery model and, in turn, determine what level of funding would be required. It focused on the following aspects of the service:

- Service delivery,
- Staffing (including management of service),
- Referral criteria and targeting, and
- Partnership working.

Recommendations from the review concluded that the Fife Cares service should continue to be a core activity of Fife Community Safety Partnership, but should be more carefully targeted on the basis of need, and this has subsequently informed the delivery of the service. Box 1 contains key lessons learnt from the running of the project.

Fife Cares and Community Safety Partnership administration staff have worked hard to create positive working relationships with colleagues within Building Services and Scottish Securities, resulting in clients benefiting from an almost seamless transition from the initial visit to installation of equipment.

Two of the most useful aspects of the service, as noted by key partner agencies, are the ability of Fife Cares to provide a robust referral process, both to and from the service, and also via the Development Officer role, to 'problem solve' a whole range of safety and security issues and concerns.

Fife Cares recognises the importance of targeting the service according to need, whilst ensuring stakeholder support and up-take of the service. In order to continue

the success and development of the service any up-coming economic constraints will require additional client and referral agency consultation.

### Box 1: Key Lessons Learnt from Delivering Fife Cares

When deciding where to place a programme, look for situations where strategic direction and governance structures are a fit and monitoring systems and processes already exist in order to increase chances for sustainability.

Modify the programme as needed to make it work within local and regional context.

Start with a smaller pilot to identify what works and what needs improvement before expanding implementation of the programme.

Implement processes to monitor and evaluate the programme, including customer surveys, in order to establish whether the programme processes are working as planned and whether there is an impact on unintentional injuries or crime or fear of crime.

In response to the current economic climate, Fife Cares has become more evidence-led, including accessing available data from the NHS, in order to deliver a flexible, sustainable service. Following in line with an agreed action within Fife Community Safety Partnership's Strategy (2011-2014) consideration is being given to reviewing the service by streamlining delivery within mainstream services.

### Summary

Fife Cares is an award-winning service which delivers home visits for vulnerable people to provide home safety (including fire safety), child safety and security advice and, when appropriate, the free installation of equipment. Referrals are made on a self basis or by partner agencies, including Social Work, NHS, Fire, Police, and local community groups. The service works in collaboration with analysts from partner agencies to target resources towards the areas of greatest need. Fife Cares also attend community meetings and organise large-scale events.

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