

BULLETIN



CARE CREATES CAMPAIGN 2026

CARE.
CREATES

30+

Organisations
actively
contributed



3,000+

Contacts
reached through
direct outreach



55,000+

Social media
impressions



6

Weeks of
campaign



42+

Campaign
content pieces
created



CAMPAIGN THEMES

- ❤️ Rights & Human Rights
- 🤝 Collaboration
- 🌍 Climate & Sustainability
- 💻 Digital & Future Ready Care
- 💷 Funding
- 👤 Workforce
- 🇮🇹 Manifesto Final Push

WHAT WE LEARNED

- Consistent messaging + real voices = visibility.
- Collective sharing amplifies impact.
- Positive human stories resonate with audiences.

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Scottish Care is a Scottish Charity, SC051350, regulated by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

Cover image courtesy Greg Macvean: Harbour Homes - a Group of Sheltered Housing Residents (Aged 60-90) Have Completed Their Walking Challenge Ahead of the World Cup.

EDITORIAL

BY PROFESSOR DONALD MACASKILL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE



There was something quietly powerful about Scotland this summer. Yes, our time at the World Cup was short. The one good result didn't last. But for a brief moment, something else did.

Across towns, care homes, streets and community spaces, people came together. Conversations sparked between strangers. Laughter replaced the everyday rush. Flags were worn lightly, not as division, but as shared identity. There was a sense, however fleeting, that we were part of something bigger than ourselves.

And that matters. Because what we witnessed wasn't really about football. It was about connection. It was about belonging. It was about community rediscovering itself.

In social care, we speak often of these things, of inclusion, of human connection, of the need to feel part of something. Yet too often they can feel abstract, overshadowed by pressure and demand. The World Cup offered a reminder that these are not distant ideals. They are lived experiences, created in ordinary moments; watching together, hoping together, even losing together.

There was dignity, too, in how Scotland left the tournament. No retreat, no bitterness, just a quiet pride. We showed up. We participated. We belonged especially in Boston. Indeed, No Scotland, no party.

And perhaps there is a lesson in that for social care. Because the heart of care is not perfection or success rather it is presence. It is ensuring that individuals, whatever their circumstance, remain connected to the world and to one another. That they are seen, included, and valued.

The football may have passed too quickly. But its echo remains. A reminder that community is built not only through systems and services, but through shared moments, mutual recognition and human connection.

For a while this summer, Scotland felt closer. And that is something worth holding onto.



@DrDMacaskill



MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT UPDATE



Stefanie Callaghan
Membership Support Manager
Scottish Care

Hi everyone – Stefanie here with your Summer Bulletin update.

Since our last Bulletin, it's been a busy and important period for Scottish Care and for you as members. Across everything we've been doing, one thing has remained constant - your continued commitment to delivering care with compassion, creativity and professionalism, even under significant pressure.

Over recent months, we know those pressures have not eased. For many of you, challenges around workforce, funding, and reduced care packages remain very real. We are also hearing increasing concerns about the lack of delivery of Free Personal Care in some areas, alongside ongoing uncertainty around top-ups. These are not abstract issues - they are impacting your services, your teams and the people you support every day.

Please be assured that Scottish Care is actively raising these issues at a national level. We are continuing discussions with Scottish Government to seek clearer guidance and consistency on top-ups, and to highlight the very real consequences of gaps between policy and practice - particularly where Free Personal Care is not being consistently provided.

At the same time, we are focused on strengthening how we support you and amplify your voice.

Care Creates – making care visible

As so many of you know, this spring saw the launch of Care Creates - a major national campaign driven by member voices. What stood out wasn't just the quality of the content, but the collective impact. Together, you showed the reality of social care in a way that was confident, creative and grounded in lived experience. In looking at the numbers and seeing the reach with had with over 55,000 impressions from our social media channels alone, without counting all the posting and reposting all of you undertook – that kind of momentum has brought our campaign to life with social care practitioners across the world noticing the kind of stories, and quotes and videos you are sharing - from Australia to Ireland, London to New York - your voices your stories are making a difference by showcasing the power of positivity that comes from great quality care!

We know this has helped shift how care is seen and talked about - and importantly, it has given us stronger footing in national conversations. Thank you to everyone who contributed, engaged and shared your stories. This is exactly what collective voice looks like and please know we are taking forward so many of your amazing stories to continue this positive outlook on social care.

Our new website – built with you, for you

We also launched our new Scottish Care website - a significant step forward in how we communicate, support and celebrate the sector.

The site has been designed to:

- make it easier to find what you need,
- better showcase your work and impact,
- and keep members at the centre of everything we do.

Thank you to everyone who helped shape the new website - your input isn't just reflected in parts of it, it's embedded throughout.

As with any new platform, we know there is more to improve, and we are committed to continuing to refine it with you. Your feedback is essential, so please keep

it coming.

By now, you should also have accessed the members' video guide, which shows how you can view and manage your own information - including contact details and key organisational contacts.

Please take two minutes to check your Members page and update your details.

Keeping this accurate ensures:

- the right people in your organisation receive updates,
- you don't miss important resources or communications,
- and we can respond to you quickly with the right support and insight when you need it.

It's quick, simple - and genuinely makes a difference.

Staying connected locally. Branch meetings matter!

With reduced capacity in some areas - including the impact of changes to Independent Sector Lead roles - local connection is more important than ever.

Our Branch Chair network, local meetings and branch visits are a critical part of how we connect member experience to national influence. They provide a structured way for you to share real time insight, raise emerging issues and ensure that what is happening locally is reflected clearly in our national advocacy and priorities.

As we begin planning our 2026-2027 programme of branch visits across the country, these conversations will become even more important. They give us direct visibility of the challenges you are facing - from workforce pressures and financial sustainability to service delivery constraints - and ensure that our national voice is grounded in your day to day reality.

Your engagement in this matters.

Please:

- attend your local branch meetings,
- connect with and build relationships with your Branch Chairs,
- and actively share what you are seeing, experiencing and needing.

Branch Chairs are a key part of Scottish Care's infrastructure - your local representatives who bring your challenges, insights and successes to the national stage. The strength of that voice depends on your participation.

The more we hear from you, the stronger and more targeted our influence becomes.

Looking ahead

There's no doubt that uncertainty remains - particularly around funding, policy delivery and the sustainability of services. But what continues to stand out is the strength of this sector.

You are not standing still. You are adapting, supporting one another, and continuing to deliver high-quality care in difficult circumstances. That matters - and it is something we will continue to champion at every opportunity.

With Care Creates, our new website, and ongoing system improvements behind the scenes, we are building stronger ways to support you, evidence your impact, and ensure your experiences shape national decisions.

Membership Support is here for you - and we want to hear from you. If something isn't working, if pressures are increasing, or if you need support - please reach out. Your insight helps drive our work and strengthens our collective voice.

As we move through the summer, thank you - genuinely - for everything you continue to do. Your care, commitment and resilience do not go unnoticed.

Let's stay connected, keep speaking up, and keep shaping what comes next - together.

Sincerely,

Stefanie



@scottieabroad



World Cup Fever Across Social Care in Scotland

Social care providers across Scotland embraced the excitement of this summer's tournament, bringing care home residents, homecare service users, staff, families and communities together through celebrations, activities and shared memories.



Forefaulds Care Home Creates World Cup Fan Zone



Abercorn House Shows Its Support for Team Scotland



World Cup Spirit at Dryfemount Care Home



Leith Legends Complete Incredible World Cup Challenge



Airthrey Care Home – World Cup Street Party



"CARE CREATES... THE STORY WE TELL" - HOMECARE 2026



Care at Home & Housing Support Conference & Awards 2026

Scottish Care's annual Care at Home & Housing Support Conference & Exhibition took place on Friday 15 May 2026 at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Glasgow. Under the theme **"Care Creates... The Story We Tell"**, the event brought together care providers, sector leaders, policymakers, exhibitors and partners from across Scotland for a day dedicated to celebrating, strengthening and shaping the future of care at home and housing support services.

Kindly sponsored by **Hierarchy Technologies**, this year's conference explored four key themes: **Visible, Viable, Valued and Visionary**. Through keynote addresses, panel discussions, practical workshops and interactive sessions, delegates considered how the sector can build public trust, ensure sustainability, demonstrate its value and create a positive future for care and support services.

The day opened with a Scottish Care welcome, followed by a chair's address from Joseph Musgrave, CEO of Home and Community Care Ireland, who reflected on the importance of storytelling in helping others understand the impact and significance of care. Delegates also heard an opening keynote from Professor Angela O'Hagan, Chair of the Scottish Human Rights Commission, on making care visible during times of change.

A plenary panel session, **"Care Creates Trust"**,



encouraged discussion on how care is perceived by the public, while insight sessions explored a range of pressing topics including technology and artificial intelligence, integrated health and medication management, innovative models of homecare delivery, and research involving care at home services. The afternoon programme focused on recognising the human value of care through a Story Exchange session and a series of practical "Skills MiniBursts" covering palliative and end of life care, policy developments, workforce induction and accessible communication. Discussions then turned to the future of the sector, with reflections from Matthew Skinner and James Sinclair of Care City and an interactive Vision Studio exploring what care must create next.

The conference also provided valuable opportunities for networking, collaboration and knowledge sharing, with exhibitors showcasing products, services and



innovations designed to support care providers across Scotland. Scottish Care extends its thanks to all speakers, sponsors, exhibitors and delegates who contributed to another successful event.

Following the conference, Scottish Care hosted the **2026 National Care at Home & Housing Support Awards**, celebrating the outstanding dedication, compassion and professionalism demonstrated by Scotland's homecare workforce every day. The awards brought together providers, staff, supported people and families to recognise excellence across the sector and to honour those making a meaningful difference in people's lives.

The evening provided an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of individuals and teams from across Scotland, highlighting innovation, leadership, partnership working and person-centred support. Scottish Care congratulates all finalists and winners and thanks everyone who submitted nominations. Their stories continue to demonstrate the extraordinary contribution care at home and housing support services make to communities across the country.

[Click here to read more about the 2026 award winners and finalists.](#)

Our sincere thanks also go to our generous awards sponsors, with special thanks to:

- Bluebird Care, sponsor of our Drinks Reception
- Ayrshire Care Solutions, sponsor of the Table Wine
- Radisson Blue , for donating the hotel stay raffle prize

The conference and awards showcased the very best of the sector, reinforcing the message at the heart of this year's theme: care creates trust, connection, opportunity and positive futures for us all.



GENEROUS DONATIONS KEEPS CARE HOME STAFF AND RESIDENTS COOL THIS SUMMER



Pictured: Lee Redhead from United Infrastructure and Sophie from SSEN with some of the dedicated staff team at Mull Hall Care Home with their new donated air-cooling unit

Residents and staff at care homes across Easter Ross and Ross-shire are set to benefit from improved comfort during the warmer summer months, thanks to a generous donation from Alness-based United Infrastructure and SSEN, who have donated four air-cooling units to care homes in the region.

The donation, coordinated by Scottish Care & United Infrastructure, will benefit the dedicated staff who work within the care homes by helping to keep them cool, while also supporting residents to remain comfortable during warm weather.



The units have gone to four care homes in the area: Mull Hall Care Home in Invergordon, Strathallan House in Strathpeffer, Oversteps Care Home in Dornoch, and Fairburn House near Muir of Ord.

Scottish Care worked with United Infrastructure to identify care homes that would benefit from the units and coordinate their delivery. Laura Dobinson from Scottish Care said, *"I am delighted to have helped facilitate this generous donation. When United Infrastructure got in touch to say they wanted to donate the units, I knew straight away that they would provide much-needed comfort for both staff and residents. Care homes are naturally warm environments, and during periods of hot weather it can be particularly challenging for staff to stay cool while continuing to provide high-quality care."*



Lorna MacDonald, Care Home Manager at Mull Hall, said, *"As temperatures continue to rise during the summer, maintaining a comfortable environment for those who live and work in our home becomes even more important. The air-cooling unit will be a fantastic addition and will make a noticeable difference to daily life. We are extremely grateful to United Infrastructure for thinking of our residents and staff in such a meaningful way."*

The idea to donate the units came from Lee Redhead, General Foreman at United Infrastructure. Lee and his colleague, also called Lee, volunteered part of their working day to deliver and set up the units, ensuring the care homes could begin using them straight away.

Lisa Robb, Social Value Manager at United Infrastructure, said, *"People who live and work in local care homes are a huge part of our communities, so being able to support them in a practical and meaningful way, as part of our commitment to social value locally, is wonderful. Going out to the care homes during the deliveries was really special. Seeing the instant relief for the staff and their delight at being able to cool down during the hot weather showed us that this donation will make a real difference."*



SAVE THE DATE

CARE HOME CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION 2026

Friday 13 November 2026 | Hilton, Glasgow

HEARING PASSPORTS: GIVING RESIDENTS A STRONGER VOICE IN PERSON-CENTRED CARE

As part of a consolidation placement at Chamberlain Nursing Home, a student nurse Mollie Grieve led the development of Hearing Passports for residents living with hearing loss, supporting a more person-centred approach to communication and care

Supporting communication is fundamental to delivering high-quality, person-centred care. During my consolidation placement at Chamberlain Nursing Home, I had the opportunity to lead the introduction of **Hearing Passports** for residents living with hearing loss. This initiative aims to ensure that residents' individual communication needs, preferences and experiences are recognised and reflected in everyday care.

Alongside this work, the home has also introduced the **Sensory Dignity and Audit Tool**, which will be completed annually to assess how effectively the environment promotes sensory comfort, accessibility and wellbeing for residents.

Listening to Individual Experiences

One of the most valuable aspects of developing the Hearing Passports was the opportunity to spend time with residents and learn about their personal experiences of hearing loss. Through one-to-one conversations and questionnaires, it quickly became clear that no two experiences were the same.

Residents shared a wide range of perspectives on how hearing loss has affected their communication, relationships, confidence and daily lives. Many described challenges that may not routinely be explored during standard assessments, highlighting the importance of giving people the opportunity to tell their own stories.

These conversations reinforced the importance of truly person-centred care. By understanding the lived experience behind a hearing impairment, staff can adapt their communication approaches and provide more meaningful support tailored to the individual.

Mollie commented *"Undertaking a placement in a care home has really opened my eyes to the importance of being patient and kind, and it's taught me a lot about how to connect with people and appreciate their stories."*

Learning Through Reflection

As with any quality improvement initiative, the process offered valuable learning opportunities.

One question in the original questionnaire asked residents, *"What does your hearing loss mean to you?"* Many found this wording difficult to interpret and responded simply by explaining that they could not hear as well as they once could.

After reflecting on these responses, the question was rephrased to *"What does hearing loss mean for you?"* This small change had a significant impact. Residents began sharing much richer accounts of how hearing loss had influenced their education, social interactions, confidence and day-to-day experiences.

The experience highlighted how thoughtful communication and careful wording can help create deeper, more meaningful conversations.

Residents' Voices

The Hearing Passport project provided residents with a platform to express their views in their own words.

One resident reflected on the ease of discussing their hearing loss:

"Yes, it's very easy because you have to love me as I am."

Another resident emphasised that hearing impairment does not define who they are:

"I don't feel like I have hearing loss. I can still hear; I just have hearing aids to help me hear."

Others spoke openly about the challenges that



hearing loss can present:

“It means a great deal to me because I feel like everyone is talking all the time and I don’t know what they are saying to me.”

And:

“Sometimes it annoys me, as I used to learn French and German and I feel like I missed out on a lot of what I could have learned.”

These reflections underline the emotional, social and practical impact that hearing loss can have, and the importance of understanding each individual’s unique perspective.

What Is a Hearing Passport?

A Hearing Passport is a concise, person-centred document that records key information about a resident’s hearing needs, communication preferences and support requirements.

Created collaboratively with each resident, the passport includes information such as:

- How the individual describes their hearing loss.
- When they first noticed hearing difficulties.
- What hearing loss means to them personally.
- Whether they feel comfortable discussing their hearing loss with others.
- Any significant experiences related to their hearing.
- Their preferred communication methods.
- The best ways for staff, visitors and family members to share information effectively.

The passport acts as a quick-reference guide, enabling everyone involved in a resident’s care to communicate in ways that promote understanding, dignity and inclusion.

Why Hearing Passports Matter

Effective communication is essential to wellbeing, independence and quality of life. When communication needs are not fully understood, residents may experience frustration, isolation or reduced confidence in expressing their wishes.

Hearing Passports support a truly person-led approach by ensuring that residents themselves decide what information is shared and how they would like others to communicate with them.

For staff, the passports provide practical guidance that can improve everyday interactions, reduce misunderstandings and strengthen therapeutic relationships. Ultimately, they help ensure that communication is not viewed as a one-size-fits-all process, but as an individualised aspect of care.

Looking Ahead

The introduction of Hearing Passports is the beginning of an ongoing commitment to enhancing communication support within the home. Future developments include:

- Ensuring all staff are familiar with residents’ Hearing Passports.
- Making passports available electronically for easier access.
- Integrating information from passports into individual care plans.
- Encouraging continued involvement from residents and families.
- Regularly reviewing and updating passport information.
- Working collaboratively with audiology services where appropriate to ensure residents receive the support they need.

Conclusion

The Hearing Passport initiative has demonstrated the value of taking time to listen to residents and understand their individual experiences. By capturing personal communication preferences and acknowledging the wider impact of hearing loss, care staff can deliver more responsive, compassionate and person-centred support.

Most importantly, the project has shown that when residents are given the opportunity to share their stories, their voices can help shape better care for everyone.

CHANGING THE PUBLIC STORY ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SUPPORT IN SCOTLAND



Reframing Public Perceptions of Social Care

Advancing the vision for adult social care and support in Scotland

How we talk about adult social care and support matters. The stories people hear shape what they understand social care to be, who they think it is for, and whether they see it as something that benefits society as a whole or just a few individuals. The Reframing Public Perceptions of Adult Social Care in Scotland project, led by the University of Stirling, has spent 18 months reviewing evidence, engaging stakeholders, and roadtesting ideas to improve public understanding.

This project began with a simple but important question raised by Scottish Care: how can we build greater public understanding of the value of adult social care and support in Scotland? Scottish Care helped secure the initial funding through IMPACT and has remained a founding member of the project's core group, now working alongside 40 partners from across the sector to explore how we can tell a fuller and more effective story about social care and support.

Too often, public discussion focuses on crisis, workforce shortages and pressure on services. While these challenges are real, research suggests that focusing exclusively on problems alone can make it harder for people to see the wider contribution social care support makes to our communities and everyday lives.

Our work suggests that people respond more positively when social care and support is described as something that helps people live well, maintain relationships, participate in communities, and navigate life's changes. Messages grounded in shared values such as fairness, dignity and interdependence seem to create stronger public understanding and engagement. Our aim is that this work will increase the importance that people place on adult social care in Scotland, and in turn increase the demand for



politicians to improve how adult social care works - for everyone.

The project has now released a series of practical guides to support organisations, practitioners, advocates and people with lived experience to strengthen how they communicate about social care and support and its role in Scotland. The guidance explores:

- How to clarify the story you want to tell
- How to build stronger arguments for change
- How to deliver, test and learn from communications

At a time when public conversations are often dominated by crisis and pressure, the guides aim to support a stronger shared public story about social care and support in Scotland.

The resources are available at: reframingcare.stir.ac.uk.

Jennifer Wallace and Dr Richard Brunner, University of Stirling





MORAY
MANAGEMENT

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Suitable for support workers and care practitioners

Typical completion time: 3 to 9 months

£600

SVQ LEVEL 3

Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7

Suitable for experienced practitioners and senior carers

Typical completion time: 6 to 12 months

£1,000

SVQ LEVEL 4/CSLM

Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 9/10

Suitable for managers, deputy managers and team leaders

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CARE INSPECTORATE



Maureen Cossar
Senior Improvement Adviser
Health and Social Care Improvement Team
Care Inspectorate



To understand what staff wanted, we ran an online survey with 145 responses and held workshops with frontline staff from care homes, day care and care at home services. We also consulted our advisory group, including members of Scottish Care.

Our new dementia resources platform is giving carers practical support

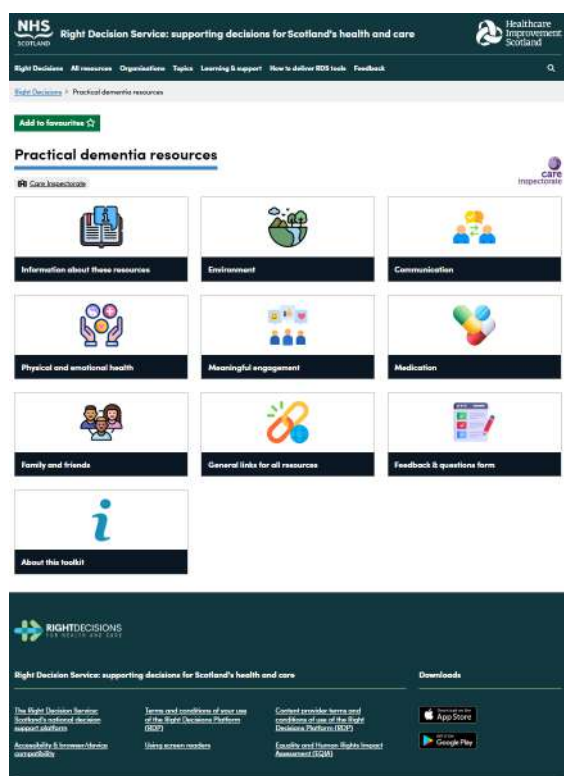
I had the privilege of updating Scottish Care members in your winter bulletin on the great progress we were making with our [Practical Dementia Resources project](#). Now, I'm delighted to share with you that our website and app are now live.

This feedback shaped the platform, hosted on NHS Scotland's Right Decision Service. It offers more than 30 resources in a range of formats, including text, videos, animations and audio clips of good practice stories from frontline staff and people with lived experience.

I'm sure many of the resources will be helpful to readers of Scottish Care's Bulletin. One that could be of particular interest is a woman who shares her story about being unsure whether sending her husband to a care home was the right thing to do. However, she soon found out that the care home provided her husband with unconditional friendship, where he was surrounded by similar people who had lost a sense of belonging.

Another video of interest is of Caroline and her mother, Heather. The two share a heartwarming conversation about the brilliant benefits and their enjoyment of meeting centres, such as Dementia Café, especially when children visit and games are played

I must stress though that the tools on the website and app are not a replacement for training; they are designed to be an accessible, additional resource for peer-to-peer learning. We're confident that this will be a valuable resource to those involved in care, especially given that the latest figures show that dementia affects around 90,000 people in Scotland. Additionally, data



from our 2024 care home annual returns show that 81% of residents are either diagnosed with dementia or are suspected of having the disease.

These figures are even more striking when you consider how many carers support people at home. What is clear is that they need practical support that is easy to access and does not take up valuable time.

We are proud of the launch, but this is only the beginning. We want to grow our collection of stories

and practical tools that can make a real difference to the care of people with dementia. We would welcome more contributions from Scottish Care members with useful tools, checklists or stories to share.

Maureen Cossar is a senior improvement adviser at the Care Inspectorate's Health and Social Care Improvement Team. She, along with David Marshall, senior improvement adviser for medicine and Lynn White, improvement support officer, is responsible for delivering the Practical Dementia Resources project.

Calling all Scottish Care Members

Has your organisation's contact details changed?

Let us know at:



comms@scottishcare.org



THE 4 BIGGEST IMMIGRATION RISKS FOR THE CARE SECTOR



In 2025, the Home Office revoked more than 3,000 sponsor licences and while obtaining a breakdown of the affected sectors is difficult it is clear to immigration lawyers that care companies are most at risk from the recent increase in compliance actions.

In the last 12 months we've seen:

- A care home group lose its sponsor licence because of an innocent error by a member of staff. The visa application itself was refused but even though the mistake did not lead to a visa being issued, it was sufficient for the Home Office to revoke a licence.
- The Home Office incorrectly assessing that a worker had been underpaid and revoking the company's licence due to confusion about a worker's start date.
- Multiple companies face stressful requests for additional information from the Home Office because HMRC data did not match what the Home Office expected a worker to be paid. In many cases this was due to a period of unpaid leave or maternity leave not being reported to the Home Office.
- Routine requests for certificates of sponsorship being delayed as the Home Office seek additional information to ensure roles are genuine and required in the business.

Across these compliance cases, we've noticed common themes, and the 4 highest risk areas are:

1. Variable shift patterns/Underpayments

Many workers in the sector have variable shift patterns, and it is not uncommon for their hours to vary from week to week. The Home Office guidance allows for an average figure to be entered on the Certificate of Sponsorship but in practice this presents a challenge as it means that salaries can vary from month to month

creating the impression of underpayments. The Home Office now assess salaries over a short period and it is important to make sure the correct working pattern is reported to them.

2. Right to Work checks

An area of the focus for the Home Office is ensuring that businesses are taking appropriate steps to prevent illegal working. This means following the Home Office guidance on how to carry out right to work checks, and even in cases where no illegal working has been found we have seen the Home Office take enforcement action because the checking process is flawed.

3. Records not being updated/Changes in role

When a member of staff is performing well, they will commonly be given additional duties or responsibilities but this is a significant risk in immigration terms. When a person's role changes, even slightly, the business must consider if their job category, or SOC code, will change. A common example of this is the move from Care Worker to Senior Care Worker.

If the SOC code will change, a new Certificate of Sponsorship and visa application are needed before the person takes up their role.

4. Breaches by non-sponsored workers

It is common for businesses to employ students, or people sponsored by another business, who are restricted to 20 hours work per week. However, even working a single hour more than this is illegal work and can lead to a fine, and sponsor licence enforcement action.

When we audit care businesses this is an area we focus on as it is one where an accidental breach can easily occur. For example, an employee calls in sick at the last minute and a business need someone to fill the shift to ensure adequate care is available. In these circumstances, a manager can easily forget to check someone's previous hours and give the shift to someone who cannot legally fill it.



What should businesses be doing?

For any sponsor licence holder, staying on top of compliance is vital but with the care sector under increasing scrutiny it is even more important for care businesses.

A business should not wait to identify an issue and should carry out their own audits regularly. This type of proactive compliance is also beneficial if you do identify an issue as it can form the basis of submissions to the Home Office to help you keep your licence.

TO ABSENT FRIENDS FESTIVAL 2026



People who have died remain a part of our lives – their stories are our stories, yet many traditions relating to the expression of loss and remembrance have faded over time.

To Absent Friends (1-7 November) is an annual event that gives people across Scotland an excuse to remember, to tell stories, to celebrate and to reminisce about people we love who have died. *To Absent Friends, a People's Festival of Storytelling and Remembrance* is an opportunity to revive lost traditions and create new ones.

Organisations and community groups across Scotland are encouraged to use the festival as an opportunity to remember people in the ways that are most meaningful for them. In previous years, community groups and organisations have hosted events of all kinds, including concerts, poetry nights, craft activities, guided walks, exhibitions, community bonfires, gardening activities, cafes of reminiscence, film screenings, activities for families and much more. Events can be big or small, in person or online. Some events remember a community member who died recently, and some are occasions for people to come together in honour of people who have died, either recently or long ago.

The festival was initiated by Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief, but groups don't need permission to take part in *To Absent Friends*. GLGDGG have created



Pictured: Glendale Women's Café To Absent Friends 2024 activity

some resources, event guides, and templates that anyone can use for hosting a *To Absent Friends* activity of their own. If you'd like to get involved, check out the information and resources here: <https://www.toabsentfriends.org.uk/content/hold-an-event/>

GLGDGG are also running a Small Grants Scheme to support participation in *To Absent Friends*. Apply for up to £275 to help with your event by 2 September 2026. Find out more and apply here: <https://www.toabsentfriends.org.uk/content/small-grants-2026/>

If you're interested in taking part but not sure where to start, join GLGDGG on 19th August at 12 noon for an informal online gathering to find out more about the festival and how to get involved. It is a chance to meet people who have been involved in the festival before, bounce ideas off each other and learn more about the small grants scheme. Email samara@palliativecarescotland.org.uk to reserve a place.

To Absent Friends website: <https://www.toabsentfriends.org.uk/>

SCOTTISH PARTNERSHIP FOR PALLIATIVE CARE



Thank you to the Scottish Care Team for the space for me to write about the Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care (SPPC). I'd like to tell you a bit about our work including some stuff which I hope may be of interest or use to you. At SPPC we know that care homes and care at home teams are a vital part of palliative care in Scotland.

At SPPC we are striving to improve how people living in Scotland experience living with a life shortening condition, dying and bereavement. We are a membership organisation, and our 100-plus members are all organisation involved in providing or improving palliative care. This includes NHS Boards, all IJBs, Local Authorities, all the hospices, health and bereavement charities, and some professional associations. Scottish Care is a member of SPPC and Donald Macaskill sits on our board. We have a small friendly staff team of 7.

Helping to improve services

As you know many different people and organisations are involved in providing good care towards the end of life. At SPPC we provide a network which helps to keep people informed and connected. We produce a **free monthly email bulletin** of policy, practice, events and other news relevant to palliative care in Scotland. You can sign up [here](#). We also facilitate networks for those with specific interests. Network members meet every few months to hear about and share good practice, share issues/concerns and provide mutual support. The **Community Palliative Care Network** welcomes people involved in social care as well as GPs, District Nurses and GPs. Please drop [us an email](#) if you think you'd like to try the network



and decide if it might be useful for you. We also run networks for Third Sector organisations (which has a focus on promoting palliative care with policy and decision makers). The Scottish Network for Acute Palliative Care links hospital palliative care teams. The Specialist Palliative Care Network does what it says on the tin - bringing together specialists (whether nurses, doctors, pharmacists, social workers, spiritual care or bereavement workers).

Our networks inform the work we do to raise the profile of palliative care with national and local decision-makers. We argue the case that palliative care must be a high priority. How Scotland supports people through the end of life is a true litmus test of our values as a nation and our determination to put those values into action.

SPPC runs an **Annual Conference** which gives people from different settings across Scotland a chance to get together and to hear about and discuss hot topics. We also provide space at conference for people to share their own work with others through a Poster Exhibition (you can see last year's posters [here](#)). If you have some work which might be of interest to others then maybe you'd like to share it at this year's conference (details of how [here](#)). We've already had a couple of posters from care homes, which is great!

Working with the public

SPPC is also working to make Scotland a place where



everyone knows how to help when someone is living with a life shortening condition, dying or grieving. We provide useful information and signpost to resources. We also developed and support *End of Life Aid Skills for Everyone* a course for the public run by volunteer facilitators. More about our work with the public can be found [here](#).

Bereavement

SPPC hosts the [Bereavement Charter for Adults and Children in Scotland](#). To support the use of the Charter we have developed [Bereavement Charter Marks](#) for Workplaces, Primary Schools and for Prisons. Some care homes have been awarded the Workplaces Charter Mark, and please get in touch if you might be interested. We are currently developing specific resources for care homes. We have also developed Bereavement Friendly Workplaces Toolkit (like all our resources it is freely available on our website).

In the first week of November each year SPPC runs the [To Absent Friends Festival](#) which supports communities and organisations of all kinds across Scotland to remember and tell stories of people who have died but who remain important. Over the years

many care homes have run small, simple yet beautiful and meaningful activities as part of the festival.

Thanks for reading! Get in touch if you would like to follow anything up.

Mark Hazelwood, Chief Executive, Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care

Office@palliativecarescotland.org.uk

<https://www.palliativecarescotland.org.uk/>

[https://www.goodlifedeathgrief.org.uk/=](https://www.goodlifedeathgrief.org.uk/)



ENERGY SUPPORT FOR SCOTTISH CARE MEMBERS

Scottish Care has introduced a new, bespoke partnership with Focus Energy Services to support members with energy and water costs.

We know that energy costs, contracts, and billing continue to be a real concern for many providers. The current energy climate remains challenging, and for some services it has become increasingly difficult to know whether contracts are right, bills are accurate, or when it is best to review arrangements.

Focus Energy Services offers independent advice, including reviews of current contracts, historic bill checks, procurement support, and ongoing contract and billing guidance - specifically tailored to the care sector.



This additional support is designed to help members navigate a challenging energy landscape. Members can contact Focus Energy Services directly at david@focusenergyservices.co.uk or on 01904 202294 / 07969 590083.

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For more information about our Commercial Partners, including contact details and latest offers for Scottish Care members, please visit the Scottish Care website - <https://scottishcare.org/our-commercial-partners/>

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