

MSPs are using Care Opinion to listen to constituents

At an event this week the Members of the Scottish Parliament have taken the opportunity to hear the views of their constituents on health and social care by signing up to Care Opinion. 69 MSPs are now receiving constituents' stories as soon as they are told. Care Opinion is an independent feedback website receiving over 2,500 stories a year about health and social care services in Scotland. People use Care Opinion's website to describe their experience of using health and social care services. Their feedback which is shared anonymously is read and moderated by Care Opinion and sent to staff providing that care. Staff can then reply to stories to let people know what will happen as a result of their feedback.

Nearly two-thirds of stories are entirely positive and praise staff, and all feedback is published on Care Opinion's award-winning website for anyone to read. Now that MSPs are signed up, they too will be able to be automatically alerted to a story told by their constituents.



The event was sponsored by Fulton MacGregor MSP in the context of the ongoing integration of health and social care in Scotland and to raise awareness of Care Opinion amongst MSPs. The social enterprise has been operating in Scotland for six years and was awarded a tender by the Scottish Government to provide their service to NHS Scotland for three years in 2015. In that time over 8,000 stories have been told.

Fulton MacGregor, MSP for Coatbridge and Chryston and sponsor of the three-day event said *"I think Care Opinion has made a huge impact on the health service here in Scotland, and I would like all colleagues to take advantage of it to understand what is happening in their communities and constituencies. Letting people talk honestly and anonymously about using services helps us continue to serve the public to the best of our ability, and I see Care Opinion as crucial to supporting the integration of health and social care."*

A member of staff using Care Opinion in the NHS said in a recent survey *"I think [using Care Opinion] makes health care providers more accountable because their responses to feedback are in the public domain. But it also means that lovely and heart-warming stories are shared*

and it gives people faith in the services.” Staff across Scotland reported that using Care Opinion improves morale and has changed the way they work day-to-day.

Care Opinion, an independent, not for profit organization, is hoping it will have the same impact on social care as it has had on the NHS. Gina Alexander, Director of Care Opinion Scotland said *“The NHS in Scotland has bravely embraced the use of independent online feedback, and we’re seeing positive signs that social care will do so too.”*

Any member of the public can tell their story or read experiences of their local health and social care services on www.careopinion.org.uk.

Ends

Notes to editors:

Care Opinion is an independent non-profit social enterprise working across the UK. Here are some stories that have been shared about health services in Scotland which you may find interesting:

This parent’s child could not be taken to the children’s ward because the lifts were broken, but the parent still wrote this in praise of the staff:

<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/opinions/331384>

This is a story about QEUH in Glasgow where a clinician responds to a story author about their grandmother’s negative experience going from the care home to hospital. Very relevant as health and social care are integrated:

<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/opinions/338178#339507>

This is a very recent story about a man in Lanarkshire with cancer demonstrating the NHS using Care Opinion to help him rapidly, and him demonstrating his gratitude:

<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/opinions/373490#374441>

This is an author reporting that a service has improved following his story about dirty toilets:

Original story: <https://www.careopinion.org.uk/opinions/337027>

Improvement story: <https://www.careopinion.org.uk/opinions/360510>

For further info contact:

Ben Simmons, Engagement and Support Officer

ben.simmons@careopinion.org.uk

