

## Changes

### Healthier Scotland Conversation

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Changes is a new collective advocacy group facilitated by Ceartas advocacy in East Dunbartonshire. The group aims to bring people together to have a say in what's happening in their local area. Members are keen to be involved in decision making, planning and consultation processes.

Members of Changes were keen to host their own consultation event as a means to reflect upon "what makes a good consultation" – members expressed frustration at "tick box" consultations where information is often inaccessible and full of jargon, feedback is not provided and there is no evidence of the decision makers listening to what they have to say.

The group decided to host a pilot event to provide them with some experience of the consultation process and they chose the Healthier Scotland initiative as a platform on which to do this.

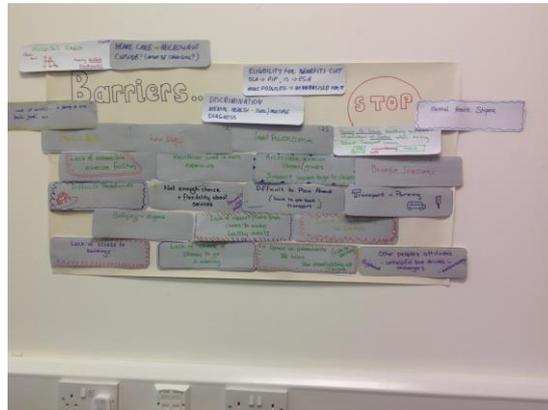
Changes members, along with support from Ceartas planned the event to ensure that it was as inclusive as possible. They decided to focus on 3 key areas of a Healthy Scotland to provide a focus to their event:

- Being treated fairly, with dignity and respect
- Being a part of your local community
- Support to make healthier choices.

Group activities were designed to encourage participation and discussion from the event and importantly to ensure that participants were encouraged to think of "solutions" and not just the "problems". The session started off with an opportunity to consider the barriers to the 3 key areas followed by discussion around ways to overcome these.



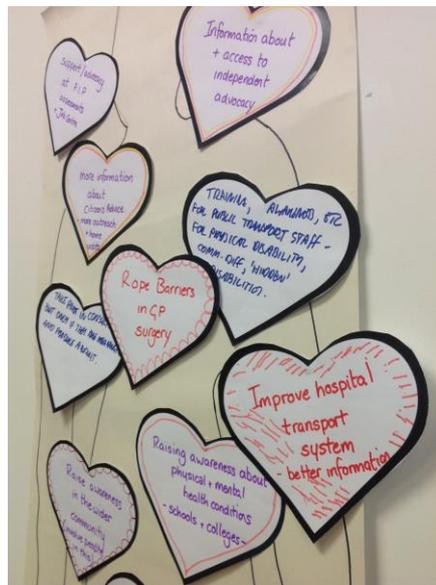
## Barriers



### Barriers identified for all three areas included:

- Lack of accessible transport
- Little flexibility in service provision – people have to “fit in” to services not the other way around
- Stigma and discrimination
- Lack of understanding of disability in the wider community
- Changes to the benefit system, lack of money.
- Lack of support to access community activities.
- No time for care staff to provide support to cook fresh, healthy meals
- Lack of privacy in GP surgeries at reception area.
- Cuts to services can lead to poor road/pavement surfaces; poor street lighting and lack of activities to participate in.

## Being treated fairly, with dignity and respect



### What needs to happen?

- Privacy in GP surgeries and health centres
- Inclusive consultation processes
- Awareness raising and training for service providers and the wider community and involve service users in the delivery of this.
- Increase awareness and access to independent advocacy
- Advocacy support at DWP assessments and appointments
- Improve hospital transport system – e.g. text messaging system

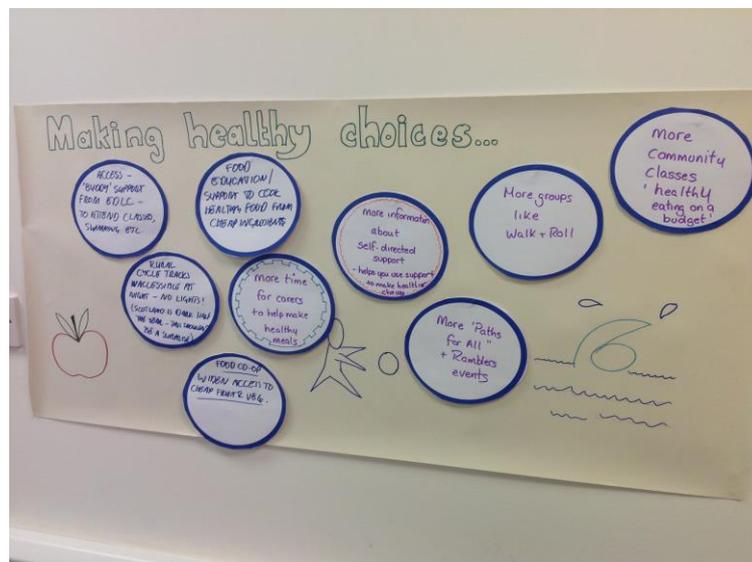
## Being a part of your local community



### What needs to happen?

- More information and support to access Self Directed Support
- Consult with people about activities offered locally
- Increase volunteer opportunities
- Creative support offered to access community facilities
- Wider range of community based/leisure activities

## Support to make healthier choices



### What needs to happen?

- Funding to Food Co-Ops to increase access to affordable fruit and veg
- Increase time given to carers to support people to make healthy meals
- Links between Food Banks and community groups to provide "healthy eating on a budget" groups
- More "Paths for All" walks and groups like "Walk and Roll"
- Leisure Trust could provide "buddies" to support people to attend classes
- Increase accessible cycle tracks in rural areas by improving lighting

### **What did participants say about the day?**

“Helpful and interesting”

“Good to hear other people’s experiences and views”

“Being involved in group discussions”

“Need to see the speaker’s face to know what is being said”

“Good to have a positive focus”

“Wall displays are good to help you think about what you have been talking about”

“Good time of day”

“Everyone took part”

“Would have been better if there had been more time, felt too rushed at times”

“I felt accepted”

“Met new people”

### **What happens next?**

- Changes group will post their feedback to Healthier Scotland website and social media
- Information will be posted on Ceartas website and social media
- Changes will consider feedback from Healthier Scotland initiative
- Changes will consider what actions they can take locally to address some of the issues raised from the session
- Changes members will also look at the feedback from the event and use this to help them improve their consultation process