ALLIANCE
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
ALLIANCE SCOTLAND
people at the centre

The ALLIANCE Concert For Caring

Person Centred Voices
Effecting Change - Improving Culture

Stories of Caring

A Concert for Caring Special

Royal Concert Hall Glasgow
September 10 2023

Contents

On 10 September 2023, the ALLIANCE hosted our Concert for Caring, as an opportunity to celebrate the immeasurable work of unpaid carers and the contribution of health and social care staff, as well as third-sector organisations that support people to lead fulfilling lives.

Following the success of two previous concerts in 2014 and 2019, the ALLIANCE brought together 1,750 people from across Scotland, providing a space for shared experiences and connections. This publication provides a glimpse into the lives of the people who attended, and their stories of love, caring and being cared for.

Sara Redmond: A Scotland that Cares

Sara Redmond
Chief Officer of Development
The ALLIANCE

The ALLIANCE's vision is for a Scotland where unpaid carers of all ages have a strong voice and enjoy their right to live well, as equal and active citizens, free from discrimination, with support and services that put them at the centre.

Caring is a central component of what it means to be human and we can all recognise the importance of the relationships in our lives to our health and wellbeing and this publication provides a spotlight on this.

Recently, the ALLIANCE has supported successful campaigns from our members which will strengthen carers' rights in law. A new UK-wide law now gives carers in employment the right to take five days of unpaid leave a year to fulfil their caring responsibilities, helping to balance work and unpaid care.

As part of the 'A Scotland that Cares' coalition, we have successfully campaigned for the Scottish Government to introduce a National Performance Framework Outcome on Care, which commits to measuring progress on how care and carers are valued. Following a long-running campaign, a right to short breaks for carers is included in the National Care Service Bill, which is making its way through the Scottish Parliament.

We know however that much more needs to be done for unpaid carers to have their rights met in practice. As a participant in Carers Trust Scotland's research put it, "unpaid carers are not unsung heroes. We are forgotten, neglected and burnt out."[i]. The research showed that only 61% of participants said they got the support they needed to be an unpaid carer, 52% said the amount of time they spend caring in the past 12 months has increased, and just 30% said Carers Allowance was enough to make a meaningful difference to them.[ii]

With research from the Coalition of Carers in Scotland showing that more than a quarter of funding allocated to local authorities to support unpaid carers under the Carers Act has been spent on other purposes[iii], it is clear that Scotland's decision makers must do more to make sure unpaid carers feel supported and equally valued in practice. The ALLIANCE and our members are determined to work together to make this vision a reality.

> **The concert was a joyful celebration of love and of the care we provide to each other through good and through hard times.**

[i] Summary: The Voices and Experiences of Unpaid Adult Carers from across Scotland – Carers Trust Scotland (September 2023). Available at https://carers.org/downloads/adult-carer-survey-report-2023—scotland-summary-report.pdf

[ii] As above.

[iii] Millions meant for carers misspent – healthandcare.scot (March 2024). Available at https://healthandcare.scot/stories/3773/unpaid-carers-funding-support-scotland

Irene Oldfather: Memories are made of this

Irene Oldfather
Director of Strategic Partnerships, External Affairs and Outreach
The ALLIANCE

As Chair of the Organising Committee for the now three ALLIANCE Concert for Caring celebrations, it has been an honour to support the team led by our National Lead Tommy Whitelaw, in putting together such a night to remember.

If you have attended any, or all, of our three concerts, you will know that they are more than an evening out – they are about bringing friends and families together, and celebrating those amazing people across our communities who care for others. They are our way of saying thank you. The stories in this publication are at the heart of the Concert ethos: they are the stories of ordinary people who do extraordinary things.

The idea of a Concert for Caring came from Tommy himself, whose backstory of years in the music industry, working across the world with well-known artists, uniquely placed him to bring together the two big stories of his life – his love of music, and his campaign to give visibility to those who care and are cared for, through the love story of caring for his mum, Joan Whitelaw.

So, from a place of deep understanding, these Concerts for Caring allow us all to come together to celebrate our own love stories, to reminisce and remember those with us and those who have passed on. And, to be able to create new memories as those in our publication have done, but also to shine a light on some great examples of how the third sector is uniquely placed to support some of our most valued citizens to live full, inclusive, and independent lives.

Music is a medium which can stir emotions like no other, and it allows us to create and evoke lasting memories. One of my favourite moments from our recent concert was when Calum Beattie singled out his 90-year-old gran from the audience to wish her a happy birthday. That was a night that they will both remember forever – another love story.

So can I end with a huge thank you to all of you who came out on the night and supported us, to Mark Mackie of Regular music for his unswerving help, to our artists and compares, to our amazing ALLIANCE support team, and finally to our great unsung heroes across Scotland who get up every day and selflessly give of themselves to benefit all of us. Thank you!

Tommy Whitelaw: How music connects us

I looked after my Mum for five years. My heart was breaking. I was struggling, and most days I really didn't know what I was doing... Just as we thought we'd figured a way of getting through things - a routine - dementia would change everything again.

I used to sing Perry Como songs to Mum...I used to sing 'And I love you...' and my Mum would go '...so', and her eyes would light up with so much life and joy

Tommy, Son.

Image by Colin Gray.
Words by Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care. From the exhibition "It Takes a Village".

Growing up like most in Glasgow, New Year's parties at home ended with songs. I used to watch and listen to my dad sing songs from Perry Como to Frank Sinatra, to Roberta Flack. Anytime he sung a love song, no matter how crowded a room, his eyes fixed solely on my mum. Their eyes met with a love for each other I'm so glad I was able to witness. Parties when I was young always finished with a song.

Many years later I worked in music, touring with artists and bands across the world. After 25 years of touring, I returned to Glasgow for a short break – at first for myself, then unexpectedly to care for my late mum Joan, who lived the last years of her life with dementia. I became a carer overnight.

During one of our darkest days, when mum was scared, I felt hopeless, and we both felt alone, by accident – and wishing my dad was here to help us – I sang to my mum: a Perry Como song called 'For the Good Times'. My mum's eyes lit up, and I knew in my heart that she was remembering my dad, and suddenly we both felt less alone, less scared and I felt less hopeless. From then onwards, every time either of us was scared I would sing one of the songs my dad used to sing.

Since my mum's passing, as part of my role as the National Lead for Person Centred Voices at the ALLIANCE, I've been on a tour across the UK to speak with health and social care staff and students, public sector workers, managers, and government officials to advocate for kindness and compassion in care. Every talk on that tour has ended with a song because music has an incredible power to connects us, lift us, and remind us of the love stories in our lives.

The first concert for caring was held in 2014 and the second in 2019. This publication is inspired by our 3rd concert, which was held on 10 September 2023 at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall to say thank you to people from all across Scotland. It's not often that we get a chance to come together, recognise and celebrate everyone who provides care in our society for the incredible work they do every day, whether it's unpaid carers, health and social care professionals, or third sector organisations that support many people to live well. It was a night of sharing the stories and songs of love, kindness and care that connect us all.

With thanks to Regular Music, Calum Beattie, Altered Images, Des Clarke, ALLIANCE colleagues, our partners, those from across Scotland for caring, the 1,750 people who joined us on the night and to those sharing their stories in this publication.

What might be the song that tells your story?

Tommy Whitelaw
National Lead, Person Centred Voices
The ALLIANCE

You can watch an overview of the concert here:

Visibility Scotland: Connecting our communities

Emma Scott
Head of Operations
Visibility Scotland

Visibility Scotland had the honour of being a key partner of the Concert for Caring 2023.

Visibility Scotland is a national sight loss charity. This opportunity to work in partnership with Tommy and the ALLIANCE was a fantastic platform to showcase our services, but also to raise awareness of sight loss, accessibility and inclusion.

Visibility Scotland's mission is to break down and challenge discrimination or social stigma barriers to create an equal and accessible Scotland. We want to empower blind and visually impaired people to influence positive change, and by working with the ALLIANCE on the Concert for Caring, we were able to do that.

Being involved in the Concert excited us for many reasons, most of all that we could showcase what every event should provide; an accessible space with inclusive communications, such as Sighted Assistance, Audio Directions, BSL interpreters and electronic notetakers. Visibility Scotland is passionate that accessibility considerations should not be an afterthought but built into the planning of every event.

Firstly, it was important for us to ensure that the concert venue was accessible for those with sight loss. We conducted an environmental audit, ensuring that blind and visually impaired audience members would be able to move safely around the venue, but also to have an empowering experience. We wanted this to be the most accessible concert it could be!

We created an audio-led video, describing the main routes into the Concert Hall from the surrounding streets. The video depicted a visually impaired person arriving at the venue, making their way through the Concert Hall and accessing their seat. This helped our visually impaired guests feel prepared for the event.

Visibility Scotland worked with the staff team at the venue to offer training in sighted guiding. This was to ensure that anyone with a visual impairment arriving at the Concert for Caring would be greeted by a member of staff and offered a guide to their seat. Our intervention helped the staff team feel more confident about supporting visually impaired people on the night.

Another of Visibility Scotland's key principles is around inclusive communication. We want everyone to be able to access information in a format that meets their needs. In addition to having BSL interpreters, electronic notetakers, and Sighted Guides, we worked with colleagues from the Scottish Braille Press, to ensure that the bar menus and drinks tokens were printed with Braille. That is, everyone attending the Concert received drinks tokens in Braille; these were not reserved only for those with visual impairments. This way the Concert's audience were reminded of simple adjustments that can make all the difference to a person with sight loss.

On the night of the Concert, our CEO Laura Walker took the audience on a journey, by asking those who could, to close their eyes and focus on the senses of hearing, taste and touch. Laura asked the audience to think back to when they were preparing to attend the concert; how would they select their outfit? How would they travel to the venue and navigate crowds without their sight? The audience were asked to consider the challenges they might face, raising awareness of the environment, as experienced by a person with sight loss is an inaccessible, sometimes frightening place.

Visibility Scotland is incredibly lucky to have a several visually impaired staff and volunteers who are the best ambassadors for our charity. With these staff in attendance, we could shout about our service provision and leave people inspired by our work.

The ultimate aim of the Concert however was to ensure that unpaid carers and their families had an amazing night out! We were honoured to be able to host so many of our service users and their carers on the night. For some, it was the first, large scale concert they had been to and there was a lot of excitement in the build up to the day! On the night, our staff team, along with colleagues from the ALLIANCE and venue staff were on hand to make sure everyone had an accessible and inclusive evening.

On reflection, the Concert for Caring 2023 achieved so much; for us as a charity, it gave us a wider reach into communities who perhaps wouldn't be aware of our work. It gave us a platform to showcase the importance of accessibility and inclusion and some of the reasonable adjustments that can be made to empower people with sensory loss, but above all, it gave our service users and their unpaid carers some respite and a really good night out!

I want to thank Tommy and all the team at the ALLIANCE for trusting Visibility Scotland to be its key partner and for all their support. Shall we do it again?

> **Massive thank you for the invites to the concert. We both absolutely loved it. What a night! Just amazing! It was our first time at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall – very impressed!**

Olivia Friend-Spencer: The power of listening

Olivia Friend-Spencer
Development Officer – Membership and Storytelling
The ALLIANCE

> **Stories are the most important thing in the world. Without stories, we wouldn't be human beings at all.**
>
> – Philip Pullman

The beauty and power that was captured by the Concert for Caring is the ability to bring together the art of music and storytelling. At the very core of human connection, I believe, is the sharing of stories, and how they allow us to relate to and care for the experience of others. Music lets us leverage that experience, bringing people together through song, through dance, and through forging new memories of togetherness.

The concept behind the Concert was to bring together carers from across Scotland, and to provide the opportunity to connect. I hope this collection of stories shows why this is so important for carers and lifts the lid on what goes on behind closed doors. Whilst the stories are inspiring, filled with love and connection, they also highlight the responsibility and burden that many carers feel. Tommy gave these carers a 'night off', where they enjoy themselves with no strings attached – not to forget about their care responsibilities, but to be proud of them, and be surrounded by others who understand, who will listen to their stories, and mirror their strength.

This collection of stories aims to showcase this, through highlighting the experiences of people in Scotland who care: unpaid carers, young carers, people who receive care, and those working in the caring profession. Whilst each story is unique, there is an indistinguishable sense of shared experience, of responsibility tempered with love. To me, that is what caring truly is, and listening to those who experience it is the only way to understand and appreciate what that means.

In creating this collection, I had the privilege of listening to their stories, and being welcomed into their intimate corner of the world. I felt firsthand the tenacity of these carers, and instantly understood the need to share their experiences – a true testament to the transformative power of listening.

Humans of Scotland aims to showcase a snapshot of the lives and varied experiences of people living with long term conditions, disabilities, unpaid carers, and people working in health and social care across Scotland.

If you enjoyed these stories, you might enjoy others that Humans of Scotland has released. Please take a look on our website.

Zoe's story

> **There are times when it can be overwhelming.**

Some people have said I'm not like a normal teenager but I've never known anything different. My mum was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis when I was seven and I've been helping to look after her ever since. I'm 19 now and studying for a degree, I want to be a learning disability nurse.

I help out a lot around the house, cooking dinner, and helping Mum with whatever she needs at home. It can be challenging at times. When you make new friends, they will often say 'We are going out, are you coming with us?' But I can't do that. I have to check with my mum and make sure she is okay and whether or not she needs me for anything. She would always want me to go out and enjoy myself and I know most of the time she would be fine but I'm not comfortable unless I check first. I just need to make sure anything she needs is taken care of before I go anywhere. It gives me peace of mind and means I can enjoy myself rather than worrying about her.

There are times when it can be overwhelming. There is obviously an emotional side to it and I do have anxiety. But a lot of young people don't realise there is help available. I applied for a Young Carer Grant and I was eligible for three payments from the age of 16 to 18. The money made a big difference. Last year, I was able to buy a car and it's made life easier, being able to get out and about. I can take my Mum out or pick up shopping. The money was obviously really helpful but it was really good to just be recognised, and realise that you are doing something which has a real value.

Bonnie's story

For young carers, they've got all those other responsibilities as well.

My role is to kind of become a friend to young carers. The way I see it is that I have to be a friend that they can trust and share with, but with the boundary of if you tell me something that could put you in danger, it's my responsibility to then take that further. I work with a lot of different young people, so a lot of different issues come up, and for me, it's about being non judgmental and open. That's the way I go about it, because I never liked feeling judged when I was younger. It felt like a lot of people didn't understand me.

I don't want children to come in and feel that they have to speak about how they're feeling. But if you want to, it's an open space to do so. I very much like to do that individually. However, when you're in my group or when I facilitate a group, I want you to come in and just be able to be yourself.

I feel like that is such an important lesson to share with young carers, especially where, you know, for most kids their life is like hanging out with their pals and going to school. But for young carers, they've got all those other responsibilities as well.

When I was younger, I looked up to my elders a lot because I was dealing with things that my friends and my peers didn't know about. At that point my mum was in a wheelchair due to her spinal issue, but she was on crutches most of my childhood. To this day, she still struggles with mobility issues due to her spinal nerve damage. But when you're dealing with that as a young person, and you're having to help them bathe or change their clothes or cook dinner, it can be hard to relate to your peers. Your friends who aren't doing that don't understand what that's like. I remember needing to ask for advice about using a washing machine, and I couldn't go to my friends about that. But I would look to my elders to be like, oh my mom's got this illness, so you know how this works, or where can I find this? I definitely looked up to those people who have the answers because I didn't, and my friends certainly did not have them. And that's exactly who I want to be for the young carers in my group.

Sometimes I'm not feeling the best and the kids always support me. They'll get me down the sofa, and ask me how I'm feeling, so I tell them, and they give me hugs. It's just life's big support bubble and the kids' are a part of that- they are looking for support and friendship. That's it. They don't really ask for much more.

I didn't realise how much that space and support meant to them. The first time I realized my god, this job actually does mean a lot, was when a girl gave me a pin that said "one friend can change your life" on it. And I wear it every day, my wee badge. I don't think she realises how much that meant to me.

They influence my life every single day – they will come to me with new music everyday, and it become a part of my daily routine to listen to songs they're listening to. When we are at the centre, I will get the speaker out and it is like a race of who can ask me for their song first. We'll just start a big queue of music on the playlist and they just add their songs. At the moment, Mamma Mia is the biggest hit of the week! We'll run around the rooms singing, dancing, which is really fun for everybody, and it's a way of bonding too. Kids love to talk about music that they found and it's always it's always a top priority for us, as it connects us together.

Barry's story

Each day I ask "what matters to you today?" and I'll try my best to help the patient to achieve this.

I'd never really been to hospital before until my Nan took unwell and was admitted. I was visiting her, and I remember she was a bit unsure, and didn't like being around different patients. She was suffering with delirium and was seeing a cat under her bed and things, and I remember thinking "I wonder if I could get involved in this and try and help people that are feeling the same way as her." I wanted to try and make a difference if I could.

That was the catalyst for me looking into healthcare. When I first started, I was surprised how busy it was as I hadn't really been in this environment before. The nurse call buzzers were going off and I was trying to get to the buzzer as soon as it was being pressed. It really is a physically tough job being on the wards.

I then started noticing the differences I was beginning to make. In the afternoons visitors would arrive to visit patients, and our job was a little less task oriented. I noticed some patients did not have anyone visiting and I would initially try to pop into the rooms of those who didn't and just try to break up their day and make them smile. I knew a wee bit of magic and thought it might be a good ice breaker and hopefully brighten their day. I really got such a good reaction to the magic and was even told "oh, it really made a big difference to me with you coming in." That really impacted on me wanting to help the quality of their stay.

I started showing the patients in the side rooms some of my tricks, and then staff started asking "can we see?". The staff would encourage me to go and show patients in the bays. It just ended up kind of getting arms and legs! I remember thinking "the patients are reacting to this!". They would even ask me to show their family members, grandkids, and so on.

Unfortunately, some of the wards do not have any TVs, and it can be a long day without home comforts, and that can be a strain for the patients. I was just trying to pick people up, giving them a break from the four walls and the medical terms.

Because of the reaction I had, I started learning a wee bit more magic, as it was helping break up the patient's day. From that, I reached out to a local professional magician, who sat with me and then even invited me into the Magic Circle and now it's a bit of a passion.

I also play music for patients, but only if they are happy for it. When I first meet a patient,

I like to get to know them and what their interests and hobbies are. I feel music can assist patients in so many ways, for example if they get confused or delirious, we could play sentimental songs that may help ground them. I feel it really can help lift patients' morale, whether it be motivating, relaxing or even just for a bit of fun.

I always try to keep things light by asking "Do you want some tunes on? Who do you like listening to? Would you like to request anyone?".

One patient loved Donny Osmond, so we would play his songs to try and motivate her. During her physiotherapy she was learning to walk again, and at times her head was down affecting her posture. Due to the patient taking an eye to Donny throughout his career we had three different generations of Donny printed out and put up on the wall to help keep her head up, "eyes on Donny". It helped to focus on her technique, but it was also fun. I really feel it helped with her progress and mood.

Each day I ask, "what matters to you today?" and I'll try my best to help the patient achieve this. It can be something as simple as wanting a shower, to getting off the ward for a short time. We've even taken a patient off the ward to see their dog before. The idea is to try and assist the patient to getting towards that front door and back home as soon as their ready.

It always nice to involve family and to help give them the confidence that we are doing our best for their loved one. It's such a privilege to be on this journey with patients and to think you may have had a positive impact and memory at a difficult time.

I really love my job, though it doesn't feel like a job. I honestly feel honoured to assist where I can.

Ailish's story

You can't really have much self-pity because you need to have sympathy for others, not yourself.

I guess it's been my whole life. I remember when I was about five having to lift my dad's head and put it on a pillow because he was having a seizure. I was also looking after my Uncle, who was immobile, couldn't walk the length of his garden without help. So, I was helping him out because at the time my mum had had a partial amputation of her foot so she couldn't walk, she couldn't do anything really. He unfortunately passed away, and my gran and grandad become quite ill, and they couldn't do much for themselves. They couldn't leave the house really, so I was basically running up and down making sure they were ok and had everything they needed.

Now it's my dad. He's got a brain injury. He fell down a flight of stairs and hit his head off a brick wall and he's got a metal plate in his skull. He gets seizures but they are unpredictable, he can't pinpoint when they will happen, or what triggers them. It just happens. Just the other day I was looking at him and I froze. It comes on so quickly, you don't even know what is happening. It was scary. My mum was obviously in the kitchen and couldn't get through quick enough, so it was me who helped him. I had to sit and watch what happened next - I needed to monitor how long the seizures lasted. There is the pressure of like, well I'm not a doctor, so I don't always know what's the best thing to do.

There's quite a lot of pressure to put on yourself to always be doing better. But I do think it's quite a good thing, because you're always striving to be the best version of yourself. You can look back, but you can't really have much self -pity because you need to have sympathy for others, not yourself. That's what we do. We aren't allowed to have time. We're not allowed to look after ourselves as much as we do others.

One thing that people always forget is that being a young carer means that you bond more with your family because you're comfortable with them, and you spend so much time together. So, you have that extra bond that some kids might not have with their parents or family.

Audrey's story

If I can help one person, then that's great. My week is done, if I can do that.

When that advice phone goes and somebody looks for help, needs advice, or they're distraught because they've found out that they've just been diagnosed with an eye condition, the information line is there for me to listen.

Now I'm not a qualified counsellor, but living with sight loss for 26 years, totally blind, I know all the emotions. All the frustrations, the anger, the losing your patience, relationships, work, losing friendships, all that I have experienced. And I can empathise with people, and what I get back is that they appreciate speaking to somebody that really knows what it's like. If I can help one person, then that's great. My week is done, if I can do that.

I personally have never wanted my blindness to stop me from being me, because it's important that you still stay that same person. But when I lost my sight, I lost my job, I lost my driving licence, I couldn't do it, so everything just stopped. I was panicked. I was frightened about the future. But I have to thank my family for the love and support, and that is something that is so important to help you cope with anything.

I could not be the person I am without my husband. When I was expecting my second child, I was adamant that this baby had to know that his mum was going to fumble and do things a lot slower. I didn't want my husband, my mum, my sister, or anybody else to take the baby, change the nappy and do all that. The first night I came out of hospital, my baby was up three times, and I was feeding and changing

him for hours. I didn't know at the time, but my husband, he lay there desperate to turn and help. But by the third change, when the nappies were all piled up, then he turned and said to me, "well done, Audrey. I was awake the whole time and I was desperate to help you, but I needed to know that you could cope". And between my husband and my rehabilitation officer, they pushed me and pushed me – and it was tough. But the support I have there, from my mum, my brother, my sister and other family members has been so great and supportive.

Losing your sight is not life threatening, but it is life changing. And I don't think anybody ever accepts it, but you learn to adapt and adjust and do things slowly and differently, and every day is a challenge, every hour is a challenge. But if you can stick with that until you've mastered it, pat yourself on the back and go, "right, I've done brilliant. I'm not going to let this visual impairment, sight loss, beat me, get the better of me", and then move on to the next thing. And that will give you courage, confidence, and allow you to keep your independence, which is so, so important.

Martin's story

When you have nothing, that is a huge amount of money. It meant I could do things to support her learning difficulties.

As an unemployed single father to a young daughter, I was struggling. I was on Universal Credit, grateful for what I received but we were just getting by. After food and bills we literally had a few pounds left. It was tough because my daughter has learning difficulties and she's a visual learner, but she was stuck in the house all the time.

Things changed when, through my Universal Credit adviser, I contacted the charity One Parent Families Scotland. They asked me to go along to a meeting at which Social Security Scotland's Chief Executive, David Wallace, was speaking. He spoke about Child Disability Payment and told me I should apply for it.

I applied for Child Disability Payment to help with the costs of caring for my daughter and got it without any issue – it completely changed things for us. On Universal Credit I was left with £2.77 a month with Child Disability Payment I had £97. When you have nothing, that is a huge amount of money. It meant I could do things to support her learning difficulties.

She couldn't lie down in a bath because she was scared of water but I could afford to take her to the swimming pool and teach her to swim. We could get on a bus or a train and do some outdoor learning. Finding out this money was available to help with those extra costs meant we could do more than just survive.

It made such a difference to our lives that I now work for Social Security Scotland. The way I was treated during my application and the difference it's made to our lives, I just knew this was somewhere I wanted to work and to help others the way I was helped.

Josh's story

I guess because I had grown up with it, it's always been part of my life. I didn't actually realise that I was a young carer until I was in fourth year. So it took a long time to realise it.

There was a bunch of things really. Teachers would tell me off because I couldn't finish homework on time, and I was falling asleep in class. One of my friends had invited me out and I told him "Oh I have to stay and do housework", and he was confused, and he said, "that's not right." It was things like that that made me realise.

Having support in school is good, you feel like you have someone to talk to. But then if you say something wrong, like, or something that's going to worry the teachers, then you feel bad about it. It feels good to let it out, but it doesn't really change our situation. At the end of the day, I'm still going to be sitting there worrying. I'm still going to be sitting there doing the same things, the same responsibilities that I was doing before.

It's just nice to know that there's other people out there who are going through the same thing as me, as bad as that sounds.

My mum is my mum, my sister is my sister. They're mine to look after. It doesn't matter, to me, if I'm having to go to school or I need to study or I need to drop out of school, I need to quit basketball, I need to do whatever. If I need to look after my mum and sister, I will look after my mum and sister.

You do sort of feel obliged to do it. It's not because they looked after me that I feel the need to look after them as well. It's not the fact that I have to do it because there are times when I can say no and I can just go out with friends. It's just that I would feel better knowing they're all right.

My family are always trying to convince me, they really want me to go out - they don't want me to miss out on experiences of being young. But if I go out with my friends, then I don't know what's going to happen to them.

When my mum needs help, my friends can be like, "oh, just say no, just come out, just come out, even just for half an hour". In that half an hour I could spend helping my mum, I could wash my sister, I could do something for the family.












Thank you to our partners

We would like to extend our thanks to Regular Music, to Callum Beattie and Clare Grogan's Altered Images, to our host Des Clarke, to the reception artists Steven Redmond and Chris Mackie, and to our partners, without which this night of celebration could not happen.

To our ALLIANCE Concert for Caring steering group for their incredible hard work in making this a reality – Thank you Ali, Jen, Laura, Emilia, Suse, Olivia, Nick, Justine, Sara, Susan, Irene, Kerry, Margaret and Chris.

Finally, to everyone who joined us on the night, thank you for an unforgettable experience - we'll see you at the next one!

Tommy

ALLIANCE
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
ALLIANCE SCOTLAND
people at the centre

About the ALLIANCE

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is the national third sector intermediary for health and social care, bringing together a diverse range of people and organisations who share our vision, which is a Scotland where everyone has a strong voice and enjoys their right to live well with dignity and respect.

Become a member

Become a member of the ALLIANCE, and join a dynamic, cross-sector community working to improve the lives of people who use health and social care services in Scotland.

Email: membership@alliance-scotland.org.uk

Person Centred Voices

Person Centred Voices works with health and social care and other sectors to encourage culture change on person centred practices.

Email: personcentred@alliance-scotland.org.uk 𝕏 @PersonCentredVo

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