

Encouraging people to play a part in their care



TV presenter Kaye Adams hosted the ceremony

The annual Care Accolades, organised by the Scottish Social Services Council, once again celebrated the excellent work going on to address the issues facing social services in Scotland.

The winners of the awards were announced at a glittering ceremony at Edinburgh's Balmoral Hotel, hosted by TV presenter Kaye Adams, with an opening address from Minister for Children and Early Years, Adam Ingram MSP.

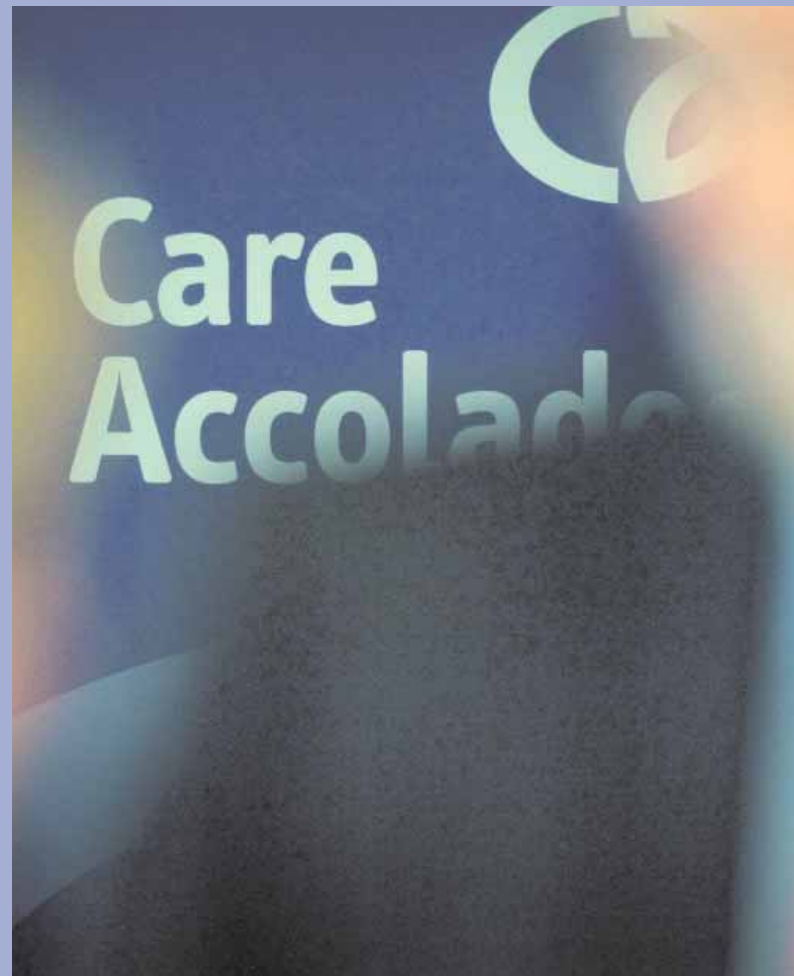
There were 13 finalists selected out of the original 114 entries for six categories, one of which included 'Best involvement of people who use services in any aspect of the organisation's work'.

This award recognises organisations who have put in place inclusive, transparent and progressive arrangements to ensure that service users – "experts by experience" – are active partners in developing solutions to strengthen their confidence, independence and quality of life.

This category mirrors the Care Commission's ethos of ensuring that people who use care services participate in shaping these services to meet their needs.

The judges in this category were looking for clear evidence of the active involvement of people who use the services, and how through this engagement and consultation all have and will continue to benefit.

Care News looks at the three nominations and how they encouraged people using their services to participate in their programmes.



The Richmond Fellowship Scotland – FOCUS initiative

The Richmond Fellowship Scotland provides high-quality community-based services for people who need support in their lives.

FOCUS (Freedom of Choice United Services) is an initiative that aims to improve services and increase the skills and confidence of the people they support.

The regional co-ordinators of the Focus Initiative are themselves supported

individuals. They work to encourage other service users to speak out and have their say on important issues that affect their day-to-day lives.

This includes driving campaigns that challenge inequalities and stigma, getting involved in staff training and interviewing other supported people to evaluate the type of services they receive.

And just as with all Richmond

Fellowship Scotland staff, each has an individual learning and development plan to further enhance their independence and their future opportunities.

Judge's comment
"FOCUS is an innovative, ground-breaking initiative that proves that the people who use services can make a major contribution to the work of any organisation."



Youngsters involved in the FACE project celebrate their achievement

FACE up to exploitation

FACE (Fighting Against Child Exploitation) is a service in Dundee, supported by Dundee City Council, Key to Change and Barnardo's, for young people who have been at risk of, or been affected by, sexual exploitation.

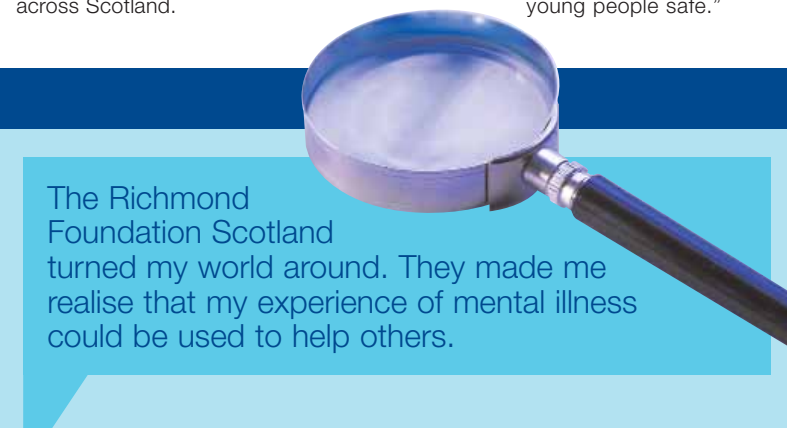
The youngsters involved in FACE, aged between 12 and 18, wanted to raise awareness about the dangers of this issue and developed an animated film, 'Nae Danger', and resource pack.

The project focuses on issues such as risk, internet safety and grooming, and describes in language that young people can easily relate to how easy it is to be sexually exploited.

The film has already been shown in secondary schools in Dundee and Fife and is being rolled out across Scotland.

It was great being involved in this project – I really feel like it's our work and being involved at every stage meant so much.

Judge's comment:
"As well as addressing their own issues in relation to child sexual exploitation, and a better understanding of their own abusive experiences, the young people of FACE are making a valuable contribution to keeping other young people safe."



The Richmond Foundation Scotland turned my world around. They made me realise that my experience of mental illness could be used to help others.

South Lanarkshire Council – the Burning Issues

THE Burning Issues Participation and Advocacy Network aims to promote the active participation of children and young people so they can express their views and concerns to help South Lanarkshire Council plan and deliver services that they need.

It is co-ordinated by the Council's Social Work Resources Children's Rights Service and Education Resources, and focuses strongly on reaching out to unlock the views of young people with complex disabilities whose voice and ideas have traditionally been under-represented.

The initiative uses a range of communication methods in workshops with young people to break down barriers such as games, jigsaws, interpreters, Braille resources and "writing with symbols". The workshops focus on issues important to them such as health, education and inclusion.

Judge's comment
"The highly constructive workshops have resulted in an exceptionally representative report which has already been used to inform services both within the council and further afield."

It was really good to get together with loads of other young people where we were really listened to.

