



## Personal Outcomes Stories during COVID: Learning from practice

**Your role and organisation:** Sally Boa, Head of Education, Strathcarron Hospice

**How have you been able to keep a focus on what matters to people during COVID?**



As an organisation, we have a long history of supporting Care Homes by providing mostly face to face education and experiences to enhance skills and knowledge of palliative and end of life care. We have also developed a community of practice through our Project ECHO care home network. This is a global tele-mentoring model that joins communities (in this case, health and social care) together so they can learn with and from each other. The care

homes come together (through Zoom) to agree a programme of learning and we facilitate the sessions through presentations on the topic and anonymised case studies.

During this pandemic, our Care Home ECHO network has grown and has provided a forum for care home staff to share good practice, celebrate when things have gone well and reflect on the more challenging aspects of supporting residents and families during this difficult time. We have also been able to host larger information meetings, via zoom, for health and social care partners to ensure they have the right information as they need it.

**What have you had to do differently and what made this possible?**

We have worked with our health and social care partners in a really collaborative way. The barriers of using technology have been removed and Care Home staff have been very keen to share what's important to them and how they want to be supported.

**What have you noticed that has been better?**

Collaboration between partners has been better and there is more understanding of different people's/service roles. In spite of challenges with reports from the press, on the whole, Care Home staff and the jobs they do appear to be more valued by others. One participant told us:

*Made me reflect that at the beginning of a shift we check everyone has what they need physically (e.g. PPE) but don't always check how people are managing psychologically. Will include this going forward*

**How did this make you feel?**

During the ECHO sessions in particular, I feel very humbled to hear how care home staff are working to support their residents and families. I'm also excited that different agencies and professional groups are working together, which makes me optimistic for the future.

**What have you learned through this?**

Relationships are key. Our support for care homes has brought positive outcomes for people because we have worked hard at building relationships and trust. Rather than going in and telling people what they need to know, we have asked them what would help and tried to find solutions together.