

# More overnight homecare offered by council

✘ The number of older and vulnerable people in Edinburgh receiving care in their own home through the night is set to increase dramatically.

The City of Edinburgh Council has boosted the number of social care worker teams working overnight from three to five meaning more people can now receive the service.

The increase in numbers is due to a cash injection of £300,000 from the [Change Fund](#) – a £70m Scottish Government fund allocated to health and social care organisations across the country for older people’s services.

This now means that more people in the city will receive assistance overnight who are [assessed as being in critical or substantial need of overnight care](#) can now receive assistance.

A year ago there were approximately 60 visits a night across Edinburgh with three teams of staff working in pairs. The extra funding has now resulted in another team coming into force with a fifth due to start in January 2012.

It is expected that the increase in staff will result in around 100 to 120 visits taking place very night.

Councillor Paul Edie, Health Leader for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: “Greater life expectancy means that the number of people needing social care is growing rapidly. We need to ensure people can live independently in their own homes and that we support unpaid carers.

“Over the last four years this administration has increased our weekend and evening services by 56% and 113% ensuring that people who need it most get care when they need it.

“I am delighted that we are now able to boost the number of home care overnight teams in the city thanks to the money from the Change Fund.

“Our social care workers provide a very valuable service. These extra numbers mean that more frail older people will benefit from their expertise in their own homes rather than being admitted to hospital or care homes. It also means that carers get a well-deserved break from looking after loved ones.”

Sally Cameron, who has an elderly mother living in the south west of the city, was full of praise for the overnight service which her mother has received for nearly three years.

She said: “I think the service is fantastic as my mother lives on her own and the home care team come in twice a night, at midnight and 4am, to check that she’s OK. The staff would do anything for you and are very professional because you do worry at night time that there may be problems.

“I’m extremely grateful especially as one summer they came in and found mum lying on the floor after she had fallen. If it hadn’t been for them then she would have been lying there until the carer came in at 9am.

“It’s good that the service is being extended to five teams as it means people can stay in their own homes as opposed to going to care homes – long may it continue.”

The service is provided between 10pm and 7am and helps those people who need help with tasks such as toilet visits, turning in bed, checking they are safe and well and taking action if needed in an emergency. It benefits those who might otherwise need to go into hospital, or a nursing or care home. It also helps carers who need a break.

The teams cover an average of 180 miles every night.

For more details of how to get an assessment for personal or overnight care please contact Social Care Direct on 0131 200 2324.