

# It's time to talk about death and dying!

## Reality

- People are unprepared for the experience of death and bereavement.
- Communities are disempowered from providing support to the dying and bereaved.
- Health and social care professionals are unprepared for death-related discussions.
- People in Scotland are living longer than ever before, and there are overwhelmingly positive aspects to living in a society where medical care is so good and premature death so rare.
- However, where once death was seen as a natural and inevitable occurrence, it is now often seen as something avoidable or extraordinary.

## Evidence

Planning ahead for death can make life easier for loved ones and improve the care a person is likely to get as they then approach the end of their life, yet in Scotland:

- 74% of people have not discussed what their wishes would be if they did not have long to live.
- For 61% of these people, this is because they feel 'too young' to discuss death, or because death 'feels a long way off'.
- 79% of people don't have any written plans for their end of life care, financial wishes or funeral plans.
- Only 35% of people have written a Will.

## Key Messages

- Death is normal.
- Being more open about death is a good thing.
- Planning for death when you're healthy means there is less to think about if you get sick.
- We can all help each other with death, dying and bereavement.
- Coming to terms with your own mortality can help you to live life to the full.
- We all need time to grieve.