CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. The strategy outlines a care pathway (page 10).

(a) If you are a service user and/or carer, please tell us what difference you believe the implementation of the pathway will make to the services you experience.

The group felt that the Care Pathway would be helpful but felt that money would need to be invested to ensure its implementation.
One individual felt that the Scottish Government would need to instruct agencies to work together. He described how he had been involved in sharing information with GPs across Tayside regarding what help a deaf person requires and on two occasions when at the GP they were unable to find the information.

Members of the group spoke about losing their sight suddenly and not knowing where to turn. They felt that if there had been a clear pathway, this may have assisted them to access the support they needed in a more timely manner.

GPs and optometrists would need to have a good understanding/knowledge of the care pathway.

(b) How can we best ensure that services and support meet your needs?

Access to specialist equipment to try was felt to be very important.

A standardised pathway would be welcomed.

(c) If you are a care provider, what changes will you need to make to implement the pathway?

Not applicable

(d) How will you make these changes?

Not applicable

2. The strategy identifies key factors that need to be in place to ensure the pathway is successful (Page 11 para 6.7).

(a) Which of the key factors are most important for a successful pathway?

The following were felt to be important by the gathered service users

- Local care pathways which professionals have to deliver
- Accessible information – may not be informed by GP about local support services
- Basic screening added into existing screening
- Clear referral routes to avoid delay in accessing support – sometimes it maybe by chance or knowing the right person that individuals have received information and support. Also, some eye conditions need treated promptly.
- Single point of access where an understanding of need is gained, follow up happens and there is a consistency of help offered.

(b) Which are the most challenging to put in place?

- Ensuring that information gets to the people who need it
- The maintenance and sharing of information

It was suggested that what was needed was multiple points of access but integrated forms of information.

(c) Do you think that any key factors have been missed?

- Individual responsibility – individuals know themselves best and should be able to advocate for themselves or have someone to advocate on their behalf. Their views should be heard and valued by professionals

3. The strategy identifies areas for action that should be addressed going forward (Page 13-16)

(a) Which of the areas for action will be the most challenging to implement?

As time was short, the group was asked their views of whether or not they agreed with the 6 recommendations.

The group agreed with all 6 recommendations.

They noted that the Scottish Government should reinstate the gathering of visual impairment data.

(b) Which of the areas for action will make the biggest difference and why?

Not discussed

(c) Are there any other areas for action that you would like to see included within the strategy?

Learn from other areas in terms of good practice

4. Please comment on the current provision of sensory impairment services as either a service provider or service user. If you have any experience of sensory impairment services, please let us know what you think of them: this should include any experience of one-stop shops.

One service user described how their optician had guided them to the Blind Society and this opened up a new world to them. They were pleased with the service they received locally from the Eye Clinic and the LVA Clinic.

Another service user said that their GP had been very helpful and had sent them to Audiology and they were very helpful too. She noted that it didn't matter how many times she had difficulties, they helped. The difficulty she had was with equipment. She explained that the equipment is very expensive and that if you buy it and it's not helpful you have wasted a lot of money.

One service user spoke about the difficulty in accessing support as the service had recently changed without prior knowledge.

A service user who is visually impaired talked about how confusing it can be sometimes with appointments giving an example of an appointment being cancelled/changed and not being informed.

A service user stated that she felt that she had been lucky in relation to the information she received.

Another service user noted that it was only because they know a certain person that they ended up getting the support they needed. Up until then they had not been getting anywhere.

A service user spoke about how his eye condition had been missed by a GP and then an optician. It was only when he persisted and saw another optician that it was diagnosed. Once it was diagnosed everything after that was very efficient.

5. What difference will the implementation of the strategy make to your life?

Not discussed

6. Does this strategy properly reflect the current climate and developments in policy and practice for children and young people particularly in relation to the Getting it Right for Every Child approach and the Doran Review?

Not discussed

7. Do you have anything you wish to add to the Sensory Impairment Strategy or any other general comments that have not been covered by the questions?

One service user highlighted the difficulty she had accessing patient transport now that it has been centralised. As she is visually impaired and has a hearing impairment she finds it difficult to follow the instructions over the phone.

Unclear about the role of self assessment as described in the care pathway so more information on that would be helpful.