

## 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.

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

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

South Lanarkshire Council proposes to develop services for people with sensory impairments in collaboration with private, voluntary and statutory partner agencies. These developments will incorporate the strategic imperatives of the health and social care integration and self directed support agendas. The emphasis will be to develop seamless inter and intra service infrastructures that promote service user empowerment and choice in the assessment and development of personalised support arrangements. Clarification and agreement on the responsibilities of each partner agency with the associated joint revisions to service operational procedures will be further developed to deliver on the aims of the strategies. It is anticipated that this will lead to a single point of access for integrated care and specialist support services. An example of a specific project development is the Lanarkshire Low Vision Project. This initiative will be expanded as appropriate to include any relevant agencies in order to develop a formalised automatic referral process following diagnosis to enable prompt and efficient access to additional information and support services.

(d) How will you make these changes?

The delivery of on all proposals will be considered in light of the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 and the outcome of the Integration of Adult Health and Social Care in Scotland. Currently discussions regarding integration are ongoing and the organisational structure is yet to be determined. However, South Lanarkshire Council would seek to incorporate the developments into Social Work Resource's service planning processes and these will be monitored within existing performance management, development and reporting structures. Short life working groups may be established as required This would include representation from all stakeholders to progress specific areas contained in the strategy. The development of the plan would be assessed in terms of its compliance with the Equality Act 2010

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 successful implementation of the pathway will be dependent on the development of organisational and operational service arrangements that are congruent with service developments associated with the integration of health and social care and self directed support agendas. Transparency in terms of partner agency's structures, roles and responsibilities will be vital to the successful development and delivery of sensory impairment services within and between organisations. Self-directed support will challenge traditional concepts of service pathways as service developments must be engineered around the bespoke needs of individual service users to achieve personalised outcomes. The concept of service pathways needs to be modernised to reflect a shift in practice approaches and the potential for reconfiguring commissioning arrangements as a result of the introduction of direct service user purchasing power.

The challenge is in achieving consistency of approach within service delivery and balancing this with the fulfilling the personalised approach enshrined within SDS.

Integrated Children's Services within South Lanarkshire provide a solid foundation for the provision of early identification of need for the wide spectrum of additional support needs. A successful pathway of care for all our children and young people is assured through the effective partnership working of services including schools, nurseries, Youth Learning, Inclusion, Psychological Services, Social Work, Public Health, Maternity, Housing, Police, Community learning and Home School Partnership, Skills Development Scotland, and the Voluntary Sector work in close partnership and are guided by the *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) approach. This provides a useful framework for assessment, analysis and planning covering both general and specific assessments. GIRFEC encourages practitioners to keep children's wellbeing, and what they can do to support and advance that, as their primary consideration at all time. The approach breaks down the concept of children's wellbeing into eight indicators: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included. Whenever practitioners come into contact with children, they are encouraged to consider the child's wellbeing and ask themselves five key questions, namely

- What is getting in the way of this child's or young person's wellbeing?
- Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
- What can I do now to help this child or young person?
- What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
- What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

Underpinning this approach is the use of the national practice model to support more detailed assessment of children's circumstances when required. The model encourages practitioners to adopt an integrated approach to assessment and planning by:

- **Initially considering a child's** wellbeing in the round using the wellbeing indicators
- Gathering more **detailed information about a child's intrinsic characteristics** and their immediate and wider environment using the My World assessment triangle.
- Analysing the information to build a picture of the strengths and pressures **in a child's life**, using the resilience matrix, and
- Using the information gathered as the basis for planning implementing, **and reviewing the actions necessary to secure and promote the child's** wellbeing, again using the wellbeing indicators.

Whilst there are still key stages in a child's life where assessments and screening for sensory impairments take place such as birth and 27-30 months, GIRFEC allows for early identification, assessment, protocols for maintaining and sharing information and joint working across the widest range of impairments across the whole of the child's life until they enter adult services.

In South Lanarkshire we have policy and guidance around all of this to ensure clarity of roles, expectations and shared thresholds for the identification of risk and need. Children are afforded a named person and where necessary a lead professional who coordinates the planning and provision and oversees the achievement of positive outcomes. Children young people and families are involved from the outset and the valuable insights that families can provide are valued and utilised to ensure that needs are met in as short a timescale as possible. In this way children and their families benefit from a wide range of services and the highest levels of support.

The Community Learning and Home School Partnership Service offers learning opportunities to children young people and adults within the community and offers support for Community Capacity Building. Our provision for adults in the community is an integral part of Council Planning (Connect). The Council's vision is to work together to improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire. The relevant values are 'Fair and open, people focused, working with and respecting others, excellent employer, accountable, effective and efficient and self aware and improving. Objectives reflect the range of Council', 'Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults', 'Tackle disadvantage and deprivation', 'Get it right for every child' and 'increase involvement in lifelong learning.' South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources has produced six core policies covering all aspects of educational provision for children, young people and adults. The policies have been produced with the aim of ensuring equality of opportunity for all and through a process of consultation with stakeholders.

All new and existing policies are audited as part of our impact assessment process in addition to our ongoing, well developed, self evaluation systems.

In particular the needs of adults with sensory impairments are fully considered at the outset with reasonable adjustments such as loop systems, interpreters and signing.

Education Resources within South Lanarkshire provide freedom of choice for the wide spectrum of additional support needs which our children and young people have. Provision is made for them in mainstream schools, in supported classes within mainstream schools or within specialist schools. As well as the Getting it right for every child we use an internal monitoring system called A28 procedures. When these are used in partnership we are confident that pupils/young peoples needs are best met. Effective partnership between Education, Allied Health Professionals and all other professionals working with the child/young person ensure that work done prior to entry to education is consolidated.

Careful monitoring of progress is recorded through an Additional Support Plan which includes individualised education plans. If more than two partner agencies are involved a Co-ordinated support plan may be put in place.

Children/young peoples comment are considered through the My world triangle aspect of GIRFEC and "What I think" tool.

The paediatric screening which takes place before a child enters school ensures that work established on the GIRFEC model at the earlier stages of their lives is built on when the child enters either pre-school or post five education. As previously explained the South Lanarkshire policies and guidance ensure clarity of roles and expectations.

The needs of children and young people with sensory impairments are met through adherence to the Equalities policy, Disability discrimination policy and the Supporting children's learning additional support needs act. Staff working with pupils who have hearing impairments are trained in British Sign Language and have access to additional qualifications for teachers of the hearing impaired. Additionally staff working with the visually impaired have access to Braille facilities and also are qualified to a national standard for the visually impaired. Our youngest children have access to specialist support through the Early Years Multi Agency Screening groups which meet in each of the four localities within South Lanarkshire.

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

The compatibility of existing IT systems may compromise the ability to effectively share information between partners, measuring outcomes and monitor the effectiveness of the proposed actions. There may also be considerable challenges with regard to data sharing as this will be dependent on service user consent to share. Ensuring consent may be difficult to manage and would likely present a significant challenge in meeting the aims of recommendation 5.

The rural nature and geography of South Lanarkshire would present significant difficulty in creating geographically based one stop shops; however, practice arrangements between partner agencies could realise virtual one stop shop approaches to care and support without the need for co-location of service providers.

The predicted increase in the numbers of people with sensory impairments, coupled with improvements in awareness/identification of issues may result in a significant increase in demand for services. The challenge will be to factor those specific resource priorities and implications in the context of a demographic landscape that will present competing increasing demands arising from an ageing population with multiple specialist priorities/needs. The emphasis is on creating service infrastructures and practice approaches that promotes transparent and equitable resource distribution in line with levels of need and risk.

For any pathway of care communication between staff, between agencies and across geographical boundaries are the most challenging aspects.

Signposting adults to appropriate agencies is also difficult where there are constant cutbacks and movement of staff. For children / young people however this is more straight forward as the named person through GIRFEC becomes the gate keeper for these children. Pre five this is the Public Health Nurse and as this procedure is now in place the pathways are becoming more accessible.

Signposting and provision is also impeded by the methods by which services are funded. Short term funding can limit the ability of services to become embedded in the pathway of support.

Staff also thought that although it was important to identify difficulties at the earliest opportunity, some staff would not have the knowledge and skills to do this. The delivery of basic multi-agency training targeted at key staff such as public health nurses and early years staff would help to address this. Identification of sensory deficit if it is minimal can be difficult to confidently assess unless a multi-agency team is built around the child/young person. This team has to be actively engaged with the child/young person and their parent/ carer to ensure that all involved build the best picture of this child/young persons needs.

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

Encapsulating sensory impairment specific service development proposals within the prevailing legislatively based strategic drivers on the health and social care integration and self directed support agendas.

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?

In considering the promotion of effective local service provision, undertaking an audit of current services and understanding the impact of demographic changes affecting future local needs will inform the future development of a cohesive integrated service delivery plan to address the needs of sensory impaired people and their carers. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of pathways will be dependent upon the quality of data and outcome measurement tools alongside a joint method of gathering and analysing this information which will enable the evaluation of the strategies implemented and provide opportunity to modify as necessary to ensure that it continues to meet the aims of the strategy. As stated previously existing data gathering and sharing arrangements may need considerable adjustment to ensure that the quality of future data is sufficient to allow an accurate analysis of performance and identify any requirement for improvement.

The realignment of spend may have far reaching impacts depending on the level of integrated working at children's and adult service level. Many services are co-dependant; pooling, sharing and creating resources across a variety of budget streams.

The same is true for the introduction of new screening processes as work undertaken in any specialist area has to come from another and while some areas of work are initially resource heavy then become sustainable once systems are in place the same may not be true for the requirement of regular screening.

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

Utilising the Talking Points personal outcomes approach and adopting a coproduction model in the assessment of need, support planning and review aims to offer people with sensory impairments (including those with multifactorial conditions) and their carers greater choice, control and flexibility in their care and support. Multiagency locality based care and support coordination groups will develop, implement and review the effectiveness of bespoke care plans.

In addition, the introduction of basic sensory screening, e.g. at certain ages, or agreed times during the pathway will promote health and well being with a preventative approach to sensory loss; and enable to prompt identification of people with impairment who can then be directed to appropriate services.

Staff commented on the usefulness of a pathway for adults that will enable signposting to local services and or requests for assistance for more specialist supports.

The implementation of the hierarchy of care and care pathway should help parents/ carers be more confident about the route for the future for their child/ young person.

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

As previously indicated, the successful implementation of the pathway will be dependent on the development of organisational and operational service arrangements that are congruent with service developments associated with the integration of health and social care and self directed support agendas. It would be constructive to begin to formulate the strategy in the context of these legislative changes by highlighting the potential of these on the development of services to people with sensory impairments. e.g. promoting service user empowerment and choice through personalised budgets.

Further specific considerations relate to promoting technological advancements in supporting people with sensory impairments and specialist habilitation and training of young people to facilitate successful transitional arrangement to adult life.

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.

South Lanarkshire Council Social Work Resources provide a range of supports to people of all ages who are affected by sensory impairment. This can address their extended social care needs and lifestyle aspirations. This service includes referring to or accessing other mainstream SLC services or other social work colleagues where the need is present. Support services for people with a sensory impairment are also directly purchased via third sector specialist providers where required, or accessed by individuals using direct payments or ILF funding. Social Work staff will also refer people to non-charging third sector serving the needs of people with a sensory impairment where relevant.

Currently South Lanarkshire Council have a dedicated Sensory Impairment team including two WTE rehabilitation officers and three WTE rehabilitation assistants with staff working between localities. They provide mobility training for all ages of white cane users and provide support, information and assistive equipment to people with both sight and hearing impairments. The needs of some people with a sensory impairment are also met by some staff from the wider physical disability and sensory impairment team which comprises Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants. Similarly some Rehabilitation Assistants can also address the needs of some people affected by their physical impairment or learning disability.

Currently South Lanarkshire Council financially supports such projects as Insight Radio, and services as Talking Books; accommodation space is provided within Blantyre Family Support Centre in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire who runs a Children's Visual Functional Assessment Clinic.

NHS Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Council operated a joint Lanarkshire Low Vision Project (LLVP) which incorporates a network of local optometrists who prescribe low vision aids and refer onto SWR rehabilitation workers who will provide training to individuals in the use of aids. Using the established referral pathways any SWR staff is able in turn to refer to local optometry services when sensory loss is suspected / identified.

South Lanarkshire do not currently operate a One Stop Shop model of service delivery; however we would propose benchmarking exercise of our existing services against examples cited as best practice within the "Success in Sight" interim review of the Scottish Vision Strategy in order to shape future service delivery within South Lanarkshire.

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

Not applicable

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?

The strategy clearly articulates many of the recommendations of the Doran Review and broadly captures the principles of strategic commissioning of specialist services for those with complex additional support needs including the consistency of services across the country, meeting the needs of children during periods of transition, and collection of data to inform the planning and commissioning of services.

Some may find pathways for individual types of impairment confusing when The Getting it Right for Every Child offers a framework that covers the widest range of additional support needs.

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?

Staff within Integrated Children's Services and Education Resources have access to a suite of training opportunities, often delivered alongside partner agencies. More specific training would normally be included as part of the staff member's Personal Development and Review interview held twice a year, or identified within support and supervision interviews.

The introduction of mandatory training is always welcome but there would need to be very careful consideration of the costs, impact and target audiences so that the process above was not compromised. There is also the consideration of sustainability and best value from small training budgets in the current economic climate.