

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.

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

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

- ☞ Single point of access – better integration of systems, more developed pathways and better multi-agency information sharing, particularly in relation to adult services
- ☞ Comprehensive compulsory training in sensory issues for all frontline and mainstream staff
- ☞ Need to work to make sure referral pathways for sensory loss are integrated into mainstream services
- ☞ Information about sensory issues widely available in appropriate formats for service users, families and carers, general services and specialist services – as requested by service users and communities
- ☞ Need to develop robust training for specialist workers in both sight and hearing issues
- ☞ Need management buy in and a clear structure for sensory issues at a strategic level

(d) How will you make these changes?

The Highland Sensory Project is the main vehicle for driving forward implementation of the strategy. Relevant to the changes detailed above it is delivering:

- ☞ Multi agency collaboration including redesigned pathways and integrated services
- ☞ a website for information - communicated in appropriate ways
- ☞ a training matrix with appropriate levels of training for mainstream workers; professionals working with people with a sensory loss; the public - including individuals with a sensory loss and families and carers.

In addition we are raising awareness of this strategy and its recommendations at a strategic level.

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

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

- ☞ Sensory awareness for front line staff is vital to make more services accessible for people
- ☞ Information being accessible to everyone in appropriate formats.
- ☞ Clear referral routes and a single point of access to ensure early onward referral to specialist services for appropriate intervention. Including consideration of sensory need in all generic assessments is also particularly helpful in this regard.
- ☞ Clearly developed set of local care pathways.

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

- ☞ Single point of access as this will require integration of systems across a variety of networks and platforms in order that all relevant organisations maintain visibility.
- ☞ Maintaining information about various diagnoses of sensory loss – there is currently no mechanism to record data about prevalence in deafness

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

- ☞ Mandatory training for all frontline staff is mentioned but needs to be an integral part of the strategy
- ☞ The national cochlear implant programme for adults is not part of this strategy, and it should be. Clear pathways need to be developed between the implant programme and the communities people belong to

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?

- ☞ Raising the profile of sensory need across all mainstream services and communities – getting the buy in of other services in developing a comprehensive sensory strategy which needs to be bedded into all services not just specialists in sensory need

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

- ☞ Mandatory training in sensory awareness will improve general levels of awareness among all non-specialist staff and will make life easier for those with a sensory loss. Better information and training will promote greater understanding of communication needs, specialist equipment provision, specialist services to refer on to at the right time, and generally better everyday social communication which can bring about improvements in social inclusion
- ☞ Local partnership working will promote efficient working and a positive experience where individuals get the right support, from the right people, at the right time

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

- ☞ Funding of increasing demands on services, though this will be offset by community asset approach to some extent
- ☞ Formal links and pathways between cochlear implant programme and local communities for adults
- ☞ Employment issues are touched on in the strategy and need to be expanded as this is a major issue for those with a sensory loss
- ☞ Reablement/rehabilitation programmes not included in the strategy
- ☞ The strategy talks about meeting the communication needs of those with sensory needs as being essential in their everyday lives yet does not explore the place of BSL. The issue of funding interpreting in social and leisure settings is not looked at, neither is the need to maintain and improve interpreter levels and how this should be funded. Ongoing training and provision of interpreters is currently piecemeal across Scotland
- ☞ Lip-reading – no clear place for this in the strategic pathway, currently straddling community education and rehabilitation. Service users consistently ask for a wider network of lip-reading as a major part of rehabilitation for those with an acquired hearing loss

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.

Within Highland we have a service delivery model which delivers to individuals via a range of statutory agencies and third sector providers.

The recent integration of Health and Social Care in Highland has further strengthened links on the statutory side and we are currently engaged with the Third Sector in delivering the Highland Sensory Project which is developing a one stop approach to ensure that individuals can move seamlessly through and across services to access the care and support most appropriate for their needs at the right level and the right time.

The one stop approach also reflects the need to develop joined up sensory service provision where appropriate and maintaining a specialist provision where appropriate.

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

- ☞ Better client services, more efficient use of financial resources. More general understanding of sensory issues for non specialist staff; and more easily accessible information about sensory loss and services available for

individuals and carers.

- ☞ Assurance that the Scottish Gov sees improving and integrating sensory services as fundamentally important

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 looks at issues for children with a sensory loss in far less detail than adults
- ☞ It reflects the person centred, outcome focused approach in GIRFEC and the Doran review.
- ☞ In highland integration of health and social care and the lead agency approach to provision of adult and children service has implications for cradle to grave services. There needs to be robust mechanisms to maintain good close working between sensory services which provide cradle to grave services from within the NHS, when the majority of other children services come from within the council.

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?

- ☞ In the feedback to our service from those with a hearing loss the term 'impairment' is not liked. The strong preference is for 'hearing loss' or 'sensory loss', or for those who use sign language 'Deaf'
- ☞ The work in implementing the strategy is likely to take a toll on staff who already have a full workload therefore it is essential that implementation is adequately resourced
- ☞ Many of the issues in the strategy are similar to those originally identified in Sensing Progress in 1998, it is great to see the beginnings of a national strategy emerging and we look forward to seeing the full implementation of a national strategy