

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

The Carer's Assessment: Carer's Support Plan

Question 1: Should we change the name of the carer's assessment to the Carer's Support Plan?

Yes

No

Comments: The concept of **Carer Support Plans** is positive and removes the concerns of Carers that they are too being judged [as in able to undertake their caring role]. It also breaks the link between assessment of need and financial assessment.

The development of Carer Support Plans should be a continuum of the principles of SDS – putting the choice and control directly into the Carer's hands. Good practice indicates they should be based on a structured 'Carer conversation' in line with Talking Points and taken at a pace determined by the Carer. This is probably how we in D&G will be taking this forward. The Carer should hold their own Support Plans and that control extends to them deciding when they are ready to address further areas of their life (see Stages and transitions section). This has the dual advantage of acknowledging the different stages of the 'Carer journey' and ensures, at the personal level, that the Carer is involved in decisions about their needs (hopefully, along with those of the cared-for person) – in line with the principles of SDS and as 'Equal Partners in Care'. There needs to be consistency

of language adopting the use of language around 'Carer Support Plans' and not to keep referring back to 'assessment'.

Permission to delegate authority is appreciated. D&G are pursuing delegating this work to the local Carers Centres. Ensuring agreement & practicalities are in place regarding the recording of Carers Support Plans on SWS information systems will be essential and managing change to current practice may prove to be a challenge.

Question 2: Should we remove the substantial and regular test so that all carers will be eligible for the Carer's Support Plan?

Yes No

Comments: This could assist Carers to ask for help at an earlier stage. It also means that where the cared-for person is only seen by Health, the support to the Carer will be forthcoming through a direct referral to the Carers Centres.

Question 3: Should we remove that part of the existing carer assessment process whereby the cared-for person is a person for whom the local authority must or may provide community care services/children's services?

Yes No

Comments: This could assist Carers to ask for help at an earlier stage.

Question 4: Should we introduce two routes through to the Carer's Support Plan – at the carer's request and by the local authority making an offer?

Yes No

Comments: In an integrated world there should be the opportunity for a number of routes toward the development of a Carers Support Plan. Rather than the local authority making an offer, perhaps there should be an obligation on statutory agencies to signpost Carers to whomever can assist them in developing their Support Plans

Question 5: Should we remove from statute the wording about the carer's ability to provide care?

Yes No

Comments: This is not about someone's ability to care, it is about what support can be put in place to enable the Carer to support the cared-for person without detriment to their own health and well-being.

Question 6: Should we introduce a duty for local authorities to inform the carer of the length of time it is likely to take to receive the Carer's Support Plan and if it exceeds this time, to be advised of the reasons?

Yes **Not sure** No

Comments: If the development of Carer Support Plans are to be aligned with SDS the Carer should remain in control and hold their own plans (like hand-held maternity records). This control includes setting their own timescales and self-assessment about their own carer-journey and their readiness to look at other aspects (or reviewing aspects) of their caring role.

This then removes the need for the Carer informed of the length of time it will take to complete the support plan because the Carer takes control. Also, it is not about someone writing the Support Plan for the Carer – this should be co-produced and the Carer write their own plan.

Question 7: How significant an issue is portability of assessment for service users and carers?

Comments: It is likely that distance caring will increase in the future bringing different challenges for the Carer. The concept of portability of the Support Plans and ensuring another local authority funds these would need greater consideration in terms of the 'Responsible Commissioner' and given the location of D&G we would expect more Carers from across the Border which could present huge complexities. We should strongly recommend clarity from the Scottish Government in this matter before this became part of the legislation.

Question 8: Should the Scottish Government and COSLA with relevant interests work together to take forward improvements to the portability of assessment?

Yes

No

Comments: If it is decided to be taken forward within legislation. Particular consideration will be required for those local authorities where cross border (with the UK) issues often crop up.

Information and Advice

Question 9: Should we introduce a duty for local authorities to establish and maintain a service for providing people with information and advice relating to the Carer's Support Plan and support for carers and young carers?

Yes

No

Comments:
Under current legislation (1968 Social Work Scotland Act and the 2014 Self Directed Support (Scotland) Act) there exists an obligation to provide information and advice. Support to Young Carers should be captured under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act – given that Young Carers should be regarded as 'children in need'? We question the need to add further duties on social work in this way.

D&G is concerned that the increased awareness of Carers to have a Support Plan, access information, advice and support services coupled with the known increase in numbers of Carers could result in significant resource issues.

Currently, in D&G, the NHS component of Carer funding is mostly through the Scottish

Government for delivering on Carer Information Strategy (CIS). This funding stream has been very welcome in delivering on the national and local Carer strategy. Currently the Carers Information Strategy is supported by ring-fenced funding from the Scottish government. It is hoped that this would not be lost in any way – and should this be the case after 2015, perhaps through Integrated budgets, this could, at a minimum, be maintained.

If this duty is introduced and section 12 of the Community Care and Health Act repealed, then some responsibility to share the costs of Carer support provision should be carried by health boards – although with Integration, expectation to produce a joint Carers Strategy would be welcomed.

This local authority also provides a range of commissioned Carer-specific services across Children and Family and Adult Services. Many Third Sector partners (including commissioned services) also provide informal support, advice and information to Carers, along with health and social care workers, financial inclusion team, etc. Explaining the complexity of the health and social care systems would be a challenge for all of us – particularly in the current environment. It is difficult to see how this could be effectively regulated and easy to see how this could become a major area for complaints. If Carer Support Plans are to be undertaken by Third Sector Partners, information and advice should be part of that ‘package’. Health and social care staff would need to be held responsible and responsive in identifying Carers at an early stage and referring or signposting them to appropriate support organisations and providing information where individual Carers need more detail than a Third Sector Partner could provide – this would achieve the collaboration the Scottish Government is expecting.

Question 10: Should we repeal section 12 of the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act 2002 about the submission of Carer information Strategies to Scottish Ministers, subject to reassurances, which are subject in turn to Spending Review decisions, about the continuation of funding to Health Boards for support to carers and young carers?

Yes

No

Comments: Integration should encourage joint strategies or plans for Carers.

Support to Carers (other than information and advice)

Question 11: Should we introduce a duty to support carers and young carers, linked to an eligibility framework?

Yes

No

Comments: Under current legislation (1968 Social Work Scotland Act and the 2014 Self Directed Support (Scotland) Act) there exists an obligation to provide information and advice. We question the need to add further duties on social work in this way.

The development of a national eligibility framework with locally applied criteria seems a cumbersome way to take this forward. This will only create inequality and resentment.

Support to Young Carers should be captured under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act – given that Young Carers should be regarded as ‘children in need’. Eligibility for Young Carers should not be subject to any criteria.

Question 12: Alternatively, should we retain the existing discretionary power to support carers and young carers?

Yes

No

Comments: A key concern here is whether Carers will benefit more if there is a duty to provide support to Carers rather than, as now, a discretionary power to support Carers and Young Carers. The SDS Bill also provides a discretionary power to provide support for Carers.

Question 13: Should we introduce a duty to provide short breaks?

Yes

No

Comments:

D&G is concerned that the increased awareness of Carers to have a Support Plan, access information, advice and support services (including short breaks in the Carers own right) coupled with the known increase in numbers of Carers could result in significant resource issues.

We know that there is an increase in the numbers of Carers supporting the cared-for for 50+ hours / week in 2011 than in 2001. This is expected to increase. Carers save public bodies considerable resources and finance. However, there is no real clarity in references to short breaks for Carers in their own right within the Carers Rights Bill and the SDS Bill and whether the Scottish Government means *additional respite* to that (already) provided by local authorities – but often offered to the cared-for person as part of their care package.

Given many Carers have no other income, or are on a pension, many cannot afford a small short break even if the cared-for person is receiving a short break. Furthermore, research indicated that families want to get away together – just with a bit of extra support – but this does not happen if only the cared-for person is funded.

D&G has welcomed the separate funding streams to Third Sector Partners for the Time to Live (Carer Short break fund) and hope this might continue after 2015.

Through the Time to Live fund we have strong evidence of the benefit of a short break for the Carer (with and/or without the cared-for person) in D&G. We know that a successful short break sustains the Carer in their caring role for longer – just as a good break benefits us all during the year. Creating consistency across Scotland without the use of legislation would be welcomed.

However, in the current fiscal environment, difficult choices would have to be made between services for the cared-for person and support for Carers in order to fund short breaks for Carers. Funding £250 to each of the 4,336 Carers supporting the cared-for for 50+ hours / week would cost this local authority over £1,000,000 a year. How affordable is this against the rising need for care at home and other social care provision? While a shift in service delivery is encouraged, this would be a huge challenge – even where high cost packages can be disaggregated and rearranged. Pooled budget arrangements with the NHS may assist this and discussions around the Integration agenda should be minded of how Carers' needs are to be met.

Stages and Transitions

Question 14: Should we issue statutory guidance on the Carer's Support Plan which will include guidance for those undertaking the Carer's Support Plan on managing stages of caring? This would apply to adult carers only. (For young carers, practice guidance will be developed to support management of a Child's Plan through the stages of caring).

Yes

No

Comments: Guidance might be useful.

It is recognised that there is a growing number of Young Carers. Recognition is likely to increase with the roll out of the Young Carers Card. There is currently support for them through the transition to when they can move to Young Adult Carers' support group. It is hoped this work will continue to be funded as it ties in with the Children and Young People Bill.

Question 15: Should new carers' legislation provide for young carers to have a Carer's Support Plan if they seem likely to become an adult carer? Any agreed support recorded in the Carer's Support Plan would be put in place after the young carer becomes a (young) adult carer.

Yes

No

Comments: Similar to the comments about Carers Support Plans this should follow SDS principles ensuring the Young Carer has choice and control and holds their own plans. This can be a difficult time for Young Carers as they transition to a Young Adult Carer and often they are dismissed or not acknowledged by statutory services.

Carer Involvement

Question 16: Should there be carer involvement in the planning, shaping and delivery of services for the people they care for and support for carers in areas outwith the scope of integration?

Yes

No

Comments: How can Carers be considered equal partners in care if they are not involved in all aspects of services? Carers are Carers whether 'in the scope of Integration' or out of it.

Question 17: Should we make provision for the involvement of carers' organisations in the planning, shaping and delivery of services and support falling outwith the scope of integration?

Yes

No

Comments: The role of Carers support organisations is important – they are often closer to Carers than statutory services and can give general comments where Carers are unable to attend events due to other responsibilities. Young Carers Projects work directly with Young Carers and they have important messages to share with statutory agencies.

Question 18: Should we establish a principle about carer and young carer involvement in care planning for service users (subject to consent) and support for themselves in areas not covered in existing legislation?

Yes

No

Comments: Many Young Carers need access to information on how to best support their parent and to have their role recognised and valued – especially in areas such as Mental Health. There is a need to break down barriers to not just see the cared-for person but also acknowledge their support network and the increasing demands that are placed on them. Carers and Young Carers are key to the current and future mental well-being of those they support and this should not be underestimated. They have valuable messages to share and often some simple solutions can be overlooked if those caring are not consulted or involved in care planning. There is huge potential for those young people who have been Young Carers to gain employment in the caring sector given their lived experience as Carers – especially where they are fully supported in this role throughout their educational years.

Question 19: What are your views on making provision for young carer involvement in the planning, shaping and delivery of services for cared-for people and support for young carers?

Comments: This is a key component as we move forward. Young Carers in D&G are involved in planning & sharing services for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers through a variety of planning means and their views are taken into account when creating new services or responding to feedback for Young Carers. We do believe that it would be good to incorporate the views of Young Carers when considering services for the cared-for person. The roll out of the Young Carers Card to a range of services, including health, should help take this forward. Any provision must be sympathetic to the demands placed on Young Carers and it would be good to consider existing processes already in place to share the views of Young Carers and how this can inform future service delivery of adult services eg: a Young Carers Festival as an example.

Planning and Delivery

Question 20: Should we introduce statutory provision to the effect that a local authority and each relevant Health Board must collaborate and involve relevant organisations and carers in the development of local carers strategies which must be kept under review and updated every three years?

Yes

No

Comments: Having a joint Carers Strategy written with the involvement of Carers has been a powerful tool in taking forward the work.

Question 21: Should we introduce statutory provision to the effect that local authorities with Health Boards must take steps to ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable, that a sufficient range of services is available for meeting the needs for support to carers and young carers in the area?

Yes

No

Comments: There may be a tendency for Health Boards to only concentrate on the health of their patients and forget that behind every patient is often at least one supportive family member, friend and Carer. The health and well-being of Carers should be meaningfully recognised as an important element in the future delivery of care and the involvement of Carers recognised and valued. All Carers have valuable information to share on behalf of the cared-for person and often this is overlooked.

Identification

Question 22: Should there be no legislative provision for GPs or local authorities to maintain a Carers Register in order to support the identification of carers?

Yes

No

Comments: Carers registers will only be of use if they demonstrate benefits directly to Carers – otherwise this becomes a meaningless exercise. Where local authorities commission other organisations to support Carers, keeping a register becomes an unnecessary duplication. Where registers are not actively managed, they quickly become out of date which can cause considerable hurt in certain circumstances.

Question 23: Should the Scottish Government ensure that good practice is widely spread amongst Health Boards about the proactive use of Registers of Carers within GP practices?

Yes

No

Comments: See above. Will GPs always know what has happened to a Carer? Should the focus be on Primary Care practitioners, Community based Health services (Public Health, etc) Accident & Emergency departments and General Hospitals where Health Boards perhaps have more control over the workforce than independent GPs?

Question 24: Should the Scottish Government ask Health Boards to monitor compliance with the core contractual elements of the GP contract?

Yes

No

Comments: Yes – if it remains part of the GP contract.

Carer and Cared-for Person(s) in Different Local Authority Areas

Question 25: What are the views of respondents on the lead local authority for undertaking the Carer's Support Plan and agreeing support to the carer where the carer lives in a different local authority area to the cared-for person(s)?

Comments: If eligibility thresholds are different across local authorities, this area will be fraught with difficulty. The co-production of an eligibility framework as suggested by the Scottish Government at a recent presentation on the new legislation suggests parity of eligibility frameworks across Scotland. Given the consideration of portability of Support

Plans and cross-authority funding, this adds to the potential cross-border challenges.

Question 26: What are the views of respondents on which local authority should cover the costs of support to the carer in these circumstances?

Comments: See Q25 above comment

Question 27: Should the Scottish Government with COSLA produce guidance for local authorities?

Yes

No

Comments: See Q25 above comment