

## 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: Scottish Families supports changing the name to Carers Support Plan as this more accurately reflects its purpose. This should help reduce stigma and connotations of judgement, encourage carers to come forward for support and increase take up of a support plan.

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: Removing this test will extend the right of a Carer's Support Plan to all carers enabling them to access information and support at an earlier stage. This is especially pertinent to families affected by a loved one's substance misuse. Family members may care for them on an ad hoc, rather than regular basis but even this low level of support can have a huge impact including stress, anxiety and emotional issues alongside the physical demands of their caring role. Removing the substantial and regular test will allow for equality of access.

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: It is especially important this is removed to ensure those families caring for a loved one with substance misuse are not discriminated against. People with problem substance use may be unable to participate at all times in key aspects of decision making and have refused support or not be engaging with services or treatment and as a result may not be known to the local authority. Caring for someone with substance misuse is stressful and unpredictable and carers looking after people in this group should not face additional barriers to support.

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: The shame and stigma associated with substance misuse often prevents families from seeking help. It is essential to have both routes to ensure that those families who are socially isolated as a result of their caring role are aware / made aware of their eligibility for support.

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

Yes

No

Comments: Scottish Families supports the proposal to remove the assessment of 'ability to care' as this places a barrier to carers accessing support. Although intended as a reflection on capacity to care rather than an assessment of competence or skills it is generally seen as judgemental. Scottish Families welcomes the Carer's Support Plan considering the outcomes the carer wishes to achieve, both short and long term.

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

No

Comments: Scottish Families welcomes this improved approach to legislate for local authorities to have a process for informing carers of the time it will take until they receive a Carer's Support Plan. We also believe that there should be some consideration of a reasonable timescale to prevent a crisis developing before carers receive support.

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

Comments: This may be of significance to service users with drug or alcohol problems. Given that people with these types of problems can lead chaotic lives at times and may have difficulty accessing accommodation it is not unlikely they will move between housing authorities. The assessment process needs to be as seamless as possible to ensure service users receive continuous support and families do not face extra burdens as a result of a service user changing locations.

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: It is important that the Scottish Government and COSLA work together with relevant interests to take forward improvements. Families whose caring role brings with it stress, anxiety and unpredictability need reassurance that the support

and care to a loved one will be continuous and meet the same level of service regardless of location.

### 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: Scottish Families would like to see a duty placed on local authorities as regards information and advice. Family members of those with problem substance use may be treated differently from carers of those with other medical or mental health conditions due to the stigma attached. It is crucial that carers of those with misuse/ addiction problems have access to adequate and appropriate information and advice if they are to have the opportunity for "a life outside caring". Information about what support is available should also include that provided by the Third Sector.

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: Scottish Families agrees with the repeal of section 12 provided the role of health boards in supporting carers is maintained and the Scottish Government still provides funding towards the costs of information and advice services.

### 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: Scottish Families seeks a duty on local authorities to support carers linked to an eligibility framework which should be transparent, fair and legal. A national eligibility framework will ensure a consistent approach across Scotland whilst allowing for local variation in the types of support available. It would provide clarity for carers on their entitlements and assist with navigating through the system. It should take into account the need to provide preventative support to carers and the need to continue to provide services if the carer moves from to a

different local authority area.

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

Yes

No

Comments: There should be a duty on local authorities to support carers.

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

Yes

No

Comments: Short breaks should be provided as these are essential to the wellbeing and health of carers. Often a carer of someone with substance misuse is also supporting other family members to cope with the situation or has hidden the extent of their caring role to protect other family members. It is crucial that a carer in these circumstances is offered the opportunity for some time out to recharge in order to continue their caring role.

## 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 on the Carer's Support Plan should include guidance on managing stages of caring. Carers experience different challenges at different stages in their caring role and recognising these is essential for planning appropriate carer support. This is especially important for those caring for someone with substance misuse problems. It needs to be recognised and highlighted that for these carers a loved one entering a period of detox, abstinence or recovery will bring new challenges and may lead to an increased, not decreased, caring role. This can be a particularly stressful time for the carer and they may need to be offered additional information or support.

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: It is extremely important that young carers support needs as an adult carer are identified and planned for. This will make the transition as seamless as possible and reduce the likelihood of a crisis situation developing.

## 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: Scottish Families supports the proposal to include carers in the planning, shaping and delivery of services. The knowledge and experience of carers should be recognised and valued; they should be involved in determining the types of support and services available and should play an active role in care planning decisions.

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: It is important for carers to have the advice and support of local organisations that understand their needs, have access to a wider picture and have experience of the many different needs of carers. The knowledge, skills and experience of carer's organisations will be invaluable when considering the most cost effective use of resources in planning, shaping and delivering services.

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: Scottish Families supports proposals to enhance legislation on the involvement of carers in planning care for the person they are caring for. People with problem substance use may not always be in a position to participate fully in the decision making process all the time. Carer involvement in the service users care planning would allow the carer to know and understand the needs of the service user and see these continue to be met at times when the service user is unable to do this. This would also help carers better identify their own support needs, manage their caring role better and allow better opportunity for them to have a life out with caring.

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: Young people should be involved as fully as is practicable in the planning, shaping and delivery of their own care/ support alongside the person they care for. This recognises the responsibilities a young person has as a carer and allows them greater control in addressing their needs.

## 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 carer's strategies which must be kept under review and updated every three years?

Yes

No

Comments: Scottish Families supports a statutory position to involve relevant organisations and carers in local strategies as these should identify unmet needs and demands for support to carers. They must be kept under review and updated every three years to address changing demographics and needs.

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: Local authorities should ensure there are sufficient services in their areas to meet carers' needs. Existing services should be fully utilised with local authorities and health boards having knowledge of, and information about, services in their area in order to correctly signpost carers. Carers of loved ones with problem substance use have very specific needs such as legal issues, communication and conflict, risks of blood borne virus and bereavement. They must be correctly signposted to the services which are geared towards meeting these needs. Local authorities must develop a list of organisations which offer carers advocacy, counselling, peer group and other forms of support to ensure that carer needs are being addressed appropriately. Local authorities and health boards should be able to provide carers with information on free local services and how to access these.

## 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: Identification of carers is paramount in addressing need. Early identification and support of carers will prevent crisis and greater costs at a later stage. Carers of people with substance misuse issues are one of the most unrecognised and unsupported groups, often failing to recognise themselves as carers. The shame and stigma associated with drug use often prevents carers in these situations from seeking help. Family members and friends are an incredibly useful source for someone with problem substance use of both in treatment engagement and support. It is highly beneficial that these carers are given the support they need to continue their caring role for a loved one with substance misuse. Given that the cared for person may have no contact with any services it is essential that those in this type of caring role are identified. A GP practice may be the only contact with either the health board or local authority that the carer has. Scottish Families seeks that GP practices have a dedicated member of staff to help identify carers and encourage them to register as a carer. The Carers Register should be used proactively to signpost carers to appropriate services.

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: It is essential that Registers of Carers be used proactively and the Government should ensure that good practice is widely spread amongst Health Boards. Due to the sometimes unpredictable care needs of those misusing substances it is important to ensure that the changing needs of their carers are identified and addressed.

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

Yes

No

Comments:

### **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)?

The local authority in which the carer lives should undertake the Carer's Support Plan and seek to recoup the costs from the local authority in which the cared for person lives. Scottish Families wants those caring for people with substance misuse, who already have a great deal of stress to cope with, to have their care needs identified, assessed and met in a location and manner which does not add to this stress.

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: The local authority in which the cared for person lives should cover the costs of support to the carer although this should not mean increased travelling or disruption to the carer's life to access this support. Support should be available in a location most convenient for the carer regardless of which local authority is paying.

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

Yes

No

Comments: The Scottish Government and COSLA should produce guidance for local authorities to ensure consistency throughout Scotland. This would ensure that all carers received the same advice, information and entitlement to support regardless of the reason behind their caring role.