

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

Together with colleagues in the other National Carer Organisations, the Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance (SYCSA) **support the proposal to change the name of Carers' Assessments to Carer's Support Plans.** We believe that this more accurately reflects their purpose, which should be of what support can be provided to help the carer manage their caring role and have a life outside caring.

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

The Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance support proposals to **remove the regular and substantial test** and extend the Carer's Support Plan to all carers. We believe that this will enable carers to access information and support at an earlier stage, preventing crisis and greater cost at a later stage. However, it is vital to ensure that to correspond to intended increase in take-up, local authorities and local carer and other community support services to whom carers are signposted are sufficiently resourced to respond. We believe that such resources would be a sound investment, as early identification and support of carers will prevent crisis and greater cost at a later stage.

The Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance would also support proposals that ALL carers are eligible for a Carers Support Plan. This should include young carers. Young carers' workers are not confident that the measures within the imminent Children and Young People's Act will be effective for young carers. Currently, most assessment of young carers' needs is carried out by the voluntary sector support services. SYCSA feel that this is a missed opportunity to ensure that young carers have their caring needs assessed and are able to have the support they need to allow them to be children and young people first.

We agree that statutory guidance should underpin the depth of Carer's Support Plans but that the scope should be informed, in all cases, by the needs and wishes of the carer. Furthermore, we agree that statutory guidance should be in place to describe what should be included in discussions for the Carer's Support Plan, not least a carer's right to choose the level of care (if any) they are willing to provide and their right to a life outside caring. However, we have some concerns that the proposal not to legislate for a minimum set of issues to be discussed may result in inconsistency.

Moreover, whilst we welcome an 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 are unsure that this will solve the current situation where carers can wait many months (indeed years) for their Carer's Assessment. Whilst we recognise that there are challenges in setting maximum waiting times, not least that it may become a standard waiting time, we believe that there should be some consideration of a reasonable timescale (e.g. not exceeding 12 weeks) to ensure that carers do not reach crisis point before they receive support.

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:

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

SYCSA support the proposal that a carer may request a Support Plan, and that should include young carers.

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

Yes

No

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

Along with our NCO colleagues, we welcome the duty that will be placed on local authorities to inform carers about the Carer's Support Plan and the time it will take to receive it. However, this duty should be extended to acute NHS services and to new integrated primary health and social care services. This information should also be required to be given to young carers and their families.

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

This may not be so important for young carers up to the age of 16. However, it could be a more significant issue for young adult carers who are in a period of transition which often leads to leaving home and moving some distance away.

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

Yes

No

On this issue, the SYCSA agrees with our NCO colleagues that **the local authority in which the carer lives should undertake the Carer's Assessment** and seek to recoup costs from the local authority in which the cared for person lives. It is not for the NCO to set out how the costs should be recovered but mechanisms are already in place for local authorities to recoup costs from each other in relation to the provision of support for the cared for person.

In some situations, the carer may move from the local authority they live in to the local authority of the cared for person. In these circumstances and where the carer's original local authority has carried out an assessment, we **believe it would be beneficial for the Carer's Assessment to remain in place for a period of 6 months** whilst they are awaiting a new assessment. This will provide continuity of support to the carer to ensure they are not left unsupported.

This is an issue for young carers in transition and should be considered along with the proposals for transition from Child's Plan to Carers Support Plan (Stages and Transitions Section)

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

The NCO believes **that local authorities should ensure that information and advice about the Carer Support Plan and for support to carers and young carers is provided.** However, a new service would not need to be established in a local authority area if existing services are already in place. As most areas in

Scotland have a carers' centre or carers/young carers' service, these services should be supported to continue their work as they have already established a local presence. There should also be a definitive list of universal, free services that are available to all carers and that form the core services provided by carers' centres and services. This would be the minimum standard for local authority-operated or funded services to provide.

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

Support for carers from Health Boards must be maintained. If Carer Information Strategies are to be scrapped, there must be mechanisms in place to ensure Health Boards continue to fund carer support in their region. Carer Information Strategies are a good way of ring-fencing money to support carers and there is a risk that Health Boards may not protect money for carer information and advice without them. Carers and carers' organisations must be involved in local planning if Carer Information Strategies are scrapped – this is covered at a strategic level by integration strategic planning groups, but may not include carers and carers' organisations in enough depth.

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

In unison with our NCO colleagues, we support the introduction of these duties to support carers and provide and promote short breaks. We believe that the legislation should go further and the duties should incorporate the following:

- **A national eligibility framework should be co-produced with carers.** We believe that if each area develops its own eligibility framework this will lead to too much variation across Scotland.
- The eligibility framework should take into account the need to provide **preventative support** to carers to enable them to access the resources they need before they reach crisis point
- There should be an agreed timescale between a carer meeting the criteria for support and that support being put in place. **We recommend that this should**

not exceed 12 weeks.

- When a carer moves from one local authority to another, there should **be a duty on the new local authority to continue to provide the service they were previously eligible for.**

A duty to support young carers

Under the forthcoming Children and Young People (Scotland) Act there is a duty to support young people, including young carers. However, since the needs of young carers are often different to those of their peers we believe that carers' legislation should include guidance outlining the services and support that local authorities should have in place to fulfil their duty to support young carers.

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

Yes

No

Comments:

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

Yes

No

Please see the comments made at Question 11. They are applicable also to this proposal.

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

Together with our colleagues in the other NCOs, the SYCSA believe that **guidance should be issued on the Carer's Support Plan that includes**

guidance on managing stages of caring.

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.

xYes

No

The SYCSA strongly believes that young carers who are likely to become adult carers should have a Carer's Support Plan, and that planning for this should be **carried out well in advance of the young person reaching the age of 18** so that the transition is as smooth as possible. Planning for children with disabilities begins at age 14, and this should also be the age when children who are caring should first be assessed as to their likelihood of them still being carers at age 18.

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?

xYes

No

The SYCSA supports the proposal to require integrated and non-integrated bodies to include carers in the planning, shaping and delivery of services. Together with the other NCOs, we believe it is important that carers and people who use services are involved in determining the types of support and services that should be available in their community.

We also believe that young carers should have an opportunity to become involved in shaping services in their community. This can be done using methods which are age appropriate, in partnership with young carer support projects, such as local and national young carer forums and the Scottish Young Carers Festival.

We also support proposals to enhance legislation on the involvement of carers and young carers in care planning for the person they care for and in shaping the support they need to help them manage their caring role and have a life outside caring. We believe that the knowledge and experience of carers and young carers should be recognised and valued in care planning and that they (and the person they care for) are the experts in deciding what services and support is needed).

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?

x Yes

No

Comments:

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:

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?

The Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance strongly believes that young carers views should be at the centre of any planning shaping and delivery of services or policies which may affect them. Many local young carers services have a young carers forum which could respond to these challenges and should be consulted as such.

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

The SYCSA believes that **there should be statutory provision for local authorities and health boards to involve and collaborate with carers and carers' organisations in the development of a local carer's strategy.** These should be connected to the national carers' strategy.

We strongly believe that young carers' strategies should also be developed. This could be a distinct part of the carers' strategy or a separate document, but the needs of young carers should be considered alongside adult carers in a local area. Not all young carers will be accessing children's services and therefore may not be covered by a Children's Services Plan. Some Children's Services plans currently in development, viewed by Alliance members, do not show any recognition of young carers and their issues. However, members of the Alliance have reported that following the national lead and having a local young carers strategy in place has been instrumental in providing effective support to young carers.

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?

xYes

No

We believe that local authorities should ensure that there are sufficient services in their area to meet carers' and young carers' needs. There should **be a definitive list of universal, free services that are available to all carers** and that form the core services provided by carers' centres and services. This would be the minimum standard for services to provide for carers. Existing carers' and young carers' services should be supported and resourced.

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

Together with NCO colleagues, the SYCSA believes that there should be a legislative requirement for GP practices to develop a register of carers and young carers within their practice. The coding mechanism is already in place to enable a register to be created. However, we think that there is limited value in creating a register if it is simply data collection. We believe that in addition to the identification of carers, GPs should be required to proactively refer carers and young carers for assessment and that this should be recorded on the individual patient record. We also advocate that the carers' register should trigger a review of the individual carer every six months to determine if the caring situation has changed and whether additional support is required in terms of the carers own health and wellbeing.

As far as young carers are concerned, consultation with our partner agencies within the SYCSA and others tells us that should be a requirement for schools to keep a register of students who are carers. To aid identification of young carers, there needs to be a programme of awareness raising of the issue in schools to help young carers to understand their situation and self identify.

We see less value in placing the same requirement on local authorities as many carers may never come into contact with social work services. Where carers are in touch with their local social work offices, their details will be available on internal client recording systems either in their own right via a carer's assessment or on the community care assessment of the person they are providing care for. The forthcoming integration of health and social care would provide an opportunity to develop integrated ICT systems to enable the sharing of information across GP practices and local authority social work departments.

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

Yes, for all the reasons mentioned in Q22.

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

Yes

No

The SYCSA agree that GPs should be required to report annually to their respective Health Boards on compliance with the GP contract. We also agree that Health Boards should, in turn, be required to report on compliance to the Scottish Government. Reporting should include: the number of carers identified within the practice, how many carers have been referred for an assessment, and how many 6 monthly reviews have been undertaken. To support this and provide a focus for carer and young carer identification and support, we believe the appointment of a carers lead within individual practices would be beneficial.

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)?

Young carers have not offered a view on this. As the local authority where the child resides would be responsible for the Child's Plan, it seems sensible for that to be the case. However, the welfare of the child is paramount, and we would hope that local authorities would work together in the best interests of the young carer where this was an issue.

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: Again, young carers have not offered a view on this. Therefore, the argument given in Q25 would also be appropriate here.

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

Yes

No

Comments: This should be for all local authorities, not just those who are members of CoSLA.

Additional Comments: The Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance holds the view of the other NCOs that the current document should include the following:

Proposal for a Duty on hospital admission and discharge procedures

Spending time in hospital, either due to an emergency or a planned admission is often a time of concern and additional stress for both carers and the people they care for. This is consistently the case, both when it is the carer who is admitted to hospital and when it is the person they care for.

An admission to hospital often results in a person becoming a carer for the first time, or it can signify that their caring role is in transition as the condition of the person they care for deteriorates and there is an increase in their care needs.

Where a carer requires hospital treatment this frequently means they are unable to continue to provide care while they recover, or sometimes, due to ongoing ill-health they may no longer be able to continue their caring role or may have to re-evaluate the level of care they can provide

It is therefore essential that at these times carers have access to information and support, from the point of admission to discharge and that their views are fully taken into account when the discharge plan is put in place.

Young carers highlighted at the Young Carers Festival that discharge of a parent from a mental health unit for example, led to them being confused about how to provide care and feeling disregarded as a carer. It is therefore really important that the role of young carers should be recognized at this point and an appropriate support plan put in place.

Carer support should be a part of hospital discharge planning and it should be available on discharge where appropriate (Carer, North Lanarkshire)

Despite the existing Scottish Government Protocol on Hospital Discharge, practice across Scotland differs widely and very often, to the detriment of carers. We strongly advocate that hospital discharge must begin at the point of admission with the full and active involvement of carers. Where necessary, support must be provided to the carer to ensure that their views are taken into consideration.

Discharge planning must take account of the level of care that carers are willing and able to provide and should put in place additional support or replacement care where required.

We therefore propose a **duty on health boards to inform and involve carers in hospital admission and discharge procedures.**

Louise Morgan

The Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance

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