

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 term "carers assessment" can indicate that the carer is being "tested" on their abilities to care. The wording of "carers support plan" is more much holistic and addresses that the plan is there to support them in their caring role.

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: The substantial and regular test is still very vague, and many local authorities are still unclear as to what carers fall into this category. All carers should have the access to receiving a support plan, regardless of the hours they do. This will also encourage local authorities to pro-actively offer carer support plans to all carers and increase the uptake.

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: Removing this element will ensure the carers support plan is inclusive of the carers needs, rather than focussing on what the cared for is or is not accessing (although this is still a part of the plan that should still be looked at).

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: Both options mean that the carer is empowered to request the support they are entitled to if they have not been visible to their local authority, while ensuring it is not only expected of them to identify a need for support. Any carer identified by the local authority should be made an offer of the carers support plan

to ensure they still have a responsibility to identify and address these needs.

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

Yes

No

Comments: This wording should be removed as it gives an indication that the carer is being judged on their competence rather than their willingness to provide care.

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: There should be indications on when to expect the service, and if this is unable to be met then the reasons are set out. If a system like this is not in the place, there is the risk of the carer waiting a lengthy period before they receive a Carers Support Plan. Furthermore, there should be a complaint route that local authorities are answerable to should the Carers Support Plan not be completed in a reasonable time period.

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

Comments: It is very significant, especially for those of minority ethnicities such as gypsy travellers. We work with many carers who do not live in the Perth & Kinross area, but are caring for someone in our local authority catchment area, however many of them have commented that it is difficult for them to be recognised as a carer by our council as they do not reside in our area, which means that their needs and opinions are not considered when providing an assessment for the cared for that should be holistic.

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: Clear guidelines across all local authorities will provide the opportunity for better communication between local authorities when supporting carers and cared for if they live in different local authority catchment areas.

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: Responsibility to ensure that the Carers Support Plan is carried forward with appropriate actions that respond to the carers needs is vital in ensuring that the Carers Support Plan is not merely a paper exercise and that it holds value and worth in its exercise. The information and advice for carers does not need to be based in the local authority, but could be funded by them and outsourced to another organisation to deliver the service.

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:

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: Carers are encouraged and entitled to access services to meet their needs, and therefore a duty to support them is vital. The eligibility framework would need to be inclusive of all carers, as the range of hours, tasks, impact etc will vary between every carer but they are each entitled to support in their own right.

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

Yes

No

Comments: If a duty is not imposed and it remains a discretionary power, many carers will not be allocated to the appropriate support. Carers are constantly regarded as saving the Government millions of pounds a year, and it should be a duty to ensure that they are invested in as it may result in a crisis point being hit and therefore a strain on statutory services to provide emergency support. A duty will ensure that support is in place to prevent such issues arising in the future.

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

Yes

No

Comments: It is imperative that carers have the opportunity to have a break from their caring role to ensure they have the energy to provide care on a long term basis. Carers are equal partners in care, and paid employees are entitled to annual leave and opportunities for breaks to re-charge their batteries, therefore carers should be entitled to the same opportunities. There are pots of funding available for carers to apply for a short break, however carers may not be eligible for certain funding pots and may not be successful with their application due to high demand, so the current provision is not sufficient to ensure all carers get the chance to have a well earned break. As previously mentioned, the risk of a carer's health deteriorating if they are unable to access appropriate services and respite is very high and will result in the local authorities providing emergency support that may not be suitable to the carers needs.

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: This would be beneficial, as this will guide the worker who is completing the plan to link up the needs identified to the appropriate support and services

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:

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: As mentioned previously, carers are and should be treated as equal partners in care. They know the cared for person inside out, and because they receive the impact of that caring role, their opinions and views should be included when the cared for is being assessed for services.

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: Carers organisations are working with carers on a daily basis and can identify where the gaps in service provision are in their local authority area. With their opinion, services can be developed that are responsive to carers needs.

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: As previously highlighted, carers are equal partners in care and this principle would further strengthen this image with carers themselves and professionals which will increase respectful attitudes and working relationships.

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:

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: This suggestion is paramount in ensuring that the national carers strategy is implement on a local level and personalised to the local needs identified

in each area. It also promotes healthy collaborative working relationships between statutory and voluntary organisations, alongside the 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?

Yes

No

Comments: Again, these range of services need not be delivered by local authorities and health boards, but can be delivered by voluntary organisations and funded and reviewed by local authorities and health boards if they feel those organisations are suitable.

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: Holding a carers register, by both social care and GPs, will ensure good practice and ideally these registers would be interlinked within each local authority area (subject to consent). This is an area that is very unclear in our area, which results in registers that are out of date.

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: This would be beneficial if the registers were monitored on a regular basis so that recommendations could be provided to ensure they were streamlined and up to date.

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

Yes

No

Comments: It would be appropriate for health boards to be delegated this task on a local level to ensure they are complying and have decided actions on what action to take if they are not.

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: We think this would be achievable if there are open lines of communication between local authorities, and that the carers support plan would be collaborated on by both local authorities.

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 of the carer should take the costs for any support provided, whether this is in their area or a different local authority.

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

Yes

No

Comments: This guidance should then be implemented on a local level, quite similar to the suggestion of joint work on carrying out a carers strategy.