

ROUGH SLEEPING DATA COLLECTION

Purpose

1. To update HPSG on the publication of the Centre for Homelessness Impact's Options Appraisal, summarise key points in the report and promote a discussion on next steps to take forward the HARSAG recommendation:

Scottish Government should implement a solution similar to the CHAIN system used in London, to support two aims of HARSAG: (i) real-time 'by name' data sharing between the agencies working with people who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping; and (ii) enabling frequent and regular reporting of numbers, locations and other data to support monitoring the reduction in rough sleeping across Scotland.

Introduction

2. Our vision is for frontline workers to have the information they need, and for people facing rough sleeping to avoid having to tell their story over and over again - our goal is to use better data to ensure a better result.
3. In May 2018 we asked the Centre for Homelessness Impact to undertake an Options Appraisal for a new rough sleeping data collection. The report was published on 22 May 2019 and announced by the Cabinet Secretary during the Housing First conference. The report presents the Centre's review of existing data systems, the findings from their extensive engagement with stakeholders and services users and, building on this work, it introduces three example data collection systems which aim to meet the HARSAG recommendations in different ways.
4. The Centre are holding an event on 5 June at which they will launch their 5-year strategy. There will also be a session on the Options Appraisal at which there will be discussion to feed into our plans. Mr Stewart will be delivering the keynote speech at this event.
5. In the High Level Action Plan we made a commitment to publish the Options Appraisal this year. We also said we would set out our next steps towards implementing a new data collection so that 'frontline workers have accurate information about rough sleepers locally and are able to respond to their needs and secure accommodation and support quickly'.

The report

6. A 25-page summary of the report has been provided to HPSG members as well as the link to the full version.
7. The report emphasises that defining the overall purpose of the data collection system upfront is the single most important factor in the collection's success and that a new data collection can present the opportunity to move closer towards

collaboration and partnership working. The report also tells us that the new data collection system must adhere to the following 'design principles':

- support the needs of individuals first and foremost, before the needs of the data collection. This means information is collected in a way that respects people's agency, dignity and preferences.
- be usable for those inputting data and those for whom data is being collected. This means it is simple to use, builds on familiar conventions and is useful beyond its core purpose of data collection.
- have a core of consistent data for it to be useful as well as a certain amount of flexibility to allow service providers to do their work effectively.
- account for people's wider context so that interactions between staff and clients are sensitive to their situations as they change.
- protect people's privacy, while supporting consensual sharing of information where it benefits individuals.

3 options proposed

8. The report sets out 3 illustrative options for delivering a new rough sleeping data collection. These build on the HARSAG recommendation which highlights three benefits for a new data collection system (to enable joined up working, to measure progress towards ending rough sleeping and to evaluate system-level improvements). Each option illustrates how a system could be configured based on different weighting of these approaches – all aim to address all three benefits to some extent, but shifting the emphasis differently for each option allows for some focus and prioritisation.

Option 1

A standard for data returns from organisations working with people experiencing street homelessness, used to build a picture of street homelessness and service usage. Client data are collected by a number of organisations and periodically reported back to a central data store.

Option 2

A simple and focused offline register of people experiencing or at risk of street homelessness in each local area, used for monitoring numbers of rough sleepers and to support information sharing between agencies assisting people experiencing street homelessness. The register is hosted, maintained and managed by a lead organisation but its content is provided in collaboration with other partner agencies via informal knowledge-sharing.

Option 3

A real-time, person-centred, shared client relationship management software system, used to better coordinate client support across services. The system is structured around client records (rather than organisations), which can be accessed and updated by organisations working with the client.

Next steps

9. The Options Appraisal report is a substantial and important piece of work which will assist the Scottish Government to introduce a new rough sleeping data collection in Scotland. The report provides a strong basis from which we can work with stakeholders to develop, test and design a practical solution.

10. The next steps are:

- Publish a statement about our planned next steps.
- Set up a knowledge hub (or similar) for dissemination and engagement.
- Scoping work in liaison with analysts, digital and procurement experts, external stakeholders and people with lived experience.
- Possible pilots or small-scale testing.
- Design and delivery phase, followed by roll out.

Discussion

11. We would invite HPSG members to consider whether they could have a role in helping to develop, design and / or test a new data collection, ensuring we build on current local practice.

12. We would also invite HPSG members to propose further Design Principles which could be taken into account in developing this work.

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