

## ADSW BRIEFING ON THE PROCUREMENT OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

### Background

ADSW is the professional organisation representing senior social work managers in Scottish local authorities. Given the recent election campaign focus on health and social care services we commissioned research to look at the best way of delivering these services. On the basis of this research we formed our proposals for the future delivering of adult social care and health services. Both these documents can be downloaded from our website home page at [www.adsw.org.uk](http://www.adsw.org.uk)

Our submission to the Health and Sport Committee's inquiry into the regulation of care may also be of interest to you in this debate: [http://www.adsw.org.uk/doc\\_get.aspx?DocID=485](http://www.adsw.org.uk/doc_get.aspx?DocID=485)

### Providing and improving care

1. Scottish local authorities employ 53,000 social workers and social carers of a total social care workforce of some 198,000 to support 650,000 people and their families, through services commissioned from the voluntary and private care sectors, or from councils' own care services.
2. ADSW is concerned about the recent issues with certain care providers such as Southern Cross. ADSW has discussed with Scottish Government the need for a review of the care market in Scotland given the emergence of these failures. In addition, in order to address difficulties in the care provision, local authorities are helping a number of providers to restructure and adapt in order that they can provide the care that people continue to need.
3. ADSW and its constituent local authorities works very closely with the regulatory body SCSWIS in addressing quality of care issues. ADSW is a member of the National Care Planning Contingency Group in order that Local Authorities can effectively step in to support vulnerable people when these companies fail.
4. Social work, as all public services recognise the need to think differently in the current financial climate. We are already well on the way to producing services that are designed, controlled and contributed to by the people who need them, their families and carers. Personalisation<sup>1</sup>, self-directed support and re-ablement<sup>2</sup> projects have all demonstrated that care can be better and more cost effective. And, because of these changes and the forthcoming Bill on Social Care and Self Directed Support, the way we commission and procure care in the future will change dramatically.
5. The Scottish Government's Change Fund is also assisting local authorities and their partners in the health service to provide better more sustainable services for adults across Scotland. This complements the work on Reshaping Older People's Care, which ADSW fully supports.
6. Issues that people and politicians may be concerned about such as charging for services and the availability of services in different areas are currently being dealt with. COSLA, in partnership with ADSW is already addressing these issues with nationally agreed eligibility criteria for services in place with the Scottish Government; and a review of national guidance on charging currently underway.

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<sup>1</sup> ADSW's report on personalisation can be downloaded here:

[http://www.adsw.org.uk/doc\\_get.aspx?DocID=355](http://www.adsw.org.uk/doc_get.aspx?DocID=355)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/25100200/0>

7. ADSW believes that we need to provide the very best care that we can for the people in our communities that need our help. We do not believe that this can be achieved through nationally driven integration as suggested by various parties during the recent election campaigns. Rather, we believe that local areas are best placed to find the solution that works for them and should be allowed to do so. However, we recognise that people in Scotland have a right to expect certain standards. We have prepared a 9 point proposal<sup>3</sup> in order to achieve improvements in services without fracturing care.

### Social work in Scotland

8. Whilst recognising that there are issues within care services in Scotland which we are seeking to address as outlined above, we should also recognise the commitment and work that is done on a daily basis to support the 650 000 people across Scotland that rely on our services. The motion today talks about a framework for improving care services; ADSW is concerned that in seeking to address some of these issues that there is not sufficient recognition of what works currently in Scottish social care.
9. The way in which social work services in Scotland are provided is unique. The main difference to other systems is that care services in Scotland are integrated. This means that one agency provides care and support to children and families; adults with mental health issues and learning disabilities; older people; and people in the criminal justice system. These services are also provided within a wide range of outlets: residential care, day care, care at home and supervisory care. Because the local authority provides these services they are integrated with other supporting and protecting services such as housing (including adapted and community housing), carers support and benefits advice. This sort of integrated care can only be provided by local authorities.
10. Social work services in Scotland have already driven change in the way that people receive services by making them more personal, supportive and empowering. We know that 88% of adult service users told the Social Work Inspection Agency that they were treated with dignity and respect when using social work services; and 77% felt that social work services had made a positive difference to their lives. Almost three-quarters of those surveyed described positive outcomes in terms of feeling safer and being able to lead more independent lives. Two thirds were positive about being helped to feel part of the community<sup>4</sup>.

For further information please contact:

Jane Devine

07901 772233 / [jane.devine@adsw.org.uk](mailto:jane.devine@adsw.org.uk)

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<sup>3</sup> Full document available at [www.adsw.org.uk](http://www.adsw.org.uk)

<sup>4</sup> Social Work Inspection Agency, Overview Report 2010,  
[http://www.scswis.com/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=287&Itemid=703](http://www.scswis.com/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=287&Itemid=703)