

Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)

Briefing for the Public Audit and Post-legislative Scrutiny Committee –
Self-directed Support

26 October 2017



About the ALLIANCE

The ALLIANCE is the national third sector intermediary for a range of health and social care organisations. The ALLIANCE has over 2,100 members including large, national support providers as well as small, local volunteer-led groups and people who are disabled, living with long term conditions or providing unpaid care. Many NHS Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships are associate members and many health and social care professionals are Professional Associates. Commercial organisations may also become Corporate Associates.

Our vision is for a Scotland where people of all ages who are disabled or living with long term conditions, and unpaid carers, have a strong voice and enjoy their right to live well, as equal and active citizens, free from discrimination, with support and services that put them at the centre.

Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) believes that the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 ('the Act') requires examination to ascertain why its policy intention – to offer disabled people and people with long term conditions choice and control over their support – has not been fully implemented. Although the Act has a firm policy objective, the ALLIANCE does not believe that this has been realised.

Implementation in line with policy principles

The Act is based on the human rights principles of dignity and respect, which are intended to underpin the Self-directed Support (SDS) process from assessment of a person's support requirements through to the use of one of the SDS options to meet their personal outcomes. Meanwhile, the Policy Memorandum accompanying the Act states that it:

“aims to provide people with choice and control over their support. The wider policy aims are to ensure that services and support become more flexible and responsive to people's needs (in line with the Christie Commission's recommendations), and to drive a cultural shift around the delivery of support

that views people as equal citizens with rights and responsibilities rather than people who receive services.”¹

Scottish Government statistics released in July 2017² indicate that only 27 per cent of people who access social care have been given the option of how their support is delivered through SDS. This is up 7 per cent on the first annual statistical release, published in June 2016³. While this indicates an increase in the proportion of people accessing SDS options across Scotland, there remain large gaps between the Act’s ambition and its implementation.

People’s experiences of SDS

This implementation gap has major implications for the experiences of people who access social care and their ability to attain their outcomes with support that they choose and control. The ALLIANCE’s research with over 100 people around Scotland found that there were concerning aspects of SDS that must be addressed if the policy objectives of the Act are to be achieved. The following findings summarise some of the key issues:

- Overall, around half of respondents had to wait up to a year or more to have their SDS support packages put in place after being assessed.
- Over half of respondents state that the amount of hours they are given in their SDS package is not sufficient to meet their needs for each day, and 14 per cent are unsure.
- Over half of respondents on SDS options 1 or 2 stated that they made their choice themselves or with input from friends and family. This contrasts with those on options 3 or 4, who were more likely to have had a social worker or care provider make the choice on their behalf.
- Over half of respondents on option 3 stated that they were not informed at all or knew only a little about SDS. This is double that of those on option 1 and 2 who were more likely to know a fair amount, or feel very informed.⁴

Given the findings of the ALLIANCE’s research, and that of other third sector organisations, the ALLIANCE believes that a review of the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 is urgently required. If the number of people who access social care but who have not either started an SDS discussion or moved onto

¹ Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Bill - Policy Memorandum, 2010 - [http://www.parliament.scot/S4_Bills/Social%20Care%20\(Self%20directed%20Support\)%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/Policy_Memo.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/S4_Bills/Social%20Care%20(Self%20directed%20Support)%20(Scotland)%20Bill/Policy_Memo.pdf)

² Data under development - Self-directed Support, Scotland, 2015-16, Scottish Government, July 2017 - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00522283.pdf>

³ Data under development - Self-directed Support, Scotland, 2014-15, Scottish Government, July 2016 - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00502637.pdf>

⁴ Personal Experience of Self-directed Support; Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland; May 2017 - http://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/download/library/lib_5926d6e2977e1/

SDS does not substantially increase by the end of the 10 year strategy in 2020, the ALLIANCE calls for a national review and implementation of corrective measures.

Suggested questions

The Committee may wish to consider the following questions during future evidence sessions on this issue:

1. What plans do the Scottish Government have to increase SDS implementation through working with local authorities and Health and Social Care Partnerships?
2. What plans do the Scottish Government have to increase awareness and understanding of individuals' right to Self-directed Support?
3. What plans do the Scottish Government have to improve people's access to Local Advice Centres?
4. What plans do the Scottish Government have to improve and increase the qualitative data gathered by local and national government into people's experiences of SDS as a way of monitoring implementation?