

Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland

‘Creating the CALL (Connections At Local Levels)’

Report from Falkirk



Introduction



Creating the CALL (Connections At Local Levels) Falkirk was an opportunity to share knowledge, experience, and feelings about self-directed support. The event included representation from the local authority, the third sector, and people who use social care services in giving a picture of the SDS landscape in Falkirk and the surrounding district.

A series of presentations given throughout the day gave a broad account of the current issues affecting people in Falkirk, and the services available to support people in accessing self-directed support in order to achieve their individual outcomes. The following event note gives an overview of the presentations and summarises the key themes to be raised during ‘Creating the CALL’ in Falkirk.

View from the council

Stirling and Falkirk have been progressing with the implementation of self-directed support through a cooperative approach with the third sector and health boards, ensuring that the principles are fully implemented. Margret Petherbridge from Falkirk Council gave an in-depth overview of the implementation proposals that the council was putting into action.

She began by outlining the principles of the Social Care (Self-Directed Support) (Scotland) Act and the council’s approach to implementation. This included: the involvement of people who use services being consulted on the design and delivery of their support packages; people being given the appropriate information in order to make the most suitable choice over their support; the effective collaboration between the council, third sector and independent providers; the promotion of dignity of those who require support; and finally the ensuring of a person’s right to take part in the life of the community.



This laid the foundation for an overview of the process for an individual going through assessment to receiving support, within which it was emphasised that an outcomes based approach offers an individual the ability to plan their support and take appropriate risks to live independently. At the same time the implications for providers adapting to the new landscape of social care were acknowledged. Specifically, the relationship between commissioners and providers was highlighted as being a positive tool to developing support that met the needs of the community. By taking a co-productive approach with all providers of support, including the NHS, education and the wider community, SDS could be implemented in partnership.



Carer's perspective

Ian McCourt, a representative from the Princess Royal Trust, described the current framework of support for carers and the implications of SDS. The Princess Royal Trust aims *“To ensure that carers of all ages are recognised and valued, receive the information and support they need to allow them to care with confidence and in good health, and are empowered to have a life of their own outside caring”*. Identifying that there are approximately 20,000 in Falkirk and district, Ian highlighted the economic and social implications of having a carer workforce. With self-directed support being implemented for carers to access, Ian spoke

of the potential opportunities for carers to be recognised as contributors to the independence of the people that employ them in a more professional context, while acknowledging the relational implications of the dynamics that can arise, for example, from employing family members.

Asset Mapping

The ALLIANCE's own project, ALISS (A Local Information System for Scotland) aims to make information about local sources of support more findable. ALISS is innovative and unique - it has been designed by and developed with people with long term conditions and professionals from multiple sectors involved in signposting people to support, and offers not only a technology solution but a means of communities working together to gather, maintain and share information.



Colin Young, Senior Policy and Outcomes Officer at the ALLIANCE, invited delegates to consider the assets in their own area that support their own wellbeing. To start the conversation Colin gave the example of a new trend across the UK whereby people come together each week before work to have a morning rave. With no medical prescription or controlled exercise regime this phenomena is energising people to stay both mentally and physically healthy during the working week. The

people's opinions being unheard or ignored and ultimately young people having no opportunities or support in early adulthood. To tackle these barriers, the 7 principles suggest that young people should be at the centre of the planning process, plans should be in place until the young person reaches 25, and that the policies impacting young disabled people should be joined-up.

Advocacy support – Forth Valley Advocacy

A running theme throughout the event was the principle that advocacy services should be made available to people accessing social care. Advocacy support gives individuals the opportunity for their views to be taken into account throughout the assessment and subsequent management of their self-directed support arrangement. Martine Turner from Forth Valley Advocacy expressed the importance of the



role of an independent advocate in enabling individuals to maximise their independence. Independent advocacy, in the context of self-directed support, offers people an impartial method of expressing their opinions during their engagement with social services. Forth Valley Advocacy, Martine explains, works with people going through the process to support them in preparing for meetings, understanding the information given to them, working through the person's support plan and the four options of self-directed support, and ultimately supporting people to make an informed choice over the support they require to meet their outcomes.

East Renfrewshire SDS Forum – The Journey



Cherie Rodney from East Renfrewshire SDS Forum described her journey of being a parent of her disabled son and the creation of a peer support network. The value she placed on self-directed support being an enabler for her son to live independently and participate in activities that he enjoys, indicated the benefits of having a network of peers to guide one another through the process.

This was followed by Rosalina Rowen, who discussed the positive collaboration between the East Renfrewshire SDS Forum, the Local Authority, and other organisations in that area. The presentation of the opportunities for involvement in a co-productive process of SDS implementation gave inspiration to others to increase individual engagement.

Creating the future of Self-Directed Support

The intention of Creating the CALL is to instigate a discussion in Falkirk on the future delivery of self-directed support. While the ALLIANCE works to increase the opportunities for integrated self-directed health and social care, all delegates who attended the event and those they work with should own the agenda, ensuring that

people with long term conditions are at the centre of the consultation on the future of self-directed support in Falkirk.