

Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)

Children, young people, and the National Care Service – ALLIANCE event report

18 October 2022



Introduction

On Tuesday 18 October, the ALLIANCE held an online event to outline the potential inclusion of children's services within the National Care Service (NCS). This report is a summary of the discussions held at that event and the insights given by panellists and attendees. Speakers included:

- Paul Beaton, Head of Children's Services Reform Unit, Scottish Government
- Anna Kynaston, Deputy Director, the Social Care and National Care Service Development Directorate, Scottish Government
- Professor Brigid Daniel, Professor Emerita, Queen Margaret University
- Dr Heather Ottaway, Head of Evidence and Innovation, CELCIS
- Dr Alex McTier, Evidence and Evaluation Specialist, CELCIS

The event was attended by 46 people, including ALLIANCE members, representing the third sector, health and social care providers, people with lived experience of accessing social care, academics, and members of the Scottish Government.

Context

The National Care Service (Scotland) Bill proposes that the NCS will be responsible for social work and social care support, including support for unpaid carers. Under current proposals, the NCS would be accountable to Ministers, and be responsible for planning and commissioning primary care and community health services as well as social care provision.

One of the elements under consideration within the implementation of the National Care Service is the potential inclusion of children and young adult's services. The Bill leaves the option to include children and young people's services within the NCS, following a period of consultation and further research, but the decision as to whether to include children's services within the NCS has not yet been reached.

Co-production work led by the Scottish Government, and a research project carried out by CELCIS into children and young people's experiences of social care are two of the critical components that will inform a ministerial decision about whether to include children and young people's services with the NCS. This research and co-production work is being carried out across 2022-23.

Presentation

The event was chaired by Dr Hannah Tweed, Senior Policy Officer at the ALLIANCE. We first heard from the Scottish Government, on the co-production work with children and young people and their families.

Paul Beaton, Head of Children's Services Reform Unit at the Scottish Government, emphasised the importance of providing high quality and consistent care and support across the country. Touching on the research being undertaken, he said that it must:

“Ensure the decision made on children's service is one that best meets the needs of children. The building of the evidence base is one of our critical next steps that was recognised in the pre-legislative consultation from a great many stakeholders and delivery partners”.

Whether or not children's services are included within the NCS, Paul Beaton stated that the NCS must be informed by the perspective of children and young people, rather than retrofitted.

Anna Kynaston, Deputy Director of the Social Care and National Care Service Development Directorate, spoke next on the introduction of a framework bill (the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill), which will bridge the gap that has previously existed between policy, legal intentions, and delivery on the front line.

Anna Kynaston shared the recently launched co-design process has been divided into five themes, which aim to start filling in the detail that was set in secondary regulations underneath the Bill. She encouraged people to share their experiences by signing up for the lived experience panel if they had front line experience of receiving social care or had supported a family member or a friend receiving social care. Further information on how to engage with the lived experience panels is available at the end of this report.

Attendees then heard from the academics involved in researching children and young people's experiences of social care in Scotland. Professor Brigid Daniel, who chairs the independent steering group for the research outlined her professional experience as a social worker and academic as informing her practice

Professor Daniels outlined that the research project started with a recognition that adult and children's services are interconnected. She stated that:

“It is people that deliver services, not structures, and processes. Therefore, the research needs to look at what inhibits people being able to offer that support and what can facilitate being able to offer that support. [...] We already have huge amounts of information and research about what children and families want and need. [...] What they want to see is their views being put into practice. So, what we're looking at is what is the best kind of structures to enable [...] seamless, flexible, creative, relationship based services.”

Dr Heather Ottaway, Head of Evidence and Innovation at CELCIS, and Dr Alex McTier, Evidence and Evaluation Specialist at CELCIS, then delved into a more detailed account of the strands of research being undertaken, the methodology, and project aims. The research team intend to gather high quality evidence that informs how best children's services can be delivered in the light of the potential introduction of the National Care Service. Framing their position around the question, "How do we ensure that children, young people and their families get the help they need when they need it?" Drs Ottaway and McTier outlined the research trajectory, including an international literature review on models of care.

The research will have 5 strands:

1. A rapid evidence review of published literature in English.
2. A 'deep dive' to examine the approaches to integration and delivery of children and young peoples' services taken in a range of high-income countries.
3. A national scoping and mapping study to explore different models of integrated service delivery in Scotland, and any potential effects on children and young peoples' outcomes.
4. National surveys of the children and young peoples' services workforce (within social care) and of senior leaders within children and young peoples' services, to build on the emerging findings from the national scoping and mapping study.
5. Targeted focus groups and interviews with members of the workforce, to explore and better understand the findings Strands 2 and 4.

Strand 1 will review English-language literature and research to better understand the evidence associated with different models of integration of children and young peoples' services with healthcare and adult social care services, both nationally and internationally. This strand will be completed by April 2023.

Strand 2 will include an in-depth look at case studies in four or five countries (list still to be confirmed) which represent different approaches to the integration of children and young peoples' services with healthcare and adult social care service. By reviewing the models in these countries, the researchers will consider whether there are any local approaches to the organisation and delivery of children and young peoples' services that can inform Scotland's future approach within the proposed NCS. This strand will be completed by April 2023.

Strand 3 will 'map' the different models of integrated service delivery across Scotland's local authority areas and Health and Social Care Partnerships and investigate any potential effects of integration on a range of outcomes over time. This strand will be completed by May 2023.

Strand 4 will include two national surveys. One will be a workforce survey focusing on individual experiences and concrete practice examples relating to cross-service working. This will include questions on: the availability, timeliness and quality of services; transitions to adult's services; children and young peoples' outcomes; experiences of local leadership and culture. The second survey will hear from senior leaders and will focus on the same issues from an organisational perspective. It will also include questions about a range of outcomes for children, young people and their families, and for the workforce within respondents' local area. This strand will be by June 2023.

Strand 5 will build on the emerging findings from Strands 3 and 4. Targeted focus groups and interviews will be held with members of the workforce to explore and better understand the emergent findings. The research team will work with the Steering Committee (led by Prof. Brigid Daniels) to decide on which local areas and groups to include and which questions or topics to explore. This strand will be completed by August 2023.

The results from each strand of the research study will be published separately and available to the public. The project outputs will include a full report and a shorter report for non-specialist audiences. The final report will draw together and analyse all five strands of the research and summarise the key findings. The thematic reports are due to be published in summer 2023, with the final report pending publication in September 2023.

Question and Answer Session

Following speaker presentations, Dr Hannah Tweed invited questions from attendees with responses from the speakers. Key questions and responses included the following:

If children's services are included in the National Care Service, how will parity of funding with adult services be ensured?

Paul Beaton acknowledged the significant concerns about pay, conditions, different modules and approaches to the commissioning and delivery of services, citing the possibility of creating national and local structures to enhance the delivery of parity for children's services. Paul Beaton also recognised the uncertainty surrounding funding and stated that ministers are completely mindful of the pressure and challenges when considering the issue of funding through the developmental process.

Anna Kynaston responded by focusing on the importance of a life-long, person-centred approach. Anna Kynaston spoke of the need to frame funding within the context of getting it right for children's services and thinking about a person's whole life journey through a system. Furthermore, Anna Kynaston stated that there is a need to focus forecasting with regards to the future needs of society. Accurate forecasting will ensure the correct bids are made thus allowing funding across all areas of the system.

How are you determining the research criteria for the international case studies?

Dr Alex McTier outlined several key determinants. Firstly, the countries chosen will be relatively small, high-income countries with populations of around fifteen million, so that the research is comparative to Scotland. Secondly, the countries selected will either have a national model of health and social care, or be countries where there has been a conversation within the last ten years around whether to move to a national model or a local, more regional model.

Furthermore, Dr McTier highlighted that one of the biggest aspects for feasibly implementing this case study is whether there is sufficient literature available. The research team will selectively use interviews with experts and key stakeholders from each country, however, they are dependent, for logistical and time reasons, on the English language literature that already exists.

How realistic is the timeline for including a genuine process of participation with children and young people to understand the difference between children's needs and adults' needs?

Paul Beaton and Professor Daniels both acknowledged that there are challenges associated with the timescale. However, there already exists a plethora of work and research into children and young people's experiences of social care. Therefore, the team is mindful of not replicating work; instead, they will look to build on and take forward the evidence that already exists.

Professor Daniels also highlighted to importance of not jumping straight into a political decision but taking full advantage of the year to gather evidence and build on the data already in existence. Furthermore, Professor Daniels emphasised that people should not view this research as finite but rather as a baseline for more longitudinal work that will inform policy and practice.

Will the National Care Service include those in the third sector who provide children's care services and education?

Professor Daniels responded by outlining a distinction between, what has been set out for policy purposes regarding what constitutes adult social care services and what constitutes children and young peoples' services, and the broader, free-ranging scope of the research project. Research projects already exist where people have been working closely with both education and social care, and these examples will be considered.

Professor Daniels proposed that it is first worth considering the question of integration itself and what that means. Integration can take on multiple interpretations. Therefore, whilst formally there may be a list of categorised children and young peoples' services, the research will likely deliver much broader categories and there is not going to be artificial restriction as to what the data may produce.

Participants were invited to contact the research team and Scottish Government officials with any further questions (details below).

The ALLIANCE would like to thank all speakers and attendees who joined in the discussions on the potential inclusion of children's services in the proposed National Care Service.

Resources and mailing lists

To watch the full discussion by the panellists visit the ALLIANCE YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-kNPfecogU>

Any questions about the research project or the co-production work on the potential inclusion of children and young peoples' services in the NCS should be directed to:
ChildrenServicesReform@gov.scot

To join our NCS mailing list, please email Hannah Tweed at:
hannah.tweed@alliance-scotland.org.uk

If you are interested in further information surrounding the ALLIANCE's work on the NCS, the following may be relevant:

The ALLIANCE's response the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's call for views on the NCS (Scotland) Bill (2022):
[ALLIANCE response to the National Care Service \(Scotland\) Bill - Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland \(alliance-scotland.org.uk\)](#)

The ALLIANCE's response to the National Care Service consultation (2021):
[The ALLIANCE calls for National Care Service to be "investment of citizenship" - Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland \(alliance-scotland.org.uk\)](#)

About the ALLIANCE

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is the national third sector intermediary for a range of health and social care organisations. We have a growing membership of over 3,000 national and local third sector organisations, associates in the statutory and private sectors, disabled people, people living with long term conditions and unpaid carers. Many NHS Boards, Health and Social Care Partnerships, Medical Practices, Third Sector Interfaces, Libraries and Access Panels are also members.

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.

The ALLIANCE has three core aims; we seek to:

- Ensure people are at the centre, that their voices, expertise and rights drive policy and sit at the heart of design, delivery and improvement of support and services.
- Support transformational change, towards approaches that work with individual and community assets, helping people to stay well, supporting human rights, self management, co-production and independent living.
- Champion and support the third sector as a vital strategic and delivery partner and foster better cross-sector understanding and partnership.

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