

Changing Lives

Background

What is Changing Lives?

Changing Lives - the 21st Century Social Work Review was an independent review, commissioned in 2004, to examine all aspects of social work to improve its contribution to integrated services. It particularly examined the following areas:

- to define the role and purpose of social workers and the social work profession
- to identify improvements in the organisation and delivery of social work services
- to develop a strong quality improvement framework and culture; supported by robust inspection
- to strengthen leadership and management giving clear direction to the service
- to ensure a competent and confident workforce
- to review and if necessary modernise legislation

The findings

The findings of the Review were published in early 2006 and set out 13 recommendations for a new direction for social work services in Scotland. These were based around three over-riding conclusions:

- *Doing more of the same won't work. Increasing demand, greater complexity and rising expectations mean that the current situation is not sustainable.*
- *Social work services don't have all the answers. They need to work closely with other universal providers in all sectors to find new ways to design and deliver services across the public sector.*
- *Social workers' skills are highly valued and increasingly relevant to the changing needs of society. Yet we are far from making the best use of these skills.*

The recommendations

1. Services must be **designed and delivered around the needs of people who use them their carers and communities**
2. Services must **build individual, family and community capacity to meet their own needs**
3. Services must **play an active part in a public sector wide approach to prevention and earlier intervention**

4. Services must **become part of a public sector wide approach to support vulnerable people and promote wellbeing**
5. Services must **recognise and effectively manage the mixed economy of care in the delivery of services**
6. Services must **develop a new organisational approach to managing risk, which ensures the delivery of safe, effective and innovative**
7. Employers must **make sure that social workers are enabled and supported to practice accountably and exercise their professional autonomy**
8. Services must **develop a learning culture that commits all individuals and organisations to lifelong learning and development**
9. Services should be **delivered by effective teams designed to incorporate the appropriate mix of skills and expertise and operating with delegated authority and responsibilities**
10. Services must **develop enabling leadership and effective management at all levels across the system**
11. Services must be **monitored and evaluated on the delivery of improved outcomes for people who use services, their carers and communities**
12. Services should **develop the capacity and capability for transformational change by focusing on service re-design and organisational development**
13. The Scottish Executive should **consolidate in legislation the new direction of Scottish social work services**

Scottish Executive response

In February 2006, the Scottish Executive welcomed the findings outlined in Changing Lives, accepted all 13 recommendations and gave a commitment to act upon them

Implementation Plan

In June 2006, the Scottish Executive published a 5-year implementation plan aimed at building capacity for change across social work services.

Five change programmes

A total of £14.82 million have been made available to take forward 5 change programmes over the next 2 years. Additional resources are also available for the establishment of Social Work Services Forum and Practitioner Fora.

Each programme will be led by an external chair and supported by Social Work Services Policy Division together with a group of people with interest and expertise in the subject. Remit will be developmental and action focused, taking the recommendations from Changing Lives and turning them into concrete actions. Programme leads will feed back to the Social Work Services Forum.

The 5 change programmes are:

1. Service Development

- **Aim:** focus on supporting local agencies to achieve the long term goal of transforming the delivery of social work services so that:
 - service users experience a service personalised to their needs, that builds upon their strengths and aspirations and develops their capacity for self care;
 - services are effectively joined up within and across organisational boundaries in a way that makes best use of the strengths of each organisation and minimises duplication;
 - there is much greater focus on prevention and earlier response to emerging problems;
 - service users are better able to appropriately access services.
- **Workstreams:** developing access standards; developing new approaches to commissioning; supporting local service development.
- **Programme Lead:** Janet Birks, Director of Housing and Social Work Services, Falkirk Council and Nigel Henderson, Chief Executive of Penumbra and Convenor of Community Care Providers Scotland (CCPS).

2. Performance Improvement

- **Aim:** focus on continuous improvement, informed by self-evaluation. The Performance Improvement Framework along with other performance improvement initiatives is intended to drive up the quality of services received and improve outcomes for service users and their families.
- **Workstreams:** framework development and implementation; national priorities.
- **Programme Lead:** Sandy Cameron, Chairman, Parole Board for Scotland

3. Workforce Development

- **Aim:** a capable, well-prepared and supported workforce is essential to delivering Changing Lives. Developing the workforce is the biggest change programme. It encompasses actions to develop the skills and capability of the workforce, to make effective use of those skills through improved teamwork and skill mix and to plan effectively for current and future needs.
- **Workstreams:** implementing workforce strategy; building education and practice partnerships, developing a new para-professional role; building effective teams with the right skill mix; developing career pathways; developing workforce planning; improving recruitment and retention.
- **Programme Lead:** Carole Wilkinson, Chief Executive, Scottish Social Services Council

4. Practice Governance

- **Aim:** To develop effective practice governance that ensures the delivery of safe, and effective practice and allows practitioners to practice innovatively and accountably.
- **Workstreams:** developing and implementing framework for accountability, autonomy and practice governances; developing a research and development strategy; developing tools to inform evidence based practice and risk management; developing a new approach to citizen leadership.
- **Programme Lead:** Andrew Lowe, Director of Social Work, Scottish Borders Council

5. Leadership and Management

- **Aim:** to ensure that leaders and managers have the courage, vision and skills to develop social work services that are fit for the future.
- **Workstreams:** developing and implementing a new leadership and management framework.
- **Programme Lead:** David Crawford, Director of Social Work, Renfrewshire Council and President of the Association of Director's of Social Work (ADSW).

National leadership and co-ordination

The Changing Lives implementation will be supported by national leadership and coordination including:

- a **CABINET DELIVERY GROUP** to provide **leadership and policy coherence across key ministerial portfolios** (Membership: Minister for Education & Young People (Chair), Minister for Communities, Minister for Justice, Deputy Minister for Health & Community Care, Deputy Minister for Education & Young People, Deputy Minister for Finance and Public Service Reform). This will meet six monthly.
- a **SOCIAL WORK SERVICES FORUM** to bring together stakeholders with an interest in social work services (Chaired by Minister for Education & Young People). Its remit will be to provide a **nationally recognised source of informed option** on all matters relating to the delivery of social work services, in order to enable **effective strategic planning and direction**.
- a **USERS AND CARERS FORUM**, which will shadow the social work services forum. Will provide an opportunity for users and carers to **directly influence and shape the detail of implementation** at a national level. Will contribute specific expertise to work within individual programmes. Will **commission and undertake work to ensure that the views of hard to reach groups** are also considered. The Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability will facilitate the forum.

- a **PRACTITIONER FORA** in each local authority area to **facilitate practitioner influence** in the process. These will be established by Autumn 2006 and the Chairs of each will meet nationally with a representative on the social work services forum.

Social work legislation

The Changing Lives implementation will also include the introduction of new social work legislation to:

- **shift focus** from the language of welfare to that of **wellbeing**, recognising **partnership** and reflecting new principles of **personalised services**;
- **embed national** priorities and performance arrangements;
- set out **new governance arrangements** for social work;
- **enshrine the role of service users and carers in the delivery and design of services**, through the development of “citizen leadership programmes”;
- **regulate** the protected functions of registered social workers;
- position social work services **within the context of wider public service reforms**.

A separate team will be established within the **Scottish Executive Social Work Services Policy Division** to take forward this work with a timescale to be agreed.

Communications

The Changing Lives implementation will be underpinned by a communications strategy developed in consultation with the Social Work Services Forum to inform, engage and promote dialogue.

A Social Work Scotland website has been developed to offer information, provide a range of practical resources, guidance and toolkits for those working in and with social work services and host discussion forums which will include sharing examples of good practice.

Local self assessment

As part of the Changing Lives implementation, each local authority and social work service provider organisation in the voluntary and private sectors will complete a self-assessment against the recommendations in order to identify existing strengths and priorities for change.

Returns will identify strengths and priorities within each of the three main service branches – children & families, community care and criminal justice and across social work services as a whole. The Executive proposed to use these returns to build networks of organisations with shared interests and to promote existing good practice. Resources and support will be available through the networks to undertake local service redesign, sharing the outcomes of work to inform change in other areas. The Executive will also utilise it to inform priorities for national change programmes.

Self-assessment returns must be signed off by the Chief Social Work Officers for local authorities and by Chief Executives or Directors for independent sector providers and returned to the Scottish Executive Social Work Services Policy Division by 31 October 2006.

Further information

Social Work Scotland

Copies of the full report, Executive response and implementation plan, together with further information on Changing Lives can be found at the Social Work Scotland website – www.socialworkscotland.org.uk

Care Scotland

A range of information on performance improvement can be found at:
Performance Improvement @ Care Scotland
www.carescotland.org.uk/PerformanceImprovement/index.html

A range of good practice information can be found at:
Care in Practice @ Care Scotland
www.carescotland.org.uk/Original/index.html

Scottish Executive

Scottish Executive – www.scotland.gov.uk

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