

## Re-establishing the link between Supporting People funding and registration with the Care Commission

Parliament has now passed an Amendment Order which reinstates the link between Supporting People Funding and registration with the Care Commission as of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005. This means that a local authority must make sure that any housing support services it funds through Supporting People is either registered with the Care Commission or is not required to register with the Care Commission but which nevertheless delivers a prescribed housing support service.

## What about Supported Lodgings / Adult Placement Services?

Currently these services are not required to register with the Care Commission and can therefore continue to be funded through Supporting People providing a local authority is satisfied it delivers housing support services. When registration is introduced possibly in December 2005 then the local authority can continue to fund the service if it has been registered.

## Annual inspections

Scottish Ministers have been granted the power to allow the Care Commission to inspect services less frequently than annually through the Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Bill passed on 30<sup>th</sup> June.

This will not have any immediate impact on services because Ministers will be required to go through an 'affirmative resolution procedure' in order to lay before Parliament any change to the minimum annual inspection requirement. They will also be required to consult widely (e.g. service users, local authority commissioners, providers) given the level of public interest in the issue.

The power granted to Ministers means that services are to be treated individually and there may be certain types of service eg Care Homes for the elderly that are unlikely to be put forward for any reduction in inspection frequency. Indeed the power can be used in different ways for different types of services.

The Care Commission is devising a risk assessment process along with a grading system to measure service standards. These will help the Care Commission to identify services where it may be appropriate to inspect less frequently.

The discussion in Parliament on Section 26A of the Bill provides an insight into the concerns and support for the move across a range of stakeholders along with the Care Commission's answers. To see the transcription go to: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/committees/health/or-05/he05-1402>

supportingpeople

enabling unit

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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

The Supporting People Enabling Unit is a partnership initiative between Community Care Providers Scotland (CCPS) and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA), funded by the Scottish Executive.

# Service Review: deadline postponed to 2007

**Malcolm Chisholm, MSP for Communities, has agreed to postpone the date by which all Supporting People services must be reviewed from March 2006 to 2007.**

## **A Service Manager's Rough Guide to Service Review**

The following seeks to address the sorts of issues that external providers in particular may face in preparing for and undertaking a Service Review. This should be read in conjunction with the Service Review Guidance which can be found on the Scottish Executive's website at: [www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/housing/spogf2-08.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/housing/spogf2-08.asp)

## **Timing**

It is reasonable to expect at least 4 weeks notice to a review commencing and some local authorities consult with their providers when timetabling Service Reviews. If you find that the review is being planned for a time that is not convenient because of other events such as a Care Commission inspection, then say so and negotiate a more convenient time.

## **The process**

Local authorities should consult with providers on the review process before undertaking them. It may do this at a providers forum or individually. If no meeting is planned in your area you can ask your local authority to organise one. To find out who to contact at your local authority go to the Scottish Executive's website at: [www.scotland.gov.uk/housing/supportingpeople](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/housing/supportingpeople)

## **Preparing**

You will need to build in preparation time for the Service Review. It may be helpful to consider what is needed at each stage of the process. Generally you can expect an information gathering exercise (sometimes referred to as a desktop review) during which you will be asked to gather information about aims and objectives, activity, costs and outcomes along with producing copies of policies and procedures. This will generally lead into meetings which will involve local authority staff meeting with staff and with service users.

It is worth finding out the purpose of any meetings being planned so you can decide who should be involved. This will enable you to prepare staff and service users for what lies ahead.

If you are concerned that the information being asked for has been provided before in a different format (eg if you have applied for an Approved Providers List or Restricted Standing List) point this out. Also, if you are concerned that the resources needed to collect information or attend meetings will have an impact on service delivery then say so. You may be able to negotiate a longer timescale or come to an agreement about scaling down who and what will be involved.

## **Undertaking the review**

Although local authorities are experienced in commissioning a range of social care services they may not know much about the sort of housing support service you provide. This may be the case with specialist services of which yours may be the only one in the area. You may find it worthwhile to discuss this with your Supporting People officer to ensure they obtain information about the service and the needs it addresses. If you have had experience of how other local authorities have reviewed similar services then share this with your local SP officer.

Local authorities are required to carry out Service Reviews in a fair and transparent fashion. They are required to carry out Service Reviews of their own directly managed services just as they are with services provided externally.

If you feel concerned about how the review has been conducted then write to your local authority Supporting People Lead Officer. It is in everyone's interest to iron out such concerns before the Service Review process has been completed rather than leaving it until the end.

You can also contact the Unit for help to interpret the guidance issued to councils and/or to find out how other areas are approaching Service Review.

## **Outcomes**

The outcome of the Service Review for many providers will be a Full Contract. The Service Review will provide the basis for negotiating price and service capacity.

There may be other situations, however, where the local authority decides not to continue funding a service or indeed, where a provider decides they cannot continue to provide it. Where a local authority decides not to continue funding a service it is required to consider the impact on service users and to agree an Action Plan for closing or ending funding to ensure service users do not face sudden loss of service. Any decision to cease funding must be ratified by elected members or by senior officers delegated to make this sort of decision by the local authority.

Members of the public affected by decisions taken by local authorities can make a complaint using the council's complaints procedure. If a person remains dissatisfied they can go to the Scottish Public Ombudsman. For further information go to [www.scottishombudsman.org.uk](http://www.scottishombudsman.org.uk)

Judicial Review through the Court of Session is the ultimate process by which local authority administration can be challenged in Scotland.

# Scottish Social Services Council

## Consultation on SSSC Registration

### Background and overview

In putting together this response the Unit hosted three regional events which included 106 staff from 56 providers. Those taking part included staff from:

- 10 Housing Associations
- 34 Voluntary organisations
- 10 Local authorities
- 2 Private companies

From these events there seemed to be broad agreement that registration of the housing support workforce was a positive move but that any qualification requirement must be approached sensitively given that there are many valued and competent members of the workforce without any qualification currently. In addition to this, service providers are facing particular challenges in recruiting and retaining staff and particular challenges in recovering costs of service provision. Any qualification requirement could compound these difficulties if introduced without careful planning and resourcing at a national level.

### Focus on housing support

Providers expressed some concern that there is currently no qualification focused solely on housing support. In England SITRA provides training focused on housing support. The SITRA course is accredited by the London Open College Network at a national level of learning at Level 3. A decision is yet to be made as to whether SITRA will go on to gain accreditation within the NVQ framework. It is possible to download course content from the SITRA website at: [www.sitra.org.uk](http://www.sitra.org.uk)

Providers also expressed the view that staff should be able to build up credits from attending inhouse courses or standalone courses often organised to address specific service delivery issues and therefore highly relevant.

### Issues raised

The issues that providers raised at the events included:

- Qualification of Managers and Supervisors
- Diversity of roles within housing support
- Access to training
- Acknowledging existing skills and prior learning
- Funding of training
- Availability and cost of Assessors
- Staff retention and recruitment
- Supporting staff through a period of change

The SSSC has received many individual responses from providers to the consultation paper. The Unit has also submitted a response which is available on request via email to [moira.weir@ccpscotland.org](mailto:moira.weir@ccpscotland.org). To keep up to date on the progress the SSSC is making, go to their website at: [www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com)

## SP: Service Directory

The Scottish Executive is developing an online information resource for potential users of housing support services, to be backed by local printed Guides and possibly a national helpline.

The aim of the Directory is to provide informative, accessible and accurate information about housing support, and thereby increase awareness of, and ease access to all services available through the Supporting People programme. All services will be included from sheltered housing for older people to specialist services for black and ethnic minority communities. It will include those provided by statutory, voluntary or private agencies. In time, it is hoped that coverage will be extended to include housing support services not covered by SP Grant.

Groundwork on the Directory started in April 2003, led by a Steering Group comprising representatives of the Executive, Communities Scotland, Care Commission, Local Authorities and national voluntary organisations. It is anticipated that a pilot website will be up and running

later this year

The London-based charity Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) has been commissioned to undertake the collection of detailed information on housing support services to populate the Directory. An initial exercise to pull together data held by Local Authorities in their SP Mapping Supply Databases has been completed, and over 7,000 services identified. This will be followed shortly by a questionnaire survey to check and update the data, and to add the extra detail that the Steering Group wishes to see included. The intention is to describe, in plain English, what each service comprises, who it is for, and how it can be accessed. This will be accompanied by a profile of the service provider.

Maintaining the accuracy of the Directory over time will be a challenge, but all involved are convinced that this one stop shop approach will provide plenty of incentive for both commissioners and service providers to be proactive in updating information on a regular basis.

## Quarriers: A Provider's View of SP

Quarriers is a voluntary organisation that provides a diverse range of services offering practical support and care for children, adults and families through more than 85 projects around Scotland.

Like many providers Quarriers has found that Supporting People has released substantial new resources. These resources have allowed Local Authorities, in partnership with community care providers, to provide more ambitious support resulting in transformed lives. Individuals who previously had no option but to live in an institutional setting are now able to exercise some control over their lives and live (with support) in the community.

However, Quarriers has found that there is artificiality about the split between care support and housing support, and this consumes much energy and distracts from building on the very real progress that Supporting People has enabled.

Quarriers has found that for organisations that provide care and support with money coming from different funding streams things become particularly complex. Further, different local authorities across the country apply different systems. This can lead to increased management and administration costs and a lack of consistency nationally. For example, some authorities manage the housing support assessment process and

administer varied funding streams internally. Others expect Quarriers to access the varied funding streams to reach the gross rate for the service being purchased.

Quarriers are interested in providing a holistic service and life becomes simpler if it is not necessary to try and separate it into specifically costed and labelled packages. Long-standing care and support packages are now compartmentalised into housing support and other support categories. This can over complicate a straightforward process. In 2004-05 some Supporting People settlements stood still. There was no annual uplift to that part of the support package falling in the housing support compartment and there was no additional compensatory increase in the care compartment. Providers have had to make a choice. Do they carry the resultant shortfall or do they reduce an individual's care package? How do you reduce the level of support provided where, as is often the case a combined care support and housing support package is in place and support is needed over 24 hours?

Quarriers welcome the service review process as this will allow them to discuss these issues with local authority colleagues and enable them to work with local authorities to ensure that the impact of any cuts from Supporting People grants on people who use services are fully considered in the spending review process.

# Making Sense of Regulation

The Chartered Institute of Housing, in collaboration with the Supporting People Enabling Unit, has set up a one day course entitled '**Preparing for Care Commission Inspections (Housing Support Services)**'

This course is aimed at Service Managers and other stakeholders. Due to the high level of interest in the course the CIH has added further dates to those originally publicised.

The new dates are: 26<sup>th</sup> October and 9<sup>th</sup> November. Both these courses will take place in Glasgow.

For further information go to the Chartered Institute of Housing website at:  
[Http://www.cih.org/scotland/](http://www.cih.org/scotland/) or phone 0131 225 4544

## Training for Staff and Supervisors

The regulation of housing support is an important issue for all staff and the aspects of the inspection process will involve many directly or indirectly. With this in mind the Supporting People Enabling Unit is organising a series of training days aimed at those carrying out non-managerial roles entitled "**Preparing The Way For Inspection**".

This course is designed to provide participants with an understanding of the Care Commission inspection regime and does not presume any prior knowledge. It aims to provide a broad appreciation of the background and purpose of inspection and key aspects of the process. It will also be an opportunity to meet a member of staff from the Care Commission.

The content has been designed to complement the course for service manager above.

### Summary of course objectives

By the end of this course delegates will:

- Have an understanding of the National Care Standards for housing support and the role of the Care Commission
- Have an understanding of the purpose of inspection and key stages in the inspection process.
- Be familiar with the expectations the Care Commission has of staff teams at inspection
- Understand the possible outcomes of inspection
- Have an appreciation of how service users might be included in the inspection process

The course will take place on the following dates:

**Aberdeen on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2005**  
**Stirling on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2005**  
**Dundee on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2005**

The trainer is Colin Paton, Dundee Cyrenians and the cost of the course will be £50

For further information contact the Unit by email: [heather.martin@ccpscotland.org](mailto:heather.martin@ccpscotland.org)  
or by phone: 0131 346 3144

# For Your Noticeboard

## Events

### **Sheltered Housing Conference and Exhibition 10 and 11 August 2005 at the Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London**

The conference addresses current themes such as changes in regulation and the challenge of meeting Supporting People requirements. Delegates will consider the practical skills needed when dealing with a wide range of people and look at new ways of developing both their own interpersonal skills and inter-agency partnership. For more information access the Chartered Institute of Housing website  
[www.cih.org/training/confshelter.htm](http://www.cih.org/training/confshelter.htm)

### **Community Care Live 21 and 22 September 2005, Herriot Watt University, Edinburgh**

Community Care Live Scotland is organising an event for those professionals working within the Scottish social care system. This two-day event will address all of the key issues to those working in social care. It plans to draw together social care professionals, frontline social care professionals and service users to debate the big issues, disclose best practices and to explore new, innovative ways of working. For more information visit the Community Care live website on [www.communitycare.co.uk/cclivescotland](http://www.communitycare.co.uk/cclivescotland)

### **Supporting People Enabling Unit 15 September 2005 at 1.30 pm The Town House, Inverness**

Regional meeting for discussion and debate on matters related to Supporting People. To book a place contact [heather.martin@ccpscotland.org](mailto:heather.martin@ccpscotland.org)

### **Scottish Housing and Support Conference 13 & 14 October 2005 Dunblane Hydro Hotel, Dunblane**

The Scottish Housing and Support Conference provides a forum for discussion, debate, training and evaluation, information provision and exchange, with particular emphasis on user views and involvement, in order to influence policy and provision of services and resources.

For bookings and enquiries contact:  
[Edna\\_milne@yahoo.com](mailto:Edna_milne@yahoo.com)  
01383 861 521

### **Scottish Council For Single Homeless 3 & 4 November 2005 National Homelessness Conference 2005 Apex International Hotel, Edinburgh**

More details will be shortly available on the SCSH website at [www.scsch.org.uk](http://www.scsch.org.uk)

## Website News

This Unit has been trying out different methods of communicating with providers. As part of this process it was decided that this edition of the Bulletin should only be available in electronic format. We are keen to find out if this affects providers enjoyment of the Bulletin so please let us know what you think of the e-bulletin format.

If you have no access to the e-bulletin please contact us at the address below and we will be happy to print off a copy and send it to you by post.

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