

Demonstrating the impact of housing support

Work is continuing on the housing support outcomes framework. The pilot that was conducted at the beginning of this year of a revised version of the matrix resulted in feedback from 15 services who in turn had involved 59 members of staff and 41 service users.

Craigforth Consultants collated and presented this feedback to a steering group overseeing the development of the outcomes framework in February. The following points were considered and some key decisions made:

- it has been agreed to include a section on employment and employability
- it has been agreed in principle that some topics within the matrix may be set up with default scores where services and their service users feel it is appropriate. This would avoid going through aspects of the matrix with individuals where it was not deemed relevant e.g. employability in a sheltered housing setting
- there is an interest amongst some service providers and commissioners in finding a way of measuring preventative benefits of housing support services. The steering group has decided to include this as a feature in the matrix although not to make it mandatory. This flexibility is designed to accommodate those situations where individuals prefer not to reflect on what their situation would be like without the service they are using.
- descriptions used within the matrix may vary between services as long as the scores they are assigned reflects a similar level of need and support

- descriptions within the matrix will be in the first person (e.g. I can, I do) to promote greater ownership of the outcomes recorded by individuals.

Further work will be undertaken on these and other issues during the development of the guidance manual. This is the next stage of the project along with the development of an IT tool to support the framework.

Whilst it had originally been hoped that the finalised framework would be available by Easter the current timescale is now this summer.

If you would like further information about the housing support outcomes framework please contact yvette.burgess@ccpscotland.org

Talking points

The Joint Improvement Team within the Scottish Government has recently renamed its outcomes tool 'Talking Points' - having previously been known as UDSET. This tool has been piloted across 20 sites in Scotland in the last 2 ½ years - involving health and social care partnerships as well as provider organisations.

'Talking points' has been designed to link with Community Care Outcomes but there will be no absolute requirement that local commissioners use it. The housing support outcomes framework will sit alongside these tools.

Further information about the pilots and the current format of the tool can be found on the JIT website: www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/user-and-carer-involvement/publications/

Measuring Outcomes of Housing Support

Housing support in practice

Providers' Questions

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The Scottish Government



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

How some local authorities are approaching 2009/10

Over the past two months the Unit has been gathering information about local authorities' budgets for housing support for 2009/10. Although some local authorities were not in a position to provide this information, here is a summary of the responses of those that were able to comment.

Aberdeen - housing support is a distinct budget within the local authority. At this stage there has been an indicative 6% reduction on the budget from 2009/10 to 2008/09 although this is to be confirmed.

Angus - will be awarding a 2.5% increase to providers of housing support services.

Argyll&Bute - It is difficult to be totally specific about expenditure on housing support because of the mix of funding from different budgets within the council and the differing terminology used by the SP team, Social Work and others. However, Housing Support remains a distinct budget within Argyll&Bute. The budget for 2009-10 is £11.1M which is a small decrease compared to last year however shortfalls in new packages coming on stream are likely to be met from other funding sources such as Social Work. There is little change in the volume of service to be delivered but a number of projects will be reconfigured e.g. some 1 to 1 contact moving to group contact.

East Ayrshire - Expected reduction of up to 30% in non social work expenditure from 2008/9 to 2009/10, Social Work expenditure unchanged.

East Dunbartonshire - housing support is not a distinct part of the local authority budget. It is expected that the provision of housing support will be roughly the same in 2009/10 as 2008/09.

City of Edinburgh - housing support is a distinct budget in the local authority. £1.2 million worth of efficiency savings are expected to be made in 2009/10 and the following year.

Falkirk - it is expected that the housing support budget will remain roughly the same this year as last.

Inverclyde - Within Inverclyde the Housing Support Budget has not as yet been amalgamated with the Social Work Department's mainline budget. The budget for 2009/10 has not been set yet but it is anticipated that this funding will be reduced.

Midlothian - expecting a slight decrease in the volume of housing support commissioned.

Moray - expects that the volume and funding of housing support will stay roughly the same this year as last.

Renfrewshire - there are no plans to remove funding from projects presently funded other than through normal review of what is bought from whom in terms of needs and best value

South Lanarkshire - Housing support is no longer a distinct Council budget but is now split between the 2 main Council providers, Housing and Social Work. In broad terms the budget will increase in 2009/10 mainly to account for internal staff and external provider wage rises

West Lothian - Budget allocation proposed for 2009/10 has been set at the same level as 2008/09. It is unlikely that there will be any significant changes in volume of housing support commissioned between 2008/09 and 2009/10.

Highland Council and Glasgow Council have both written to providers of housing support to inform them that significant cuts will be made to the housing support budget. In Highland it is expected that this could result in a decrease in the amount of housing support commissioned.

If you would like to share your experience as a service provider regarding funding and/or contractual arrangements do get in touch with the Unit. This will help the Unit to reflect on the implications for housing support services as we move into the second year of un-ringfenced funding post Supporting People.

Housing Support in Practice

Eildon Housing Association's Tenancy Support Service provides housing support to those who feel they need some help if they are to maintain their tenancy.

Currently Eildon Housing Association's Tenancy Support Service has a Tenancy Support Co-ordinator and three part time Tenancy Support Workers that support 80 to 90 of their tenants in the Scottish Borders. The service's staff comes from a wide range of backgrounds including social care, housing, education and mental health services and Eileen Shand the Director of Housing and Care Services for Eildon HA believes this allows them to tailor the support packages to the needs of individual clients.

Eileen said "We have a very broad range of clients. Some people need one or two hours a month to keep them on track where as other need the Tenancy Support Service to work in partnership with a number of agencies to provide intensive support. It is important that we target our support in the right way otherwise it simply will not work. Having a broad range of experience in our staff team helps us do this".

Eildon Housing Association's Tenancy Support Service was able to give a number of examples of housing support in action.

Recently Tenant A, who has a learning disability, was helped to set up her own tenancy. The housing support worker assisted Tenant A to complete her Housing Benefit form, apply for a Community Care grant and set up her utility payment plans. Now that she lives in her own home Tenant A has asked for the housing support service to continue as she feels she needs regular support if her tenancy is to be sustained.

Tenant B is in his late 50s and has received support for a number of years. Recently he was informed that he was no longer eligible to receive a free bus pass. This had a devastating effect on Tenant B as he lived in a rural area and

spent many hours travelling on the bus. His housing support worker helped him to get his bus pass reissued and at the same time assisted him to get his Disability Living Allowance award raised to a higher rate which gave him entitlement to other benefits. This greatly improved the quality of his life.

Some of the work carried out by the Tenancy Support Service is short term. For example, Tenant C had been suffering from depression. As a result of this he had multiple debts including rent arrears and a date had been set to cut off his gas supply. The housing support worker collaborated with Trading Standards to prevent the gas supply from being disconnected and helped him draw up a realistic budget that would allow him to repay his debts over time. Having got through the period of crisis Tenant C felt more able to cope and so no longer uses the housing support service although he is aware that he can call on that resource in the future if he needs to.

Eileen Shand went on to say "We at Eildon Housing Association are proud of our Tenancy Support Service. It has assisted many people settle into their tenancies and can prevent many problems before they happen. The idea of preventing problems is important to us which is why we would like to set up a pre-tenancy programme. This would allow us to work with people before they take up their tenancy and would make it far more likely that the tenancy will succeed. Unfortunately we have not been able to secure funding for this work yet but we are determined to do so. We feel strongly that effective tailored tenancy support is vital to assist with tenancy sustainment and hope, on a partnership basis to be able to develop our pre-tenancy service."

More information on Eildon Housing Association is available on their website at http://www.eildon.org.uk/2_index_housing.asp

Questions and Answers

Q. How long should voluntary organisations keep records on service users who have left the service?

A. Individual voluntary organisations can make their own policy when it comes to the retention of records on services users who have left the service but of course it is important to take note of current guidelines.

The Information Commissioner states that records should not be kept longer than “necessary” but does not specify what necessary means.

For legal reasons, the Care Commission is unable to provide advice on the retention of records and would also advise providers to seek their own legal advice prior to the destruction of any records. However, the Care Commission produced a guidance note called 'Guidance on the Retention of Records in Care Services' which is available on request.

The Care Commission also recommends that providers visit the Records Management Society's website at www.rms-gb.org.uk as this contains valuable information on records management.

Q. Do you have any knowledge about how the personalisation agenda will impact on support services? Whilst I am keen to promote the tailoring of services to individuals I cannot help thinking that when it comes to housing support nobody has worked out how much such an approach will cost.

A. From the point of view of housing support in general I think that the lifting of the ringfence could mean more scope for housing support to be defined around individual's needs / preferences. There is, for instance, no more requirement on local authorities to fund activities only included in the '21 tasks'. As you have highlighted the limiting factor will be cost

and the funding pressures that local authorities are facing.

Q. The service I run was commissioned by the local authority in 2003 and is funded 75% by social work and 25% by housing support. I was advised last week that the housing support funding is being withdrawn. Do you have any ideas about who I can approach for new funding? The service consists of supported accommodation for people who have been homeless.

There is no straight forward substitute to housing support funding when a council decides to withdraw it. Research that we have been conducting suggests that many service providers are facing funding shortfalls and are being asked by local authorities to make savings. The 2 options you could look at - but I realise you may have done this already - are to:

- review the housing management / support cost split to check that this still reflects the service you provide
- approach the Social Work department to find out if they will increase their contribution to the funding of the service
- if the service works with people facing addictions you could approach your local Drug Action Team

In terms of grants - there are no grants specifically for housing support but the Scottish Government does provide grants through the Housing Voluntary Grants Scheme for service related to homelessness. This grants scheme is currently being reviewed by the Scottish Government as highlighted on page 7.

Q. Is there anyway I can find out who is representing the voluntary sector on my local Community Planning Partnership?

A. Yes, you can either contact your local authority or you can consult our website where there is an area listing each local authority and named contacts representing the sector: www.ccpscotland.org/spunit/info/local_authorities.php

Questions and Answers

Q. I am a service provider of combined care and support packages to people who came to this area from other parts of Scotland. I am concerned that although the local authority where the service is based has paid for the housing support element of the packages in the past they are now asking the originating authority to pay for these costs. Is this something that we can do anything about?

A. There is nothing to stop a local authority doing this if they wish to. It may be that your local authority has already entered into an agreement with those local authorities where your service users originated from. As you will know, one of the factors that tends to influence local authority funding decisions is where a person is deemed to be 'ordinarily resident'. The Scottish Government has recently consulted on this and other issues related to funding of social care with a view to issuing new guidance and regulations. The Unit submitted a response highlighting the sort of scenario you have highlighted: www.ccpscotland.org/spunit/info/crossboundaries.php

A timescale has not yet been set by the Scottish Government for finalising the guidance.

Q. I heard that there were going to be changes to who is considered “a fit person” to manage a care service. Is this right?

A. In the original Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 it was laid down that any person who has received a prison sentence of more than 3 months would be considered unfit to manage a care service.

In 2008 the Scottish Government consulted with the social services sector to find out if this should be amended so that the law could be a little more flexible. Following analysis and consideration of the responses received it was decided to revise the regulations so that the nature of the offence could be taken into account when deciding if someone was not fit to act as a service manager. The revised Regulations have been laid in the Scottish Parliament and if approved will come into effect on 1 April 2009. More information is available on the Scottish Government website at www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/02/19153104/1

Research into the Funding of Housing Support

The HSEU is completing a two year study to gather information about housing support in Scotland. It will address the following issues:

- The extent to which local authorities in Scotland paid the full cost of the housing support services they commissioned in 2008/09
- The extent to which the amounts of housing support local authorities purchase have changed as the new funding arrangements take effect.

In May 2008 the HSEU contacted all 1198 housing support service managers registered with the Care Commission to invite them to take part in the survey.

There were some important findings from the survey including evidence that 44% of the respondents reported that they were operating in deficit.

This year the HSEU is going to get back in touch with service managers to find out about the funding of their service. A questionnaire will be posted out in June 2009 and a report of the findings will follow later in the year. Contact moira.weir@ccpscotland.org for more information.

Experiences of Single People Presenting as Homeless in Glasgow

Glasgow Homelessness Partnership has published an evaluation study called Evaluation of the Experiences of Single People Presenting as Homeless in Glasgow. The study was carried out by the Centre for Housing Policy at York University and was based on interviews with 27 service providers and 30 people who had presented as homeless in Glasgow since March 2007.

The report highlighted that there has been a reduction in the number of single people presenting themselves as homeless. Over 2002/03 to 2007/08 homelessness presentations in single households fell from 10 056 to 6269 a reduction of 38%. In addition there has been a considerable decrease in the number of people sleeping rough with 1 in 10 people reporting sleeping rough in the three months before presenting as homeless in

2007/08 compared to 1 in 5 in 2002/03.

Approaching 4 in 10 single applicants (37%) reported they had support needs with aspects of their life including drug and alcohol dependency, health problems and housing management skills.

Most people who had moved onto permanent tenancies were positive about the support they received and providers of support stressed they believed that improved joint working between services has meant that service users have a better all round experience.

The full evaluation study is available on York University website at www.york.ac.uk/inst/chp/publications/PDF/Glasgow%20Presentation%20Exec%20Sum%20Printing2.pdf

Nobody's Listening

Help The Aged has published a report called Nobody's Listening: The impact of floating support on older people living in sheltered housing.

Over the past year Help The Aged has noticed an increasing number of complaints about the replacement of sheltered housing wardens with community alarm systems. In response to this the charity commissioned The Housing and Support Partnership to investigate how the provision of sheltered housing in England has changed and the effect this has had on tenants.

The report has some key findings including:

- over the past five years there has been a 4 % reduction in sheltered housing, and a further 7 % fall is anticipated over the next three years

- it is projected that in three years' time, 61 % of sheltered housing will still have a warden-type service but floating support will have increased to cover 38 % of schemes. This is from a base five years ago of 5 per cent.

As part of the research tenants were asked how they felt about the changes in sheltered housing provision. Most participants were unhappy with the proposed or actual removal of wardens. In particular many participants had concerns about their safety and security when on site staff were being reduced or withdrawn.

The full report is available on the Help The Aged website at http://policy.helptheaged.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/652BC405-AA9E-49CB-B7FE-E16A7B0D3A99/0/nobodys_listening.pdf

Scottish Government

The Housing Support Team in the Scottish Government is keen to keep in touch with providers of housing support services. This section contains news from the Team.

The Scottish Government welcomes the work being done by the Enabling Unit to develop and promote use of the Housing Support Outcomes tool. We have been pleased to be represented on the steering group for the project and look forward to development of an improved IT platform for the tool, which we hope will encourage its wider use. While it will remain voluntary, we hope providers and local authorities will find it a helpful way of evidencing 'below the waterline' of Single Outcome Agreements the real impact of housing support services in delivering positive outcomes for vulnerable people.

Action is under way on a number of reviews which will be of interest to housing support providers and others in the Third Sector:

- Following the consultation exercise, and in line with the Concordat, we are liaising with COSLA about the future of national reporting on housing support, with a view to wider dialogue with all stakeholders shortly;
- Ministers are considering the results of the review of our housing voluntary sector grants scheme;
- A review of Care and Repair is nearing completion; and
- A review of a code of practice on the management of owner occupied sheltered housing is again almost complete, with a revised code to be published soon.

We hope to be able to report more fully on all of these in the coming months.

Readers may be aware that s.11 of the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 came into force on 1 April 2009. This requires landlords (except local authority landlords) and lenders to inform the relevant local authority when taking court action for repossession. Prevention of homelessness guidance for local authorities will be published later this month on the Scottish Government website.

Finally, an evaluation of the impact of the funding made available by the Scottish Government under the national telecare strategy was published in February. This showed that as well as helping to secure significant efficiency savings, the impact of the new technologies was also generally viewed very positively by clients. The report is available at:

[Www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/telecare-in-scotland/telecare-publications/](http://www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/telecare-in-scotland/telecare-publications/).

Contact the Housing Support Team at:

E-mail: housingsupport@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 0131-244-5524

Website: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/access/housingsupport

For Your Noticeboard

Events

Housing Support Providers Highland Meeting

Thursday, 16th April 2009
1.30 pm - 4.00pm
Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC
Tulloch Caledonian Stadium
Stadium Road
Inverness

This meeting gives providers of housing support the opportunity to come together to discuss matters of common interest. If you wish to attend please ensure your place is reserved by contacting liz.pettigrew@ccpscotland.org

Develop Your Tendering Skills

Supply2.gov.uk was created by the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) to provide small businesses with access to lower-value (typically below £100k) public sector contracts.

Supply2.gov.uk is running a series of events on tendering called Develop Your Tendering Skills
Edinburgh 30 April 2009
Glasgow 19 May 2009
For more information visit the Supply2.gov.uk website at www.supply2.gov.uk/events/s2grs09/book.htm

The Scottish Housing and Support Conference

Thursday 1 October 2009
Edinburgh

This conference brings together policy makers and service users, providers and commissioners, staff and committee members from housing, support, health, social work and the voluntary sector. It promotes new ways of working helps to improve service delivery, policy and practice across Scotland. It is run on a not-for-profit basis by a planning group from voluntary and not-for-profit organisations.

In response to the demands on everyone's budgets SHASC have made 2009 a credit crunch conference, with 3 special offers:

- There will be a number of free places for individual service users, thanks to Scottish Government sponsorship.
- The standard delegate fee is only £120, a saving of £25 over last year's prices.
- And if you make a confirmed booking by 31 July the cost is only £95 per person, a huge saving for your budget!

It is possible to register your interest now by emailing Norma Jones, Conference Co-ordinator at shasc@joa.co.uk

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