

Housing Support Statistics Working Group

When the Supporting People programme came to an end the Scottish Government consulted with the housing support sector about what information should be gathered in future. Following this the Scottish Government has convened a short life working group that will develop a revised statistical data collection on housing support which is of sufficient quality to achieve National Statistics designation.

The group will meet four times and will look at:

- The type of housing support information that is collated
- How information is collected

The group expects to finish its work by February 2010 and includes representatives from:

- The Convention of Scottish Local

- Authorities;
- Local authority practitioners;
- The Housing Support Enabling Unit;
- Housing Support Providers;
- Housing Associations;
- The Home Care Statistics Team in the Scottish Government;
- The Housing Support Policy Team in the Scottish Government.

When the Supporting People programme was in operation the Scottish Government collated annual statistics on the clients who used housing support services. This information was used to monitor how many people used housing support services and also the kind of services that were being delivered.

The last report was published in 2008 and can be seen on the HSEU website at www.ccpscotland.org/hseu/publications/housing-support-statistics

The Third Sector Resilience Fund

The Scottish Government has announced that £1.7million is being targeted at Third Sector organisations which have faced either:

- an increase in demand for their services because of the recession, or
- cash flow difficulties because of the recession.

Applications for between £10,000 and £100,000 are invited from the end of October 2009 until 4th December 2009.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate clearly:

- their viability prior to the recession,
- the “shock” it has experienced as a consequence of the recession
- the need for assistance
- also, how the assistance will enable them to implement a recovery plan.

To obtain more information about the criteria and the application process go to the Scottish Government website at: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/15300/funding/ResilienceFundStrategy1

housingsupport

enabling unit

Bulletin

housingsupport

Research into housing support

Housing support in practice

Providers' Questions

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.

Care Commission

Alison Bavidge, Policy and Knowledge Management manager with the Care Commission got in touch with the Housing Support Enabling Unit to give an up date on the Care Commision's annual returns.

Care Commission Annual Returns

Alison said "Each year we ask care service providers to complete an annual return, which gives information about the service provided in the previous year. This helps us to regulate and inspect care services effectively. The information providers give us also helps us to share information with other bodies such as the Scottish Government and local authorities to try to reduce the number of times you are asked to provide the same information.

In January and February 2009 housing support and support service providers in Scotland sent us 1049 annual returns. This is nearly 92% of the annual returns we were expecting from this type of service and a really solid improvement on previous years.

Last year was the first year that housing support service providers had to use an electronic version of the annual return. Providers seem to have grasped this challenge with both hands and we thank you for your effort and support in moving away from the paper formats for the annual returns which were so costly to produce and run. As we look forward to the new scrutiny bodies in

2001, the quality of the information that we hold will be vital in ensuring a smooth transfer of regulatory arrangements.

Passwords

Remember, you will need a password in order to use any of our online forms. One will have been sent to you previously but if you have forgotten your password please use the password reminder facility available on the website at www.carecommission.com

Please make sure you **get your password as soon as possible**. If you leave it until the last moment, our helpdesk may be very busy. This password will also allow you to access other electronic forms such as the self assessment that your Care Commission Officer asks you to complete before your inspection. If you need more help or want to discuss electronic forms please call our helpline on 0845 603 0890.

We will write to you in November to let you know the exact date the annual return forms will be open in January and the final date you can submit your return."

Procurement

As reported in the last edition of this Bulletin the Scottish Government Joint Improvement Team (JIT) and Scottish Procurement Directorate are developing good practice guidance on procurement of social care services.

Over the summer a series of focus groups were held with service providers who have had experience of local authority tendering processes as well as meetings with service users. Two reports summarizing the issues raised and discussed are now available on the JIT website along with a report on the results of a survey completed by 22 councils and 37 service providers:

[Www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/commissioning/procurement/](http://www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/commissioning/procurement/)

A second meeting of a Reference Group took place in September at which it was agreed that the guidance should establish a set of values to underpin the procurement of social care. Good practice examples referred to by councils and providers are being examined with a view to producing practice material to sit alongside the new guidance.

It is hoped that in November draft guidance will be circulated for comments amongst those who have already been involved in this project. The timescale for the guidance to be published is February 2009.

Questions and Answers

Q. I read your article on charging in the last Bulletin with interest. The council my service works with has not thought to let us know that their policy has been reviewed. I am really concerned about this because as an accommodation based service we obviously have an obligation to let prospective tenants know what they should expect in terms of costs and charges. I am now aware that the council is sending out invoices to people who have not faced a charge in the past and is asking for backdated payments. What can we do?

A. Changes to charging policies should be implemented in a planned way by local authorities and policies should be clear and transparent. This is detailed in the COSLA guidance at pages 15 and 17. Service users have legitimate grounds for complaint where this has not happened. As a service provider you could ask the council to clarify exactly what its new charging policy entails and ask to meet with council officers to discuss the impact this will have on your service and on your service users.

The CoSLA guidance is available on their website at:

www.cosla.gov.uk/attachments/execgroups/hw/coslachargingguidance2009-10.doc

Q. As a support provider I have recently been asked by my local council to provide details of individual support plans. This has come out of the blue and although we do ask service users for consent to share their plans with other agencies such as health services I feel uneasy about doing this because we have not alerted service users that this could include the council.

A. Local authorities can ask to see support plans in the course of contract monitoring and / or for case management arrangements. When consent to share information is being obtained from service users it should be mentioned that the council could be one of the organisations that the information might be

shared with and outline the reasons why. In cases where a service user refuses to give consent the service they receive should not be put in jeopardy under the terms of data protection legislation. You might find the Framework Code of Practice useful to refer to: www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/data_protection/detailed_specialist_guides/pinfo-framework.pdf

Q. I remember a few years ago that there was some work done that showed how much money the preventative work carried out by housing support services saved other sector such as the NHS or prison service in the long term. Has any more work been done on this?

A. In 2007 Tribal published a report on Supporting People: Costs and Benefits which looked at the costs and benefits of housing related services provided by the Supporting People programme across the range of clients receiving services. The report can be seen on the Scottish Government website at www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/12/14141444/0

There has been no further work done on cost benefit analysis in Scotland. However, in England the Department of Communities and Local Government published research into the financial benefits of the Supporting People programme, 2009.

The report by analysts Capgemini estimated that the £1.6bn invested through Supporting People in England has saved other services in England £3.41bn - through reduced costs in homelessness, tenancy failure, crime, health and residential care packages.

The full report can be seen on the Department of Communities and Local Government website at www.ccpscotland.org/hseu/publications/supporting-people-in-england1/research-into-the-financial-benefits-of-the-supporting-people-programme-2009

What's In A Name?

Better Futures

The search has been on for a name for the Housing Support Outcomes Framework. The name 'Better Futures' was put forward by Peter Millar, Chief Executive of Aspire, and a member of the Outcomes Steering Group.

Peter explained that for him the term Better Futures "suggests positivity and instills a sense of hope with an explicit expectation that there should be growth in individuals' confidence, abilities & skills. The term inclines the person's perspective towards looking forward to new possibilities rather than a preoccupation with the past and it also helps to tilt the housing support worker positively in the same direction. Whilst this assumption of positive development should be the case for the majority of individuals, the term Better Futures is also applicable to those whose confidence, abilities & skills are being maintained at their current levels by housing support services, plus a sense that the absence of the service would be relatively adverse." Peter's views are shared by the whole group and his suggestion has been adopted.

Development of a web based IT tool

Work is continuing on the development of the web based IT tool. As reported previously Capita is adapting a tool it developed in England under Supporting People. The IT tool will enable service providers working with individuals to record their support needs over a period of time. In particular it will provide a means of recording a baseline when someone starts using a service as well as plotting their aspirations using the scoring system described above. At subsequent reviews an individual's actual situation will be scored allowing a

numerical value to be given to the 'distance travelled' between the baseline and subsequent reviews.

The IT tool is being developed with careful consideration of data protection issues. Discussions have taken place with staff from the Information Commissioners Office to ensure compliance with legislation. A system for gaining service user consent to the gathering and recording of their personal and sensitive information from the outset is being included.

Reporting requirements

Crucial to the future success of the system is its ability to produce reports from the data the system will hold. This is key to its credibility because information gathering systems quickly become irrelevant if they cannot generate useful information. Work is currently taking place to identify the top 15 reporting requirements and a range of stakeholders have contributed their ideas through the Outcomes Steering Group. If you would like further insight into the reporting function being developed please contact Yvette Burgess at: yvette.burgess@ccpscotland.org

Testing the tool

A demonstration of the IT tool is being developed with a view to testing taking place in November. The testing process will be designed to check usability of the system, data migration and reporting.

Accessibility

An 'easy read' version of the Framework is being created by the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disabilities to assist people with learning disabilities to use the system.

To see the Development Report by Craigforth along with the full version of the outcomes matrix go to the HSEU website www.ccpscotland.org/assets/files/hseu/information/Draft%20Report%20Craigforth.doc

Better Futures

The Housing Support Outcomes Framework is made up of five sections within which appear a number of topics. Levels of support are given a score and the total score can be compared with previous assessment scores. In this way a person's support needs are quantified and can be tracked over time.

A number of elements of support are considered within each question.

Area of support	Level of support required				
	High		Low		
Accommodation					
Suitability of property	4	3	2	1	0
Security of accommodation	4	3	2	1	0
Health					
Physical health	4	3	2	1	0
Mental health	4	3	2	1	0
Addictions	4	3	2	1	0
Safety and Security					
Domestic abuse	4	3	2	1	0
Legal issues	4	3	2	1	0
Safety from harassment and abuse	4	3	2	1	0
Safety risks and emergency procedures	4	3	2	1	0
Use of technology	4	3	2	1	0
Social and economic well being					
Life skills	4	3	2	1	0
Money matter and personal administration	4	3	2	1	0
Leisure	4	3	2	1	0
Social interaction	4	3	2	1	0
Self esteem	4	3	2	1	0
Employment and meaningful activity					
Core skills	4	3	2	1	0
Training and education	4	3	2	1	0
Looking for work	4	3	2	1	0
Sustaining employment	4	3	2	1	0
Meaningful activity	4	3	2	1	0

Housing Support in Practice

Over the past two years the HSEU has been investigating the funding of housing support in Scotland. One of the things that this work has highlighted is that there have been changes to the way that some people receive their housing support service. In particular, many tenants in sheltered housing have found their 24 hour warden service has been replaced by an alarm service. The HSEU investigated this further by getting in touch with some sheltered housing tenants to hear more about their experience. One example is given below.

Mrs Lily Sneddon moved into sheltered accommodation two years ago. She looked at a number of sheltered housing complexes and decided to move to one with 24 hour warden support. After living in the accommodation for eighteen months she was informed that the 24 hour warden service would be replaced by an alarm system.

Mrs Sneddon decided to get involved in the HSEU research so that a wider public could hear about what was happening to older people in sheltered housing.

“A few years ago I realised that my eye sight was going and that I was not going to be able to manage at home if it got any worse. I decided then to think about sheltered housing and looked at a few different places in my area. The newer complexes looked really good. The buildings were fresh and well laid out. However, all the newer ones had wardens during the day and switched to an alarm service at night. For me the whole point of moving into sheltered housing was to have somebody there. So I decided to go to one of the older blocks where there was a 24 hour warden service. The place had a warm, relaxed feel about it and I felt at home immediately.

After a year my pal told me she had read in the local newspaper that the warden service was being removed. At first I thought nothing of it as I was sure somebody would have told me if the 24 hour warden service was going. However, I was wrong.

I felt angry and let down when I heard that the wardens were being replaced by alarms. I had signed a missive saying that 24 hour warden service was part of the service and I thought that meant something. The truth is I very rarely used the warden service but I liked knowing it was there. With the wardens if you needed someone it just takes two or three minutes for them to come. They would ask how you were or if you needed a doctor sometimes that contact was all it took to make things better. But if more was needed it was done. I am not keen on the idea of there being nobody here at night.

My neighbours feel the same way about it as I do and many of them have written to the councillors to try and get it stopped. But the decision has been made and I felt I was wasting my time by trying to fight it. I know all this is about money and I don't think it is right that older people's lives are measured by money.”

The HSEU will publish its full research report in November 2009. In the meantime for any more information please contact moira.weir@ccpscotland.org

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.

House Key website

As reported in January, the House Key website was incorporated into the Scottish Government website in December 2008 and can be viewed at: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/access/housingsupport/supportservices.

The site provides a Directory of Housing Support services, divided into three separate search facilities: housing support services, sheltered accommodation, and home adaptation and repair services.

Information on the website has been provided by local authorities, housing associations and voluntary organisations. Sheltered housing and home adaptation and repair services information has been provided by the Elderly Accommodation Counsel.

Since the House Key website was incorporated into the Scottish Government website, nearly 5,000 'hits' have been recorded by individuals searching for information.

We are currently in the process of updating the service records held on the website. Should you wish to update your details, or have any suggestions on how the site can be improved, please contact us at: thehousekey@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Older People's Housing

The Scottish Government and COSLA have launched a joint programme of work on Reshaping Care for Older People to agree what we need to do now to shape the future of health and social care.

This programme is looking at a wide range of issues in the context of the demographic challenge of an ageing population. Further information can be viewed at:

www.jitscotland.org.uk/action-areas/reshaping-care-for-older-people/.

The programme comprises eight workstreams, including one on housing and communities which is managed by the Housing Support Team.

A working group has been established with representatives of housing associations, private housing and older people's organisations. It is considering the outcomes that we would like to attain for older people's housing to optimise independence and quality of life, and the changes that need to be made to achieve them as the number of older people in the population increases.

The first stage of the work will be completed in November, at which point a decision will be taken on further work and wider engagement.

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 Regional Meeting
23 November 2009
Inverness, Inverness Caledonian Thistle
Football Stadium

The Housing Support Enabling Unit and the Workforce Unit have joined forces to present an event for housing support providers to be held in Inverness. This event will provide an opportunity for providers of housing support to:

- meet with other service providers to discuss issues of common concern
- hear about ongoing research into the costs and funding of housing support
- find out more about the Housing Support Outcomes Framework
- obtain the latest guidance on TUPE
- hear more about workforce registration and qualifications

More information and a booking form are available on the HSEU website at www.ccpScotland.org/assets/files/vssswu/Events/Invernessprog.doc or by contacting liz.pettigrew@ccpScotland.org

Making the Link: the role of housing support within Local Housing Strategies
Tuesday 8th December 2009
Edinburgh

The Unit, in partnership with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Scottish Housing Best Value Network will deliver a national forum to bring stakeholders together in order to develop a greater understanding of the links between housing support and the strategic housing planning process.

The event is supported by the Scottish Government and is aimed at providers of housing support, officers within Community Health Partnerships and local authority staff within social work and housing.

The event costs £40.

For further information go to the HSEU website at www.ccpScotland.org/hseu/training/events

Contacting the Unit

Housing Support Enabling Unit
8 - 12 Torphichen Street
Edinburgh
EH3 8JQ

Switchboard Telephone: 0131 229 9468
Website: www.ccpScotland.org/hseu

Yvette Burgess, Director yvette.burgess@ccpScotland.org

Moira Weir, Information and Development Officer moira.weir@ccpScotland.org

Liz Pettigrew, Administration Assistant liz.pettigrew@ccpScotland.org