

Providers' experience of the Supporting People Programme

Introduction and Background

The SP Enabling Unit has undertaken the second stage of a longitudinal research project. The purpose of this research is to establish and chart how well equipped providers feel in providing housing support services under the Supporting People Programme.

45 organisations from across Scotland are taking part in this research. The first stage of this research was carried out in March 2004.

Stage two of the research was carried out in late September and early October 2004 before the impact of the funding announcement for 2005-2008 could be assessed.

Survey Sample

The survey sample has been designed to include the experience of different types of providers. In selecting organisations to take part, consideration has been given to:

- Geographical area including urban, island and rural providers
 - Local authority areas including weighting the representation of some local authorities that had received larger grants.
 - Size of provider
 - Type of service provided
 - Nature of business

43 of the 45 providers that participated in the initial survey undertook the second survey. 2 providers dropped out of the research because they no longer receive SP money or the service folded. 2 new providers have been selected to replace them. They were selected along similar lines according to type of service and geographical location.

Methodology

Each organisation agreed to nominate a member of staff to participate in the ongoing research and do undertake a telephone interview once every six months for two years.

Each interview is scheduled in advance and participants advised to allow ten minutes for it. The interview is structured according to a questionnaire (see Appendix1).

The first set of interviews was conducted in March 2004. The information gathered from these established a baseline for further findings to be measured against.

The second set of interviews was conducted in October 2004. Some of the survey questions replicated questions asked in previous surveys to give an indication of how things had changed and some questions started a new line of research.

This is a summary of research carried out by the Supporting people Enabling Unit. For a full copy of the research findings contact:

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Report

November 2004 Part 2

Area of Focus:

1. Administration associated with the Supporting People Programme
2. Supporting People Forums
3. Funding of housing support services under the Supporting People Programme
4. Service reviews
5. Relationship between providers and Local Authorities



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.

Summary of Findings

The future funding of housing support through Supporting People is an issue of concern for providers. Although 67% of providers reported that their current funding does cover their costs there are growing concerns that service capacity will be affected if the cost of inflation is not covered in future years.

Most providers say they can meet the information requirements associated with Supporting People with ease and 80% of providers are able to gain information with ease from their local authority when they need it. This marks a change since March 2004 when administration and information requirements associated with Supporting People were highlighted as considerable problems.

Providers found it difficult to comment on the Service Review process as 84% of providers have not taken part in a review of their service by their local authority. 89% of these providers do not know when they will do so. The pressure remains for local authorities to complete service reviews by April 2006. As most appear to be considerably behind schedule for achieving this date with ease it is to be hoped that pressure is not put on providers to prepare for and take part in service reviews at short notice.

Providers report a dramatic improvement in being able to gain information from local authorities and alongside this report improving relationships with SP Teams. Some providers have noticed, however, the impact that changing personnel in SP Teams has on sustaining good working relationships with local authorities.

Six Month Comparison

