

# Service Provider Optimism Survey

## Winter 2013 - short summary of results

A recent survey of 49 housing support providers, conducted by the Housing Support Enabling Unit, has found that 80% of respondents are concerned about how Welfare Reform will affect the delivery of their services and 60% of respondents have already seen their services affected by the changes.

*"Welfare Reform is likely to increase demand and/or increase the urgency/level of need of our client group."*

*-Care and Support Provider*

### Summary of findings

- **80%** of respondents reported that they had **concerns about how Welfare Reform would affect their service**; of these, **60%** had already **seen effects on their services from Welfare Reform**, up from 43% of respondents in Summer 2013
- Most organisations responding seem to be **confident about meeting the requirements for workforce registration**, with 92% of respondents indicating that they were "more confident" or "about the same" about their organisations ability to meet the registration requirements.
- **65%** of respondents have experienced **local authority funding cuts** in 2013-14 and 13% of respondents indicated that they had received cuts to over 90% of their services.

Changes to the welfare system are proving to be hugely challenging for support providers. Not only are the people that they support being affected by reduced income and uncertainty, but, in some cases, the nature of support is changing. Support workers are being asked to advise on benefits and support individuals through moves, sanctions and appeals more often than before.

Well over half of respondents also reported that they had experienced local authority funding cuts in at least one of their services this year. These funding cuts are a continuing trend; organisations

have received cuts to funding or a standstill for several years running and, in most cases, are being asked to continue to deliver the same services. Many organisations indicated that they had already made cuts to staff levels, terms and conditions and service delivery in order to adjust to these cuts and now there is very little room for additional savings.

This survey also asked whether providers felt confident about meeting workforce registration requirements. Responses indicated that housing support organisations were well prepared for this, with 92% of respondents reporting that they felt the same or more prepared for the changes to registration requirements than they did 6 months ago. This is an encouraging trend and reflects the preparatory work that housing support providers have been doing for several years to ensure that their workforce is ready for registration.

The HSEU will continue to monitor how Welfare Reform affects the delivery of housing support services in Scotland using the on-going Provider Optimism Survey as well as other surveys and case studies. For a more comprehensive summary of findings from the survey visit the HSEU website to download the full report.



The HSEU works with and assists providers of housing support across the independent and third sectors.

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