

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

Update for members of CCPS

January 2013

This paper outlines the focus and activities of the Looked After Children Strategic Implementation Group (LACSIG). It also gives details of the changes made over the summer of 2012. It includes:

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Please note that unless otherwise stated 'LACSIG' refers to the programme as a whole, including both the main board and the Activity Hubs. All comments and enquires can be addressed to Ben Farrugia at ben.farrugia@strath.ac.uk or 0141 444 8532. Further details about the programme are also available at www.celcis.org/lacsig/

LACSIG Programme Office

08 January 2013



PURPOSE AND ROLE OF LACSIG

1. LACSIG is a Scottish Government backed initiative to deliver change in the way services work for looked after children. Bringing together a mix of strategic and front-line professionals - from across Scotland's public, private and third sectors - it provides a forum in which the national effort to improve outcomes can be coordinated. In helping to improve communication between the many organisations involved in supporting looked after child and their families, it hopes to encourage greater collaboration across the planning, delivery and review of services. In this way it aims to:

- reduce drift and delay in the **care planning** process (as well as the quality of care plans);
- establish a more strategic approach to the **commissioning** of services for children;
- ensure corporate parents provide a meaningful **education** to all;
- extend support for **care leavers** into adulthood;
- develop a **foster care** provision that meets the needs of the population;
- identify further ways in which **volunteers** can support children and families.

CHANGES MADE IN 2012

2. Between May and September 2012 LACSIG moved into a new phase, with changes made to its structure, membership and focus. At the Board level this involved the introduction of a new chair (the Minister for Children and Young People) and a number of new members. The Board has also been given a more outward facing role, monitoring activity across the relevant sectors and holding key delivery agencies to account for developments in their area. Importantly, the Board's focus is now broader than the issues being explored by LACSIG's Activity Hubs.

3. In May 2012 the LACSIG Board agreed to bring the **Health Hub** to a close. Outstanding activities are being taken forward by Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland and the Child Health Commissioners Group. In the place of the Hub two 'champions' for looked after children's health have been identified: Sally Egan of

NHS Lothian, Vice Chair of the Child Health Commissioners Group; and Dr Kate McKay, Scottish Government National Clinical Lead for Child Health. Both are undertaking specific activities, and will report their progress directly to the Board.

4. Reflecting on the conclusions of the Audit Scotland report¹ of March 2012 and updated high-level children's services review, some members of the LACSIG **Commissioning Hub** expressed the opinion that LACSIG (and in particular the Hub) was unlikely to add further value in respect of embedding strategic commissioning into practice. The challenge – members noted – was now about implementation, which LACSIG has little capacity to effect. This issue was raised with the LACSIG Board in May 2012, who agreed that alternative approaches should be explored. The views of LACSIG members were surveyed at the Two Year On event (29 June 2012), where the majority also expressed the view that a new approach was needed. This was fed back to the Commissioning Hub in August, where it was agreed that the Hub should be brought to a close.

5. In October 2012 the LACSIG Board considered a '*strategic commissioning: options*' paper, prepared by the Scottish Government. This highlighted relevant work already underway or planned (such as the new Early Years National Commissioner Officer post) and outlined a number of ideas about how to support Community Planning Partners in the future. These options are now being considered by Scottish Government and other relevant organisations, with firm plans expected early in 2013.

6. A new group looking at **Throughcare & Aftercare** is under development, to be chaired by Duncan Dunlop of Who Cares? Scotland. A suggested focus has been issues relating to accommodation for care leavers and young adults who were formerly looked after. A final decision on focus will follow the results of a mapping exercise of services being undertaken by SG and Centre for excellence for looked after children in Scotland (CELCIS). This work will be augmented by research funded by Life Changes Trust (Big Lottery), exploring young people's experience of TC/AC.

7. To ensure foster care provision adequately reflects the needs of Scotland's looked after young people, the Scottish Government has commissioned a national

¹ Audit Scotland (2012) [Commissioning Social Care](#), Edinburgh

Foster Care Review. This review (chaired by Sandra Paterson, former Head of Children's Services in North Ayrshire) will look at how the recommendations and aspirations laid out in the 2008 report *Moving Forward* can be realised in practice. It will run throughout 2013, reporting to the LACSIG Board and the Minister for Children and Young People.

8. The **Workforce Hub** met for the last time in August 2012. With the completion of its work plan for 2011-12 the Hub and LACSIG Board agreed that to bring the group to a close, transferring its responsibility for 'identifying the development needs of professionals working with looked after children' to CELCIS, working closely alongside other key organisations such as the SSSC, Education Scotland and Further and Higher education institutions.

9. The **Care Planning Hub** (chaired by Alistair Gaw and Romy Langeland) and the **Learning Hub** (chaired by Carol Kirk) remain in place, but both have seen a tightening of their focus. The former now has explicit responsibility to oversee implementation of the Scottish Government's Care and Permanence Plan (2011). The latter (Learning) has agreed to look specifically at looked after children's 'access to and engagement with' educational / learning opportunities, and throughout 2013 will be trying to identify what barriers and enablers are involved in providing a meaningful full-time education to children.

10. In response to the recommendations of the 2011 Parliamentary Committee inquiry into the educational attainment of looked after children, the Scottish Government has invited Susan Elsley to review what role **volunteers** play in supporting looked after children and their families. This review will operate within the LACSIG structure, and will run between December 2012 and June 2013.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

11. Across LACSIG a number of activities are currently underway.

❖ Measuring Outcomes

As part of its focus on the commissioning of services, the LACSIG Board will consider the work being taken forward across Scotland on 'measuring personal outcomes'. Particular attention will be given to the 'outcomes in secure care' work currently being taken forward by the Scottish Government and Secure Care providers, as well as the Educating through Care Scotland (EtCS) 'outcomes framework' pilot. Both of these projects offer an insight into the opportunities and challenges associated with adopting an outcomes approach to the planning, delivery and evaluation of services.

❖ Updated guidance on the role of responsible Health Commissioners

In response to concerns over the management of healthcare in situations where a child or young person is placed out with their home NHS Board area, the Scottish Government (in partnership with the Child Health Commissioners Group) are updating and revising the guidance on the role of the responsible health commissioner. Progress is being reported to the LACSIG Board.

❖ Establishment of national Care and Permanence Team

As part of the Scottish Government's response to the 2011 SCRA report on permanence planning for looked after children, a national Care & Permanence Team has now been established at CELCIS. This team will work both bilaterally with individual agencies, and across the sector, identifying and implementing improvements in mechanics of the care planning system. The team will concentrate on reducing the drift and delay in decision making through improving the quality of assessments, reports, communication and care planning (including the care plans).

❖ **Cost and Consequences Calculator Pilot**

Two local authorities have now confirmed their interest in participating in a pilot of the Cost and Consequences Calculator, with a further two considering involvement. This calculator enables authorities to establish accurate costing for their internal care planning procedures and services. Such data is critical to a robust strategic commissioning approach, allowing purchasers to accurately assess the relative costs of externally and internally provided services. The LACSIG Board is being kept updated with progress.

❖ **Workforce Briefing: Professional boundaries**

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is to publish new guidance on professional boundaries, aimed at all those working with looked after children.

❖ **Embedding attachment theory into professional practice**

Scottish Attachment in Action and CELCIS have completed a mapping exercise to establish the extent to which attachment theory underpins the education and day-to-day working of practitioners in Scotland's children's services. The findings of this report are now being considered by the LACSIG Care Planning Hub and CELCIS, with a view to developing a comprehensive programme of work (over 2013-14) to ensure that professional practice with children reflects (and respects) an understanding of child / adult development, with the centrality of consistent, positive relationships.

Copies of the report are available to download from the CELCIS website. .

❖ **Children on home supervision requirements**

Following the Parliamentary inquiry into the educational attainment of looked after children, the Scottish Government and LACSIG gave a commitment to explore options for improving the system of 'home supervision'. A Ministerial summit is being

convened on 4 December to consider the issue in detail, with proposals expected in March 2013.

Please note: CELCIS has prepared a research briefing on Home Supervision Requirements, which will be available to download from the CELCIS website from 04 December 2013. New research from SCRA looking into children on home supervision requirements for 5 + years was published on 14 November 2012.

❖ **Guidance on the role of external managers**

The role of the external manager has been highlighted as pivotal in safeguarding children and young people. In 2009, the Independent Inquiry into Abuse at Kerelaw Residential School and Secure Unit highlighted that the 'failures of external management were an important contributor to what went wrong' (Scottish Government, 2009: 137). The work of the NRCCI includes key messages and recommendations on the role of external managers which should be constructive, supportive and challenging. In discussion with the residential sector, the Scottish Government and CELCIS have developed new guidance on the role of the external manager in Scotland (to be published very soon).

❖ **Revisiting the 'core tasks' of designated managers**

In early 2013 the LACSIG Learning Hub – in partnership with CELCIS and the Scottish Government – will revisit the 'core tasks for designated managers in educational establishments'. In line with the refresh of We Can and Must Do Better (due 2013) – and following a series of regional engagement events with designated managers in 2012 – the Hub has agreed to update and re-launch the Core Tasks, making them fit for purpose. This work will form part of broader strategy aimed at enabling designated managers to effectively support the education of looked after children.

❖ **Reduced hours timetables**

As part of its commitment to ensuring all looked after children have access to the statutory minimum hours of education, the LACSIG Learning Hub will be working with ADES to survey the extent (and use of) out-of-school provision. This will run in parallel to conversations with ScotXed about change to the way attendance (and reduced hours timetables) are recorded information management systems.

APPENDIX A:**LACSIG BOARD MEMBERS (AS OF 08 JANUARY 2013)**

Scottish Government (Chair) Minister for Children and Young People	Aileen Campbell
Scottish Government (Depute Chair) Director of Children and Families	Mike Foulis
Scottish Government Head of Looked After Children Policy	David Blair
Scottish Government Deputy Director for Child and Maternal Health	John Froggatt
Scottish Government Chief Social Work Officer	Alexis Jay
Scottish Government Clinical Lead for Child and Young People Health	Dr Kate McKay
Scottish Children's Report Administration Chief Executive	Neil Hunter
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) Children and Young People Lead	Robert Nicol
Scottish Social Services Council Chief Executive	Anna Fowlie
Independent <i>Chair of Care & Permanence Activity Hub</i>	Romy Langeland
City of Edinburgh Council / ADSW Head of Support for Children & Young People <i>Chair of Care & Permanence Hub</i>	Alistair Gaw
North Ayrshire Council / ADES Corporate Director for Education & Skills <i>Chair of Learning Hub</i>	Carol Kirk
Care Inspectorate Director of Operations	Karen Anderson

Who Cares? Scotland Chief Executive <i>Chair of Throughcare & Aftercare Hub</i>	Duncan Dunlop
Education Scotland Strategic Director for Early Years, Families & Partnership	Alistair Delaney
British Association for Adoption & Fostering Director	Barbara Hudson
Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland Director	Jennifer Davidson
Independent <i>Chair of Foster Care Review</i>	Sandra Paterson
NHS Highland (Chair) <i>Commissioning Champion</i>	Garry Coutts
Children 1st Children & Family Service Director	Alison Todd
Children in Scotland Director	Jackie Brock
Scottish Child Health Commissioners Vice Chair	Sally Egan
Independent Chair of 'Role of Volunteers' Hub	Susan Elsley

ATTENDING TO SUPPORT LACSIG BOARD

CELCIS LACSIG Programme Lead	Ben Farrugia
CELCIS LACSIG Administrative Support	Kirsty Anderson

APPENDIX B:

LACSIG ACITIVTY HUBS (As of January 2013)

Hub	Current Focus
Care & Permanence	Implementation of the Scottish Government's 2011 Care & Permanence Plan
Foster Care	National Foster Care review
Learning	Children's engagement with educational opportunities.
Throughcare & Aftercare	<i>TBC</i>
Role of volunteers	Review of the role of volunteers