

September 2022

National Care Service (Scotland) Bill

Housing support and the NCS

The National Care Service (Scotland) Bill was introduced to Parliament on 20 June 2022¹. The Bill is currently in Stage 1 and a consultation has just concluded.

The principles of the National Care Service focus on building a service that allows the realisation of human rights, centres on early intervention, and that is designed collaboratively. Housing services under the Housing Act are not included within the scope of the National Care Service. This includes functions related to homelessness. However, the policy memorandum² recognises that

'...the NCS will need to work closely with housing and homelessness services to ensure people's needs are met.'

The policy memorandum also suggests that the NCS will be subject to the shared homelessness prevention duty and will be involved in joined up planning to tackle homelessness.

Other functions of housing support are not mentioned within the NCS Bill or Policy Memorandum, suggesting that they will not be included within the scope of the National Care Service. However, areas and services that often intersect with housing support are included in the NCS including responsibility for Adult Support and Protection, mental health services, alcohol and drugs support, and Social Work. This is important because housing support is often a collaborative effort with joint funding streams involving Social Work and Housing.

Concerns of housing support providers

- How will providers maintain the ability to work collaboratively with other social care services, especially with joint funding streams such as through social work?
- Providers of housing support have fundamental concerns that structural changes will not improve front-end services. Culture change and adequate funding are required.
- The current state of the bill as framework legislation means that essential details will be dealt with in secondary legislation and there are worries that a level of scrutiny has been removed.

¹ <https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/national-care-service-scotland-bill/stage-1>.

² <https://www.parliament.scot/-/media/files/legislation/bills/s6-bills/national-care-service-scotland-bill/introduced/policy-memorandum-accessible.pdf>

- Relationship between the NCS and local government is an area of concern. Will the NCS still be able to foster accountability at local level and how will care boards practically be different from local authorities and Integrated Joint Boards?

Responding to the consultation

The Unit contributed to both the CCPS and SFHA responses and will continue engaging with the sector as the Bill progresses through Stage 1 and beyond.

The principles of the Bill look promising for bringing positive change to social care and support. They emphasise the importance of human rights, early intervention, and collaborative design. However, without a model of change targeting the primary change drivers of culture, relationships, and behaviours, it is not clear how the principles will be followed through.

CCPS has created a [model of change](#) for social care and support in Scotland. Beginning with a similar overarching vision to the National Care Service, this model includes system requirements, behaviours, resources, and operating principles that are necessary to enable change within social care and support that would meet the principles outlined in the NCS Bill.

You can find the CCPS response to the consultation [here](#) and the SFHA response should appear on its website.

Changes to COVID-19 guidance

Wearing of face masks

The Scottish Government has announced that face masks are no longer required to be used by social care staff except in the following circumstances:

- a supported person asks that staff wear a face mask (and this should be noted in their support plan)
- a member of staff prefers to wear a face mask
- there is an outbreak of infection
- where a member of social care staff is likely to have contact with someone who has a respiratory infection

The guidance for healthcare differs from social care and face masks continue to be required for health care staff. The reason for this divergence in guidance is that the harms to supported people associated with social care staff wearing masks are deemed to outweigh the usefulness of doing so in community settings. When healthcare staff visit someone at

home or in supported housing or a care home they should follow the social care guidance ie they are not required to wear a face mask.

The [guidance](#) should be implemented from 14th September or earlier if possible.

Covid and Flu Vaccination – Autumn/Winter 2022

Social care staff, including those working in housing support and sheltered/ supported housing are eligible for both the COVID-19 vaccination and flu vaccination.

The online booking portal for frontline Health & Social Care Workers (HSWCs) Is open. The portal can be accessed, along with other information on the programme and eligibility, via [Winter vaccines | NHS inform](#) The direct portal page link is [Login - Customer Service \(nhs.scot\)](#)

Asymptomatic testing

Revised guidance will be announced during week beginning 12th September for implementation by the end of September.

Housing Benefit and Supported Housing Survey

The Housing Support Enabling Unit is looking to gather information about the number of supported exempt accommodation services across Scotland. The HSEU also plans to create case studies of good quality supported exempt accommodation and other supported housing services.

In March, it was announced by the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Rough Sleeping and Housing that [changes were being planned to the housing benefit system for supported housing](#). We feel that it is important to present examples of how supported exempt accommodation is working in Scotland. This work is becoming increasingly relevant with the emerging news of poor-quality supported housing and the misuse of the housing benefit system in England.

We would appreciate your help in providing information about the number of supported housing services across Scotland and to help us build these case studies.

[Click here to complete the survey.](#)

We ask that only one person from each organisation completes the survey, which will be open until 21st September.

Please email hs.unit@ccpscotland.org if you have any questions.

Understanding social care software systems in Scotland – a digital mapping survey

Closing date approaching soon

The Scottish Government recently invited a broad range of voluntary sector organisations to take part in a survey about the digital and manual systems they use in the delivery of social care services. They are seeking to understand the voluntary sector data and digital footprint across social care in Scotland to inform improvement plans alongside the development of an integrated social care and health record as part of the National Care Service.

The response rate for this survey has so far been low, so they are keen to encourage the appropriate IT/digital manager/teams from invited voluntary sector organisations to contribute and ensure their voices and perspectives feed into future plans.

Please be aware that emails encouraging participation are being shared widely across various communications channels and distribution groups, so you should check with colleagues before completing the survey.

The survey has been simplified and a separate short form has also been created where you can get help to complete it. A copy of the Word version is included so that you can see what is required: [Understanding Digital Systems survey.docx](#)

The original survey link is here:

https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/understanding_care_systems/

And a link to the short form is here:

https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/this_will_just_take_5_minutes/

A new closing date for completion of the survey has been agreed with SG in the hope of increasing participation: **5pm Friday 16th September 2022**. For further information, please contact nancy.fancott@ccpscotland.org

No Place Like Home Photography Competition – closing date extended!

The HSEU launched our annual No Place Like Home Photography Competition over the summer, and we want to give housing support providers one more chance to make sure the people they work with can showcase their photography talents!

The competition is open to anyone using housing support or supported housing services. We are eager to shine a light on the valuable role of housing support in Scotland so we would love to gather as many entries as possible. To enter, people must submit a photograph and an accompanying short narrative representing at least one of three themes of home, community, or wellbeing. Cash prizes of £50 are available for the winners and entry forms are available [here](#).

The closing date is now **Monday 19th September** – so make sure you get those entries in!

Scottish Government

Scottish Child Payment stakeholder events

In October and November, Social Security Scotland is holding several online events about the Scottish Child Payment. These events are designed for stakeholders working with individuals who will be eligible for the five family payments including Scottish Child Payment and Best Start Grants.

List of events:

- 25th October 2022 14:30
- 26th October 2022 10:00
- 1st November 2022 10:00
- 3rd November 2022 14:30

Anyone interested can book a free space now via Eventbrite: [Online social security scotland Events | Eventbrite](#)

If you have any questions, experience difficulty booking or have any accessibility needs you need assistance with, you can email the National Engagement and Partnership Team at nationalengagementandpartnershipteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot.

Better Futures

Half-price offer

Better Futures is an outcomes-monitoring tool hosted by the Housing Support Enabling Unit and used by housing support providers throughout Scotland. Its unique scoring system

enables support workers to create individually tailored support plans, and to update and track progress over time.

Now we are into September, Better Futures is available to new providers to take up for half the standard annual fee. If you are intrigued by the opportunities Better Futures could offer your organisation, we would love to hear from you. The Housing Support Enabling Unit will help you explore if Better Futures is right for your service and offer a free demonstration of the system, guiding you through the basics of adding a record to the online system, setting up a support plan and recording outcomes. [Email us](#) for more information!

Multifactor Authentication

Multifactor authentication (MFA) was introduced for all Better Futures logins in August. All staff logging in to the system are now required to confirm their identity using the Google Authenticator app on a phone or device and/or using the Google Chrome Authenticator Extension, ensuring that Better Futures continues to maintain maximum security of data stored on the system.

The transition to MFA was smooth and the Unit would like to place on record its thanks to all Better Futures providers for preparing staff for the change and supporting them through any challenges or difficulties they may have faced.

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

CCPS is a limited company, registered in Scotland under the company number of SC279913. The company's registered office is at Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh EH7 5QY. CCPS is a registered Scottish charity: No. SC029199.