

November 2022

National Care Service

Update

During November, several Scottish Government committees have been hearing evidence on the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill. On the 8th of November, Yvette Burgess, director of the Housing Support Enabling Unit gave evidence to the [Local Government, Housing and Planning committee](#), alongside representatives from Cyrenians, the Chartered Institute of Housing Scotland, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, and All in for Change.

The HSEU continues to be involved with the work of CCPS around the NCS as debate develops. Any future events will be shared by our mailing list.

Extension of older people's health and social care strategy

In late October, the Scottish Government released feedback after the consultation on the [Health and Social Care Strategy](#) for Older People closed in June.

The Scottish Government has proposed to extend the timeframe for development of a Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People, in order to take account of, and contribute to, the development of the National Care Service. The Scottish Government reports that ministers remain committed to developing the strategy, once they have considered the implications of the National Care Service Bill.

The [consultation paper](#) published in February 2022 stated that the aim of the strategy would be to 'build on the work which has already been undertaken across Scotland to deliver integrated, person centred health and social care for

older people, address gaps, and develop any new priorities from emerging areas of work.'

This announcement comes after the recent announcement from the Emergency Budget Review that £70 million of spending on the NCS will be cut through a [rephasing of the NCS](#) development.

Supported Exempt Accommodation

Legislative update in England

Supported Exempt Accommodation has recently been the subject of increased scrutiny and mainstream media attention after it emerged that there have been numerous examples of abuses of the housing benefit system in England resulting in extremely low-quality accommodation. The cross-party [Levelling Up, Housing and Communities \(LHUC\) Committee](#) published a report on 27th October labelling the current system of exempt accommodation a 'complete mess' that was failing residents at the expense of the taxpayer.

On 15th June 2022, Bob Blackman, MP for Harrow East introduced a Private Members Bill to the House of Commons, [the Supported Housing \(Regulatory Oversight\) Bill](#). Pre-legislative bill scrutiny began this month when the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee heard evidence about how the bill plans to introduce licensing schemes within local authorities to enable better regulation of supported exempt accommodation. The current version of the Private Members Bill does not apply to Scotland, with provisions including more detailed supported housing strategies for local authorities, new National Supported Housing Standards, and licensing regulations for supported exempt accommodation.

At this stage, it seems unlikely that this bill will change current arrangements in Scotland. With housing as a devolved function, the bill's provision of increasing licensing regulation in the supported housing sector would not apply. The current version of the bill does not mention changing the housing

benefit eligibility that currently enables supported exempt accommodation. The HSEU is currently creating case studies of good quality supported accommodation in Scotland, and will continue to engage with any changes that would affect the housing benefit system and supported accommodation in Scotland.

New Care Inspectorate quality indicator frameworks for housing support

The Care Inspectorate has recently updated the [quality framework for housing support](#). These updates come as a way to reflect the changing practice and policy context in which housing support is provided, and in response to learning from the pandemic.

There are three key updates:

- Separation of standalone housing support services and offender accommodation services. Each will now have their own framework.
- Removing key question 7 and adding a new quality indicator 1.5, 'People's health and wellbeing benefits from safe infection prevention and control practice and procedures.
- Introducing 'core assurances' or key areas that are essential to a service being safe.

The Care Inspectorate is hosting a webinar for housing support providers on 22nd November from 10:00-11:00am to explain the changes of the updated framework and answer any questions. More information is available on the [Care Inspectorate website](#).

Digital Lifelines Small Grants Fund

Applications are open for the Digital Lifelines small grants fund, but they close soon – the deadline is midday on Friday 18th November

The Digital Lifelines small grants fund is to support small, local organisations to continue or extend digital inclusion activities with people at risk of death from a drug overdose and those who care about them and support them.

The fund is for community-based organisations with an income of less than £250,000 in their last financial year. Organisations must:

- Be based in Scotland or predominantly delivering services in Scotland
- Have been operating for at least 18 months
- Have a set of audited or independently examined accounts

Grants to a maximum of £10k for up to twelve-months are available for local voluntary and community organisations.

You can find more information and apply [here](#).

Better Futures

Annual Event, November 2022

The Better Futures Annual Event took place online earlier this month, between 1st and 10th November. It offered an opportunity for existing and potential system users, as well as those with broader interest in housing support and

outcomes monitoring, to come together for remote presentations, discussion and demonstrations.

Over 100 attendees from a variety of sector organisations tuned into four sessions focusing on:

- Better Futures, regulation and the Scottish Government's data strategy
- Demonstration of the Better Futures online system
- Harnessing digital technologies to tackle homelessness
- Commissioning for Outcomes and the role of Better Futures

The first event session began with the announcement of winners of the Unit's annual 'No Place Like Home' photography competition, which celebrates the achievements and experiences of people using housing support services in Scotland. The session then moved on to presentations from Care Inspectorate service manager Claire Pierce and Scottish Government policy lead for data and intelligence Ryan Anderson. In addition to outlining headline areas of work and policy objectives, both speakers spoke of the virtues of Better Futures and the benefits of its person-centred, user-led, outcomes-focused approaches to recording and measuring the progress of people receiving housing support.

The demonstration session was led by Fraser White from the Unit, supported by experienced Better Futures user Alexander Rae from South Ayrshire Council. Attendees were guided through some of the main features of Better Futures, gaining insights from Alexander who uses the system as both a commissioner and provider of services.

Simon Community Scotland led delivery of a session looking at the role of digital technologies in tackling homelessness, which doubled as a DigiFest satellite session. Floating housing service lead Tracy Orr, digital inclusion manager Nigel Gallear and Patrick McCann from Simon Community provided an overview of services across Scotland and how its digital inclusion programme, Get Digital Scotland, is helping change people's lives. They also used case study examples to show how they use Better Futures to support people's journeys out of homelessness and ways in which the client access

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function helps ensure service users have control over decision-making in their lives.

The event series closed with a CCPS-led discussion of its work in driving a Commissioning for Outcomes agenda. Neil McKechnie described how collaborative commissioning involves working together as equals to plan, design and provide social care services which are easy to access, give choice and meaningfully involve people in understanding the outcomes they want to achieve to have a good life. CCPS's collaborative commissioning resources are available online at [the CCPS Big Ideas website](#).

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.