



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Kay McVeigh
SPDS
15 November 2022

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee
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16 November 2022

Dear Kay,

Follow-up to your attendance at HSCS Committee, 15 November 2022

I am writing further to your attendance at the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee on Tuesday, 15 November, to give evidence as part of the Committee's Stage 1 scrutiny of the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill.

The following specific questions were not asked during the session, where we would be grateful to receive a follow-up response from you in writing. Please do not feel obliged to answer every question and feel free to focus your answers on those questions that appear most relevant to your organisation's sphere of interest and expertise:

General views on the Bill

- Do you agree that accountability for social services should be transferred from local government to the Scottish Ministers and for what reasons?
 - **No - Individual councils, IJBs, Cosla and SPDS have already submitted detailed evidence on this.**
- To what extent would the Bill address urgent challenges in community health and social services?
 - **The Bill would not impact on the current urgent challenges in community health and social services. Workforce challenges are the most pressing issue, and these can be progressed (in so far as they can be resolved in the current labour market) without the Bill, using existing mechanisms. Work on the NCS at present is detracting from the ability to address the current crisis.**
- Are improved consistency and quality the most important criteria to achieve better outcomes for people needing social care and support in Scotland? Are there other criteria you think are more or equally important in considering reform? What impact will the Bill as introduced have on services in terms of fulfilling these criteria?

- What elements of the Bill will make the biggest contribution to improved outcomes for people using social services? What additional elements would you like to see included that could further help improve outcomes? How should the impact of the Bill in improving outcomes be measured?
- What could be done to ensure the process of change wouldn't destabilise services?
 - **There would need to be clarity around the model and implications for the workforce and service users. Even positive change can be destabilising, and the mechanisms required to introduce change successfully in organisations are well understood. The approach taken with a framework bill is not helpful, as questions from the workforce cannot be answered. This is significant non defined change on top of change (IJBs) which are still relatively new and bedding in.**

Comparisons between the NHS and social care

- Is there sufficient clarity about the differences between the National Health Service and proposals for a National Care Service?

National Social Work Agency

- Should the NSWA cover social work only or could it take account of multi-disciplinary working?
 - **This needs more discussion - social work will work very closely with other professions which will also have their own standards and codes to follow. In covering more professions this will become more complex.**
- How could a National Social Work Agency address workforce pressures in social work? Should it also cover the social care workforce?
 - **Effective workforce planning is required to address workforce pressures. Putting some resource into workforce planning would negate the need for a National Social Work Agency to deal with this. There is a risk that silo based workforce planning would have a detrimental impact through unintended consequences.**

Staff roles and multi-disciplinary teams

- How should the Bill ensure that the principle that services are to be centred around early interventions and prevention is realised in practice?

Workforce pressures

- What aspects of the Bill could support or embed fair work practices in social care and support services? Are there any aspects of the Bill witnesses would like to see further reinforced, or anything they would specifically like to see added to the Bill, to support this objective?
 - **If the existing Fair Work workstreams conclude their work, and subsequent proposals are resourced and rolled out, then these aspirations will be met without recourse to the Bill**
- What difference could implementation of the Health and Care Staffing (Scotland) Act 2019 make to the integration of health and care services? How do witnesses see the commissioning principles set out in the 2019 Act interacting with the NCS principles set out in the current Bill?
- What role is there for professional bodies in addressing workforce issues? To what extent will the Bill facilitate or impede professional bodies in fulfilling that role?

- **The Bill appears to be creating an additional layer which will add complexity and remove current accountability. There are existing National bodies which could do this already.**
- What aspects of fair work could be co-designed, and who should be involved in the co-design process?
 - **The existing Fair Work workstreams could conclude their work, and this aspect met without recourse to the Bill**
- How do we ensure fair work becomes a reality in a national care service? Is there enough in the Bill to reassure you that fair work is adequately addressed? If not, what is missing?
 - **This work is already being covered via the Fair Work workstreams and should not wait for the Bill.**

Training and research

- How can the Bill ensure staff time is protected to undergo training and professional development?
 - **The existing Fair Work workstreams could conclude their work, and this aspect met without recourse to the Bill**
- What are the risks and opportunities in care boards or the Scottish Ministers setting standards and becoming involved in qualifications for social services staff?
- How is training linked to fair work? Does the Bill as introduced acknowledge and facilitate that link appropriately? How could the Bill be improved to reinforce the link between training and fair work principles?
 - **The existing Fair Work workstreams have already identified this work, and this aspect can be met without recourse to the Bill**
- Which body or bodies should oversee training of social services staff and should this be made clear in the Bill?
 - **SSSC set the standards, provide some resources and employers have responsibility for delivering training. This could be mandated via commissioning rather than waiting for the Bill.**

Information sharing and data collection

- Should other bodies, beyond care boards and health boards, or individuals have access to the scheme to share information proposed by the Bill?
- Should there be more detail in the Bill about the 'care records' scheme? If so, what would witnesses like to see?
- What part could and should data collection play in the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of a national care service?
- Would you support the continuing use of integration indicators so that performance could be compared before and after the reforms proposed by the Bill are implemented?

Deadline for response

To enable the Committee to factor your response into its planned evidence session with the Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care on 20 December 2022, I would request that you send this to the Committee **no later than Monday, 12 December.**

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gillian Martin'.

Gillian Martin MSP
Convener, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee