

Scottish Cross Party Group for Muscular Dystrophy UK

Zoom Meeting– Minutes

Introductions

- Jackie Baillie MSP, Chair of the Scottish Cross Party Group, welcomed attendees including Anna Kynaston, Deputy Director of the National Care Service Development Directorate).

Context of discussion

- Matthew Rose, Health Policy Manager from Muscular Dystrophy UK gave an overview of the long-term issue in Scotland of poor access to care and support packages. MR reflected on concerns previously raised at the CPG regarding experiences of the Self-Directed Support framework in practice – highlighting high thresholds for accessing support, and complex assessment processes leading to insufficient care being provided. MR also emphasised the points made at previous meetings about the variation of care package provision.
- MR highlighted that the National Care Service Bill had been introduced in the Scottish Parliament over Summer, which shifts the responsibility from local authorities to a national level. He said MSPs will be debating the Bill in the autumn months, whilst the government also carry out further co-design with organisations and individuals to develop more detail about what is already proposed in the Bill.
- MR updated that MDUK have invited other charities that represent and advocate for people with a long term condition to come together and work on campaigning products to assist engagement with the co-design process and amendment stages of the Bill.
- The group of charities have agreed a set of issues and recommendations to focus on which relate to concerns raised at previous CPG meetings for an improved care system.

Update from the Scottish Government National Care Service Division

Overview

- Anna Kynaston (AK) summarised that the proposed National Care Service brings together social work, social care, and community health to strengthen health social care integration, with accountability for adult social care transferring to Scottish Ministers.
- AK said that a decision had not yet been taken on whether children's services will be included in a National Care Service, with the remaining months of 2022 being used to collate evidence informing this decision.
- Overall, the aim of Bill is to drive improvement and consistency by resolving ineffective processes and practices which act as barriers.

Functions – national and local

- AK said there will be national accountability for care, but that services will continue to be designed and delivered locally. At a national level there are additional requirements for guidance and new care standards, which will support new local

bodies to deliver in a consistent and fair way - for example, national standards around 'assessment'.

Co-design

- AK said that the government have intentionally introduced a framework bill, and currently have only scratched the surface of the level of consultation required for a scale of reform such as the National Care Service.
- A co-design panel was launched in September, which is intended to involve people with lived experience of care in future development of the NCS. There are five initial themes for conversation which are: Information sharing; realising rights; keeping support local; making sure voices are heard; valuing workforce.
- An additional part of the codesign work is a register to include stakeholders, representative organisations and partners such as the NHS.

Questions and discussion

Primary legislation vs guidance and regulations

- JB said there is a degree of nervousness about the Bill being a 'framework' Bill, and asked what assurances can be given to people regarding further detail.
- AK said that at a national level there should be some draft guidance starting to be published along the same timeline as the Bill. Where secondary legislation needs to be introduced, this will be driven by the co-design process.
- JB said being able to see draft secondary legislation and guidance will be helpful for all involved in the reform.

Funding

- When asked what extra funding is going to be added to support the NCS being a success, AK said that the government have published financial memorandum that provides information which is currently known. However, the codesign process mentioned will also be supported by business cases which will be publicly available.

Carers and workforce

- When asked about the challenges with workforce recruitment and retention, AK said that whilst pay is important, resolutions are about more than just pay, for example total reward packages and training. She said the government recognise it is important to build a better workforce for the future, so the system is ready when a national care service begins.
- Asked about the possibility of new practitioners, AK responded that officials are talking to professional bodies about future training requirements – noting that attendees at a different Cross-Party Group had raised the gap between the current training for social work is, and what the reality of the job is.

Transition

- Members raised transition as an area for concern, especially given the Bill does not currently include children's services and asked how the Transition Bill is being considered.
- AK acknowledged that the consultation already carried out shows transition as a big issue and that is why it has been identified as a 'key cross cutting theme', which will feature through the 5 themes highlighted earlier in the meeting.

Respite

- The group highlighted examples relating to budget and respite allocation that show a lack of standardisation. AK explained that there are provisions in the Bill around unpaid carers, however, they will also consider whether there is a national guidance note that needs to be introduced to address this.

Short term help ahead of reform

- Finally, JB said that a lot of people are struggling right now, especially given there is a cost-of-living crisis. JB asked what work is taking place to deal with these current pressures faced.
- AK said a lot of responsibility currently sits with local government, and the national government is working closely with COSLA to ensure there is a shared programme of activity to deliver improvements for people in the short term. She said now the Bill has been set out with clear principles, it makes that activity much easier to plan. There is a document being developed which will be published in the coming months.

AOB

- AK agreed to come back to the group at a future meeting for further updates and discussion.