

Update on the Implementation of Self Directed Support in Midlothian**Report by Eibhlin McHugh, Joint Director Health and Social Care****1 Purpose of Report**

To provide an update on the progress made with implementation of Self Directed Support (SDS) in Midlothian.

2 Background**2.1** The Self Directed Support (Scotland) Act 2013 introduced more choice and flexibility in how individuals receive social care support reflecting a goal of delivering better outcomes for individuals and communities.

The SDS act required local authorities to offer 4 options to individuals who are eligible to receive social care:

- Option 1 – A direct payment to allow an individual to arrange their own support. An individual can use their direct payment to employ personal assistants, or purchase equipment and services.
- Option 2 – The individual chooses the support organisation and the council arranges support
- Option 3 – The individual asks the local authority to arrange the support
- Option 4 – A mixture of the first three options

Whichever SDS option is selected individuals must be eligible to receive support and funds can only be use to meet the outcomes agreed in the care plan.

2.2 In addition to introducing choice about how support is provided the Act required the local authority must make sure it adheres to the following values (Respect, Fairness, Freedom, Safety and Independence and ensure it has due regard to the statutory principles of Collaboration, Informed Choice, Participation & Dignity and practice should be informed by the principles of Innovation, Risk Enablement and Responsibility.**3 Progress to Date****3.1** In order to support the implementation of Self Directed Support a project team was set up to co-ordinate the work necessary to ensure that Midlothian Council meets its obligations under the act. This work is being overseen by a Project Board, whose membership includes Heads of Service, service user / carer representatives and representatives from voluntary organisations. The work completed to date has focused on ensuring the necessary policies, procedures and

working practices are in place to meet Midlothian Council's obligations. This work has included:

- Developing Self Directed Support policies for both Adults and Children's Services
- Developing resource allocation tools in order to provide consistent allocation of social care budget for individual cases
- Establishing detailed procedures to allow individuals to choose providers under option 2
- Developing practice around assessments to ensure that assessments are outcome focussed and support individuals to have greater choice and control over how their support is provided
- Piloting different ways of providing support in order to identify more innovative ways of meeting individual's outcomes
- Keeping abreast of national developments and best practice in other local authorities in order to Midlothian Council

3.2 There is evidence that SDS is changing how individuals receive support:

- There is a increase in the number of individuals choosing direct payments for their support (although this has been offset by a number of people in receipt of a direct payment moving to receive their support by option 2)
- There has been a significant uptake of SDS option 2 and in particular by individuals choosing care at home providers through option 2
- There is evidence of increased creativity in the provision of support and individuals outcomes being met by non – traditional support

4 Current Implementation Plan

4.1 It is recognised by Scottish Government that the implementation of SDS will take a number of years to fully embed the changes the Act introduces. Consequently despite the progress made to date the work to fully implement SDS is ongoing. The current implementation plan focuses on the following objectives:

4.2 *Adult Community Care*

- Continue to strengthen outcomes focussed practice in relation to social work assessment and care planning
- Increase creativity and flexibility in support planning to ensure individuals receiving support benefit from more choice and control
- Embed SDS in commissioning processes to ensure services commissioned by Midlothian Council are delivered in line with SDS values and principles
- Support development of Health and Social Care Information Hub to enable individuals to have easier access to information about support available in the Midlothian area

- Ensure public information, policies and processes are updated to reflect SDS policy

4.3 Children and Families

- Implementation of personal outcomes approach to assessment across Children and Families services
- Increase creativity and flexibility in support planning (with a particular focus on children affected by disabilities)
- Support the development of respite services to ensure incorporation of SDS principles
- Ensure public information, policies and processes are updated to reflect SDS
- Examine how SDS should be applied in relation to young people leaving care

5 Challenges and Issues

5.1 There are some aspects of the implementation of SDS continues to be challenging both in Midlothian and nationally. One of the challenges that has been recognised nationally is need to develop a shared understanding of SDS and how it fits within the wider Health and Social Care system. Within Midlothian this is being addressed through the involvement of health professionals in the SDS development work.

5.2 A further challenge is the impact of pressure on social care budgets. While SDS aims to increase the choice and control that individuals have over their support this needs to be done within existing budgets. In some cases this has led to a perception that local authorities are not offering support in line with SDS principles whereas in many cases support is not being offered as the individual was not eligible for social care funding.

5.3 Waiving of Charges for Carers

A key issue that has been identified nationally is SDS waiving of charges for carers regulations. Local authorities currently have a power, not a duty, to provide support for carers. While Local Authorities can charge for social care support they provide to individuals (subject to financial assessment), SDS regulations require the local authority to waive charges when support is provided to carers. There is some ambiguity as to when these regulations apply, specifically in relation to charging for replacement care (care provided when the carer is not available). COSLA has also highlighted concerns that no additional funding was made available to offset the loss of charging income to Local Authorities.

5.4 Midlothian Council is using its powers to provide limited support for carers who have been assessed as needing and being eligible for support. This support is non chargeable. In most cases addition support will also be available under an assessment for the cared for person, however this support would be chargeable. This has led to increased financial pressures as a result of reduced charging income and an increase in the volume of requests for support for carers.

6 Report Implications

6.1 Resource

Work related to the implementation of SDS is being funded from Scottish Government funding allocated for this purpose.

6.2 Risk

There are a number of risks associated with the implementation of SDS in Midlothian. These are outlined in the following table:

Risk	Actions being taken to mitigate risk
SDS does not get embedded as business as usual activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project plans emphasise working towards business as usual • Working ongoing with planning managers to embed in commissioning processes
Competing initiatives result in SDS implementation being de-prioritised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior management commitment to SDS implementation • Ensure, where possible, SDS development complement other development initiatives
SDS procedures become overly bureaucratic and a barrier to the implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy is to keep procedures as flexible and simple as possible
Approach to support provision continues to be service led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work continuing to promote outcome focussed approaches and innovation and creativity in support planning
Risk averse approach to practice limits innovation and creativity in support planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project plan has task to develop risk enablement approaches
Waiving of charges for carers results in unbudgeted financial expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uptake of support of carers being monitored • Participation in national working groups that are discussing funding with Scottish Government.

6.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☒ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

The implementation of SDS has been incorporated within both the Single Midlothian Plan and service plans.

6.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The relatively new nature of the SDS legislation means that performance monitoring frameworks are still being developed. Performance reporting to Scottish Government and the annual Service User and Carer Survey now collect and report on information related to SDS.

6.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Through the implementation of SDS we are required to adopt changes in practice and a more co-productive approach to engaging the person and their wider support network to plan their support. There is evidence that this has a direct impact on the success and sustainability of a person's care plan and on a preventative basis can reduce the need for on-going intervention from social work

6.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

There is representation from health and social care professionals, the voluntary sector, users and carers on the SDS Programme Board. As work continues to embed SDS as a 'business as usual' activity, communities and other stakeholders will be involved through existing engagement forums.

6.7 Ensuring Equalities

As part of the work being undertaken to update policies and processed equalities impact assessments will be completed.

6.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

There are no sustainability issues arising from this report.

6.9 IT Issues

There are no IT issues associated with this report.

7 Summary

Midlothian has been making good progress in the implement of Self Directed Support that is resulting in a change in practice and culture related to the provision of social care support. Work is now focussing on ensuring that Self Directed Support is embedded within the normal working practices of Midlothian Council.

8 Recommendations

It is recommended that the progress being made with the implementation of Self Direct Support in Midlothian Council is noted.

Date 5th September 2016

Report Contact:

Graham Kilpatrick Tel No 0131 271 3477
graham.kilpatrick@midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers:

