**NATIONAL SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT COLLABORATION**

**NOTE OF MEETING – 2ND AUGUST 2023**

**In attendance by video conference:**

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| Donald Macleod (SDS Scotland) (chair) | Ali Upton (Scottish Social Services Council) | Philippa Harrop (Voice of Carers Across Lothian) |
| Ashley Drennan (Inspiring Scotland) | Becs Barker (Carr Gomm) | Brett Rogers (In Control Scotland) |
| James McNulty (Scottish Government) | Cheryl Taylor (SDS Practice Network) | Christina Fraser (Scotland Excel) |
| Beth Anderson (Scottish Government) | John Skouse (Care Inspectorate) | Des McCart (Healthcare Improvement Scotland) |
| Elaine Torrance (NDTi) | Fran Holligan (COSLA) | Gaby Nolan (Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living) |
| Frank Reilly (SASW) | Sandy Hunter (Wheatley Care) | Gordon Dodds (Scottish Government) |
| Jack Blaik (City of Edinburgh) | Jaynie Mitchell (Coalition of Carers) | Jill Fraser (Inspiring Scotland) |
| Juliana Heron (City of Edinburgh) | Kayleigh Hirst (SDS Scotland) | Laura Hendry (Cornerstone SDS) |
| Lisa Ehlers (Inclusion Scotland) | Louisa Waugh (Carr Gomm) | Lyn Pornaro (Disability Equality Scotland) |
| Mark Han Johnston (SDS Scotland) | Morag Duncan (Dundee Carers’ Centre) | Pauline Lunn (In Control Scotland) |
| Rob Gowans (Health and Social Care Alliance) | Sarah Anderson (SDS user, SW student and Community Broker) | Anne-Marie Monaghan (Community Brokerage Scotland) |
| Susan Todd (Scotland Excel) | Violet Keenan (SDS Forth Valley) | Danielle Farrel (In Control Scotland) |

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| **Welcome and Matters Arising** | **Actions**  |
| DMd welcomed the group. Apologies were noted from: Martin Kettle, Susan Kelso, Les Watson, Joyce Campbell, Sheila Hanney.DMd welcomed new attendees Susan Todd, Christina Fraser and Neil Armstrong.The previous meeting minutes were approved by assent. **Matters Arising****Actions from last meeting** – **Monitoring and evaluation subgroup** – Some volunteers have come forward, following last month’s discussion. We still need a Care Provider perspective on the group, so if any Care Providers would like to step forward, please contact us at sds.team@socialworkscotland.org. AD (Inspiring Scotland), SH (Wheatley Care) volunteered to join the group, and PL offered to put a call out on the In Control Scotland mailing list for Care Providers.  |  |

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| **Highlight Presentations** | **Actions**  |
| **Scotland Excel – National Frameworks for Care and Support / Care Homes for Adults** –  ***(double click to open this document)***CF and ST from the Adult Social Care team at Scotland Excel, to showcase a move from competitive commissioning to collaborative commissioning. Scotland Excel are renewing two national frameworks (Care and Support/Care Homes for Adults) and are presenting consultation findings in terms of how these have performed in relation to SDS, and also to explore potential opportunities to share best practice in commissioning for these services. AMM – How do you manage the balance between consistency and flexibility?CF – We work with local authorities (LAs), to carry out any due diligence tests, offering to benchmark, and attending provider forums. The agreements will be between the LAs and the providers, however Scotland Excel have done all of that work behind the scenes to support both LAs and providers. RG – How might this fit with the plans for a more consistent approach through the National Care Service (NCS), and the ethical care principles? CF – At the moment, there’s nothing definite about the NCS, but we are following the ethical standards and trying to make it as flexible as possible with regard to the NCS. JMl – If a family chooses a provider not on the framework, how does that work? We hear lots about choice and control, but the reality on the ground is very different (CF – It’s a choice, and the LAs are starting to pass more of that choice to supported people. JMI – The Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) [C&P: Commissioning For Outcomes](https://www.ccpscotland.org/our-work/cp-commissioning-for-outcomes/) consultation is now open ([link](https://www.ccpscotland.org/our-work/cp-commissioning-for-outcomes/)). PL - With 32 HSCPs able to participate, 23 noting interest, 11 using and 1 'all-in' how do you measure the effectiveness of a national framework in terms of outcomes for disabled people?LE – How do you ensure that supported people are able to have input into the development of the framework?CF – We can see reports from providers and other data, but we are also consulting just now with supported people, and would love to catch up after this meeting with anyone who has relevant experience to share. JMy – To what extent is the statutory guidance for Strategic Commissioning on your radar?CF – Joyce Campbell (on annual leave) would be able to answer this in more detail, so we will pass the question back to her and get back in touch with you. SA – As a supported person, I’m currently changing to a Personal Assistant (PA) not on the framework, living in a rural area. Social Work have told me that it is either less hours, or paying more for the same. The reality is not the ideal. CF – Sorry to hear that, and we would love to catch up with you after the meeting. MHJ - Would be interested to hear how the budget allocated to provide services under Option 3 by agencies are equally reflected in the budgets allocated to PA Employers under Option 1. Pay rates can differ significantly. How would this meet the SDS Standard around Consistency for example - equality across all the Options? Also 'Zoning' - how does this fit with ethical commissioning?PL - Appreciate we're over time on this but I'll get in touch with CF separately. At In Control Scotland we have a workstream on commissioning and SDS so would like an opportunity to share some insights that would definitely take us way over time. BB - You mentioned 'saving local authorities'' time. I know you represent them, but has consideration been given to support providers and individuals who spend excessive amounts of often wasted time applying for contracts? How is ethical commissioning benefiting registered support providers in this way?DM - There may be many micro providers who are not registered with CI but can provide personalised care and support but cannot get on local approved providers frameworks. DM - How transparent are all the costs to disabled people who are commissioners?**National Brokerage Framework update** – AMM introduced the Community Brokerage Framework, which is a partnership between the Community Brokerage Network and Self Directed Support Scotland. There are many different models of brokerage, some of them challenging in terms of holding on to the values and principles of SDS. The Community Brokerage model which started in East Ayrshire has moved out across the whole of Ayrshire since its inception, and has been recognised as a model of best practice, remaining person-centred and not financially led. The National Brokerage Framework is a move towards defining the acceptable models of Brokerage in Scotland, ruling out models that don’t align with SDS principles and values, and providing more of a collective voice within the context of the development of the NCS. ***(click here to access this document)****Comments:*AU - It would be fantastic to find more ways of bringing stories together with other data / intelligence to ensure all aspects of current challenges and opportunities are listened to. AMM - Relationship based practice is core to social work. It is such a pity current pressures on workforce and finance deny them that opportunity in the majority of situations. 'Community based' social work and brokerage could work very well together. We need to be clear about what we mean by community based social work. |  |

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| **National Self-directed Support Stakeholder Updates** | **Actions**  |
| **SiRD update** – SiRD fund has been refreshed and is open for applications. More information on the Inspiring Scotland website, deadline for applications is 15 September. For [more information, visit this link](https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/support-in-the-right-direction-2024-2027/). BB talked about the work of Community Contacts which is a SiRD funded project in Highland and Argyll and Bute, offering intensive support to about 250 people, and light touch support to about 2000 people. Anybody is eligible for this kind of support, which is offered using one-to-one, end to end, depending on individuals’ requirements. Community Contacts also helps with advice, mediation and support of all appropriate kinds, for example supporting a person to employ a family member who is also a substitute Power of Attorney, which involved a lot of conversations and scrutiny of the legislation, resulting in a positive outcome for the person. Small sums have also been accessed for families to get short breaks, or other things, such as buying a storage solution for a supported child, creating a safe space for the child, and less anxiety and involvement for the carer. Community Contacts has also been able to be the point of contact that answers the phone and listens to people who are being told that don’t qualify for support or are facing a long waiting list, in some cases helping people to challenge decisions and get better outcomes. BB gave an example of one such a case where a young person was able to go to college and have the confidence to present about their experience to the class due to the support she received. AD – Did COVID help or hinder flexibility for people accessing support?BB – Through the Carers’ Direct Payment fund in particular, Highland are still offering flesibility, but in Argyll and Bute like many rural areas, they are struggling due to retention and recruitment. There is a willingness there to offer more creative solutions, and while there is a budgetary consideration, the cost of creative solutions is often less than the cost of traditional solutions or of doing nothing and letting the situation get worse. **In Control Scotland update** – BR talked about Working Together For Change, national and local programmes. The national programme will start on 28 September, and will be ten sessions over six months (7 online, and three in person), getting into the nitty gritty of SDS, what’s working well, reflections, person-centred planning. The local group will begin on 29 August, covering the three Ayrshire LAs, again getting into the nitty gritty of SDS, what’s working well, reflections, and looking at what’s needed to make positive change happen. If you or anyone you know wants to [know more, click this link](https://www.in-controlscotland.org/programmes-informationsessions) (to access downloadable application form and PDFs on both the local and national programmes). In Control Scotland will be running the 'Working Together for Change' programme again over 10 sessions from September 2023 until March 2024. There are 30 places available on the programme and the application process is now open. Working Together for Change is about enabling people to be in control through Self-directed Support. The Programme will bring together people from across Scotland to make positive change in social care, harnessing the unique skills, insights and knowledge of people using and delivering social care to unlock the potential of self-directed support. In Control Scotland have already delivered this programme twice nationally. The programme is open to disabled adults and the families and carers of disabled people, people who work in social work, social care, and health and community services across Scotland. The course is delivered to intentionally encourage the building of new alliances and connections between people across Scotland who can make a difference to how self-directed support works. As this programme is fully funded by the Scottish Government, it will be free to participate for successful applicants. You can access further information about the programme and download the application pack from In Control’s website at: <https://www.in-controlscotland.org/programmes-informationsessions> The closing date for completed applications is: Friday, 1st September 2023. Please feel to circulate this information to anyone you feel may be interested in applying for the programme and if you would like any further information or would like to discuss anything, please contact In Control directly - email info@in-controlscotland.org.ukOption 3 case study research will be undertaken this year by In Control, seven LAs are signed up for that work, and there should be something to share in the autumn about flexible option 3s and good practice. Lunchtime sessions will be back monthly after the summer holidays (31 August) on SDS. Quarterly networks: 10am-12pm 19th Sept (general SDS) and 2pm-4pm 3rd Oct (children and families)To sign up for any of these - or to find out more about Working Together for Change - email info@in-controlscotland.org.uk Danielle Farrel has now joined In Control Scotland on a more permanent basis, and will be attending the national SDS collaboration as well. *Questions –* SA – How did you choose Ayrshire rather than somewhere else in Scotland?PL – The Ayrshire LAs have existing relationships (such as joint commissioning practices, and providers working across LA boundaries), so it made sense to work within Ayrshire from that starting point from all three LAs. **SWS SDS project** – **Workstream 1: Review of SDS standards**JK gave an update from the SDS project bulletin, focusing on the review of the SDS standards, which has now started. The SDS standards will be examined this week and next by a screening group, through as many perspectives as possible, and then the standards will be considered by various lens groups during the autumn. The screening sessions will consider the SDS standards from a number of perspectives including geographical as well as protected characteristics, with a view to agreeing and forming the lens groups which will take a closer look at the standards in Sep-Nov. Some participants are unable to make one or both of the screening sessions due to leave. We will consider alternative ways to include these perspectives in the work.   Independent researcher Jane Scott will be looking at the data from the lens groups as we go, to give us an early sense of what is coming out, so that we can feed that into other relevant work streams (particularly 2 and 3).   **Workstream 2: SDS Practice Resources** The team are in the process of finding a graphic designer to update the look of the SDS practitioner toolkit now that the content is finished. The project team hope to meet with a potential graphic designer in August. This work stream will also look at anything coming out of the review of SDS Standards relating to practice guidance.   **Workstream 3: Self-evaluation and improvement** This work is quite promising and valuable. We are currently in the middle of the 100 day test cycle, testing the first iteration of the self-evaluation framework. There were check-ins with each of the three sites at the 30 day mark, and last week all three sites came together at a 50 day check-in to talk about progress.  Salient points of interest that have emergent so far include: * Shift from performance to learning approach is challenging, so we need to encourage and return to this time and again to build confidence.
* What is needed in LAs to carry out a good self-evaluation (installation stage of implementation). Capacity is a challenge but overall, sites are seeing good level of engagement, partly to do with the enthusiasm generate by the learning approach.
* All sites reflecting on feeling positive and this is mirrored across those involved at local level. This is a very different feeling from evaluating against performance.
* Although it has been challenging to carve out time and space, the self-evaluation approach has been highly valued and is garnering more support; people seeing the value and therefore continuing to commit.
* Open starting point where all sites talked about either not starting with overly defined expectations, or challenging their own original starting point and shifting from this based on what they observed and learned. All were and are open to change based on learning.
* There are different scales of focus – from whole system to specific focus on carers. This reflects different starting points. Self-evaluation framework is flexible enough to accommodate this and still sites reflected on high degree of commonality overall.
* Strengths-based, being able (sometimes with help of external input) to genuinely value what is strong in their local system and see how to use these building blocks in their improvement journey.
* Working with problems, being able to look at those difficult and uncomfortable parts of their local systems, with a focus on understanding rather than judging. The discomfort stays but the ability to understand and then address is a much more positive experience and is leading to change and improvement.

 After the 100-day test, we will schedule two reflective learning sessions, one for practitioners (involving but not limited to the 13 local authorities who put forward interest, but have not been involved in the work so far), and one for leaders including COSLA and Scottish Government.   **Workstream 4.1 – Direct Payment Model Agreement to Employ Personal Assistants** The SDS project team and Jane Scott presented to the SDS community of practice on progress, at the recent meeting (26 July).   Key learning points included:  We have consistency at either end of what’s including in a Direct Payment but the inconsistency in the middle reflects the complexity of the relationship between the PA and employer; and the importance of maintaining the employer’s agency while providing all necessary support to enable them to be a good employer.  The following aspects have emerged as important: • Learning from supported people and ISO identified the challenges around recruiting PAs,   • the importance of end-to-end employment support,  • the ability to train, pay and develop PAs based on skills, • the importance of social workers having good outcome conversations with people,  • the differences in practice and rates for PAs in Adults and in Children and Families,  • worries about redundancy, recruitment costs and reclaiming.  More work to be done next by the SDS project team to scope out a timeline for the work to develop a model agreement that can be used across the country.   **Workstream 4.2 Personal Assistant (PA) Wellbeing Work** The process of developing a PA Wellbeing strategy has begun with the members of the PA Wellbeing Subgroup, IMPACT, Personal Assistant Network Scotland and Cornerstone. Initial thoughts include creating a health and wellbeing framework to sit alongside the PA Training Framework, developing wellbeing support outside the role of the employers’ responsibilities, supporting local PAs locally, growing a PA voice through an advisory board of regional reps, learning about the diversity of the workforce and ensuring current social care wellbeing resources are available to Personal Assistants.  The PA Wellbeing subgroup (a subgroup of [the PA Programme Board](https://www.sdsscotland.org.uk/pa-programme-board/)) have met and discussed the possibility of using the Wellbeing Fund for a Blue Sky Social Card (discount card £5) for PAs and agreed to test with 50 PAs to learn more about the process and benefits.  **Workstream 7 Training and Practice Development** The first meeting of the Training and Practice Development Workstream group took place on 25 July, and is starting to think about how to make connections between the various strands of Social Work training at different levels, in collaboration with the Advanced Practice Framework which is being developed at the moment by Scottish Government. Next steps are to scope the specification for research into:  1) current SDS training and practice development opportunities, its nature and purpose, and its availability to the social work profession across the career span;  2) the SDS training and practice development needs of the social work profession. |  |

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| **Scottish Government Update** | **Actions**  |
| **SDS Improvement team update** – Rachael McGruer will be replacing Simon Cuthbert-Kerr as Deputy Director for Improving Quality and Standards and will be overseeing the reorganisation of a new division that would, among other things, bring together some National Care Service teams together with Carer Policy and SDS. Rachel would be happy to come to the next NSDS C meeting to talk about this as part of SG update.On the Improvement Plan, there are now two videos from Minister Maree Todd and Cllr Paul Kelly (COSLA), which can be used to promote the Improvement Plan, and Ms Todd has been talking about the Improvement Plan during her other engagements around Scotland. Videos by Ms Todd and Cllr Kelly:<https://youtu.be/0rt-wwUXkKk> <https://youtu.be/AfKWdNpcQ1k> Volunteers have come forward to be part of a monitoring and evaluation group with regards to the SDS Implementation Plan and a date will be set for an initial meeting shortly. There will be an online learning event on 25 August as part of the NCS co-design which is happening over the summer, which national SDS collaboration members will have received invitations for. *Comments and discussion:*FH – to clarify, LAs are not required to do their own improvement plans, but they will be encouraged to reflect the national SDS improvement plan in their own plans at a local level. There is more to be done to learn what would be helpful as regards improvements in some areas, and how to encourage LAs to think about how to reflect the themes of the national Improvement Plan in their own work going forward. More detail to follow at a future meeting.  |  |

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| **Any Other Business** | **Actions**  |
| LP shared an update from Disability Equality Scotland – There will be an [event held online on 31 August (3pm-5pm)](https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/events/social-care-and-the-scottish-human-rights-bill-consultation-event/) looking at the Human Rights Bill particularly from the perspective of Social Care, jointly hosted by Disability Equality Scotland and the Alliance, members were encouraged to attend and to circulate the details. Disability Equality Scotland are recruiting for a Senior training and development worker ([click here for details](https://disabilityequality.scot/news/join-us-senior-training-and-development-worker/)). The next meeting of this group will be on **6 September 2023** - **1pm-3pm**. [Click here to join the meeting](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3Ameeting_MThkNWNjNDEtYTViMS00NmMxLWE5NDUtNDQyZWQzYjQyZjFj%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%223f56ffd8-b90c-4687-b8ed-f572197e94cf%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%226b5f8009-5ce2-4c65-922f-43460a4bf777%22%7d).  |  |