**PA Training Framework survey September 2023**

**Summary of findings**

**Background**

Self Directed Support Scotland carried out a survey of PA Employers and PAs in September 2023 to seek their views around training. The survey was designed to inform the development of a National PA Training Framework. You can read more about this work here: <https://www.sdsscotland.org.uk/pa-training-framework/>

The results from the survey have supplemented other consultation including one-to-one interviews.

**Survey results**

* 106 Employers and 109 PAs responded to the survey
* There was a wide range in the number of PAs employed by the Employers. Some currently had no PAs (but were recruiting), others employed more than 10 PAs.
* There was also a big difference in the number of hours on average their PAs worked – from less than 10 hours a week to full time contracts.

This tell us there is a wide range of Employers, who are likely to spend different amounts of time on management and training of their PAs, depending on how many they employ and for how long.

* Employers and PAs wanted to be able to access different types of training. The most popular choices were:
  + self-directed learning (eg. an online learning module)
  + training that can be done by Employers and PAs together
  + training in a group setting
  + training at home led by the Employer.
* There was most interest from Employers and PAs in the following training topics:
  + support for the employer to create and manage the PA role
  + training on the context of Self-directed Support
  + relationship skills
  + medical tasks.
* A significant proportion (73%) of Employers told us they have no or insufficient budget for training.
* Employers were less confident than PAs about identifying their PAs’ training needs. Just over half (54%) felt they needed more support to carry out their employer role.
* We asked Employers and PAs what was the best way to recognise learning. Respondents indicated an appetite for formal qualifications, with 68% saying this was the best way to recognise learning.

**Conclusions**

The results showed us that there is a wide range of Employers with an equally wide range of training needs. To ensure any training offer is bespoke and relevant to the unique context of each relationship, an employer's toolkit could be developed.

Modules on relationship skills could be developed for local Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs), to deliver to groups, or for Employers themselves to use at home with their PAs.

For medical training, we suggest the most helpful action would be to develop a directory to signpost people to what is already available locally, as well as a way to indicate the quality and relevance of this training.

The issue of qualifications as a way to recognise PA training needs further exploration and guidance – the survey indicated a high level of interest in this, but we also acknowledge that some Employers feel strongly that formal qualifications are not needed for PAs.

It seems that some Employers/PAs want or need formal training, regardless of their contract, and some would prefer carrying out everything in-house.

As long as all resources are offered on an optional basis, there should be room for everybody’s needs to be met. Sustainable and well-funded Centres for Inclusive Living and Disabled People’s Organisations also have a crucial role to play in the delivery of any training for PA employers and PAs.

**Want to know more?**

You can read the full survey results here: <https://www.sdsscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/PA-Training-Framework-survey-analaysis-November-2023.docx>