

## **Additional Questions for the Minister from COCIS Meeting – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

### **Independent Review of Social Care**

#### **1. How quickly will the recommendation that charging end be acted upon?**

*Whilst this Government supports the implementation of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland's recommendations, it will be for the next Parliament and Government to carry out this implementation and the legislative changes required to realise many of these recommendations.*

*However, on the 24<sup>th</sup> March the Scottish Government and COSLA issued a [joint statement of intent](#) outlining how they will work together to deliver the key foundation pillars set out in the recently published review.*

*The review report recommends intentional and progressive action to improve social care services for those who use and deliver them to drive high quality consistent services with human rights at the heart of them.*

*Agreement has been reached by the Scottish Government and COSLA to have outline plans in place, by May, to deliver:*

- *An end to charging for non-residential services as soon as possible*

#### **2. How will the Scottish Government go about introducing a right to respite for carers?**

*As explained above the Scottish Government and COSLA have issued a [joint statement of intent](#) outlining how they will work together to deliver the key foundation pillars set out in the recently published Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland (IRASC)*

*Agreement has been reached by the Scottish Government and COSLA to have outline plans in place, by May, to deliver:*

- *Ensuring that unpaid carers are fully supported to have a life alongside caring, in order to protect their health and wellbeing and better sustain caring roles.*

### **Funding**

#### **3. How do you see funding investment for Carer Centres going forward?**

*We are pleased to see the additional uplift this year of £28.5 million for Carers Act implementation, bringing the total investment in 2021/22 to £68 million.*

*The Cabinet Secretary has written out to all Local Authorities and Integration Authorities to highlight the £28.5 million uplift for Carers Act implementation and emphasise the importance of these funds being used to expand carer support.*

#### **4. Small, local community projects are a vital resource, what plans are there to direct more funding to them, rather than large organisations?**

*The Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland provides us with a great opportunity to think about how we can look differently at all aspects of adult social care, including our approach to commissioning within the sector.*

*As mentioned above, the Scottish Government and COSLA issued a [joint statement of intent](#) on the 24<sup>th</sup> March outlining how they will work together to deliver the key foundation pillars set out in the recently published review.*

### **Carer's Allowance**

#### **5. What are the Scottish Government's plans in relation to Carers Allowance, including any plans to extend financial support to older carers?**

*We are working with carers, stakeholders and the wider public to develop the replacement benefit for Carer's Allowance (currently known as Scottish Carer's Assistance). We've carried out a range of work to date and heard about a number of things carers would like to change about the existing benefit, including in relation to support for older carers.*

*Last month, we shared a discussion paper on the future of Scottish Carer's Assistance, which brings together evidence from this work. The paper is available on our website at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-carers-assistance-discussion-paper/>*

*The paper sets out proposed aims for the new support. We are inviting views on these and intend to use this feedback to develop final aims. The final aims would then be used, alongside other key criteria such as equality impacts, feasibility and value for money, to identify proposals for Scottish Carer's Assistance. We would consult on these proposals before bringing forward regulations for our new benefit.*

*We recognise that the next steps in this process will be a matter for a future administration. The document has been shared to allow discussions on the future of this support to progress, as it is important that work to develop Scottish Carer's Assistance continues.*

*Because of the impacts of coronavirus – on both Scottish Government and the DWP who are integral to work to devolve Carer's Allowance – the timetable for delivering Scottish Carer's Assistance has had to be revised. There will be an update on timings when this work is complete.*

### **Identifying carers**

#### **6. What is the Scottish Government's definition of unpaid carers? Does it include supporting people in residential care?**

*You are a 'carer' if you provide (or intend to provide) care for another person – but **not** :-*

- if this is **only** because of that person's age (where they are under 18); or*
- if you are caring because you have a contract or as voluntary work.*

*You are a 'young carer' if you are a carer (as above) and are also :*

- under the age of 18; or*
- 18 or over, but still attending school.*

*This includes carers supporting people in residential care.*

**7. What can we take forward from the efforts made to identify carers and people with a learning disability to enable them to get the vaccine?**

*We ran a national marketing campaign in November and December 2020 to encourage more unpaid carers to self-identify and come forward for support. In addition to those newly identified carers who engaged with the campaign, we know that many have contacted their local carers centre for the first time as a result of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.*

*Taking learning from the 2020 marketing campaign, we developed a tailored COVID-19 vaccine campaign for unpaid carers which aligned with the “Roll up your Sleeve” national campaign. We have shared the campaign assets with health boards, local authorities and a wide range of third sector organisations, including those supporting individuals with learning disabilities and their carers, to ensure as many of those who are eligible as possible can access the vaccine.*

*We continue to work with representative organisations to identify emerging issues and barriers to accessing the vaccination and find practical solutions to these challenges.*

**8. How will this information be used in the future, will there be a national carer register?**

*We are considering how best to contact unpaid carers who have registered through the carers system for future vaccination programmes.*

**Carers Act Funding**

**9. How can we ensure there is transparency around the use of Carers Act funding? Why can't this resource be ringfenced?**

*This Government has provided local government with greater freedom and flexibility on how they deploy the resources at their disposal to support service delivery, and in so doing has reduced the level of bureaucracy and associated costs it imposes on local authorities through measures such as ring-fenced funding.*

*The vast majority of the revenue support provided to local government is provided as a block grant which the Scottish Government provides to all local authorities as part of the annual local government finance settlement.*

*Having provided the greater freedom and flexibility it is the responsibility of each local authority to allocate the total financial resources available to it on the basis of local needs and priorities.*

**Respite**

**10. Can you clarify respite and day care will open in stage 3 and does this include council services?**

*Yes, in levels 0 – 3 support services can operate in line with guidance and essential support services can operate at level 4.*

**Moving out of the pandemic**

**11. Will there be extra bereavement counselling specifically for carers after we exit the pandemic?**

*Under the Carers Act, local authorities must maintain information and advice services for carers, which must include information on bereavement support.*

*It is also the responsibility of all local authorities and the relevant health board to jointly prepare a local carer strategy, which must assess the extent to which demand for particular support, such as bereavement support, is not being met in their area.*

*As explained above, there is an additional £28.5 million uplift earmarked for the Carers Act in the draft budget for 2021-22. The Scottish Government would therefore expect Health and Social Care partnerships to utilise this uplift, to ensure they commission the appropriate level of support to meet the needs of carers in their area.*

**12. As we start to open up again a lot of people who have been shielding will need support with their mobility through strengthening and balancing classes. Is there an opportunity to ensure carers are able to attend to enable them to motivate and support, especially for individuals with dementia or learning disabilities?**

*Many people with dementia and/or their carers will have been shielding due to a combination of age-related co-morbidities. The Scottish Government's Dementia COVID-19 Recovery Plan is building on national work since the start of the pandemic and recognises the significant impact of the necessary restrictions on mobility and other issues.*

*As part of this plan we are funding implementation of the national dementia allied health professional framework Connecting People, Connecting Support to help lead on physical rehabilitation in parallel with wider national work on physical rehabilitation.*

*Carers have rights to be involved in decisions about support for themselves and for the person they care for, to ensure they meet both their needs. I would encourage any carer to discuss options like attending classes jointly with the health and care staff involved.*

**Young carers**

**13. Mairi, you stated that Young Carers are a priority as part of your ministerial responsibility. However there are serious issues regarding the continued support of Young Carers in Highland, in relation to continued funding for support services, access to SDS and their rights to a Young Carer Statement, I would welcome a conversation with you regarding this (Rosin Connolly, Connecting Carers )**

*At the commencement of the new parliament I would encourage you to write to whichever Minister holds young carers as part of their portfolio to discuss further any concerns you have around support for young carers.*

Nevertheless, young carers have been a focus for the Scottish Government, even prior to the pandemic. We have sought to promote the right to a Young Carer Statement as widely as possible, not just amongst young carers but also trusted adults in health care settings, third sector organisations, schools and beyond so that they can support young carers in accessing this right; and we will continue to do this.

Additionally, We have offered support with the introduction of the Young Carer Grant and the Young Scot young carer's package. As well as funding a post with Carers Trust to have a dedicated Education officer, to help raise awareness amongst educational staff and institutes of the issues young carers can face.

Throughout this pandemic we have listened to young carers on how restrictions are affecting them and adapted the support on offer to meet their changing needs. We provided an additional £910,000 to the Time to Live fund to help young carers to have some sort of a break. The small grants can be spent on something of their choice include purchasing; board games, PC gaming equipment or e-readers/tablets; sports or outdoor equipment; subscriptions to movie channels, magazines; online exercise classes or music tuition.

Furthermore, in response to feedback from young carers, a greater focus has also been given to providing opportunities through the Young Scot young carer package which support wellbeing. We have provided £300,000 in extra funding for the Young Scot young carer package during 2020/21. This additional funding is to help support young carers wellbeing and enable them to take some form of a break. Recently, the package has been able to offer e-vouchers, subscriptions to streaming services and family wellbeing boxes.

Young Scot are also looking at reviewing which areas in Scotland have a low sign up to the package and doing targeted work in these areas to help support young carers in accessing the opportunities and support available through the package.

To further address the concerns young carers have expressed around their wellbeing, we are currently working with a small group of young carers to develop a tailored young carers page on the National Wellbeing Hub. There is already an existing page [for adult unpaid carers](#). However, this will be a new resource for young carers to access tools and information to better support their wellbeing and mental health. We hope to have this launched by Spring.

The Cabinet Secretary wrote to local authorities on 10 March to highlight the £28.5 million uplift in Carers Act implementation funding included in the local government settlement as part of the Scottish Budget 2021-22 and to ask for their support in ensuring these additional resources are allocated in full to expanding support for unpaid carers.

## **SDS**

### **14. Why is SDS flexibility only for the pandemic and not permanent?**

SDS has always supported a flexible approach to support and put the needs of the user at the centre of the conversation. We have recently finalised a [new framework and standards for SDS](#) to support this approach and will be working alongside Social Work Scotland and HSCP to implement the framework and standards.