

# changing lives



## ***Changing Lives* eBulletin – January 2009**

Welcome to the first *Changing Lives* eBulletin of 2009, providing an update on the developments of the 5 Change Programmes, the Research and Development strategy and the Local Practitioner Forums. This issue includes an update on SSSC's corporate plans for 2009 and ADSW's and SSSC's strategy to promote Social Work in Scotland.

### **Changing Lives - The 5 Change Programmes**

#### **Practice Governance**

The consultation on the Guidance on the Role of the Chief Social Work Officer closed on 19 December. The 48 responses received were generally very positive and a finalised paper will be published in Spring 2009.

This will be complemented by a paper setting out the social work profession's contribution to delivering better outcomes for Scotland. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the vital contribution that social work makes to delivering the Government's strategic objectives as set out in the National Performance Framework and delivery of local outcomes. It also identifies those social work functions which only registered social workers should be accountable for. This paper will be subject to a formal consultation exercise commencing in early 2009.

The final product to emerge from the Practice Governance Group is a Practice Governance Framework for Social Work Services. This Framework will seek to describe the appropriate balance between two complementary perspectives:

- The *responsibility* of the **employer** to create a structure that supports the practitioner to deliver safe, effective and accountable practice;
- The *expectation* that the **practitioner** will exercise their personal professional responsibilities in response to the needs of service users, and in accordance with the relevant codes of practice.

The Framework is currently under development and is likely to be published in Summer 2009.

**The group met on 20 January and the next planned meeting is for 24 March.**

#### **Service Development**

The group met in early January to discuss content for the Commissioning for Personalisation paper and accompanying discussion paper providing more detail on the issues and processes that need to be considered. Both are close to being finalised and work has begun on their

format, design and distribution, along with the already available Shared Understanding of Personalisation, in a single pack/publication.

It is hoped that these papers will be available by early April 2009. In addition, the Chair has written to Local Authorities for an update on developments/approaches to personalisation. Some 14 responses have been received and a compilation report is being put together for the website to signpost people to work being done. This will conclude the work of the group .

**Subject to any late changes, the group plan that their final meeting will be on 12 March.**

### **Performance Improvement**

The Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) has been working closely with the *Changing Lives* Performance Improvement Group to develop a Self-evaluation Guide for social work services. The move towards increased self-evaluation is consistent with the recommendations of the Crerar Review, as well as SWIA's intention to take a more proportionate approach to inspection following the completion of its round of performance inspections in March 2009. Increased self-evaluation will also help to address the need to embed a culture of continuous performance improvement across social work services as identified in *Changing Lives*.

**SWIA's Self-evaluation Guide** is based on the well-established Performance Inspection Model (PIM). The Guide sets out the key questions that should be addressed under each of the quality indicators in the PIM, as well as suggesting possible sources of evidence. The Guide also provides updated illustrations of good and weak practice under each quality indicator which are designed to help users arrive at a judgment as to the current standard of their performance. The Guide will be supported by an e-tool which will assist users in completing self-evaluations and can be used to generate a range of reports that will identify areas for development.

A number of local authorities have assisted SWIA in this work and have been involved in both drafting and testing the Guide. The **Self-evaluation Guide will be launched on 11 February**, with a further suite of good practice guides on commissioning, performance improvement and leadership to follow later in 2009.

**As the SWIA Self-evaluation Guide approaches completion, the Performance Improvement Group decided at its meeting on 6 October 2008 to conclude its work.**

### **Workforce**

With the successful launch of the **Continuous Learning Framework** in December, **the work of this group has come to an end**. Proposals have been developed for the establishment of a broader national workforce group to champion the workforce development agenda. These will be discussed at a seminar in early February.

### **Leadership & Management**

The **Leadership and Management** group met through teleconferences in December and January and is putting together proposals for a seminar in late March. The seminar will focus on the strategic priorities for leadership in the sector and action required to address these, including

demonstration of the prototype leadership framework. **Any further group meetings will also be discussed at the seminar.**

Testing of reflective tools in support of the prototype **Leadership Framework** will commence in the very near future; work to re-energise the existing leadership communities in the West and South East of Scotland has begun with events being planned for March; initial contacts have been made to begin the establishment of new leadership communities in Tayforth and the North.

### **Research & Development**

The Scottish Government has provided resources to IRISS to pave the way for the development of a Research Strategy for Scotland's social services. Commencing in 2008 through to mid 2009 a comprehensive, cross-sector stakeholder engagement exercise is being conducted. Demonstration projects have been initiated and a series of events have been arranged for February, designed to generate and improve interest and understanding of the key issues around implementing a **Research & Development Strategy**.

This activity will soon be augmented with work to develop and test a draft research quality assurance and ethical framework alongside the developmental testing of a prototype research register.

### **Local Practitioner Forums**

Significant progress has been made across Scotland in relation to the development of Local Practitioner Forums (LPFs) and in harnessing their contribution to transforming social work services. By September 2008, 21 LPFs were established and working effectively, with all other areas in the process of setting up a forum.

In July 2008, the ADSW Executive Committee agreed that the association should assume professional leadership for engaging frontline staff, supported by the Scottish Government. To help re-invigorate local interest in LPFs, and make clear the value that is placed upon the practitioner input, each area has been allocated the support of a dedicated ADSW Professional Development Manager.

Practical support is provided partly through the revised Scottish Government LPF Toolkit document that advises on the effective engagement of local stakeholders in LPFs and *Changing Lives*.

ADSW support has included re-establishing ten ADSW Geographical Area Grouping meetings for senior managers, all of which will soon be fully operational. The remit of the groups is to implement the *Changing Lives* agenda locally, working with the LPFs to break down the traditional distinction between policy development and service delivery.

ADSW will meet with leaders of independent and private service providers with the aim of widening membership of the ADSW geographical groups, and has developed a position statement to assist LPFs with developing effective lines of communication and influence. The

aim is to benefit from the practitioner's view of practice development and to consider the practicalities of existing and anticipated policies.

Opportunities for sharing ideas on change and reviewing solutions across levels of organisations have been created through the establishment of the National LPF Chairs Meeting, chaired by Alan Baird, the President of ADSW, and attended by the Scottish Government and ADSW Professional Development Managers. National LPF Chairs meetings were held on 11 September and the 19 November 2008 with most local authority areas represented.

Justin McNicholl, Chair of Clackmannanshire LPF, was elected as National LPF chair at the last meeting. The next national LPF chair meeting will be held in Crieff in **March 2009** when senior managers from the local authorities who support the LPFs will also be invited. These national meetings will be held, as a minimum, bi-annually.

Go to <http://www.socialworkscotland.org.uk/forum2.php> for LPF guidance, contacts and more.

### **Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Corporate Plan 2009**

The SSSC corporate plan sets out how its work will contribute to a more successful Scotland and help achieve the Scottish Government's national outcomes and strategic priorities. SSSC's strategic objectives are to register and regulate social service workers and to build the capability and capacity of the social service workforce. To achieve these objectives activity will focus on workforce development, engaging with employers and people who use services and carers on the introduction of required registration.

One of the key areas SSSC are working on to support the workforce is the **Continuous Learning Framework (CLF)**. The Framework has been developed in partnership by the SSSC and the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS). It aims to improve the quality of outcomes for people using social services by supporting the people who are delivering these services to be the best they can be, setting out what employers need to do support their staff. SSSC will be working with employers over the next three years to support them in implementing this across their workforce. Along with the published framework, SSSC will also be launching a website to include information, tools and resources, good practice examples and opportunities for discussion.

In 2009, the Scottish Government announced the final dates for social services to achieve registration. In the next 10 years, SSSC will register over 50,000 social service workers for the first time. Achieving a registered, regulated and qualified workforce will present challenges to organisations and to the SSSC. But without question, meeting this goal will bring about a transformation in social services in Scotland.

A copy of the SSSC corporate plan can be downloaded on their website: [www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com)

### **ADSW's and SSSC's strategy to promote Social Work in Scotland**

The Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW) and the SSSC have appointed Pagoda PR to build awareness and understanding of the role of social work services in Scotland.

The one year brief involves implementing a strategy to show how social work services are at the heart of every community and helping to change lives. By working together and with other organisations, ADSW and SSSC plan to highlight the value of social work for individuals, families and communities.

Alan Baird, President of ADSW said: “There is widespread confusion about social work services. This lack of understanding can undermine our effectiveness. The role of the campaign will be to start shifting perceptions of our work amongst a wide range of stakeholders and the wider public.”

Pagoda PR will work with Jane Kennedy, ADSW’s recently appointed Parliamentary and Communications Manager to develop the campaign. It is likely to include case studies in the media and the use of individuals who will champion social work services. The campaign will also showcase success stories, focusing on the positive contribution that social work services make to life in Scotland.

“Social work services in Scotland have a strong, positive story to tell”, said Ian Coldwell, Managing Director of Pagoda Public Relations. “Unfortunately, perceptions of social work are skewed by media coverage of a small number of high profile, child protection cases. Meanwhile, much of the valuable day to day work of social services in areas such as early years, criminal justice and work with older people, goes unreported. Within the first year we aim to lay the foundations for a campaign which can be sustained in the longer term by in-house communications staff, working in their local areas”.

2009 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year of the Association of Directors of Social Work.

### **National Social Work Services Forum**

The National Social Work Services Forum (NSWSF), chaired by the Minister for Children and Early Years, Adam Ingram, met on 9 December. Topics discussed included:

- an update on developments in relation to the Crerar review and the announcement of a single body to look at care and social work
- personalisation and the re-tendering of services – with contributions from Annie Gunner Logan (CCPS) and Alan Baird;
- pilot training being undertaken to promote the Principles and Standards of Citizen Leadership (with a presentation from Andy Miller, SCLD); and
- an update on Local Practitioner Forums – with contributions from Alan Baird and Justin McNicholl.

**The next NSWSF meeting takes place on 28 April at Victoria Quay.**

### **The Changing Lives Newsletter**

Work on the Spring/Summer newsletter has begun. If you would like to submit an article for consideration, please contact Ben Coburn: Email [ben.coburn@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ben.coburn@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) Tel 0131 244 7683, by no later than Friday, 6 February.

For further information on *Changing Lives* please visit [www.socialworkscotland.org.uk](http://www.socialworkscotland.org.uk).