

National Care Service (Scotland) Bill (Stage 2) draft amendment – request for written evidence.

Organisation details

Name of organisation

Name of organisation: Carr Gomm National Involvement Group

Information about your organisation

We are the Carr Gomm National Involvement Group. Carr Gomm is a national social care and community development charity providing person-centred services and opportunities across Scotland. We are people supported by Carr Gomm representing our services in Midlothian, Edinburgh, Stirling, Dundee and Glasgow. Our role is to help shape Carr Gomm by influencing its strategic direction, through sharing feedback and in helping the organisation's development in a variety of areas e.g. digital inclusion, accessibility and in getting our messages right. We are people with an interest in improving social care and the lives of others who require it. Because of this we also contribute to opportunities for sharing our opinions and expertise through national consultations and conversations e.g. the post-legislative scrutiny of the SDS Act and by inviting Scottish Government National Care Service Directorate personnel to our meetings.

Supplementary Information

National Care Service strategy

1. What is your view of the proposed National Care Service strategy (see proposed new sections 1A to 1E)?

Tend to support

National Care Service Board

2. What is your view of the proposal to create a National Care Service Board, and the provisions about the role and functions of the Board (see in particular new Chapter 1B of Part 1, and new schedule 2C)?

Tend to support

We agree with the proposals to form a National Care Service Board. As citizens and people who rely on social care services, we would like to see transparency in the processes undertaken to recruit members to the Board. It is essential that people who rely on social care services are included in the Board and are supported in their roles. As Carr Gomm National Involvement Group members, we would like to be included in further discussions on this subject.

We would like further information on which ministers will be responsible for the National Care Service. Local authorities are currently struggling to retain social care providers and staff. We would like to know how the NCS Board will support local communities to retain their social care services and what the Board will do to help make social care a career of choice.

Creation of local boards and removal of other integration models

3. What is your view of the proposal to establish National Care Service local boards and to remove other integration models (see in particular Chapter 1A of Part 1, and new schedules 2A and 2B)?

Tend to support

We fully support the idea of a partnership agreement between local authorities and Scottish Government. We cannot see how social care can be effectively delivered unless the different parts of the social care system work together. We think it is important that people who rely on social care services are represented on the Local Boards. We would like to be included in further discussions about the developments of Local Boards. We are concerned that having several levels of bureaucracy may slow down decision making, and the Stage 2 Bill changes may cause this. We therefore request assurances that the added levels of decision

making will help people in receipt of support as well for those providing it. To show true respect to people who rely on social care, the different part of national and local government must stop arguing and must start working together. It is important that the people and organisations providing support services are represented on the Local Boards. Local Boards need to be adequately funded to ensure quality social work and social care services for those people that need them and for those that make up the workforce.

Monitoring and improvement and commissioning

4. What is your view of the proposed new provisions on monitoring and improvement (see new sections 12K and 12L) and on commissioning (see new section 12M)?

Tend to support

The idea that the NCS sets national standards of what good social care should look like is fully endorsed by our membership. People representing all of us on the Boards should have a Code of Practice to ensure they carry out their roles ethically.

Partly support and partly oppose

We would like social care providers to be selected fairly. The decision making should be based on which provider is the best at providing the service for the people it supports, and which organisation is the best employer. We think some competition is a good thing, but it has to be fair.

National Chief Social Work Adviser and the National Social Work Agency

5. What is your view of the proposed new provisions to designate a National Chief Social Work Adviser and for the creation of a National Social Work Agency (see new section 26A)?

Tend to support

We agree with the principle to develop the NSWA and it should set the quality standards. Leaving the responsibility of social work services with local authorities has not worked as they have too many competing demands. The NSWA should have powers to tell Local Boards what to do. In our experience, social workers

often do not give people the space to talk for themselves and this means they cannot express what matters to them. We hope the NSWA will help social workers improve their practice including listening more to the people they are supporting.

Amendments to the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014

6. What is your view of the proposed amendments to the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, as set out in the marked up version of the Act?

Tend to support

We request that the Scottish Government consults with people in Highland as it is them that will be most affected by the proposals to amend the above Act.

Areas of further work

7. What is your view of the Scottish Government's proposed approach to addressing the areas of further work outlined in the Minister's covering letter?

Tend to support

Draft National Care Service Charter

8. What is your view of the initial draft of the National Care Service Charter?

Tend to oppose

We hope it will work! The information shared so far may be above a lot of people's heads. People will need support and accessible versions to understand it, otherwise it will be a lost cause.

Other comments

9. Do you have any other comments on the Scottish Government's proposed draft Stage 2 amendments to the National Care Service Bill?

If the NCS fails, it in itself would be a breach of human rights. The NCS and the changes it promises to people are fundamental to enable all of us to live as active, valued citizens. The NCS will need to make sure it works closely with other local and national policy areas including housing, education, equalities and welfare benefits. Without working together, the NCS will not be successful. The Bill does not give enough detail in how the NCS will work in practice. We would like more information on this and to be involved in the discussions leading to this. We are disappointed that the Scottish Parliament did not take the time to develop this consultation in accessible formats and that a communication pack was not supplied. This has led to us feeling disrespected. We request that all future consultations are published with accessible versions at the same time as the primary consultation documents are published. Currently we are not confident that people with lived experience are listened to. We would like to see improvements in this area. Only we know what we need, and we want to be taken seriously.