



SLÀINTE AGUS CÙRAM SÒISEALACHD EILEANAN SIAR

Health and Social Care Western Isles



Colleagues

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It has now been over three years since the legislation on health and social care integration was passed by the Scottish Parliament. Over that time, partnerships across Scotland have formed and are making progress towards improving the overall effectiveness of the health and social care system – more joined-up planning, more joint resourcing of services, more multi-professional and multi-agency teams. As a signal of their commitment to the integration project, the great and the good of public life in Scotland recently signed a joint communiqué – the signatories included the Cabinet Secretary, the President of COSLA, the Chief Executive of NHS Scotland and the Chair of Local Authority Chief Executives. Here is the statement in full:

We need to step up the pace of integrating health and social care. Truly integrated services, focused on the needs of citizens – individuals, carers and families, and on the health and wellbeing of local communities – require our leadership and personal commitment. We need to act together and in our individual roles to accelerate progress. There are challenges that we must address. We will work together, and with our local populations as well as partners in the third and independent sectors, to understand public expectations and better meet needs for health and social care, which go hand-in-hand with improvements in life expectancy and the availability of new medicines and technologies. We are already making progress. We recognise that we are jointly responsible for tackling these challenges and that we need to adapt, compromise and support one another to deliver integration for the people of Scotland. The Public Bodies (Joint Working) Act 2014 puts in place governance and financial arrangements, and a set of outcomes, for us to work within to achieve integration. We share a duty to empower Integration Authorities, to hold ourselves and one another to account in order to make integration work. We will learn from one another and adopt good practice. We will also work collaboratively and in partnership beyond the statutory sector to deliver improvements. We commit to delivering together because that is the right way to deliver better services for our citizens.

It signals the firm intention of all parties to put their energy into developing local systems of care – a renewal of vows, if you will.

Back at the ranch, we're regularly having these conversations at the Joint Board and at our Integrated Corporate Management Team. More to do, of course, but we're seeing an increasingly joint approach across our local system.

The BBC are carrying an article about people with learning disabilities and autism who are living outside of their natural communities. This is an important issue for us locally, because our stated ambition of supporting people in their own communities is being tested just now by the availability of appropriate accommodation and by recruitment challenges. We hope to open up debate about this issue when we meet in November to consider a new strategy on Learning Disabilities.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-45666103>

The Scottish Government published its consultation paper on restricting the promotion and marketing of targeted food and drink high in fat, sugar or salt where they are sold to the public. It is available online at <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781787812567>

The consultation extends to Wednesday 9 January 2019. Scotland's serious diet and weight problem requires action on a number of fronts - a key aspect of this is ending our nation's damaging relationship with junk food and reducing associated health harms and so the consultation asks about restricting the promotion and marketing of categories of food and drink that are typically high in fat, sugar or salt, yet provide little or no nutritional benefit.

You might think my interests in this are remote, that this is a public health matter. It is of course, but unless we get this right, the dependency of people we support across health and social care with long-term conditions will only increase.

The Mental Welfare Commission has just published its report on visits to adults on guardianship. Guardianship orders are used to safeguard those who lack the capacity to make their own decisions. The Commission monitors the use of welfare provisions of the Adults with Incapacity Act, and publishes reports on their use. In addition to monitoring at a statistical level, the Commission carries out visits to individuals subject to guardianship. These visits are targeted towards people where we identified issues in relation to possible use of restraint, seclusion, or deprivation of liberty. The majority of guardians are private individuals, usually a relative, carer or friend. Local authorities have a duty to make an application for welfare guardianship where it is needed and no-one else is applying.

In 2017-18, the Commission visited 291 adults on guardianship. In almost all cases (92%, 267) the two categories of assessment - care and treatment, and accommodation - were rated as adequate or good. These were the main findings from the visits:

- The Commission identified issues in 23% (67) of visits. The largest number of these concerns was around the suitability of the adult's placement (22%, 23) or the level and nature of activities available to them (22%, 23). These issues were discussed with the individuals and care managers, and followed up with reviewing teams where appropriate.
- In 19% (54) of all cases, there was no clear evidence that the guardian had visited the adult in the last six months.
- In half of private guardianships (93 of 187) there appeared to have been no recent visits by the local authority supervisor. These visits support guardians in properly using their powers.
- On 11 visits, issues relating to Section 47 of the AWI Act and medication were raised as a cause for concern. Where an individual lacks the capacity to consent to medical treatment, the doctor must complete an s47 certificate before giving the treatment.

The full report is available on the Commission's website, and includes a number of case studies: https://www.mwscot.org.uk/media/433412/10.09.2018_our_visits_to_adults_on_guardianship_2017-18_0609.pdf

We're working through a process just now to lay new lines of clinical governance from the nurses employed in GP practices through to the Nurse Director of the Health Board, following recommendations being taken forward nationally. It is one of the traditions of general practice that the clinical governance of all practice-employed health professionals be overseen by the GPs themselves. While this has helped consolidate good team arrangements within primary care, it is right that we supplement that with a professional line from the practice nurses through to the Nurse Director. We may want to develop a similar line in time for AHPs employed by the practices.

You may be aware that our adult care and support service has experienced a few challenges over the summer period, with higher levels of vacant posts and absence than we would normally expect.

We are actively working to address these matters. We recently recruited an additional nine members of staff and three new relief staff, which will improve our ability to provide the high quality service our service users expect. We are also strengthening staff training arrangements and implementing a new rota. We hope this will help to build greater resilience within the service and spread the skills and experience of staff across our various care establishments. We are also taking a fresh look at our overall service offer, to take advantage of opportunities provided by the integration of health and social care. We want to build multi-professional teams that include social work, psychology and occupational therapy, as well as care staff. The building blocks of these arrangements are already there and we now want to introduce a more structured approach to support improved care planning and coordination. In the meantime, we continue to work through existing challenges and I'm confident that we'll be in a stronger place by the end of it.

That's all for this week.

Ron

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