

Support in the Right Direction - building the capacity of Support and Information Organisations

The National Strategy for Self-Directed Support (SDS) in Scotland sets out a vision for high-quality support and advice which enables people to make genuine individual choices and promotes self-direction and independent living. Independent Support helps people make informed decisions about SDS and the availability of and access to Independent Support is crucial to its success.

The SDS *Support in the Right Direction* Fund (2015-18) aims to build the capacity and availability of independent support services across Scotland. £2.82million has been spread across 34 projects for Year 1 (2015-16).

In October, participants were asked to report on progress of funded projects over the first 6 months. Many are still in development phase, and project implementation has focussed on staff induction, building the necessary networks to support activity and developing project materials. Support and information provision has started and is continuing among many projects. Key activities reported on include:

Support in the Right Direction Fund

April – September 2015 Delivery:

- **At least 29** new staff have been recruited, inducted and trained.
- **21** projects reported on development and distribution of SDS support and information materials. This includes websites, case studies, events, drop-in sessions and mapping & publication of local resources.
- **17** projects reported on meetings and work with 3rd sector partners, Providers, Local Authorities and Health and Social Care partnerships.
- **16** projects reported on the development and delivery of SDS workshops or training both for clients and providers.
- **12** projects also reported on direct provision of support and advice to people and families and carers of people eligible for SDS or in need of some care support. This includes 6 projects undertaking intensive case-work.
- **5** projects have been involved in recruitment and training of volunteers either as peer mentors, SDS ambassadors, or members of co-design teams.
- **4** projects have developed and supported peer support or SDS information sharing groups.

Other important activity in the first 6 months includes; **skills training for people eligible for SDS** (3), the **development of digital tools to support SDS management** (3), **broker training** (2) and the **development of PA employer guidance**.



Kate and Ella discuss life and SDS at Carr Gorm's 'Oban Blether Group'.

It should be noted that this summary has been pulled together from what projects have reported. It likely won't include ALL work that has taken place as some reports had more detail and clarity than others.

Over the next 3 months **Inspiring Scotland** Performance Advisors will work with all the funded projects to better understand the activities of the *Support in the Right Direction Fund* and standardise reporting measures to ensure more robust data on activity is collected.

This work will draw on the work of previously funded organisations, managed by Evaluation Support Scotland, to explain what Independent Support is and what difference it makes.

[Support in the Right Direction - The value of Independent Support](#) provides a list of types and examples of activities that make up Independent Support. Inspiring Scotland aims to map activity of funded organisations against this list and work with organisations to regularly report against these standard headings.

Support in the Right Direction Fund
April – September 2015 Client Groups

Independent Support is a person-centred approach responding flexibly to individual circumstances. People may need support for a variety of reasons. From project applications and the October progress reports, it is clear projects are supporting people with a range of issues. The client groups projects identified as supporting are: (organisations will support more than one group)

Carers including families	10 projects including Carers Trust, Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living, and VOCAL
People with mental health problems	9 projects including Carr Gomm, Ceartas, and ENeRGI
People with learning disabilities	9 projects including PAMIS and Enable
People with physical disabilities	8 projects including Glasgow Disability Alliance and Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living
Older People	6 projects including Ayrshire Independent Living and Carr Gomm
Young People	5 projects including Kindred Advocacy and Cantraybridge

8 projects also claim to support *any person or families needing care support or people eligible for SDS*. Other client groups projects have identified as supporting are:

- People in transition (4 projects);
- People with autism (3);
- Providers (3);
- People with sight impairments (3);
- People with dementia (2);
- People who are deaf / have hearing loss (2); and
- Homeless people (1)

Collecting data on who projects are supporting is useful. It could contribute learning about what user groups are involved in SDS and how it is contributing to reducing inequality. Inspiring Scotland plans to canvass groups to see what monitoring data (user group, age, ethnicity, postcode) they currently collect and what is appropriate, to see if this could be included in regular progress reports.

Support in the Right Direction Fund
April – September 2015 Areas of work

Funded organisations are working throughout Scotland. A review of project applications and progress reports identified 5 organisations working nationally - ARC Scotland, Carers Trust, Deaf Action, In-Control Scotland and Penumbra. Other areas where a number of projects are being delivered are:

Aberdeen	5 projects including Advocacy Aberdeen, Ceartas, Grampian Opportunities, i-Connect NE and PAMIS
Fife	5 projects including Ceartas, Disabled Person Housing Service, Enable, ENeRGI and PAMIS
East Ayrshire	4 projects including Ayrshire Independent Living Network, Ceartas, Community Brokerage Network and Diversity Matters
East Renfrewshire	4 projects including SDS Forum East Renfrewshire, IRISS, Diversity Matters and PAMIS
Edinburgh	4 projects including Diversity Matters, LCIL, Kindred Advocacy and Ceartas
Glasgow	4 projects including GCIL, Glasgow Disability Alliance, Simon Community and PAMIS

There are 4 Local Authority areas where it appears funded projects are not undertaking any local work. These are Orkney, Shetland, West Dunbartonshire and Western Isles.

A list of what projects work in the remaining Local Authority areas is on the final page of this report.

Support in the Right Direction Fund

April – September 2015 Reporting on Outcomes

Fund recipients are working towards a range of outcomes for individuals, practitioners and providers. On the whole most organisations have not reported back on progress towards outcomes in the first progress report. For many, this is due to insufficient output from which to draw learning – projects are just getting started or are in development stages.

Projects were asked what the expected Outcomes for their client groups were at application stage, and the obligation to report back on these is clear in the SDS Support in the Right Direction grant agreement. It is clear however that support is required for many grant recipients to collect, analyse and report on outcome information.

Refining outcomes: There is significant work required to support projects to refine project outcomes. Many projects have numerous outcomes, some listing activities, some listing aims and making numerous impact statements that are very similar. Evaluation Support Scotland guidance states projects should not set too many outcomes (4 or 5 is enough) and groups should focus on the changes that are most relevant to their overall aim. As with Fund activities (outputs) **Inspiring Scotland** proposes using the Outcomes identified within Support in the Right Direction - The value of Independent Support to map project outcomes, adding to this list where necessary.

Developing outcome monitoring plans: Where there is not one already in place, organisations receiving Support in the Right Direction funds will be supported to develop an effective outcome monitoring plan. Identifying indicators that people are progressing towards an Outcome is critical to this, and again the guidance and examples developed through the Evaluation Support Scotland working group found in Self Directed Support - Measuring Independent Support will be referenced.

Support in the Right Direction Fund

April – September 2015 Outcomes

11 organisations provided some outcome information in the first progress report. Reviewing the Outcome information provided, there is a strong indication that Support in the Right Direction fund work has:

- Enabled people to access clearer information about SDS.
- Be more aware of support available to access and manage SDS
- Make more informed choices about SDS

At least 1,193 people have attended awareness raising events with projects reporting around 540 people providing feedback. These numbers are indicative as they have not been interrogated further and may include attendance at a number of events.

2 organisations have provided good evidence that:

- 21 people are achieving their personal outcomes and living the life they want to as a result of the independent support they accessed.

Carr Gomm provided evidence through case-studies showing the Community Contacts project has empowered people to speak out in relation to their support and have more support planned on their personal outcomes.

VOCAL also provided a small case-study that indicated support from the Support Worker had improved confidence (in a caring role) and raised awareness of options and choices available.

Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA) reports that 100% of participants in GDA learning activities feel their confidence has increased, they are able to make positive choices and regain more control over their lives.

I've learned that disabled people can follow their dreams, given the right support, like having SDS. I now know about my rights and feel more confident to speak up and challenge people, including my social worker. I now have friends. A few months ago I was totally depressed and could see no point in life – now I'm joining a network that speaks up for disabled people!" Participant in Glasgow Disability Alliance's Future Vision programme.

Support in the Right Direction Fund

April – September 2015 Challenges

Many organisations have reported delays to project roll out due to delay in receiving the funding, recruitment or staffing absence issues and the time it takes to build necessary alliances and partnerships.

Other challenges groups have reported during the first 6 months include:

- difficulty working across wide geographies and rural areas and specific challenges for rurally isolated staff to engage in networking opportunities;
- organisational funding pressures and staff time being diverted to assist with securing core funding;
- prioritising support to people in crisis affecting project development time; and
- time taken to raise awareness with agencies and the need for effective marketing of services.

Projects are reporting a number of problems working with Social Work and Local Authorities. Specific challenges highlighted include:

- difficulty in engaging with Local Authorities and building relationships with staff, changes in staff and organisational structures and competing priorities delaying partnership working and provision of information;
- difficulties in getting local authority partners to commit consistently and sustain commitment to joint work;
- slow referrals from Social Work to projects; and
- lengthy timescales from Social Work to respond to needs discouraging people from asking for changes to support.

The difficulties of supporting SDS when Local Authorities have restricted eligibility for care support and the lack of SDS practice across Local Authorities is commented on by a number of projects.

‘there exists a disparity between the principles of SDS and existing restrictions of only critical or substantial need are being funded at present’

Other project delivery challenges described in the Progress reports include observations that Local Authorities:

- continue to not fully offer SDS to children and families as they do not have the systems in place (especially at time of transition);
- don’t offer SDS accurately and try to fit the old system into the new;
- are subjecting support plans to high levels of scrutiny, and are applying eligibility criteria to plans. This means that people are deemed eligible for support at assessment, but then denied it after the support plan has been written; and
- are prescribing providers based on price and not informed choice.

In turn projects report that people are waiting for long periods before having a care assessment and that there is mistrust of SDS as people associate it with budget cuts or their expectations of it providing more flexible care are not met. In general groups are reporting that they feel there is still a need to raise awareness about the practical application of SDS both with people accessing support and across the social care and health workforce.



PAMIS – Digital Passport event. The Passport facilitates communication between a person with Profound Multiple Learning Disabilities, carers and practitioners on issues related to health and social care. It also provides a resource, and a source of confidence for all involved in that care; in understanding how to communicate with the person, better support them socially and carry out complex medical procedures.

**Support in the Right Direction Fund
April – September 2015 Conclusion**

Despite delays highlighted in almost all submitted progress reports, across 32 funded projects, £947,658 has been spent in the first 6 months of funding, developing and expanding Independent Support work. On the whole organisations are meeting project plan milestones and where activities have started there is significant output and numbers of people accessing support.

Submitted progress reports provide some indication that groups have capacity and understanding of evaluation to start reporting on outcomes, however it appears there is significant work to be done to refine outcomes and develop appropriate and effective outcome monitoring plans. There is also support needed to ensure reporting is clear, detailed and provides some analysis of evaluation information. Providing a sense of scale and context through collating and reporting monitoring data, with numbers that are clear, was also missing from the first set of reports – however this can in the main be understood as organisations focussed on development work.

The reports give some indication that work is having an impact. People are accessing more information, feeling more informed and becoming more aware of their options. In some cases, people are feeling more confident to self-advocate, or to seek out a range of service options. Also emerging is the importance of social connections and contacts, with many projects commenting on the importance for people of having opportunities to socialise, whether through the process of getting Independent Support or as a way of meeting personal outcomes. Anecdotally there have been reports of people seeking help or care support, that can in part be alleviated by connecting to community groups or activities and addressing their social isolation.

Inspiring Scotland contact with Fund participants has been positive and where face-to-face meetings have taken place there is enthusiasm to engage, a thirst for support and a willingness to share learning and learn from others. There are some small changes that could be made to smooth the reporting process and grant instalment claims, including clearer communication and increased timescales. Dialogue is on-going with grant holders and Scottish Government and will inform any changes.

Projects in each Local Authority *This list is likely to change as clearer data is gathered and projects develop.

Aberdeenshire	Children in Scotland, Grampian Opportunities, PAMIS	Moray	Children in Scotland, Grampian Opportunities, PAMIS
Angus	Dundee Carers Centre, PAMIS	N. Ayrshire	AILN
Argyll & Bute	Argyll & Bute TSI, Carr Gomm	N.Lanarkshire	Ceartas, Simon Community
Clackmannanshire	ARC Scotland	Perth & Kinross	Children in Scotland, PAMIS
Dumfries & G'way	DICE	Renfrewshire	PAMIS
Dundee	Dundee Carers Centre, PAMIS	S. Borders	BIAS, Encompass
E. Dunbartonshire	Ceartas, GCIL, PAMIS	S. Ayrshire	AILN, Ceartas, IRISS
E. Lothian	Diversity Matters, LCIL, Kindred Advocacy	S. Lanarkshire	Ceartas, GCIL, PAMIS
Falkirk	Ceartas, Diversity Matters	Stirling	ARC Scotland
Highland	Cantraybridge, Diversity Matters	W. Lothian	LCIL, Kindred Advocacy
Inverclyde	PAMIS		
Midlothian	Kindred Advocacy, LCIL, VOCAL	NATIONAL	ARC Scotland, Carers Trust, Deaf Action, In –Control Scotland, Penumbra