ANGUS COUNCIL
SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

10 JANUARY 2008

CHANGES TO THE INSPECTION METHODOLOGY USED BY THE CARE COMMISSION

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH

ABSTRACT

This report advises the Social Work and Health Committee of changes being made by the Care Commission to the methodology used to inspect social care services. These changes are being introduced as from 1 April 2008 and will impact on all social care services, both local authority and independent, in Angus that are regulated by the Care Commission.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee notes the contents of this report.

2 BACKGROUND

The Care Commission was set up in April 2002 under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 to regulate adult and child social care and independent healthcare services in Scotland. Services regulated by the Care Commission include:

- Adoption agencies
- Adult placement services
- Care at home
- Care homes for children and young people
- Care homes for older people
- Care homes for people with physical and sensory impairments
- Care homes for people with learning disabilities
- Care homes for people with mental health problems
- Care homes for people with drug and alcohol problems
- Childcare agencies
- Criminal justice supported accommodation services
- Early education and childcare up to 16
- Fostering and family placement services
- Hospice care
- Housing support services
- Independent hospitals
- Independent specialist clinics
- Nurse agencies
- School care accommodation services
- Short breaks and respite care services
- Support services

The above services are inspected by the Care Commission against a set of National Care Standards set by the Scottish Executive.
The Care Commission is introducing changes to how it inspects services with the aim of ensuring that inspections are more targeted and better focused on people who use care services and their carers from the 1st April 2008.

The main changes being introduced are:

- more involvement from people who use care services and their carers, in assessing the quality of care;
- introducing a grading scheme to help report on the quality of care; and
- having a system to assess how much inspection time is needed for each service so that more inspection time is spent on those services that need to improve and less time on those that are performing well.

3 THE INTRODUCTION OF A GRADING SCHEME

A new grading scheme will be introduced from 1 April 2008. This means that by the end of the inspection process in 2008/09 the Care Commission will award regulated services grades based on the quality of the service provided. A six point grading scale is being introduced:

6 – excellent
5 – very good
4 – good
3 – adequate
2 – weak
1 – unsatisfactory

Currently no grading system is in place as services are either registered or not with the care commission.

From April 2008 providers will be required to complete a self assessment using a framework of Quality Themes and Statements. Providers will be asked to self assess against each Quality Statement and to provide evidence to support this self assessment that includes identifying any areas for improvement and how these will be achieved. There will be four Quality Themes, which may vary depending on the service type.

Quality of:
- life (or experience)
- environment (or information)
- staffing
- management and leadership.

The focus and intensity of any inspection will take into account the self assessment and any evidence provided to support it. Providers will also need to show that they have involved people who use their service in the self assessment process.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Whilst there are no financial implications arising from this report there are potential future resource implications as individual services seek to meet specific recommendations or requirements from the care commission and to provide services that are at the higher end of the grading scale.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications arising as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.
CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

CONCLUSION

This report advises the Social Work and Health Committee of changes to the inspection methodology being adopted by the Care Commission. Many social work and health services are regulated by the Care Commission and the introduction of the new grading scheme will challenge these services to actively demonstrate the quality of service provision and how service users and carers are involved in and their views taken account of in the provision of the service.

R Peat
Director of Social Work and Health

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.