

ANGUS COUNCIL

**SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 17 FEBRUARY 2009
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE - 26 FEBRUARY 2009**

**CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO DRAFT EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTATIONS GUIDANCE FOR
HEALTH AND LOCAL AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIPS**

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH

ABSTRACT

The Scottish Government has issued draft guidance in relation to equipment and adaptation services for health and local authority partnerships for consultation. The draft response on behalf of the Angus Community Planning Partnership is appended to this report for approval.

A copy of the consultation paper has been placed in the Members' Lounge.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee and Neighbourhood Services Committee:

- i) note the content of this report;
- ii) instruct the Directors of Social Work and Health and Neighbourhood Services to forward the response to the Scottish Government.

2 INTRODUCTION

The new draft equipment and adaptations guidance aims to update and clarify existing guidance, taking into account legislative and policy changes in care provision since previous guidance was issued in 1976 (Circular 1976 (GEN) 90).

It aims to make equipment and adaptations an important part of an integrated community care service, enabling some of our most vulnerable citizens to live in their own homes for as long as possible and achieve a quality of life they wish to have.

The guidance aims to enable professionals, service users and carers to better understand local health and social care partnerships' responsibilities, and to create a more consistent approach to the provision of equipment and adaptations across Scotland.

The key recommendations in this document are:

Local partnership recommendations:

1. Local partnerships should incorporate equipment and adaptations into mainstream community care services by:
 - Taking an outcomes based approach to involvement of service users and carers during the assessment process
 - Incorporating equipment and adaptations into the assessment, care plan and review process in line with the National Minimum Information Standards;

- Offering a carer's assessment to anyone who cares for a disabled person or older relative
 - Ensure training for staff reflects the above approach.
2. Partnerships should jointly produce and publish information on equipment and adaptations provision.
 3. Partnerships should adopt a 'standard' and "specialist" model to the provision of equipment and adaptations where standard items of equipment can be accessed without the need for a full community care assessment, or directly by the service user themselves.
 4. Partnerships should work together to agree the range of equipment and adaptations that will be provided, and the funding streams for these.
 5. Local Authorities should identify all their spending on equipment and adaptations across their services including social work, education and housing services with the aim of integrating provision of standard equipment and adaptations with their health colleagues. Health services should carry out a similar review. This could involve the use of pooled budgets and establishing joint stores for the provision of 'standard' equipment and adaptations.
 6. Models of provision should cover: protocol for access, information for service users, review of equipment catalogues, training and quality assurance as well as provision, including, maintenance, review and recycling. Models should also ensure there are robust performance management systems in place.
 7. Local partners should review the benefits from their current models of delivery and consider the advantages from an integrated approach across services and agencies.
 8. Local partnership should target occupational therapy services more effectively. Agencies need to remove duplication and streamline pathways of service provision between hospital and community based occupational therapy services and reallocate their professional expertise to meet the needs of local service provision.

The Scottish Government have made a commitment to:

1. Developing a national website to provide a useful resource for service users and carers to access information on equipment and adaptations.
2. Producing a good practice guide for equipment provision that will allow partnerships to benchmark services.
3. Commencing work to establish a good practice model for provision of major adaptations.
4. Developing a guide for practitioners, service users, and carers through the different funding streams available for housing adaptations.
5. Supporting shared learning from early implementers of effective occupational therapy approaches between health and local authority staff and providing support for further implementation.

3 PARTNERSHIP RESPONSE

The proposed response appended to this report reflects a wide variety of views across the partnership and not a single Social Work or Angus Council response ([Appendix 1](#)).

The response welcomes the overall principles and recommendations as set out in the guidance.

The response however also highlights that in some areas the guidance is not prescriptive enough, potentially leading to discrepancies in the provision of service in the partnership areas of Scotland.

Specifically the guidance lacks clarity in respect of the specific responsibilities of each agency. The guidance also requires to be more specific regarding eligibility criteria. The guidance would also benefit from providing more detail and direction regarding equipment provision for end of life care. It would also be helpful if the guidance gave further consideration to risk management and liability for accidents and injury caused by equipment provision.

The response also notes that the provision of equipment and adaptations in 2009 requires to be seen against a changing context brought about by the opportunities from new technologies. The development of telecare and telehealth/telemedicine solutions and their impact on more traditional forms of equipment/adaptations merits a more rigorous discussion within the guidance.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

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

6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The issues dealt with in this Report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An equalities impact assessment is not required.

7 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.

8 CONCLUSION

There are no major concerns about the new draft guidance as there is a general endorsement of the key recommendations and overarching principles. However there is agreement that the guidance could be clearer in some areas.

R Peat
Director of Social Work and Health

R Ashton
Director of Neighbourhood Services

NOTE: The undernoted 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 a material extent in preparing the above report.

Consultation on Equipment and Adaptations Guidance for Health and Local Authority Partnerships 2008

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