

SUBMISSION FROM SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

This response is from the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC is a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) and was established in 2001 by the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act. We are responsible for registering people who work in social services, regulating their education and training and the collation and publication of data on the size and nature of the sector's workforce.

Our work increases the protection of people who use services by ensuring that the workforce is properly trained, appropriately qualified and effectively regulated. We aim to protect people who use services, raise standards of practice, strengthen and support the professionalism of the workforce and improve the outcomes and experience of people who use social services. The social service workforce provides care and support for some of the most vulnerable people in Scottish society. These workers often deal with complex care needs and have the potential to make a real difference to individuals' lives.

Our vision is that our work means the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce. Our purpose is to raise standards and protect the public through regulation, innovation and continuous improvement in workforce planning and development for the social services workforce. This response focuses on the six themes identified in the call for evidence.

Themes 1 and 2: Workforce issues and occupational segregation

To avoid duplication we have combined our response to workforce issues and occupational segregation under one heading. This response uses two data sources to examine key workforce trends:

1. The SSSC publishes annual Official Statistics on the social services workforce. The latest data was published in October 2012 and provides a snapshot of the sector as at December 2011.
2. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the largest household survey in the UK and provides the official measures of employment and unemployment.

The LFS data is used to examine trends and comparisons with other sectors. Data in this response is from the SSSC's data unless indicated otherwise.

The social services sector employs approximately 195,000 individuals in Scotland. The sector employs approximately 8 per cent of the overall workforce and was identified as a "high participation" sector in the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy. The number of workers employed by the sector grew rapidly during the ten years to 2008 and has stabilised since then. Approximately 40 per cent of the is employed by the private sector and a further 26 per cent by the voluntary sector. Approximately 84 per cent of the workforce is female.

Table 1: Percentage of staff by gender and sub-sector

Sub-sector	Female	Male
Adoption Service	91	9
Adult Day Care	77	23
Adult Placement Service	76	24
Care Homes for Adults	85	15
Central and Strategic Staff	79	21
Child Care Agency	94	6
Childminding	100	0
Day Care of Children	97	3
Fieldwork Service (Adults)	80	20
Fieldwork Service (Children)	82	18
Fieldwork Service (Generic)	79	21
Fieldwork Service (Offenders)	65	35
Fostering Service	87	13
Housing Support/Care at Home	81	19
Nurse Agency	82	18
Offender Accommodation Service	66	34
Residential Child Care	67	33
School Care Accommodation	63	37
All	84	16

Source: Scottish Social Services Sector: Report on 2011 Workforce Data

As Table 1 also illustrates there are some areas of the sector where men have a higher representation, namely criminal justice and residential children's services where men make up over one third of people working in those sub-sectors. Non-residential children's services have the highest proportion of female workers at over 90 per cent.

The childminding figures in Table 1 are rounded up. In reality there are a small number of men working in this sector. This workforce includes a number of childminding assistants. Some of these individuals will be registered with the Care Inspectorate. In many instances childminding assistants are likely to be the partner of the childminder. This example reinforces the point that while childcare is perceived as a female role there are many instances where males are actively involved in the delivery of child care services.

The median number of weekly hours worked by social services staff is 33 while a quarter of the workforce is believed to work 20 hours or fewer per week. Limited data is available on the extent to which social services workers in Scotland are underemployed or choosing to work fewer hours for personal reasons such as a lifestyle choice or family circumstances. The Annual Population Survey and the Government’s Rural Scotland: Key Facts 2012 report reinforce the point that women are considerably more likely than men to work part-time across all geographic areas and industries. It is likely that these trends will be repeated in social services. The proportion of male social service workers is slightly higher in the voluntary sector as illustrated in table 2:

Table 2: The social services sector gender split by employer type (December 2011)

Employer Type	Male	Female
Public	15%	85%
Private	13%	87%
Voluntary	21%	79%

Source: Scottish Social Services Sector: Report on 2011 Workforce Data

The SSSC has published data on the social services workforce since 2008. It is too early to use this data to examine longer-term trends in relation to gender split. The LFS data indicates that the proportion of males in the social services workforce (20 per cent) has remained relatively stable since 2002. The LFS data also suggests that there are no large variations in the percentage of female staff in the social services sector across different nations within the UK. The following table examines the gender split within social services by job function:

Table 3: The Social Services Sector gender split by job function (December 2011)

Job Level	Male	Female
Administrative/support staff (C0)	16%	84%
Ancillary staff (C1)	24%	76%
Care Staff (C2)	16%	84%
Care staff- supervisory and contribute to implementation of care plans (C3)	13%	87%
Care staff- responsible for care needs (C4)	16%	84%
Unit/ project manager (C5)	19%	81%
Group manager (C6)	19%	81%
Director/Chief Executive (C7)	34%	66%

Source: Scottish Social Services Sector: Report on 2011 Workforce Data

It seems reasonable to speculate that a greater percentage of full-time posts may have an influence on the gender ratio at Director / Chief Executive job level.

One key group of workers not included within the figures in Tables 1 - 3 are many individuals involved in the delivery of Self Directed Support (SDS). SDS is a term that describes the ways in which individuals and families can have informed choice about how their social care and support is provided to them. SDS gives people control over an individual budget and allows them to choose how it is spent on support which meets their agreed health and social care outcomes. A growing number of individuals take their SDS budget as a Direct Payment (or cash payment). The number of people in receipt of Self-Directed Support (Direct Payments) has increased each year from 207 in 2001 when these figures were first collected to 5,049 in the year to 31st March 2012. Many individuals will employ Personal Assistants (PAs) or purchase services directly from a provider. The number of PAs employed by individuals varies widely which makes it difficult to produce a detailed profile of this workforce. A Scottish Government-commissioned survey of PAs and other workers involved in the delivery of SDS in 2010 indicated that 86 per cent of this emerging PA workforce is female.

The need to support more males to consider childcare careers has been noted in a number of reports in recent years including the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy and an Independent report by Professor Susan Deacon. There have been a number of campaigns which aimed to encourage more males to consider social service career. Career guidance and availability of relevant courses plays a critical role in supporting males to consider these career options. Recent examples include the "Men Can Care" project at Kibble and the "Men in Childcare" courses. Over

1,200 individuals have attended Men in Childcare courses in recent years¹. The SSSC has also developed a number of resources which provide information for individuals considering a career in this sector. The SSSC's data also indicates that the number of males admitted to programmes has increased slightly since the new social work degree was introduced in 2004.

In addition to the paid workforce the sector benefits from the support provided by more than 657,000 unpaid carers in Scotland. The Carers Strategy notes that unpaid carers are believed to contribute savings to health and social services in Scotland of an estimated £7.68 billion per year. The Strategy reinforces the point that a significant number of unpaid carers are male. The 2001 census indicated that 60 per cent of unpaid carers are female but noted that the gender balance was more even among young carers and older carers aged 70 and over.

Theme 3: Childcare

The SSSC welcomes moves to increase the number and flexibility of hours of funded early learning and childcare as outlined in the recent consultation on the Children and Young People Bill. The SSSC also welcomes moves to increase provision of care during and outwith school hours. The workforce has a vital role to play in the delivery of these services and it has been a requirement since December 2011 that all lead practitioners and managers of day care services for children are required to either hold or be working towards a level 9 Childhood Practice qualification. Evidence shows that the best experiences for children come from qualified staff.

The childcare proposals may present some challenges for the predominantly-female workforce required to deliver these services. It will be vital to ensure that providers maintain appropriate numbers of qualified staff at all times, and that learning and development opportunities can meet that need. It may be difficult for some services to find the time and resources to allow staff to undertake learning and development. It is vital that the resource implications of learning and development are factored in by service commissioners. A significant number of respondents to the consultation on the Children and Young People Bill focused on workforce implications arising from this agenda. A number of respondents indicated that they would need to consider changes to terms and conditions to ensure that they were able to respond to any service demand changes. There may be significant implications for the workforce as part of these proposals.

Theme 4: Women in Business

There may be a need for support for women to start, maintain or develop their own business. These issues can be particularly prominent in a sector such as social services where the majority of staff are female. There may be a perception that the majority of women working in social services are employed by local authorities and other services but a substantial proportion of these workers are self-employed. They

¹ Source: Men in Childcare website: <http://www.meninchildcare.com/> The courses are run by John Wheatley College, Stevenson College, South Lanarkshire College and Dundee College.

include childminders and a number of personal assistants supporting individuals in receipt of Direct Payments as part of the Self-Directed Support agenda.

Theme 5: Managing equal pay in local authorities

The SSSC welcomes progress made around ensuring local authority equal pay obligations are met. We also welcome moves to promote the living wage within the private and voluntary sector. A substantial number of social service employers have reported a tightening of budgets in recent years. For example, a study of voluntary sector social service employers by the University of Strathclyde and commissioned by the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) in 2010/11 notes:

- 68 per cent of respondents had reported no cost of living increases in their contracts in the last financial year
- 79 per cent of respondents had been unable to award a salary increase that covered the cost of living at some point during the last three years.
- 57 per cent of respondents had implemented a pay freeze. Many of these freezes were targeted on increments but did allow a cost of living increase. Some respondents had placed a freeze on both measures.

Similar issues and trends are reported by a number of private sector providers in this sector.

The drive to promote the living wage in social services will play a crucial role in improving the value placed upon a workforce which remains predominantly female. The wages that services pay may not be entirely within their own gift due to commissioning arrangements. Employers regularly note a number of issues in relation to the recruitment and retention of their workforce where pay rates are one of the outstanding concerns. The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) recently put forward a proposal which would ensure all local authority staff are entitled to a minimum of the Living Wage. One of the key challenges will be around the implementation of this wage for the wider social service workforce. Local authorities are significant commissioners of social services and are likely to see a continued decline in their budgets over the next few years. Delivering a Living Wage for private and voluntary sector providers will mean commissioners have to make major decisions about prioritising resources. Some commissioners note that they support the principle of the Living Wage for private and voluntary sector employees but indicate that it will take some time before they can deliver this aim. They also note that the offer to deliver a Living Wage for many staff is still fairly recent. For example, the commitment to introduce the Living Wage for some groups, such as the NHS, will not take place until the next financial year. Another consideration is that some commissioners have expressed concerns about whether all private and voluntary sector providers would pass on fee increases in the form of a Living Wage for staff. This issue raises concerns about the way that the Living Wage would be enforced.

The SSSC is concerned with the image and value of the social service workforce and we believe that, while they are not the whole picture, pay rates are central to it. If as a society we value care and the people who provide it, we must recognise that

financially. If we want to achieve a skilled, confident and qualified workforce, we must be able to attract, reward and retain the people working in it. To pay people less than a Living Wage is contrary to that aim and work.

Theme 6: Cross-cutting issues

The call for evidence refers to the impact of attitudes around female employment. The SSSC participated in the Women's Employment Summit organised by Scottish Government and the Scottish Trade Unions Congress in September 2012 and welcomed the emphasis on social services within speeches by the First Minister, the Deputy First Minister and the Minister for Youth Employment. These speeches and reports referred to throughout this response reinforce the valuable role played by women in the delivery of social services and the need to support more males to consider a career in this sector.

Summary

The social service sector remains a predominantly female workforce although they have been moves to support more males to consider a career in social work and social care. The sector is often perceived as "women's work" although it is important to reinforce the vital role played by many males in service delivery. For example, a third of the workforce in residential child care and fieldwork services for offenders are male. The sector benefits greatly from the vital support of more than 650,000 unpaid carers. Approximately 40 per cent of that unpaid workforce is believed to be male and the proportions are more even among younger and older carers.

The proposals to increase the availability and flexibility of childcare services in Scotland are welcome although they may have some implications for the workforce required to deliver services. The need to continue supporting workers to develop skills is vital. Evidence shows that the best experiences for children come from qualified staff. It has been a requirement since December 2011 that all lead practitioners and managers of day care services for children are required to either hold or be working towards a level 9 Childhood Practice qualification. The moves to address the issues around unequal pay and to promote the Living Wage are welcome as they contribute towards a key challenge around improving the image and value of a predominantly-female social services workforce.

Neil Macleod
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