

## **Inquiry into regulation of care for older people**

### **UNISON**

#### **General Comments**

UNISON welcomes many of the findings of the Scottish Parliament's Health and Sport Committee's Inquiry into the Regulation of Care for Older People and many of the comments of the Scottish Government in response to the Committee's report. However, we have concerns at some of the responses from the Scottish Government and wish to expand these in the following paragraphs.

- **Paragraphs 23-29 – Complaints**

UNISON Shares the concerns of the Committee that residents and carers do not feel confident in raising issues and welcome the Care Inspectorate's (CI) in raising the role of the complaints process including the right to seek a review by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. We also support the commitment that the CI, together with the SSSC will publicise guidance on "whistleblowing" for care staff and promote the SSSC codes of practice within the workforce as part of its inspection process.

- **Paragraphs 30-31 – Frequency and Types of Inspections**

We are pleased that the Care Inspectorate is to hold a minimum annual frequency of unannounced inspections for older people's services but are concerned that the necessary increase in resources for this will have to come from efficiency savings in other areas. We believe that additional money should be made available to ensure that the work of the Inspectorate does not deteriorate overall.

- **Paragraphs 34-35 - Engagement with Healthcare Professionals**

We welcome the intention to engage with healthcare professionals but believe that as the biggest union representing health and social care staff, UNISON should be involved in discussions to address workforce issues.

- **Paragraphs 45-47 – Support and Investment in the Workforce**

UNISON is pleased to support the Scottish Government's comments on supporting staff training and development, and welcome the Dare Inspectorate's initiative to commission research into the appropriate staffing mix for services to older people. This can only strengthen and secure such services.

- However, we believe that the Scottish Government should and can do more to insist that those people who are chosen by them to provide services through the procurement process should pay the Living Wage. We hope that this will be one of the outcomes which arise from the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's current inquiry into a living wage in Scotland.

- **Paragraph 48 - Care at Home**  
UNISON supports the Scottish Government's comments for workforce development to be a key point in the forthcoming Self Directed Support Bill. UNISON was pleased to take up the offer of a seat on the Workforce Development work stream.
- **Paragraphs 49-53 – Integration of Health and Social Care**  
UNISON will be submitting comments on this separately.
- **Paragraph 56-57 – Commissioning and Procurement**  
UNISON would support the view of the Committee that the Care Inspectorate should have more powers in relation to the commissioning and procurement of services for older people and would urge the Scottish Government to give further scrutiny to this aspect.
- **Paragraphs 58-61 – Monitoring financial viability**  
UNISON supports the view of the Committee that there should be greater scrutiny of the financial viability of care homes, following the collapse of Southern Cross and other groups of care homes. It appears sensible to us that this should be part of the Care Inspectorate's inspection process and we welcome the Scottish Government's commitment to look at how the financial stability of social care providers can be sustained in the future.

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