

Inquiry into regulation of care for older people

Scottish Borders Council

Scottish Borders Council's Social Work Department is grateful for the opportunity to provide a response on the report on inquiry into the regulation of care for older people.

The report sets out a range of sensible measures which Scottish Borders Council broadly welcomes, indeed practical steps that contribute to safeguards for the care sector is paramount for the recipients, providers and commissioners of care.

Many of the measures set out are helpful in ensuring that there is consistent regulation across all providers of care, and that standards are maintained to an equally high level regardless of sector or location.

It is very important that steps are taken to ensure and improve involvement of service users. The Committee should be commended on picking up this key point.

We particularly welcome the proposals regarding tighter monitoring of the financial viability of care providers. We have slight reservations about the capacity that exists to undertake this scrutiny, and would seek clarity on how this will be achieved and who will lead on this in the future. However, this scrutiny needs to take place and will provide greater reassurances for all concerned parties.

To assist in the journey towards integration of health and social care, the proposals of joint inspection of care pathways are crucial. Whilst these measures will depend on the closer working of the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland, this is a move that should be welcomed as there is a need for effective communication between these regulatory bodies. There will also need to be a familiarisation process for staff from providers and commissioners who have previously only experienced working with one or other of the regulatory bodies.

Overall, we welcome the work and recommendations of the Health and Sport Committee on these important issues.

Director of Social Work Services
Scottish Borders Council