

Inquiry into regulation of care for older people

Scottish Social Services Council

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) welcomes and notes the Health and Sport Committee's Report on the Inquiry into the Regulation of Care for Older People and the Scottish Government's response to it. The SSSC appreciated the opportunity to give evidence to the Inquiry and found the Report interesting and informative.

The SSSC would like to thank the Health and Sport Committee for its support of the registration and regulation of care workers and its recognition of the key role it plays in improving the quality of care services for older people. The SSSC would assure the Committee that it will respond positively and cost-effectively to the Scottish Government's decisions about the registration timetable.

The SSSC wishes to comment on three aspects of the Scottish Government's response: the Care Inspectorate's role in handling complaints; the Care Inspectorate's role in enforcing the SSSC Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers and mandatory registration of social care workers; and, the timetable for registration of social care workers.

In relation to the Care Inspectorate's handling of complaints the SSSC would like to let the Committee know that in addition to the Partnership Agreement that the SSSC and the Care Inspectorate have recently agreed, referred to in Page 17 of the Scottish Government's response, the bodies are working together to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which will set out in more detail how they will co-operate to identify and progress matters of shared interest and concern. It is intended this MoU will be supported by a detailed protocol about how the bodies will share relevant information and intelligence gained through their regulatory activities and will co-operate in investigating complaints where concerns have been raised about the quality of service provision and the conduct and/or competence of SSSC registered workers within such services.

The Care Inspectorate's role in promoting the SSSC's Code of Practice for Social Service Workers and for Employers of Social Service Workers is referred to in Page 7 of the response and its role in enforcing required registration of social care workers is referred to in Page 17 of the response. The SSSC would wish to reinforce to the Health and Sport Committee the importance of the Care Inspectorate's role in these respects. The SSSC does not have enforcement rights over employers of social service workers; its enforcement rights are in relation to the regulation of registered workers. Therefore, the Care Inspectorate plays a vital role in ensuring care service providers meet the requirements set down in the SSSC Code of Practice for Employers and their statutory responsibilities in relation to the registration of their staff. The SSSC is contributing to the development of the Care Inspectorate's inspection methodology to help ensure that these important aspects of its regulatory functions are covered within inspections.

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