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Lewis Macdonald  
Convener, Health and Sport Committee  
T3.60  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Date: 27 November 2020

Our Ref: PM/fe/cn/kk

Via email: [healthandsport@parliament.scot](mailto:healthandsport@parliament.scot)

Dear Convener

### **Delivering care at home and housing support services during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Thank you for your letter and your acknowledgement of the value of the inquiry by the Care Inspectorate into the delivery of care at home and housing support services.

With most people in need of care and support supported in their own homes, the exploration of the issues impacting on this sector and people supported by it is critical. The Care Inspectorate therefore welcomes the Health and Sport Committee report on how COVID-19 has impacted on care and support at home. We particularly value the insight it provides into the experiences, during the pandemic, of people who experience care and their carers. I note that the summary of responses produced in this current report is part of an ongoing inquiry by the Health and Sport Committee into adult social care in Scotland. I look forward to seeing the final report in early 2021.

I very much agree with your view that the survey undertaken by the Health and Sport Committee makes an important contribution to listening to, understanding and taking account of the views of people who experience care. It certainly has provided additional insight for us into people's experiences during the first wave of the pandemic. We have read this with interest, along with other recent publications that have had a user and carer focus, to inform our own work going forward.

We are encouraged by the fact that many of the key messages from the Health and Sport Committee survey are in line with the findings of our own inquiry. These include some of the more positive aspects which you have highlighted, such as the hard work and commitment of staff, the key contributions of carers and families and alternative approaches to delivery of day care, as well as wider challenges relating to complexity and funding in this sector.

We are very interested in the evidence in your survey of instances where carers and family members reported they were forced to "step in" because of a lack of support being offered from care providers. We reported that "Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) effectively prioritised support for people with critical needs, but how this was managed in terms of the impact of this prioritisation on packages for other people using services was very variable across the partnerships." We also noted that while many HSCPs had monitored the impact on service users and carers through surveys and direct contact, there were "still large numbers of people who experience care, or their carers, in some HSCP areas, that had not received

any direct contact". We would welcome any additional information that may be available from your survey in relation to this, or other issues which may give us further insight into people's experiences.

With regard to the committee's concerns about distribution and allocation of funding for small providers and third sector providers that have been raised in your pre-budget scrutiny we noted similar issues. In recognition of this we recommended in our report that "Scottish Government, HSCPs and service providers should review the processes for accessing Scottish Government sustainability funds for current or future COVID-19 related costs, to facilitate access for service providers, where relevant, to such funding". As you acknowledge, our report notes that the pandemic has exacerbated the challenges that already existed in the delivery of care at home and housing support in Scotland. We have shared the report with the review group carrying out the independent review of adult social care.

I also agree with your view that as well as longer term improvement required in the care at home and housing support sector, more immediate action is required to ensure better support and mitigation during the current pandemic.

In this respect, I took our report to the Scottish Government led Pandemic Response in Adult Social Care group for consideration and this ultimately led to the establishment of a national multiagency short life working group looking at winter planning in care at home services. I have also taken the opportunity at my regular meetings with Scottish Government to raise the key issues from the report directly with them, and in addition raised the report with the Scottish Government led Mobilisation Recovery Group.

Key issues and recommendations in our report have informed the workplan for the winter planning short life working group, referred to above, together with the issues identified by other stakeholders. This group is taking forward work to be progressed at national and local levels to support winter planning in care at home and the Care Inspectorate is directly contributing to the work of this group.

The report has been shared directly with HSCPs and we have taken the opportunity to check on the progress they have made with the recommendations, identified in our inquiry report, as part of our regular discussions and meetings with partnerships.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

**Peter Macleod**  
Chief Executive

CC: Jeane Freeman MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport