Scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2012-13 and Spending Review 2011

Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland

LTCAS welcomes the Committee’s decision to focus its scrutiny on preventative spending, including in relation to older people. We would highlight that preventative spend and integration of health and social care also have a significant impact on the many people of working age who are disabled or live with long term conditions (including in relation to their outcomes as they move into older age). It is important they are not overlooked, particularly in the context of the negative impacts of the UK welfare reforms.

Key points

- LTCAS strongly welcomes the Scottish Government endorsement of the Christie Commission, including the move towards prevention and integration of health and social care.
- The continuation of the Change Fund is welcome but the third sector must have a genuine stake as an equal partner alongside health and local authorities – something that was not evident in the first round.
- LTCAS’ key concern continues to be the gap between national policy direction and the reality of people’s experiences – preventative support is already being pared back significantly.
- Significant attention needs to be paid to the future of social care in Scotland so that people are able to do more than simply exist – the focus must be on human rights, independent living and active citizenship for disabled people and people with long term conditions.
- Social care services are already under-resourced and there is a fear that the council tax freeze may worsen this.

1. Twelve Propositions for Social Care

LTCAS, in partnership with a large consortium of organisations, is working to contribute to discussion on the future of social care in Scotland. Following a round table discussion, interviews with key individuals, a national dialogue event (held 13 September 2011), and a review of existing evidence; a paper was produced by Dr Jim McCormick (Scotland Adviser to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) on behalf of the consortium.

Living well with long term conditions: Twelve Propositions for Social Care (attached) maps key issues and puts them in terms of recommendations for an integrated health and social care system that: prevents negative outcomes; reduces need for formal services; and improves health, wellbeing

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and quality of life.

Among the messages of the paper is the need to start from the perspective of rights. Many people who are disabled or live with long term conditions currently feel that they are ‘becoming too expensive for society’. Their experiences are too often of services increasingly meeting only their most basic needs, not services that enable them to live as full, contributing citizens.

When JRF began to fund its programme, A Better Life for older people with high support needs, it quickly concluded that the standard currency of the debate – concepts like dignity and respect – wasn’t tough enough. These are valuable qualities to be promoted, but they involve relying on others to bestow them. So, we take our chances that a skilled social work manager or homecare worker will have the empathy and time to demonstrate them. But what about when this fails? A right-based approach can help to clarify expectations of fair, consistent and respectful experiences and of redress when standards fall lower than this.

Living well with long term conditions: Twelve Propositions for Social Care

The paper offers a distillation of a large body of evidence and expertise on how Scotland can reduce need, improve outcomes and change the landscape of support.

2. Delivering the Vision

In its Spending Review and Draft Budget, the Scottish Government sets out its plans for transformational change through a ‘bold and imaginative programme of renewal and reform’. Included in this is a strong endorsement of the third sector as key to service reform, preventative support and maximising individual and community capacity.

The question – and where LTCAS hopes the Committee will focus its scrutiny – will be how the Scottish Government’s vision is realised in decisions made by health boards and local authorities, especially as budgets continue to tighten.

From a third sector perspective LTCAS knows that its member organisations contribute significantly to the prevention and shifting the balance of care agendas. Our members’ work enables individuals and communities to remain well and resilient, maximise their capacity and develop lasting community-based support networks. However many organisations are already being lost for the want of modest funding, despite their absolute fit with the Christie Commission vision.

To ensure the Spending Review makes the difference it aspires to, LTCAS recommends:

- A requirement for health boards and local authorities to take a strategic approach to sustainable funding of the third sector. This could be
assisted by approaches such as ‘Let’s Get on with it Together’ (Highland) in which the third sector itself co-ordinates across a locality to offer greater value for money and coherence to service users and funders.

- Greater inclusion of the third sector in the health and social care integration agenda, particularly given its role as a major provider of social care and preventative support. There is a danger that separate discussions develop on greater integration between health and the third sector, and between health and social care.
- Careful scrutiny of the Change Fund in terms of: equal partnership across the health, local authority and third sectors in developing local change plans; and impact in terms of transforming the landscape of support.
- Third sector representation on the ‘Public Service Reform Board’.
- A clear focus on the value of what is being invested in, not just on saving money. For example, investment in self management and independent living will reduce costs in the longer term, but these approaches are also about investing in individuals and communities and valuing the contribution made by older people, disabled people and people with long term conditions.

For more information:

Twelve Propositions for Social Care (LTCAS and partners, 2011)  
http://www.ltcas.org.uk/download/library/lib_4e71e74d61e59/

Long Term Conditions and Public Service Reform (LTCAS, 2011)  
http://www.ltcas.org.uk/download/library/lib_4e3ab500426a8/

Impact, Evaluation of the Self Management Fund for Scotland 2009-11  
(LTCAS, 2011)  
http://www.ltcas.org.uk/download/library/lib_4e8c689aa42ed/

Life Changes Trust  
Life Changes is a new trust being funded by the Big Lottery in Scotland. It will operate for 10 years, during which it will invest £2.5m a year in Scotland in young people leaving care and £2.5m a year in older people with dementia and their carers.

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