Health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc. and Care) (Scotland) Bill

Stage 2 Amendment on the provision of voice equipment: Call for Views

Fife Assessment and Alternative Communication Team (FAACT)

There are 3 main points we are responding to:

1) **Financial Provision for Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) Services in Fife**

Fife has a tripartite funded, multi-agency service which has been in existence for 25 years. It is called Fife Assessment and Alternative Communication Team (FAACT).

Please see the Annex for funding details.

N.B. My understanding is that the amounts contributed by the individual services have not changed since 2011 but that the balance of staff and equipment costs will have, due to increases in salaries paid.

The FAACT service provides assessment, recommendation and provision of higher tech communication devices with specialist staff to support the implementation of the devices. The service therefore covers both the ‘equipment’ and the ‘support’ required to ensure it’s appropriate use.

2) **Implications of the named amendment.**

Given that Fife already has a jointly funded service and that there is a long standing, respected and comprehensive service being delivered, I do not predict any immediate financial implications for Fife as long as the existing funding continues.

We do however need to identify ‘up-lift’ for the increasing staffing costs or the allocation for equipment will erode over time.

In Fife we have built up local staff capacity in Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), education and social services to ensure that they are relatively well equipped to support the assessment, provision and recommendation of lower tech communication systems such as signing, symbols use of Talking Mats etc. however there will be areas in Scotland where this has not been possible so there may be further financial issues associated with this.

3) **Wording of Amendment.**

Although the terms Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) and communication are used within the amendment we are concerned about the alternating use of the term ‘voice equipment’ or referring to people who have ‘lost their voice’ under the section headed ‘Policy Intention’.
Losing one`s voice is not the same as having a communication impairment and we are concerned that this will be open to misinterpretation at a local level if left as it is. Our preference would be to use AAC devices / equipment and to describe `any person who is limited in their ability to use verbal speech or to communicate effectively thus impacting on their overall quality of life`.  

**Fife Assessment and Alternative Communication Team (FAACT)**
Finance (FAACT)

Projected funding for 2010/11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Services</th>
<th>NHS Fife</th>
<th>Education</th>
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<tr>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>62,000</td>
<td>78,000</td>
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Total = 165,000

Staffing Costs

Approximately 112,000

165,000

-112,000

53,000 Available for equipment