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Gillian Martin MSP  
Convener  
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

By email - [HSCS.committee@Parliament.Scot](mailto:HSCS.committee@Parliament.Scot)

28 May 2022

Dear Convener,

Thank you for your letter dated 19 May 2022 requesting further information following my appearance at the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee on 17 May 2022. During the meeting, I agreed to send further information on the cost of social care recruitment, the Scottish Government's data improvement programme and an update on the work underway on the National Care Service. I trust the additional information below is helpful.

### Cost of Social Care Recruitment

The recruitment in social care report published by CCPS revealed "collectively, these 13 organisations invested £83,600 in recruitment between October and December 2021. On the assumption that these 13 organisations can be considered representative of the wider CCPS membership of 80 organisations, we estimate that our members are likely to have spent slightly over £500,000 on recruitment during the final quarter of 2021". Using this trend to make a projection for the sector as a whole with over 1200 providers suggests recruitment costs substantially greater than £500,000.

The Scottish Government have taken a suite of actions to support recruitment in adult social care. We have funded the MyJobs Scotland recruitment website which has advertised 5041 adult social care jobs since February 21, saving providers at least £250,000. We have redeveloped the My SSSC portal used by care providers to recruit experienced, previously registered staff during the pandemic. In March this year, the Scottish Government convened a roundtable meeting with care providers and stakeholders to discuss previous experience of and aspirations for future recruitment fairs. Based on this engagement and in partnership with colleagues from DWP, we have organised a series of sector specific job fairs across Scotland during April and May. Additionally, we are working with DWP to support them to make appropriate, informed referrals to the social care sector and maximise the use of employability routes to support retention.

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## Data Improvement Programme

Close multi-agency and multi-year partnership working is required and underway to address the necessary improvements to social care data. We are continuing to develop and refine our improvement work and I will ensure the Committee remains informed of this work as it develops.

In terms of short term focus areas we are working to unblock workforce data to support policy development for recruitment and retention of social care staff. Work is in hand to review data sharing amongst national bodies and Scottish Government to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness. This work should be completed this year.

Concurrently, but with a medium term timescale, we will undertake a detailed review of care home data. This will focus on understanding the current data landscape in terms of quality, coherence and completeness – and addressing any issues to ensure the most efficient approach. We will work closely with colleagues, particularly those in Local Authorities, to take this forward. We expect this work to progress over the coming months, into early 2023. We intend to build on this work to address wider areas for data improvement.

## National Care Service

Scottish Ministers are still considering the wealth of information provided through the National Care Service consultation. We are continuing to engage with the people who access and deliver social care services to listen to their experiences.

For example, I recently met with members of the Independent Living Movement and other employers of personal assistants, to discuss their views about some of the proposals in the NCS consultation last year. I am attending a meeting of the Children and Families Collective Leadership Group (CLG) along with the Minister for Children and Young People. This will be an opportunity to hear the group's thoughts on children's services in respect of a NCS, including how we maintain and build upon positive progress in relation to The Promise.

Discussions like these are providing an invaluable opportunity to hear from people who have direct experience of accessing and delivering social care support and, I hope, indicate our appetite for genuine collaboration to take place and for progress to be made.

As you know, the Scottish Government established the Social Covenant Steering Group (SCSG) last summer. The Group is made up of people who access and deliver social care support. The purpose of the Group is to review and inform plans for engagement on the NCS, ensuring that lived experience and the views of people are central in the development of the National Care Service.

The group has met formally eight times since being created, including twice formally with me, and twice with my officials, since March. The focus of recent discussions in the group has been on our emerging plans for co-design. There has been some discussion about the broad principles of co-design and the group is now moving to a process of offering concrete advice and support to make sure the Scottish Government's plans for co-design are allowing us to reach the widest range of people.

The group has been strongly supportive of our aim to ensure that a broad range of voices is involved in co-design activity, including people who face additional barriers to engaging with

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the Scottish Government, whose needs are particularly complex, or who belong to protected groups as defined in the Equality Act, unions, people in national and local government, and other organisations delivering care. The group has emphasised the importance of staying focused on the person and on their needs, and as we develop our plans for engagement and co-design, I have asked my officials to keep this front and centre in their minds. I will continue to discuss and review progress with the SCSG.

Some members of the group have also taken part in user-research workshops to inform KPMG's work to develop a current operating model (COM) and a target operating model (TOM) to inform the programme business case. The group reviewed 3 high level examples of people's journeys in accessing social care. This involved comparing the examples with their own lived experience and their feedback on these examples has helped to inform and give us a nuanced understanding of individual experiences. The feedback and challenge from the group has informed the business case but also highlighted where further desk research and user research is needed as part of our co-design work.

We are also benefiting from the advice and expertise of the Key Stakeholder Reference Group. The overall purpose of the Key Stakeholder Reference Group (KSRG) is to support the programme's communications with a range of experts, practitioners and those with lived/living experience.

The last meeting of the KSRG was on 12 May where attendees heard useful updates on the programme business case, which is currently being developed with assistance from KPMG, encompassing evidence from a number of sources and the consultation responses. They also heard from the Office of Chief Designer on co-design which is still at an early stage. The next meeting will take place on 1 June

Over the summer of 2022, we will set out our plans for continued engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including those with lived experience. This will include plans for research and co-design that will prioritise involving people accessing social care services who face additional barriers to engaging with the Scottish Government, whose needs are particularly complex, or who belong to protected groups as defined in the Equality Act. Planning is also underway to establish a Lived Experience Partners Panel, which will support the programme to widen participation in co-design activities even further. There will also be opportunities for a wide range of stakeholders, including those with lived experience to engage directly with Scottish Government Ministers.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide further information to the committee on these important issues. I hope you and wider committee members find this information useful.

Your sincerely,



**Kevin Stewart**

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