



Partnership Agreement between the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Care Inspectorate (CI) – overview of joint work

Introduction

The SSSC and the CI have a shared aim to improve the experience and outcomes for people who use social services in Scotland. The SSSC and CI are independent agencies with separately defined statutory duties and powers, but together we are jointly responsible for regulating and improving the social services sector. We adopt a shared approach to regulation which promotes the rights, independence and wellbeing outcomes for people experiencing care, with a focus on relationships rather than just compliance with technical inputs. We jointly promote improvement and innovation across the sector.

We support each other to fulfil our statutory responsibilities and identify opportunities to work together to achieve our mutual aims.

The SSSC and the CI identified 12 priority areas of shared interest and the table below highlights areas of joint working between the two organisations:

Priority	Area of work	Achieved by joint working
Stronger position to influence and inform.	Strategic policy and advice to government. Work to ensure our policy positions and responses complement and enhance each other's work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed and published guidance to the sector around flexibility on recruitment during COVID. Statement on supporting short notice recruitment and deployment was issued in January 2021.• External forums, such as Scottish Care and Coalition of Care, Society of Personnel and

	<p>Where appropriate develop joint policy positions and jointly influence major stakeholders.</p>	<p>Development, and Support Providers, attended by both organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement and collaboration as part of the development of joint consultation responses. • Regular meetings between the SSSC and the CI as part of our duty to collaborate on corporate parenting duties, including the SSSC/CI Joint Working Group. • Supporting Scottish Government (SG) to develop the Careers in Care social care recruitment campaign as members of SG’s campaign advisory group.
<p>Develop a personalised, rights and outcome based approach to regulation and improvement.</p>	<p>Involvement of people who use services and carers.</p> <p>Where appropriate joint initiatives on themed subjects, including joint working between Involving People groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CI supported SSSC review of Codes of Practice to ensure alignment – outcome focused, rights based and personalised, and assisted with a promotional film and Codes Conversations. • Review of social care, social work and early years recruitment guidance – sector involvement. CI and SSSC have worked together to update the Safer Recruitment guidance document.
<p>Mainstream human rights and equality in policy and practice</p>	<p>Human rights, equality and diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer recruitment guidance is actively addressing equality and discrimination in

<p>aligned to the Health and Social Care Standards.</p>	<p>Where appropriate joint work promoting rights based approach to regulation and improvement. Develop a collaborative approach to equality and diversity, including joint work.</p>	<p>recruitment practice – including ethnic minority representation, disabilities and care experienced people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper submitted to joint CI/SSSC EMT group to seek approval for joint public statement regarding recruitment of refugees. • Developed the Protecting People Policy in June 2021, now undergoing further review with an aim to publish in December 2022.
<p>Seek opportunities to combine engagement activity and speak with one voice to enhance impact and efficiency.</p>	<p>Engaging with the social services sector and organisations representing providers, users and other key stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and published guidance on referrals with the NMC and training for Inspectors in January 2022. • Informal and formal engagement consultations for the updated Safer Recruitment guidance.
<p>SSSC – ensure all workers are registered and achieve the relevant qualifications in the required timescales.</p> <p>Promote to all our stakeholders, including the CI the dates of required registration.</p>	<p>Registration.</p> <p>Work together to ensure that workers and employers comply with and understand the value of meeting the required timescales and supporting employees to gain qualifications that maintain registration and improve practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for panel members for the CI to input into the regulation of care services • Regular meetings between respective policy and enquiry (call handling) teams to align practices. • Work in collaboration to implement the Safer Staffing legislation – Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

<p>Inform the CI of service providers whose workforce is not meeting registration requirements and/or where there are other significant issues in relation to their workforce.</p> <p>CI – Work with employers to make sure they have in place plans for the registration of their workforce. Ensuring that employers understand the importance of a registered and qualified workforce in relation to the inspection and grading process.</p> <p>Work with the SSSC to identify and quantify the workforce.</p> <p>Work with the SSSC to identify gaps in the workforce or in training.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SSSC and CI jointly chair the Safer Staffing L&D subgroup. • The SSSC/CI annual report on Vacancies in the sector published annually since 2017.
<p>SSSC – employee – ensure the workforce adhere to the Codes.</p> <p>Promote the Codes to all stakeholders.</p> <p>Work with the CI to increase sector awareness of and compliance with</p>	<p>Regulating and improving the workforce.</p> <p>Meeting the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of Scottish Government and NES Leading to Change programme, including contribution to the governance group discussions and decision-making, development of relevant strategy, and contribution to developing the social work/social care subgroup’s leadership development plan.

<p>the SSSC Codes of Practice for Employers.</p> <p>CI – Employer – ensure the employers adhere to the Codes.</p> <p>Increased awareness of the Codes to employers and how they relate to the inspection and grading process.</p> <p>Inspectors access MySSSC, monitor employer compliance and take regulatory action, as necessary.</p> <p>Inspectors make Fitness to Practice referrals to SSSC.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Inspectors access to MySSSC and using this as part of inspections. • Collaborative approach around the responsibilities for keeping The Promise, including refreshing The Common Core of Skills, Knowledge & Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland for children and young people. • Collaborative approach around the review of the codes, including contributions as part of the stakeholder group.
<p>SSSC – the SSSC and CI have a two-way referral process and share intelligence.</p> <p>CI – Informs the regulation of services, including grading and enforcement.</p>	<p>Regulating and improving services.</p> <p>Meeting the Health and Social Care Standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SSSC/CI Joint Working Group (JWG) has developed a procedure for the organisations making referrals to each other and provides advice to staff on this process. The JWG monitors referrals and reports to the Joint Executive Group, which has noted an improvement in both the rate and the professional dialogue regarding referrals. • Protection Group – newly established bi-monthly group chaired by the CI to ensure

		collaboration around all child and adult protection matters.
Provide leadership in delivering better ways of ensuring high quality social services.	Innovation, change and development. Use our intelligence, insights, knowledge, expertise and position in the sector to lead, innovate and plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed the draft learning strategy for quality improvement with CI and NES. Tested implementation of approach to identify QI learning needs in adult and youth justice workforce in late 2022. Analysis started and will inform further collaborative work in supporting QI learning with the workforce.
<p>SSSC - The SSSC analyse and publish official national statistics.</p> <p>The SSSC and CI share data and knowledge to assist in planning for the future and identifying trends.</p> <p>CI – Share data and knowledge to assist in planning for the future and identifying trends.</p>	<p>Workforce and service development and planning including the publication of National and Official Statistics.</p> <p>Identify and develop sources of intelligence and sharing data, which result in intelligence products for both internal and external benefit. Develop and follow the Data Sharing Agreement and Data Processing Agreement.</p> <p>Themes from scrutiny, improvement and fitness to practise inform the development of joint resources and joint quality improvement activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published annually in August since 2010 the Official Statistics report on the whole of the social service sector’s workforce. <i>(NB the annual National Statistics report that we have published on MHOs since 2012 is not based on data we receive from the CI).</i> Analysis of the relationship between the % of qualified staff and the quality of services in social care, to demonstrate the public value of the SSSC and the Care Inspectorate – Q4 2021/22. The SSSC and CI have a data sharing agreement (DSA) and data processing agreement (DPA) in place to ensure the latter can share data (on the workforce,

		services and providers) with the former and so avoid duplication of data collection.
Shared opportunities, messages and protocols.	<p>Communications.</p> <p>Develop shared messages, materials and communication plans. Work together in communication campaigns where appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a shared protocol for internal Shared Services documents for staff. • Advising and collaborating with Scottish Government on the Careers in Care adult social care recruitment advertising campaigns throughout 2019 to 2022.
<p>Benefit and meet the needs of both organisations.</p> <p>SSSC – the SSSC to maintain registration of CI authorised persons and approve Professional Development Award.</p> <p>Assist the CI in developing the PDA and other professional development.</p> <p>CI – Meet the SSSC requirements for registering authorised persons and conditions of registration.</p> <p>Assist the SSSC in developing internal and external learning and development.</p>	<p>Employee development.</p> <p>Ensure that the professional knowledge of CI authorised persons is maintained and developed through SSSC conditions to undertake the Professional Development Award in Scrutiny and Improvement (PDA).</p> <p>Develop other professional development projects and opportunities for sharing knowledge and expertise through less formal routes such as shadowing, mentoring and joint projects.</p> <p>Increase understanding among staff of our principles of working together and the added value we bring to each other. Present a clear vision of how a collaborative approach to workforce and service regulation and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing close working regarding the rollout and development of the PDA in Scrutiny and Improvement. • Collaborative working on the content of courses and badges. Several CI webinars, online modules and events have been 'badged' which means that participants can gain CPL recognition for their engagement and reflection on the learning. • Protection Group – bi-monthly meeting chaired by the CI to ensure collaboration around all child and adult protection matters.

	improvement will increase standards and quality of care.	
Improving efficiency by reducing duplication and enhancing effectiveness by greater consistency and integration.	<p>Shared services: the Shared Services Agreement sets out which areas of work we share, such as human resources, finance, health and safety and other support services.</p> <p>We will identify and develop further shared services as appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Shared Services survey – both organisations are now demonstrating alignment on views of performance • Monthly meeting of the Shared Services Oversight Group. • Quarterly meeting of the Service Review Board. • Annual review of shared services by SSSC Council and CI Board

Areas for development

Opportunities for further development, or where greater focus should be applied, were discussed during the process developing this report. The follow areas will be considered in planning our partnership working:

- identify more opportunities to work on and issue joint strategic communications and engagement in areas of mutual concern or interest, for example joint statements on policy issues
- work more collaboratively in respect of registering authorised persons and conditions of registration
- implementing data and intelligence structures that use shared data and intelligence from the SSSC and the CI
- working together to respond to and engage with matters relating to the NCS, IRISR and COVID Inquiry
- intelligence-led CPL sampling – CI intelligence relating to specific employers/areas of the country where issues have been identified could be used to help the SSSC make decisions on where to focus its CPL sampling activity
- enhance our approach to combining resources as Corporate Parents
- more active and connected approach to regulating and inspecting provider compliance with SSSC Codes.

The SSSC and CI have maintained a positive, collaborative and cooperative relationship since the agreement has been in place and both organisations are committed to developing this further.