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To:
Local Authority Chief Executives
Self-directed Support Leads
Local Authority, Chief Social Work Officers

Cc:

CoSLA
Social Work Scotland

11 March 2022

Dear All

Social care – Self-Directed Support (SDS) Guidance for the Pandemic – Guidance update

As you are aware, Scottish Government published an update to the SDS Guidance for the Pandemic on Friday 11 February 2022. Once again this guidance has been updated to incorporate the use of the existing powers found in section [12A\(5\) of the Social Work \(Scotland\) Act 1968](#). This allows local authorities to provide or arrange for the provision of support without the need for a prior assessment where a local authority considers that the need for services is a matter of urgency.

This addition to the SDS Guidance for the Pandemic is intended to encourage practitioners to consider using the existing powers in the 1968 Act where appropriate to allow Option 1 to be used pending an assessment of social care support. I would like to see this approach being encouraged at local levels in response to ongoing system pressures, including the effects of the pandemic, and in particular, when an individual's hospital discharge is delayed due to no social care support assessment being carried out.

I recognise this approach may not be appropriate for everyone or for all situations, however local authorities must enable worker autonomy, to ensure social workers and relevant practitioners are able to use their professional judgement to decide when it is the right circumstances to use this approach.

The guidance is available on the Scottish Government website as of today I'd appreciate if this [link](#) can be added to your own local websites to provide information to the public, as this guidance is available to all who use and work within SDS.

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Once again please ensure this guidance is circulated to everyone in your organisation who works on SDS, and that the importance of worker autonomy to make these decisions is encouraged.

If you have any queries relating to this updated guidance, please contact ASCAS@gov.scot

May I take this opportunity to thank you and your workforce for your ongoing support as we move towards the recovery phase of the pandemic.

Kind regards,



Kevin Stewart

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