

Ill Health and Disability Stakeholder Reference Group

Meeting 16

Monday 16 December 2019 – Atlantic Quay, Glasgow

Present:

Claire McDermott, Chair, Scottish Government
Donna Burnett, NHS Public Health Practitioner
Rob Gowans, Citizens Advice Scotland
Richard Gass, Rights Advice Scotland
Cate Vallis, RNIB
Yvette Burgess, Coalition of Care and support Providers Scotland
Gill Young, Castle Rock Edinvar
Heather Mole, Secretariat, Scottish Government
Dr Mini Mishra, Scottish Government

In attendance:

Lesley Moorhouse, Scottish Government
David George, Scottish Government
Laura Graham, Scottish Government
JP Liddle, Scottish Government

Apologies:

Bill Scott, Inclusion Scotland
Patricia Moultrie, Glasgow Local Medical Committee
Duncan McIntyre, Chair of Learning Disability Practice Network
Kate Burton, NHS

Agenda item 1. Welcome and Introductions

1. The chair welcomed members and intimated that Graham Watt had tendered his resignation from the stakeholder reference group prior to the meeting. Caroline Keir will also no longer be attending the group as she is taking up a new position, Gill Young will continue to represent Castle Rock Edinvar.

Agenda item 2. Minutes, Scottish Government Update and Response to the Consultation

2. Members indicated that Caroline Keir and James Wilson appeared on the minutes twice. The minute was approved and is now published on Scottish Government website : <https://www.gov.scot/publications/ill-health-and-disability-benefits-stakeholder-reference-group-june-2019/>

Scottish Government update paper feedback

3. It was noted that the pre-briefing paper for the meeting includes an update on inclusive communications and the issue of literacy which is equated with cognitive

and learning impairments, however capacity to understand the content of communications ought to be considered as well.

4. The group were invited to respond to the draft regulations for Disability Assistance for Children and Young People. The group were emailed the link to these regulations after the meeting and asked to email them to the SCoSS secretariat before the 28 February. A link to the draft regulations is found here: https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Social_Security/General%20Documents/20191212_CabSecSSOP_to_Convener_draft_DACYP_regs.pdf

5. Members asked whether there would be an opportunity to feed into the policy proposals for the replacement for Personal Independence Payment. The chair confirmed that there will an opportunity to do so.

6. The chair thanked the group for their feedback on home assessments at the last meeting and noted that this is being developed by the programme team currently, an update will be forthcoming.

ACTION: Officials to update the group on programme developments for home assessments when appropriate.

ACTION: To consider the ability to understand communications within the inclusive communications work.

Agenda item 3. Consultation next steps

7. DG presented a summary of the Scottish Government Response to the Consultation on improving disability assistance in Scotland, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-disability-assistance-scotland-scottish-government-response/>

8. Feedback was taken from the group about the names of the disability benefits. Changing the names seems appropriate at this stage in the development of the benefits as the client experience, including the decision making process and the gathering of supporting information will be significantly different. The Model Client journey was published at the time of the consultation response and is available here: <https://consult.gov.scot/social-security/improving-disability-assistance/>

9. The group discussed the change in the number of days to request a redetermination. Having 42 days to request a redetermination was welcomed by the group. Officials confirmed that key stakeholders were involved in informing this decision and though some of the group may be disappointed in the 56 day decision for Social Security Scotland to respond to a redetermination request, the need to have time to gather further supporting information on behalf of the client was an important aspect of this decision. Additionally, Short Term Assistance is available during this process which is an improvement on the current system.

10. Quick responses and clear reasoning for decisions will be necessary for individuals who are considering asking for a redetermination. GY intimated that a significant factor which impacts on timelines is the postal service as individuals can receive letters 2 weeks after a decision is made, reducing the time they have to respond. Richard G asked for clarification about the time limit for lodging an appeal, and whether this was included in the 42 days. He emphasised the need for time to meet with advice services to discuss whether an appeal was advisable and then for a further appointment with an advisor to support them.

11. CV reiterated that for RNIB clients with vision impairment/blindness indefinite awards should be made possible. RNIB's opinion is that reviews are not necessary as the condition would not change and 'reviews' has very negative connotations for people. Officials responded that all awards are rolling/indefinite awards and that light touch reviews were currently under discussion. DG confirmed that work was ongoing to establish how indefinite awards can be achieved while maintaining the overall person-centred approach.

12. Members asked about the development of the 20 m mobility rule. Officials responded that SG is working with stakeholders on viable alternatives that are not too abstract and have asked the Disability and Carer Benefits Expert Advisory Group (DACBEAG) for advice by the end of December 2019.

13. Members asked for clarification for what will happen to people who would have transferred from DWP DLA onto PIP after April 2020 because there will be some people on DLA and some on PIP. CM confirmed that DWP will pause forced migration onto PIP for Scottish clients and that work is ongoing to establish how they will transfer to Social Security Scotland.

Agenda Item 4. Accessible Vehicles and Equipment (AVE) Scheme

14. DG reported on the progress of the AVE scheme for affordable leasing. SG has gone out for applications, encouraging new suppliers to join. There will be an accreditation system for providers. Any person who is awarded enhanced rate mobility can go to any supplier who is accredited to lease a vehicle or equipment.

15. SG is unable to give details currently about the applications received. The scheme will be in place for the go live for DACYP. More information will be available to the group in the New Year. Other suppliers can come forward later on to become accredited. SG is aware that they will need to publicise the decision to people.

16. Rob G asked whether under the terms of the new process could the company still be Motability. DG explained that there are no exclusions. Furthermore, Motability will honour a lease until it ends during the transition period.

Agenda Item 5. Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) for DACYP

17. LM gave a summary of the EQIA consultation, stakeholder engagement and the draft report focussing on each of the protected characteristics.

18. DB recommended that the SG do a Health Inequalities Impact Assessment as this would include those living in deprivation.

19. The group noted that the concerns around interpreters unavailability of interpreters for specific groups would need to be considered carefully by Scottish Government.

20. LM noted that a Fairer Scotland Duty report will be done as well in the New Year.

ACTION: Officials will make the group aware when the EQIA and other impact assessments are published.

Agenda Item 6. DAY 1 – Volume of Applications

21. The members split into groups to discuss the paper – DAY 1 Volume of Applications - and feedback was given.

Agenda item 7. Future of IHDBSRG

22. 6 monthly meetings were felt to be too infrequent as policy development and advice through DACBEAG is occurring at a faster rate. It was suggested that more correspondence might be helpful in order to be kept apprised of developments. The group discussed increasing the frequency of meetings to quarterly to match the speed of delivery as we get closer to the launch dates for each benefit.

23. The group considered a future focus on the delivery of benefits on day one and the policy priorities for the medium to long term.

24. The group discussed the value of face-to-face meetings, rather than work by correspondence and quarterly meetings. They thought that advance communication about the topics arising would be important for planning purposes. CM noted that she would need to consult with members not present about their engagement going forward.

25. The group asked whether it might be possible for the DACBEAG and the IHDBSRG to come together once a year to share the work they are doing.

ACTION: Officials to check with members who were not present on their preferences and organise meetings accordingly.

ACTION: Officials to check with the DACBEAG secretariat whether joint meetings on occasion would be possible.

8. Agenda Item 8. AOB

26. No other business was discussed.

Next meeting: 22 April 1000-1300 New Register House, Edinburgh