

National Appropriate Adult Oversight Group

11 July 2023 10.00am – 11:30am

Attendees:

Sandy Riddell, Mental Welfare Commission (Chair)
Ffion Heledd, National Appropriate Adult Coordinator (Secretariat)
Michael Gough, Scottish Government
Anil Gupta, COSLA
Jane Kelly, Care Inspectorate
Louise McInnes, Police Scotland
Jana de Villiers, Forensic Network
Nicola Cumming, National Operational Group
Neil McIntosh, Victim Support Scotland
Alice Squires, People First (SOLD Network)
Susan Cleland (Appropriate Adult, Tayside)
Kay Newton (Care Inspectorate)

Apologies:

Frances Donohoe, National Policy and Participation Officer (COSLA)
Sarah Meanley, Scottish Government
Lindsey Henderson, Scottish Government
Lynsey McKean, Scottish Government
David Mitchell, Scottish Government
Grazia Robertson, Law Society of Scotland
Donald Coutts-Wood, Practitioners Forum
Stephen Heath, Clarity in Communication
Laura Kerr, Social Work Scotland
Matthew Webb, National Operational Group
Callan Curtis, National Operational Group
Jan Green, Speech and Language Therapy (NHS Forth Valley)
Franck David, SOLD Network, People First
Stephen Grimason, Police Scotland

Ffion noted that Nick Ward (Change Mental Health) has decided to step back from the group but we will continue to engage on a more informal basis as and when appropriate.

Susan Clelland (Tayside) and Neil McIntosh (Victim Support Scotland) were welcomed to their first meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest noted.

3. Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes from the May meeting were approved.

4. Update from National Appropriate Adult Project

Ffion provided an update on work since the last meeting.

- The Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) is being reviewed and updated but it is taking longer than anticipated to work through comments and to link in with the Scottish Government's Data Acquisition Services who are working at capacity. Work will continue in order to progress things over the summer.
- We have been reflecting on the governance arrangements and how to strengthen communication and links between the Operational Group and the National Oversight Group. Members of the Operational Group have agreed that there will be at least one representative present at National Oversight Group meetings. We are also considering the format for future engagement with practitioners, for example, opportunities to engage with established networks at local level. Views are welcome.
- Contact with local services – Fran and Ffion have met with most local services on a one to one basis over the last three months. It has been notable how much progress has been made in many areas, whilst acknowledging different areas are at different stages of development. Local oversight arrangements are not yet embedded in all areas, though there are examples where this is working well. There is further scope to share good practice and raise awareness of the service both on a national and local level.
- The Operational Group met on 27 June. A summary of the main points of discussion and actions was circulated to this group along with the approved minutes of their previous meeting in April.
- Alongside building relationships with local contacts, Ffion and Fran have been forming links with colleagues in COSLA and on a national level more widely. This includes discussions about Appropriate Adults in the context of the new Dementia Strategy and the Mental Health Strategy and their associated Action Plans which are in development.

Sandy outlined the positive progress made since the start of the National Project and emphasised the importance of ensuring continuous reach, influence and impact as well as keeping the momentum going as things progress.

5. Member updates

Care Inspectorate

Kay updated on progress with the pilot sites for the Quality Improvement Framework in Glasgow and Tayside. Glasgow is about 4 weeks into the 12 week cycle and Tayside is around half way. Both areas have reported positive experiences and provided useful feedback. Nicola and Susan (Tayside) noted that the process has triggered some good discussions in the team e.g. around feedback and ways to improve the quality of the service even further.

Sandy asked about wider ownership of the process and ensuring engagement from those not involved in the pilot. It will be important to keep engaging with the

Operational Group, and important for practitioners and managers to own the framework to be able to drive things forward.

Jane explained that there are ways to keep people informed, including using the website, newsletters, existing groups and so on. The Framework is close to being finalised, and there is scope for some joint branding between the Care Inspectorate, COSLA and the Scottish Government. Following publication, there will be scope to roll it out gradually using other forms of communication e.g. webinars. Open to be guided by the sector about what they need and when, and to align the next steps with other outputs such as the updated Guidance.

Actions: Kay to attend Operational Group meetings to provide updates.

Scottish Government

Michael provided an update on the review of the National Guidance. A draft has been circulated to Police Scotland and COSLA for comments. A further draft will be issued to members of this group towards the end of August, with publication likely to be in October/ November.

Consideration is already being given to some wider points including the possible need for the creation of set qualifications or job specification for Appropriate Adults and some form of bespoke document on Appropriate Adult support to 16 and 17 year olds – it would be helpful to have a discussion on those points at the next meeting of this group.

Jane, Kay and Jana raised that it would also be helpful for the Care Inspectorate and the Forensic Network to have early sight of the draft updated guidance and Michael invited them to contact Sarah to discuss.

Action: Ffion to add as agenda items for the next meeting

Police Scotland

Louise McInnes provided an update:

- The Appropriate Adult awareness videos created in conjunction with Clarity in Communication are now available on the Police Scotland intranet.
- The Standard Operating Procedure is still being reviewed to tie in with updated Guidance.
- A response to the Scottish Government on the draft guidance is being prepared.
- There have been a few queries about provision of Appropriate Adults and cross boundary provision. Police Scotland's position is that they should usually be provided in the area where the police procedures are taking place. There will be occasions where Appropriate Adults are sought from another area, however, this should be the exception rather than the rule and should be because of unavoidable circumstances such as time critical cases.
- There have been queries about information provided to local co-ordinators in instances where the person needing an Appropriate Adult is under specific measures such as protective measures. In these circumstances, you should

be given a name so that you can record the case, but you may not be provided with any further details.

- There will be a Continuous Professional Development day in August on Adult Support and Protection. Ffion and Fran will give an input on the role of Appropriate Adults. There will also be similar input to Tier 2 training in November.

Alice asked on behalf of the SOLD Network members how the films are being used in training. Louise explained that they are available to access on the intranet rather than being used in any particular training per se.

Waiting times for solicitors and telephone consultations

Ffion and Fran have met with colleagues from the Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) to share areas of interest and identified a number of ways we could work together to aid mutual understanding and to work towards addressing both strategic and operational issues. SLAB has invited us to present on the role of Appropriate Adults at a learning and development day in the Autumn and we have invited them to present about their work and structures at a future Operational Group meeting. SLAB is not currently a member of the Oversight Group but would be willing to consider joining if the group thought that would add value.

The group recognised that delays in accessing solicitors is something that is being addressed in the context of wider justice reform –we are keen to ensure that the voice of Appropriate Adults and those who use the service is heard in this context.

Action: Ffion to invite SLAB to the Oversight Group/Operational Group as appropriate

Training and Development

Sandy explained that Training and Development falls under the remit of the Operational Group, with the option of raising any issues of particular concern at the Oversight Group.

Ffion outlined that training is something that has been consistently raised through the Practitioners Forum, Operational Group and in meetings with local contacts. There has been a particular focus on the need to make it fit for purpose and sustainable in the longer term.

The original contract for developing national training was awarded by the Scottish Government to West Lothian College. This included an expectation to deliver a final report and evaluation. The report and evaluation have not been delivered as expected and Scottish Government is pursuing this from a contract management point of view. Michael explained that it has taken some time to get hold of a contact at the college, and many of the people originally involved had moved on. West Lothian college's view is that COSLA should complete the evaluation of the training. Sarah and Michael will review the information received and discuss with the college whether or not the contract has been completed as expected.

Meanwhile, local practitioners have consistently expressed the urgent need for refreshed training and training the trainer support on an ongoing basis, and a group of coordinators have come together to progress this in a short life working group under the banner of SAAN. Nicola explained that she is part of this group and would report on developments into the Operational Group.

Sandy raised the risks and opportunities associated with training at the point we are at. For example there is no formal accreditation for trainers. Need to keep a very close eye on this as a sector as it could have big implications, particularly at this critical developmental stage.

SOLD Network – Alice explained that members are refreshing some films including a new one about the experience of having an Appropriate Adult, and would be happy to input into any local training. Local Coordinators should get in touch with the SOLD network if interested.

Louise gave assurances that Police Scotland are also keen to be involved in any discussion around training and identify where they can help or be involved nationally or locally.

Action: Ffion to circulate a note outlining the current position, invite views from stakeholders, and add as an item to the next agenda

Future development/sustainability of project/ embedding the legislation

Sandy reflected that, considering some of the themes discussed, there is a need for a broader conversation about the future long-term sustainability of the service, the National Appropriate Adult Project and where we go from here. The group agreed that it would be helpful to develop a paper outlining the progress to date, common themes, risks, opportunities, challenges and potential solutions as a starting point for discussion. It could be a useful starting point for any interactive in-person event we may wish to hold in the Autumn, which could also bring in operational colleagues, Appropriate Adults, and people who may need to be supported by an Appropriate Adult.

Jane noted that the updated Guidance and QIF would also provide a good starting point for whatever comes next – possibly a delivery plan or something to measure progress and consider the issues in relation to sustainability.

Consider: what are the priorities, how do we support one another? How do we get things done? What would make a difference? What would success look like in relation to this part of the structure

Action: Ffion to coordinate a paper for discussion in the Autumn

Format of October meeting and in – person event

The group agreed that an in-person event would be helpful but that the timing would be important, to tie in with other elements of the work, for example the publication of the refreshed Guidance and Quality Improvement Framework. It would be helpful to have a morning session focused on achievements to date, followed by a session on future sustainability/ action planning. Optimum timing is likely to be October/ November but it would be worth keeping this under review. It would be most effective if it were exclusively an in-person event, as past attempts at hosting hybrid events in this style have been unsuccessful.

Action: Ffion to organise a small working group to develop proposed plans for an event by the end of August.

AOB

Sandy thanked everyone for their updates and noted that we will provisionally keep a date of Tuesday 10 October for the next meeting/event.

Action: Ffion to issue invites once date and format is confirmed.

7. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 10 October 2023 (TBC)

Action: COSLA to send out invites, agenda and related documents.

Future Meetings

- TBC