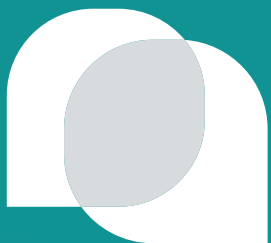


**National
Appropriate Adult
Project
Annual Report
2021/22**



**Appropriate
Adult**



COSLA

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Foreword



Sandy Riddell

Chair, National Oversight Group

Chair, Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

The past two years have seen important progress in the development of Appropriate Adult services in Scotland. These play such a vital role in helping to ensure that the rights of vulnerable people who come into contact with the justice system are fully protected. It is for this reason that The Mental Welfare Commission has been delighted to play its part in the development of policy and practice in this crucial area and as Chair of the National Oversight Group, I have been so impressed by the passion and commitment of all those involved to date.

Scotland should be proud of having established this statutory service and I want to pay tribute to all the local co-ordinators who informed the many changes required during the consultation period before commencement. I have also been impressed by the contribution of

Appropriate Adults, co-ordinators and partners who have also worked so hard to inform recent and ongoing developments, often in addition to other work and life commitments. I want to pay particular tribute to the National Coordinator and all those involved with the work of the National Oversight Group for their continuing commitment and support.

The service landscape, complex at the best of times, has faced particular challenges and therefore it is particularly inspiring that those involved both locally and nationally have worked so hard together to bring about change. The introduction and impact of these changes will increasingly direct and support us to drive key actions and further improvements together. The development of local oversight and governance arrangements will allow for ongoing and new developments to be implemented, and tailored to local needs. Our work will also benefit from the rich and diverse knowledge and experience of practitioners, co-ordinators, partners and stakeholders and of course people and their families with lived experience of receiving the support of an Appropriate Adult.

I fully acknowledge that change is challenging but change also brings with it opportunity. This first annual report highlights how far we have been able to build on the foundations already in place. The plan also identifies a range of future developments which will have the potential of ensuring that Scotland continues to evolve its services in ways that are of a consistently high standard across communities and are delivered in ways that are fair and respectful of individual rights and diverse needs of those who come into contact with them. I envisage pockets of innovation being spread between areas and best practices being widely shared. I firmly believe that together we can tap into, and benefit from, the creativity and expertise that exists across Scotland.

We should be proud of what we have achieved during these difficult times. But there is still much more to do, and I look forward to working with you all to further realise the full potential of these critical services.

Introduction

I'd like to start this annual report with acknowledgment and recognition for the work of Appropriate Adults and Co-ordinators. Throughout the pandemic they continued to deliver services, dealing with the seemingly endless change in restrictions, practices and availability. They have delivered this in addition to other roles and responsibilities and against a backdrop of competing priorities and a shift to statutory provision. This often goes without recognition or praise so thank you to each and every one of you for keeping the crucial services operating and supporting people to understand and exercise their rights.

Initial Stages

The past two years have been a roller coaster, to say the least! It would be fair to say I came to this role with a lot to learn of the local variation of Appropriate Adult services in Scotland. However, I have experienced a warm welcome and a real appetite for development of much-loved services with a sprinkling of resistance! The resistance to change is not unexpected firstly on a human level and secondly, the oversight of change is coming from people and agencies new to the world of Appropriate Adult services.

“Change is not easy. Growth cannot occur without pain. Healing can be a hard thing to achieve. Letting go of grievances and grudges may not be appropriate in all cases but it is likely to be necessary for many. Giving up that which has defined us or in which we have placed so much hope or expectation is a tough thing to do. We may fear many things, including loss of face and relevance, with a sense of emptiness and even hopelessness. To be open to our shortcomings, as well as those we perceive in others, takes courage, especially if we have been or feel wounded.”

Quote from the Sturrock Report (2019)¹

Using an analogy from group work theory, there has been a fair share of 'forming' and 'storming' with recognition of 'norming' and beginnings of 'performing' in the wider group of people, partners and stakeholders. These stages are all required to enable a new group to 'grow, face up to the challenges, tackle problems, find solutions, plan work and deliver results' (Bruce Tuckman, 1965²).

There are challenges, particularly with the backdrop of a global pandemic, the requirement for remote working, and recommendations from numerous reviews including the largest wide-scale change coming down the road for health & social care in the form of the National Care

1 J Sturrock (2019) *Report to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport into Cultural Issues related to allegations of Bullying and Harassment in NHS Highland*. Scottish Government

2 Tuckman, B., 1965. Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6).

Service. A paradigm shift is now taking place with local authorities recognising and beginning to deliver on their corporate responsibilities and enabling people's experiences of Appropriate Adult services to be considered in all aspects of development and provision.

Role of National Appropriate Adult Co-ordinator

The role, which I am honoured to have, is a unique one to inform, support and promote change across Appropriate Adult services during the implementation of the statutory provision and the move to a rights-based approach.

The aims of the role are to:

- Promote consistency, quality and sustainability in relation to Appropriate Adult provision across Scotland
- Implement national Appropriate Adult training framework
- Promote awareness of the role of the Appropriate Adult across different sectors
- Contribute to implementation of quality assessment framework for local authorities in relation to Appropriate Adult services
- Contribute to development and implementation of policy initiatives relating to Appropriate Adults and communication support in the criminal justice system
- Deliver on specific and thematic pieces of work including the national Appropriate Adult reports, research and guidance
- Supporting the stakeholder group overseeing the implementation of the statutory service, structuring work of the group's agenda and coordinate its actions

The post, funded by the Scottish Government, is hosted by COSLA and as such is subject to its governance arrangements. This ensures local government is involved in implementation and development with work being accountable to the various Board and Leadership arrangements of COSLA.

You will no doubt have heard me speak about services being rights-focused and the need to improve the experiences and outcomes for people when they access Appropriate Adult services. This is not only my vision for services but that of COSLA, the National Oversight Group and is also reflected in the recommendations from various reviews over recent years; the Scottish Human Rights Commission report on Disability Rights in Scotland (2017) and independent reviews of Adult Social Care and delivery of forensic mental health services, both in 2021. In addition, the Carloway review in 2011 provided similar recommendations which were incorporated into the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, the legislation that drove Appropriate Adult services being placed on a statutory footing.

This requires a shift from service led to answering the 'so what' questions, in other words what the impact on people is, for all developments. The main aim of Appropriate Adult services becoming statutory is to ensure people who access the service receive the same level of high-quality support irrespective of what part of Scotland they are in and for people's human rights to be promoted.

Appropriate Adult National Oversight Group

The National Oversight Group was established by the Scottish Government in 2020 as part of the measures to oversee the implementation of Appropriate Adult services moving to statutory provision. Members are providers, key stakeholders and partners with an involvement or interest in Appropriate Adult provision. This promotes a coordinated approach to the implementation and development of the statutory service. Active membership is:

- [Mental Welfare Commission](#) (Chair)
- [Scottish Government](#)
- [Convention of Scottish Local Authorities \(COSLA\)](#) (Secretariat)
- [Care Inspectorate](#)
- [Police Scotland](#)
- [Social Work Scotland](#)
- [Royal College of Speech & Language Therapy](#)
- [Supporting Offenders with a Learning Disability \(SOLD\) Network](#)
- [People First](#)
- [Association for Real Change \(ARC\) Scotland](#)
- [Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service](#)
- [Law Society of Scotland](#)
- [Support in Mind Scotland](#)
- [The Forensic Network](#)
- [Victim Support Scotland](#)
- [Clarity in Communication](#)

New members from October 2022 include:

- Representatives from the National Operational Group
- Representatives from Practitioners Forum

It is an advisory group that makes recommendations to relevant organisations and groups concerning Appropriate Adult provision. The aim is to ensure high quality and consistent service is provided in all parts of Scotland. This includes, but is not limited to, recommendations about:

- Delivery of services
- Use of services
- Training
- Quality assessment
- Updates to the guidance
- Development of policy at local and national government level

'Finding its feet'

The group held its inaugural meeting on 21 September 2020 when its Terms of Reference were agreed. Since then, there have been quarterly meetings with high levels of attendance. As the group has found its feet, discussion and debate have increased which is very welcome to inform developments and ensure as many voices are heard. To broaden perspectives, Victim Support Scotland and Clarity in Communication became members in 2021. This addressed gaps in representation from the areas of victims' experiences and non-local authority providers. It has also been acknowledged the voice of practitioners was missing from the group. This is currently being addressed with the introduction of a Practitioners Forum which will be a new member of the National Oversight Group.

In addition, as part of the new governance arrangements, a National Operational Group is in the early stages of development and will also have representatives as members of the National Oversight Group.

The Notes from the Group's meetings can be found on the [COSLA Appropriate Adult webpage](#).

Developments

There have been various developments over the past two years along with ongoing developments in the planning and early stages of implementation.

Branding

In April 2021, work commenced on developing a national brand for Appropriate Adult services. It was a jointly led project by the Scottish Government and COSLA, in consultation with local authorities, Appropriate Adult services and partners as part of the implementation of the statutory service.

The main aim of placing Appropriate Adult services on a statutory footing is to help to ensure people who access the service receive the same level of high-quality support irrespective of what part of Scotland they are in. To achieve this aim, there must be a consistent understanding of the Appropriate Adult's role among partners in justice, health, social care and the third sector. The creation of a logo is a simple but effective way to help promote awareness of the role and create a more coherent sense of identity across local authority areas.



Hopefully, you will have seen the Appropriate Adult logo displayed on documents, ID badges and electronic resources.

Engagement

It was essential to spend time engaging with partners to highlight Appropriate Adult services as well as the developments underway. We have also contributed to a variety of consultations and policy areas all promoting an understanding of Appropriate Adult services.

This has included presentations, conferences and meetings with:

- Social Work Scotland Adult Committee
- Gender Based Violence & Learning Disability Steering Group
- Social Work Scotland Adult Support & Protection Subgroup
- SOLD Launch of 'Practice Guide for support staff – People with Communication Support Needs in the Scottish Criminal Justice System'
- Independent Custody Visiting Service Annual Conference
- Carr Gomm Custody Navigator Service

And contributed to the following consultations:

- Improving Victims' Experiences of the Justice System
- Mental Health Law Review
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- National Care Service

We were also part of the Letter of Rights for Scotland Working Group – Accessibility Delivery Group. Further information will be available in the next newsletter including a copy of the recently developed easy read Letter of Rights.

Newsletter

Newsletters are an accessible way to share information widely and develop a consistent understanding and message. The first Appropriate Adults Newsletter was published in April 2021 and there have now been eight editions. I would encourage anybody with an interest to subscribe to the newsletter. Along with signposting to training, research articles and partner/ stakeholder information it also provides updates on local and national developments.

There has been positive feedback received so far to the newsletter with subscriptions growing each month. You can subscribe to the newsletters and access previous editions using the links below.

[Edition 1](#) - May 2021

[Edition 2](#) - July 2021

[Edition 3](#) - September 2021

[Edition 4](#) – November 2021

[Edition 5](#) - January 2022

[Edition 6](#) - March 2022

[Edition 7](#) - May 2022

[Edition 8](#) – July 2022

To subscribe to receive newsletters straight to your inbox, please sign up [here](#).

In addition to the newsletter, another important piece of work to develop a consistent understanding of the role of Appropriate Adults is being carried out. [Clarity in Communication](#) has led on the production of video clips that will be shared with partners to highlight the role of Appropriate Adults and promote a consistent understanding of what Appropriate Adults do.

Quality Assurance

We have been working closely with the [Care Inspectorate](#) since September 2020. They have the statutory responsibility for quality assessment of Appropriate Adult services. The team at the Care Inspectorate is in the final stages of the development of a self-evaluation tool; a Quality Improvement Framework (QIF). The proposed model is based on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) framework which is widely known, used and highly regarded across a wide range of public and private sector organisations. Frameworks based on EFQM have been used to inform scrutiny models in Scotland for many years. The QIF is informed by extensive mapping, surveys and consultations across the Appropriate Adult landscape including people with lived experience of being supported by Appropriate Adults. Workshops with services and partners took place in August 2022 to consider quality indicators from the QIF and further inform its development with a high level of engagement.

Working Groups

To deliver developments collaboratively and with accountability, work has been carried out in subgroups of the National Oversight Group in the form of short-life working groups (SLWG), subgroups of the National Oversight Group. The membership of the groups varies although all are partners with an interest in the topic of the wider landscape.

Definition and Role of Appropriate Adults

The first SLWG had its aim to improve understanding of the role of Appropriate Adults by agreeing on a definition as well as the aspects of work they carry out. The group met on three occasions with the recommendations from the group being agreed upon by the National Oversight Group. The agreed definition and role can be found on the [COSLA Appropriate Adults webpage](#).

Data Improvement

To know if we are heading in the right direction and services are meeting the needs of people supported by Appropriate Adults, we have to collect data. Without it, we are developing in the dark. The data should be robust and reliable to allow us to understand people's needs, set standards and goals of continual improvement and development and continue to drive toward people's rights being recognised and promoted. The second SLWG was looking at improving the quality of data collected by Appropriate Adult services to evidence and inform funding decisions, determine training needs and inform policy.

The group determined a referral pathway that looked at what information is gathered and when. This, as well as the information already gathered by some services, was used to determine what data could be gathered to inform service and policy developments, locally and nationally.

PROCXED, a Scottish Government online validation software that supports local authorities in collecting and validating data, was chosen to be adapted for Appropriate Adult services. This would allow for secure and robust data collection. Although the system went live for the data collection on 1 July 2022 further development is required to the system in response to feedback and data protection concerns. The data gathered will be analysed by Justice Analytical Services at the Scottish Government to start to tell the story of how Appropriate Adult services are used and provide in-depth information for funding decisions, developments and evidence-based practice.

Adults With Incapacity Legislation – Guidance for Appropriate Adults

The third and most recent SLWG explored concerns with the part of the [Guidance for Local Authorities](#) relating to Appropriate Adult practice and delivery for people who are considered to lack capacity as defined by [Adults with Incapacity \(Scotland\) Act 2000](#) legislation.

Again, the group was well attended with people engaging positively to clarify this area of practice to ensure people experienced rights-based support in line with the principles of legislation. It also considered the term 'relevant specialist' used in the Guidance in an effort to identify roles and responsibilities relating to this term.

The recommendations from the group will inform the review of the [Guidance for Local Authorities](#) currently underway.

National Training Programme Project

West Lothian College was contracted to develop the materials for the new National Training Programme. They started work in August 2021 with the new program commencing roll out in April 2022. The training is trauma-informed and will reflect the need for a rights-based approach, understanding and meeting the needs of people who require the support of an Appropriate Adult.

Work is in progress to identify the most effective way to evaluate and recognise the training as well as consider requirements for continuous professional learning.

Public Protection

As we all know, public protection is everybody's responsibility. Work has started to strengthen the understanding of this for Appropriate Adult services. Referrals for child protection and adult support & protection (ASP) have been included in the data collected, both Fran and I have presented the work of Appropriate Adults to Adult Protection groups and it is highlighted as a responsibility for Appropriate Adults within the new National Training Programme and [Guidance for Local Authorities](#).

This work will be ongoing as it is a responsibility shared across all areas of the Appropriate Adult landscape; operationally, strategically and corporately. Fran and I were consulted as part of the review of the ASP Codes of Practice so that Appropriate Adult services were accurately reflected.

Policy & Participation Officer

This new role was created to support the work of the National Coordinator and lead on engagement with local authorities. Fran Donohoe came into post on secondment for 18 months in March 2022 from Aberdeen City Council where she had experience as an Adult Support and Protection trainer and both an Appropriate Adult and Appropriate Adult Coordinator.

The Policy & Participation Officer will ensure there is a link between the National Oversight Group and service providers at a local level and will help to identify any gaps. Fran has attended local oversight group meetings and presented at multiagency events including the Scottish Police Authority Independent Custody Visiting Service and Social Work Scotland. Support has also been offered on an individual basis to coordinators who are new in post. This will hopefully help identify examples of good practice and areas of policy development that may need support. Another key area is to increase opportunities for Appropriate Adults to identify harm and act on any concerns linking in with Adult Support / Public Protection and National Training Programme. The rollout of the National Training Programme is something that Fran will support as well as working alongside the Care Inspectorate who are developing the Quality Improvement Framework (QIF).

Fran said 'I have had a great welcome to the Communities Team at COSLA and look forward to supporting the ongoing implementation of developments, keeping a person-centred approach, involving people with lived experience and adopting a trauma-informed and inclusive way of taking Appropriate Adult services forward.'

Local Government Advisory Group

It was recognised the connection between the National Oversight Group and local authorities from a strategic and corporate perspective required to be strengthened. This has been achieved with the development of a Local Government Advisory Group to promote and support corporate and strategic ownership and responsibilities in the implementation of the now statutory Appropriate Adult services. The aim was to create a formal mechanism between the National Oversight Group and statutory provision whilst developing and embedding responsibilities nationally.

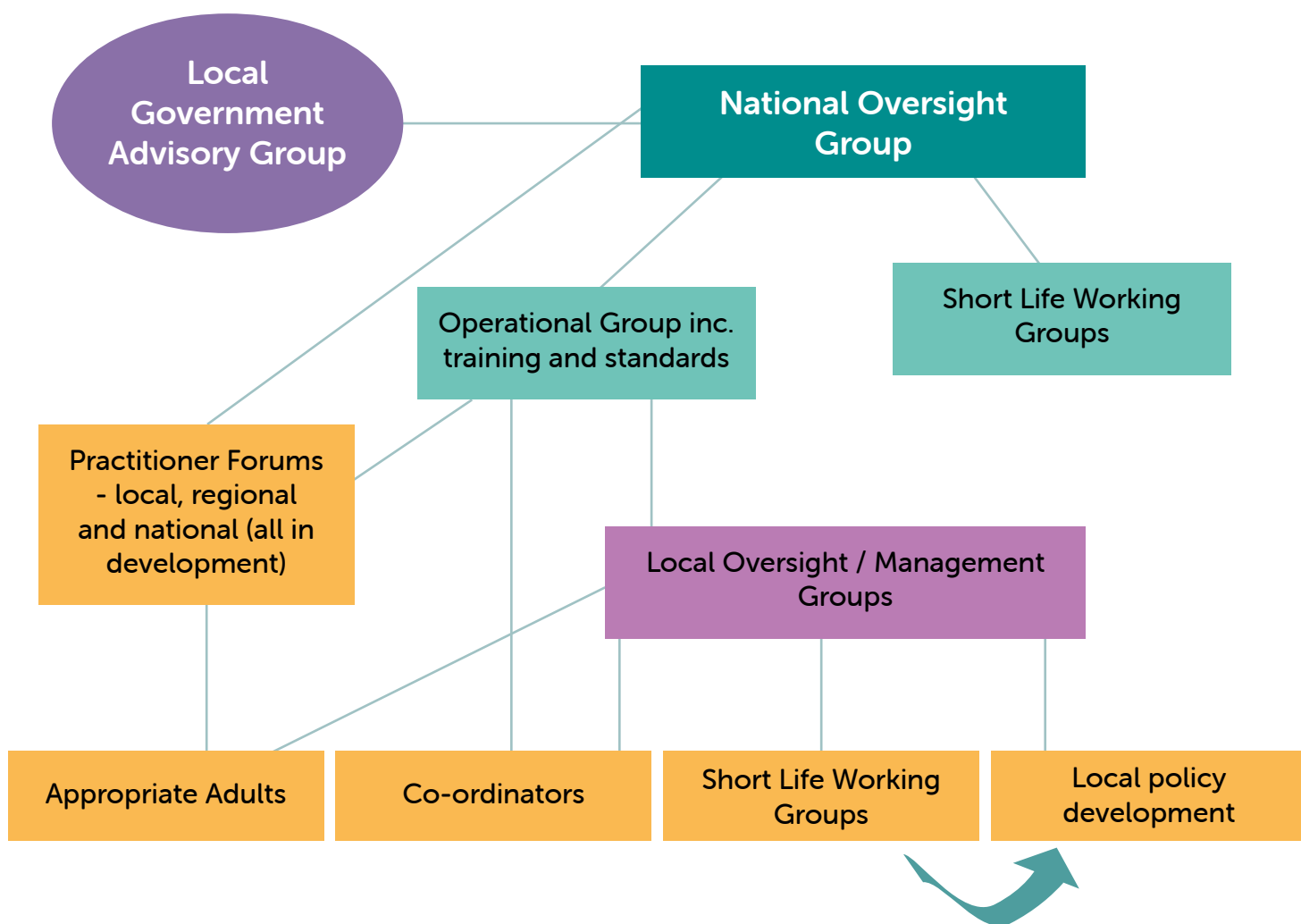
Membership of the group includes representatives from the following organisations:

- SOLACE
- Social Work Scotland
- Directors of Finance
- Care Inspectorate
- Health & Social Care Partnerships
- Police Scotland
- COSLA (Health & Social Care, Local Government Finance and Communities Teams)

The areas which have been covered to date are:

- Governance
- Funding
- Quality assurance

The Group has agreed on a governance structure (graphic below) for Appropriate Adult services, locally and nationally, improved understanding and plans for an upcoming funding review and been involved in discussions for the Quality Improvement Framework being developed by the Care Inspectorate providing much-needed input from a corporate and strategic perspective.



Review of 'Guidance for Local Authorities'

The [Guidance for Local Authorities](#), published by the Scottish Government in January 2020, is a live document that requires to be kept under review. This will ensure it reflects ongoing changes across health & social care and the legislation which supports this. In July 2022, the first review of the Guidance started with members of the National Oversight Group. This will be followed by a wider consultation to ensure the Guidance reflects the voice of everybody involved and is up-to-date and relevant. The aim is for the revised Guidance to be published by early 2023.

Practitioner Forums

It has been noted by the National Oversight Group meeting there is no practitioner representation. To explore whether there was an appetite for practitioners to be represented, a survey was conducted last year. This identified a strong interest by Appropriate Adults to be represented. Fran followed up on this year with a survey gathering opinions on the development of Practitioner Forums. Representatives from this forum will attend National Oversight Group meetings.

Feedback from the survey included some of the following:

What would you hope to gain from attending a practitioner's forum?

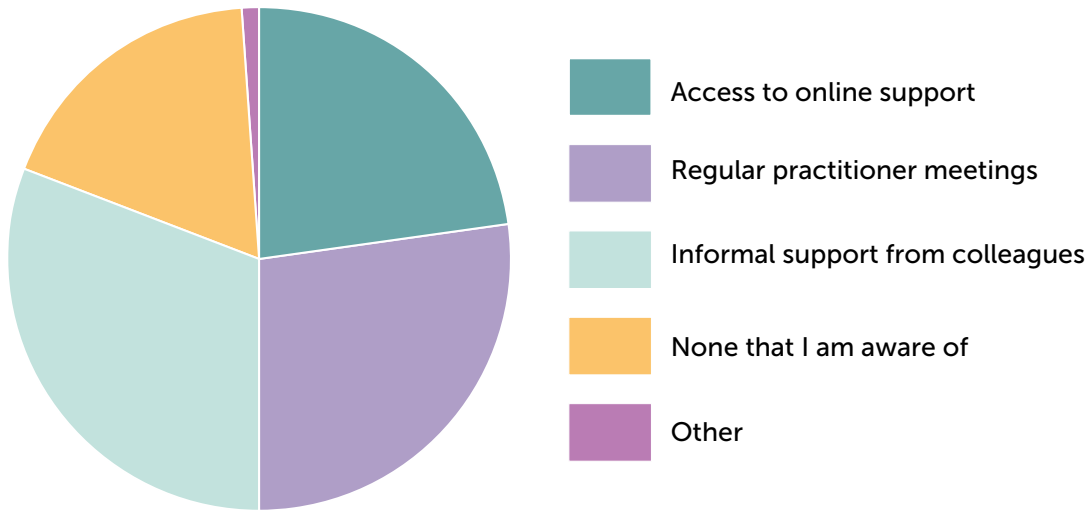
“ Learning from other practitioners' varied experiences, benefitting from discussing any concerns arising from past sessions as an Appropriate Adult ”

“ To enable cohesion and everyone working towards the same goal ”

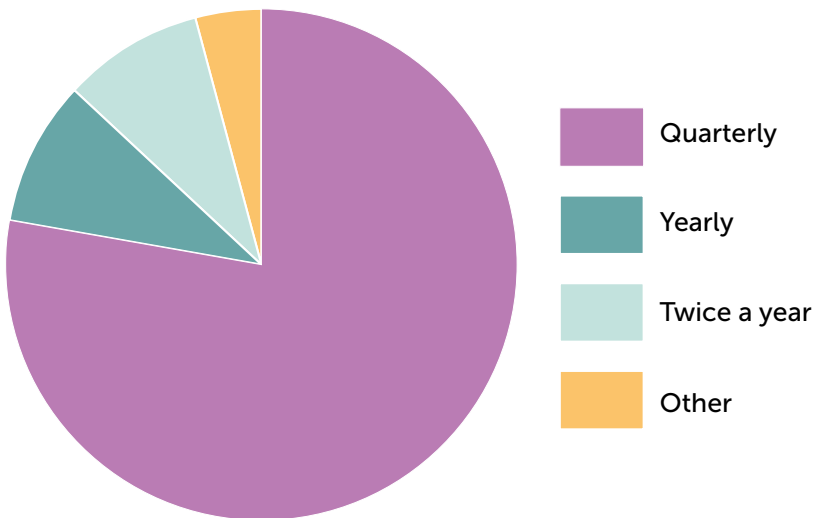
“ Continual learning and updates on any changes in legislation, procedures etc. Feedback and information from colleagues in person, rather than simply reading from the screen ”

“ Getting up to date relevant information ”

What are the existing arrangements for local support?



How often would you be able to meet?



Taking on board the feedback, we will look at local developments and build on regional forums and offer 4 nationally a year. The forum will be a safe space for practitioners to explore practice issues and share their experiences.

National Operational Group

The governance structure agreed by the Local Government Advisory Group and the National Oversight Group includes the development of a National Operational Group as a subgroup of the National Oversight Group. The group will focus on, as the name suggests, the operational aspects of service provision as well as training and standards.

The group held its inaugural meeting in August 2022 with strong attendance. Membership of the group includes representation from the Practitioners Forum, co-ordinators and local authority leads with Police Scotland and other partner organisations specific to agenda items. Fran will Chair for the initial stages with the plan being for the group to become self-sufficient once it is beyond the early development stages. Fran, along with one other member, will represent the group at the National Oversight Group. Notes from meetings will be available on the [COSLA webpage](#).

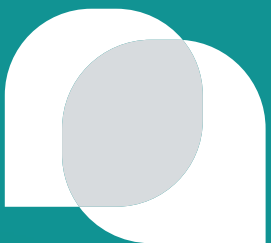
The Journey Continues...

Over the coming 12 months, developments will continue to be embedded locally and nationally. We will continue to learn and develop an understanding of best practice and how to improve the experiences and outcomes of people who benefit from support provided by Appropriate Adults, drawing on the knowledge and skills of everyone involved.

I take this opportunity to let you know I am leaving this post from October 2022. It has been an honour to play a role in the developments to date and learn from the rich knowledge and experience of everyone involved. My parting ask is to remain open to changes and support the embedding of developments, further promote and highlight the crucial role of Appropriate Adults and continue to develop towards being rights focused and person centred.

I wish you all the very best!

Jo Savege
National Appropriate Adult Co-ordinator



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