

Scrutiny intentions in respect of strategic partnerships - 2018/19

Duties under the Public Bodies (Joint Working)(Scotland) Act

From April 2017, the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland have a joint duty under the Public Bodies (Joint Working)(Scotland) Act 2014 to assess and report on the effectiveness of integration authorities' strategic plans. In these early stages of the integration of health and social care, we will report on the progress which integration authorities are making towards a more collaborative culture and integrated approaches to planning and delivering services which should deliver improved outcomes for people in communities. During 2018/19 we intend to visit three partnerships to report on their progress. A key area of focus will be the measures partnerships are taking to ensure they fully understand the current needs, and anticipate the future needs, of their communities and how they are jointly planning, commissioning and delivering services to meet these needs. We will be particularly looking to identify examples of good practice in engaging with communities to assess and plan to meet needs.

Audit Scotland's 2016 report on the progress of implementation of self-directed support noted that authorities' commissioning plans do not yet set out clearly how they will make decisions about changing services and re-allocating budgets in response to people's choices. We will therefore ensure that all of our joint inspections of strategic planning include a focus on how commissioning decisions are being influenced by self-directed support legislation.

Inspection activity to date has reinforced the critical importance of strong and effective care at home services in order to meet aspirations of maintaining people in their own homes and communities for as long as possible and in line with their wishes. We recognise that there are many services and supports which contribute to achieving this, including community health services. Nonetheless, we know that directly provided and commissioned care at home services play a very significant role. Over the next year, therefore, planning and commissioning to ensure sufficient, stable and quality care at home provision will be a focus of our enquiry during joint inspections.

Thematic review – self-directed support

We are currently undertaking preparatory work for a thematic review of self-directed support which we will carry out during 2018/19. Our aim is to build on the key findings of Audit Scotland's progress report, published earlier this year, particularly to explore the ability and confidence of front line staff to implement self-direction support legislation by offering choice and control and making decisions with people about their support. Throughout the year, we will conduct an inspection in up to six areas across the country with the aim of identifying factors which support effective implementation of the legislation and barriers which require to be overcome. We will provide feedback on each area and publish an overview report which will be disseminated more widely, with the expectation that all areas will then use these findings to evaluate their own practice and make improvements where necessary.

Joint inspections of services for children and young people

From April 2018, Scottish Ministers have asked the Care Inspectorate to lead another programme of joint inspections of service for children and young people, with scrutiny partners Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland. They have asked us to provide assurance about how community planning partners are protecting and meet the needs of children and young people who have experienced, or at risk of, abuse and neglect, and how they are working together to improve outcomes for children and young people who are subject to corporate parenting requirements. We intend to carry out five joint inspections in 2018/19. We have agreed with Ministers that, for the duration of this programme of inspections, we will incorporate an area of specific enquiry each year, with the aim of identifying key lessons and best practice which all partnerships could use to support their own continuous improvement. We will publish an overview report at the end of each year.

Community justice

We will work with Community Justice Scotland and other partners to support improvement in the implementation of the community justice strategy, to identify any particular risks and to carry out targeted scrutiny where this is required.

Adult support and protection

We have recently completed a thematic review of Adult Support and Protection, carried out across six partnership areas in collaboration with colleagues from HMICS and Healthcare Improvement Scotland. We intend to publish a report on this work by the end of the current financial year. During 2018/19, we will work with Scottish Government and colleagues to encourage partnerships to use this learning to review their own practice and to take any action necessary to strengthen their response to concerns.

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