



## **Partnership Agreement between the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Care Inspectorate (CI)**

**The SSSC and the Care Inspectorate: A commitment to partnership in improving the experience and outcomes for people who use social services in Scotland.**

### **Introduction**

The SSSC and the CI have a shared aim to improve the experience and outcomes for people who use social services in Scotland. This partnership agreement is our overarching document to support all our joint working, which includes the agreements on shared services, data sharing and data processing. It replaces the previous memorandum of understanding between the SSSC and CI.

The SSSC has a statutory duty to register and regulate the social service workforce and its education and training. It is also the Scottish partner of the sector skills council, Skills for Care and Development, with the responsibility for workforce development and planning.

The CI is the everyday name for Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland, the scrutiny body created by the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010. The CI regulates and inspects individually registered social care services and carries out strategic inspections of social work, child protection and criminal justice. The CI has a statutory duty to support and drive improvement.

The SSSC and CI are independent agencies with separately defined statutory duties and powers, but together we are jointly responsible for regulating and improving the social services sector. We adopt a shared approach to regulation which promotes the rights, independence and wellbeing outcomes for people experiencing care, with a focus on relationships rather than just compliance with technical inputs. We jointly promote improvement and innovation across the sector. We will continue to adopt a rights-based approach to regulation and quality improvement and ensure that our work fully upholds the developing human rights legislation, policy and practice.

We support each other to fulfil our statutory responsibilities and identify opportunities to work together to achieve our mutual aims.

We align our respective vision, purpose and outcomes and we mutually contribute to reviewing these.

## **Vision**

The SSSC: Our work means the people of Scotland can count on social work, social care and early years services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

The CI: The Care Inspectorate's vision is for world-class social care and social work in Scotland, where every person, in every community, experiences high-quality care and support, tailored to their rights, needs and wishes.

## **Purpose**

The SSSC: We protect the public by registering social workers, social care and early years workers, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting their professional development. Where people fall below the standards of practice and conduct we can investigate and take action.

The CI: We are a scrutiny body that provides public assurance with a duty to further improvement and we are a key contributor to the aspiration for world-class social care and social work in Scotland.

## **Outcomes**

The SSSC:

- People who use services are protected by ensuring the regulated workforce is fit to practise.
- The SSSC supports and enhances the development of the registered workforce to deliver high standards of practice and drive improvement.
- Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and policy makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.

The CI:

- People experience high quality care.
- People experience positive outcomes.
- People's rights are respected.

This partnership agreement sets out the following.

- The principles of how we work together.
- The benefits of us working together.
- Areas where we have a shared interest and can add mutual value.
- Making it happen.

## **1. Principles of how we work together**

We follow mutually beneficial common principles to work together.

**Purpose:** Partnerships work well when purpose, objectives and roles of agencies are mutually shared and understood, reviewed on a regular basis and clearly set out in relevant documents.

**Value:** Partnerships work well when agencies share resources, skills and experience to enhance their impact and deliver more effectively. Organisations can contribute to policy making and broader shared priorities. There is a focus on innovation and how agencies work together to deliver best value for money.

**Engagement:** Partnerships work well when relationships between agencies, departments and stakeholders are open, honest, constructive and based on trust. There is mutual understanding about each other's objectives and clear expectations about shared interests.

The principles ensure that our collaborative actions:

- are in the best interests of people who use services and carers
- are proportionate
- reduce bureaucracy and duplication
- recognise that we are equal in partnership but different/distinct organisations with specific and complementary roles in improving the quality of practice and care in Scotland's social services.

## **2. The benefits of us working together**

- Improved outcomes for people who use services and carers.
- Less duplication and more consistency.
- Shared resources and expertise.
- Meeting statutory requirements and improving delivery on collaboration and partnership working such as corporate parenting.
- Shared commitment to quality improvement and safeguarding.
- Increasing recognition of the value and role of social care, social work and early years to attract high quality staff and improve outcomes best value.
- Promoting our work through media and policy.
- Increasing public understanding of our shared aims.
- Reviewing and developing our work together in line with national reviews and the recommendations that come from these.

The overarching message to people who use services, carers and the public is that we are partner organisations working closely together to improve the quality of care, the protection of vulnerable people and public confidence in social services.

### 3. Shared areas of interest/purpose and added value to the sector

We have identified the following priority areas as those in which we have a shared interest and/or we can bring added value.

<b>SSSC Providing public assurance and raising standards in the workforce</b>	<b>Area of work</b>	<b>Care Inspectorate Providing public assurance and raising standards in services</b>
<p>Stronger position to influence and inform</p>	<p>Strategic policy and advice to government.</p> <p>Work to ensure our policy positions and responses complement and enhance each other's work.</p> <p>Where appropriate develop joint policy positions and jointly influence major stakeholders.</p>	<p>Stronger position to influence and inform</p>
<p>Develop a personalised, rights and outcome based approach to regulation and improvement.</p>	<p>Involvement of people who use services and carers.</p> <p>Where appropriate joint initiatives on themed subjects, including joint working between Involving People groups.</p>	<p>Develop a personalised, rights and outcome based approach to regulation and improvement.</p>
<p>Mainstream human rights and equality in policy and practice aligned to the Health and Social Care Standards.</p>	<p>Human rights, equality and diversity.</p> <p>Where appropriate joint work promoting rights based approach to regulation and improvement. Develop a collaborative approach to equality and diversity, including joint work.</p>	<p>Mainstream human rights and equality in policy and practice aligned to the Health and Social Care Standards.</p>

<p>Seek opportunities to combine engagement activity and speak with one voice to enhance impact and efficiency.</p>	<p>Engaging with the social services sector and organisations representing providers, users and other key stakeholders.</p>	<p>Seek opportunities to combine engagement activity and speak with one voice to enhance impact and efficiency.</p>
<p>Ensure all workers are registered and achieve the relevant qualifications in the required timescales.</p> <p>Promote to all our stakeholders, including the CI the dates of required registration.</p> <p>Inform the CI of service providers whose workforce is not meeting registration requirements and/or where there are other significant issues in relation to their workforce.</p>	<p>Registration.</p> <p>Work together to ensure that workers and employers comply with and understand the value of meeting the required timescales and supporting employees to gain qualifications that maintain registration and improve practice.</p>	<p>Work with employers to make sure they have in place plans for the registration of their workforce. Ensuring that employers understand the importance of a registered and qualified workforce in relation to the inspection and grading process.</p> <p>Work with the SSSC to identify and quantify the workforce.</p> <p>Work with the SSSC to identify gaps in the workforce or in training.</p>
<p>Employee – ensure the workforce adhere to the Codes.</p> <p>Promote the Codes to all stakeholders.</p> <p>Work with the CI to increase sector awareness of and compliance with the SSSC Codes of Practice for Employers.</p>	<p>Regulating and improving the workforce.</p> <p>Meeting the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers.</p>	<p>Employer – ensure the employers adhere to the Codes.</p> <p>Increased awareness of the Codes to employers and how they relate to the inspection and grading process.</p> <p>Inspectors access MySSSC, monitor employer compliance and take regulatory action as necessary.</p> <p>Inspectors make Fitness to Practice referrals to SSSC.</p>

The SSSC and CI have a two-way referral process and share intelligence.	Regulating and improving services.  Meeting the Health and Social Care Standards.	Informs the regulation of services, including grading and enforcement.
Provide leadership in delivering better ways of ensuring high quality social services.	Innovation, change and development.  Use our intelligence, insights, knowledge, expertise and position in the sector to lead, innovate and plan.	Provide leadership in delivering better ways of ensuring high quality social services.
The SSSC analyse and publish official national statistics.  The SSSC and CI share data and knowledge to assist in planning for the future and identifying trends.	Workforce and service development and planning including the publication of National and Official Statistics.  Identify and develop sources of intelligence and sharing data, which result in intelligence products for both internal and external benefit. Develop and follow the Data Sharing Agreement and Data Processing Agreement.  Themes from scrutiny, improvement and fitness to practise inform the development of joint resources and joint quality improvement activity.	Share data and knowledge to assist in planning for the future and identifying trends.
Shared opportunities, messages and protocols.	Communications.  Develop shared messages, materials and communication plans. Work together in communication campaigns where appropriate.	Shared opportunities, messages and protocols.

<p>Benefit and meet the needs of both organisations.</p> <p>The SSSC to maintain registration of CI authorised persons and approve Professional Development Award.</p> <p>Assist the CI in developing the PDA and other professional development.</p>	<p>Employee development.</p> <p>Ensure that the professional knowledge of CI authorised persons is maintained and developed through SSSC conditions to undertake the Professional Development Award in Scrutiny and Improvement (PDA).</p> <p>Develop other professional development projects and opportunities for sharing knowledge and expertise through less formal routes such as shadowing, mentoring and joint projects.</p> <p>Increase understanding among staff of our principles of working together and the added value we bring to each other. Present a clear vision of how a collaborative approach to workforce and service regulation and improvement will increase standards and quality of care.</p>	<p>Benefit and meet the needs of both organisations.</p> <p>Meet the SSSC requirements for registering authorised persons and conditions of registration.</p> <p>Assist the SSSC in developing internal and external learning and development.</p>
<p>Improving efficiency by reducing duplication and enhancing effectiveness by greater consistency and integration.</p>	<p>Shared services: the Shared Services Agreement sets out which areas of work we share, such as human resources, health and safety and other support services.</p> <p>We will identify and develop further shared services as appropriate.</p>	<p>Improving efficiency by reducing duplication and enhancing effectiveness by greater consistency and integration.</p>

We will identify a way to bridge these areas where we have links and shared interests. This will mean that we have shared priorities that help both organisations meet their objectives.

At the same time, we will recognise each other's right to hold a separate view on issues, including those set out in the table. We are also key stakeholders for each other -we will keep each other up to date and seek their insights. This agreement sets out how we will develop a shared space for sharing information and insights.

#### **4. Making it happen**

- The SSSC Council and the CI Board meet to implement this agreement and hold wider discussion and debate about our partnership and how we implement and promote it externally. Our Conveners are members of the respective Council and Board, which hold regular joint events.
- The executive teams of both organisations meet quarterly to share and update each other on strategic issues. Action or tasks can be developed and delegated from this meeting for joint working with officers from both organisations, including the SSSC/CI Joint Working Group (Terms of Reference).
- A range of communities of practice are established where appropriate which meet face-to-face/online (as required) to implement partnership working at an operational level.
- Action plans will be developed when required for specific areas of work in section 3 of this agreement. The joint EMT and joint board meetings have strategic oversight of these areas of work.
- Promote our shared outcomes to all staff ensuring that there is an understanding of how working in partnership increases our effectiveness and helps meet our individual and shared outcomes. Live the spirit of the agreement through our respective and collective values.
- Produce visual materials that show the journey of the SSSC and the CI and how our journeys link.

- Develop joint guidance and resources for sector on a range of topics where appropriate.



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