

Cross Party Group on Social Work



ACCESS TO CARE AND SUPPORT

MEETING DATE: WEDNESDAY 27 APRIL

FLASH REPORT

Accessing Care & Support: What's the Problem?

Eligibility Criteria

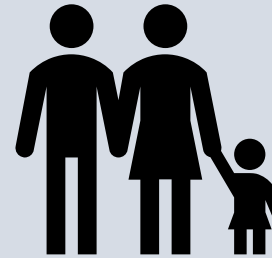
Which is the level of need required to access assessment of services.....

....is too high for people to be deemed 'eligible' for help.

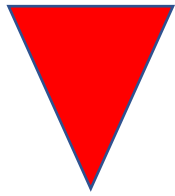
Help is only available beyond this point

CRISIS

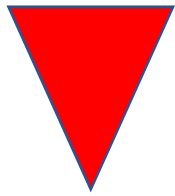
**IN NEED OF
HELP HERE**



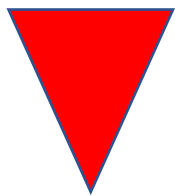
Too many people get trapped in this zone



People who need help, cannot get it. They must be in crisis before it becomes available to them.



Without help, the situation worsens. Problems intensify and people don't feel listened to or valued.



Eventually the crisis point is reached. But now it's too late. The situation has escalated to a level that could, and should have been avoided.

How does this impact people's lives?

*We asked the group
to tell us. Here's
what they said*



What is the solution?

“Instead of being driven to focus mainly on individual deficits (eligibility criteria) and responding to that with a menu of services to ‘fix’ people, there should be space to engage with the person about where they want to get to in their life. Let’s then work backwards with them to establish how we work together to get there. Having the opportunity to be listened to and reflect with a skilled member of staff can already start to improve outcomes, and we need to prioritise that time.”

Dr Emma Miller, social worker, academic and driver of Personal Outcomes Network

“It took too long to agree that I needed help and then to get me the help. This is because of the way social work is structured and the need to make sure the situation is bad enough before you get help. My social worker knew I needed help and advocated for me. They fought my case but people who didn’t know me, who had no human connection with me, said that I didn’t qualify.”

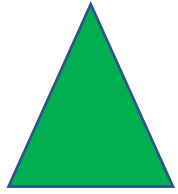
Arlene, user of social work services

“Part of the answer to this complex issue is about moving power through the system. Wherever possible into the hands of individuals and families seeking or requiring support and, where that’s not possible, into the hands of appropriate people close to them. Including social workers. Indeed, in my view, this debate about access to care and support is a call to arms to re-empower the professionals who stand alongside the people requiring support”.

Ben Farrugia, Director of Social Work Scotland

“If prevention is to be mainstreamed and best value from resources secured, eligibility criteria must cease to exist. Social workers should be freed up to work with the individual to work out what the individual needs for a ‘full life’. Budget holders should also be freed up to make professional judgements about which needs they will meet within budget that will have the greatest impact both in the present and the future.”

Colin Slasberg, social worker, commentator and academic



When someone needs help, they get it. Decisions are person-centred, not based on eligibility and resource.



Working with a social worker becomes a therapeutic, two-way process agreeing outcomes based on life situations and circumstances.



Social workers are freed up to have the time within their community to build relationships and trust with those who might need to use services.

Cross-Party Group

ON SOCIAL WORK



Tuesday 27 September
6.00-7.45pm.

*We'll be discussing the impact of the
National Care Service Bill on the
future of social work*

How can you help?

Parliament has a unique opportunity to work with social workers and those with lived experience of social work services to improve and shape the future of the profession.

We would be very interested in speaking to MSPs about any of the issues raised in this flash report and how you can help. You can also attend our next meeting and contribute to the discussion.

Please contact us on cpgsocialwork@basw.co.uk

Useful Resources

- [Setting the Bar for Social Work in Scotland](#)
- [Unmet need for care \(ipsos.com\)](#)
- [Can the shift from needs-led to outcomes-focused assessment in health and social care deliver on policy priorities?](#)
- [Radical Proposals for Social Care in Scotland. If not now, when? And if not us- who?](#)
- [Ending eligibility: ten tests for establishing a human rights-based approach to adult social care](#)
- [The failure of National Eligibility Criteria- what next?](#)
- [Realistic hope for a Social Care system driven by Human Rights from Scotland](#)
- [Feeley's Missing Link, 'The Promise' and reforming social work in Scotland](#)