



Self Care – New Legislation Passed.

The Scottish Parliament has passed The Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Bill. This will come into force some time in 2013 and from that time Councils will be required to allow citizens needing care to decide themselves how that care should be delivered. The idea is that after a care assessment the council by agreement with the person involved should allow the care to be delivered in the way the person wants.

The new law obliges councils to offer four ways in which someone can receive care.

Option 1 - By receiving a direct payment – which the citizen can use to purchase care services himself or herself.

Option 2 - The citizen directs from where the council should provide the care

Option 3 - The local authority arranges the care itself.

Option 4 - A mixture of the three options above.

Self directed support is not new – but only once this bill becomes law will the councils delivering care will be compelled to allow citizens to have these choices over how care and support is going to be provided to them.

The government's thinking on this seems to be twofold. First it is seen as generally a benefit for those in need of support to be able to “take control” of their care - a movement towards equality if you like as a citizen. Secondly there seems little doubt that the government hope and expect that stretched resources will simply go further under this new system.

David Borrowman of Solicitors for Older People Scotland comments “Many people will welcome this new approach. The last published statistics show only just over 4000 people receiving self directed support in Scotland. Once the legislation is in place I would expect this number to increase rapidly. Whether councils' expenditure on care goes further – we'll just have to see. But since about half of the recipients of Self Directed Support are over 65 – I think older people in Scotland will benefit from this new law”

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