

Secure Care Pathway and Standards Scotland

Equality Impact Assessment

October 2020



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Equality Impact Assessment – Results

Title of Policy	Secure Care Pathway and Standards, Scotland
Summary of aims and desired outcomes of Policy	The aim of the policy is to drive up standards of care, enhance the experiences of young people in and on the edges of secure care and ultimately improve outcomes for this vulnerable group of children.
Directorate: Division: team	Directorate for Children and Families. Youth Justice and Children's Hearing Unit.

Executive summary

The Secure Care Pathway and Standards have been co-produced with care experienced children, young people and adults.

The Secure Care Pathway and Standards, Scotland are rooted in the existing statutory requirements, ethos and principles set out in the relevant legislation, policy and guidance. They are based on the legislatively enshrined human and children's rights and are crucial in the integration of secure care within the Getting it Right for Every Child framework. The Pathway Standards provide context through the specific calls for action from children and young people with experience of secure care, giving a unique voice to the outcomes set out in the Health and Social Care Standards, and adhering to the same key principles of:

- Dignity and respect
- Compassion
- Be included
- Responsive care and support
- Wellbeing

The standards are also future proofed by aligning with the Health and Social Care Standards and their implementation will support the achievement of, the transformational Vision, Purpose, Values and Principles of secure care as agreed by the Secure Care Strategic Board in April 2018.

Our vision is of compassionate, nurturing, relational, rights based responses and supports within families, schools and communities; for all children and young people whenever there are concerns about significant harm to self and/or other people.

We are working together to Get It Right For Every Child, focused on making sure children and young people are offered early, timely, appropriate and high quality supports to help them fulfil their potential.

Scotland is striving to become a country where all children and young people; whatever the vulnerabilities and risks associated with their distress and actions; are cared for as children and where no child or young person is deprived of their liberty.

When introduced and implemented it is anticipated the standards will be used by:

- Children, their parents/carers, families and advocates to understand what they should expect from corporate parents and professionals when being intensively supported in the community or a secure care setting.
- All corporate parents to inform strategic decisions on resource priorities, service design, commissioning, joint working arrangements, self-evaluation and individual support to children and their families
- Secure care services in their strategic and operational development, and self-evaluation
- Regulators and inspectors as part of their future scrutiny and improvement work.

Background

Secure accommodation is a form of residential care that restricts the freedom of children under the age of 18. It is for the small number of children who may be a significant risk to themselves, or others in the community. Their needs and risks can only be managed in secure care's controlled settings. Secure care aims to provide intensive support and safe boundaries to help these highly vulnerable children re-engage and move forward positively in their communities.

The Scottish Government Secure Care Strategic Board was established in October 2017 in response to the findings and recommendations of the Secure Care National Project, which urged the development of national secure care standards to improve experiences and outcomes for children who are in and on the edges of secure care in Scotland and to ensure their rights are central. The Scottish Government 2018 Programme for Government gave a commitment to developing secure care standards for Scotland.

The standards reflect the principles and format of the Health and Social Care Standards, which were introduced from April 2018. It is expected that the National Secure Care Standards, when formalised, will align with those standards.

The fundamental approach to drafting the standards has been a commitment to ensuring that the experiences and views of those young people in secure care or who have experienced secure care previously, are captured in the standards.

The Secure Care Strategic Boards Pathways and Standards work stream brought together a significant programme of co-production work in partnership with all five secure centres, Who Cares? Scotland, CELCIS, CYCJ Social Work Scotland, NHS, the Care Inspectorate, SCRA, Scotland Excel and care experienced young people and adults with current and past experience of secure care.

The Board's Pathways and Standards work stream began by mapping existing legislation, guidance and policy documents against the Calls for Action gathered from young people during the Secure Care National Project. The feedback on this process was positive, with young people and secure care staff involved in the co-production describing the immediate positive impact by bringing a new understanding of young people's needs, experiences and feelings.

The Scope of the EQIA

Scottish Government officials have worked with a wide range of stakeholders including all five of the secure care centres in Scotland, care experienced children / young people past and present, SCRA, Social Work Scotland, COSLA, WhoCares Scotland (Advocates) NHS, Commissioners Scotland Excel and others to ensure all stakeholders had the opportunity to help draft the standards.

The Pathways and Standards work stream held several meetings over a 12 month period, including meetings within the secure care centres. Each secure care centre nominated a champion to work with the young people in their care to ensure their voice was central to the co-production.

Key Findings

The Pathway and Standards are for all young people in or on the edges of secure care and take account of the individual needs of each child / young person. The engagement with stakeholders and in particular care experienced children and young people has highlighted the need and desire for these standards to be implemented. Children's rights must be respected and they must have a strong influence in shaping the care service they want and expect in the future to support this vulnerable group.

We have listened to young people and heard what matters to them the most. When implemented, these standards will help to drive up standards and improve outcomes for this group of children and young people.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The Secure Care Pathway and Standards will impact on only a small number of children and young people who experience secure care. They will not adversely disadvantage any equality groups.

It is recognised that the standards will have a significant impact on stakeholders and service providers as they work towards full implementation, however, once implemented, these standards will have a positive effect on those young people in secure care.

As we implement the standards we will continue to monitor and consider equality impacts to ensure there is no negative impact on any of the equality groups.



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