

PA Programme Board – Open Meeting 2024 - Minutes

Thursday 27th June 2024, 10:00 – 12:00

In attendance:

Alison Tanner	Jane Kellock	Lucy Devlin
Amanda Vickery	Jeremy Adderley	Lynsey McLean
Ann Marie penman	Jess Elsey	Maree Todd MSP
Ashley Drennan	Jessica Gill	Margaret Petherbridge
Calum Carlyle	Jillian Greig	Mark Han-Johnston
Christina McLaren (co-chair)	Joanne Finlay	Morag Duncan
Colleen Cochrane	Joanne McGee	Natalie McLaughlin
Danny Bradford	Julia Lawrence	Niccy Kershaw
Don Morrison	Kaye Robertson	Pauline Boyce
Donald Macleod (co-chair)	Kayleigh Hirst	Pauline Nolan
Donna Murray	Laura McGinley	Rhiann McLean
Elsbeth Critchley	Leigh Rennie	Richard Brunner
Emma Bowen	Leona Masson	Richard Ibbotson
Erin MacLennan	Les Watson	Sean MacAskill
Gail McKeitch	Linda Munro	Sharon Shepherd
Hazel Jack	Linda Riley	Sharon Wilson Hodgson
Iain Ramsay	Lisa Paul	Toria Fraser
Jan Young	Louise White	Victoria Freeland
	Lucia Ortisi	

Apologies:

Anne-Marie Monaghan, Johanne McBean, Becs Barker, Ali Upton, Marianne Scobie, Julia Smith, Peter Scott, Beth Anderson

1. Chairs' introduction

DM welcomed existing members of the PA Programme Board and those joining for the first time as today's meeting is an Open Meeting.

He gave an overview of the PA Programme Board, which was founded in 2021 following the publication of the Feeley Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland, which recommended further recognition the PA workforce and achieving parity between PAs and other parts of the social care workforce.

2. Overview of PA Programme Board achievements

DM shared an infographic which summarised the main achievements of the PA Programme Board so far: <https://www.sdsscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/PAPB-Infograph-Key-Acheivements-2022-4-1.pdf>

DM noted the collaboration with stakeholders and ongoing efforts to refresh the workplan and identify future objectives.

3. Update from Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, Maree Todd MSP

Maree Todd MSP thanked the PAPB for the invitation to speak to the group and covered :

- Recommendation 8 of the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation (IRISR), which recommended a bespoke system of registration for PAs in Scotland, and noted she will continue to support the work plan of the Board and not consider further actions are necessary to implement recommendation 8 until the work with Disclosure Scotland and the PA Programme Board work plan activities to support the recruitment, retention and training of PAs, have been progressed.
- The progress of the National Care Service Bill through Parliament, emphasising its potential to achieve greater consistency and quality in social care across Scotland.

The following questions were asked:

JK asked whether the Scottish Government recognised the underfunding and lack of resource across the social care system.

MT acknowledged that funding is very tight following years of austerity and the rationale behind the NCS developments was to enable SG to have greater oversight on how funding for social care is being spent locally.

DB noted he had heard that PAs may need to obtain formal qualifications in future.

MT said any considerations around training for PAs would take a balanced approach in supporting PAs while considering the complexities and potential impacts of regulatory changes. DM noted that there are currently no plans to enforce mandatory qualifications for PAs. Instead, the work of the PA training framework is focusing on creating pathways for career development within social care that do not impose unnecessary requirements on PAs.

SM asked about the difficulties in achieving culture change to bring about improvements and asked what the Scottish Government's strategy was for achieving this necessary change.

MT underscored a commitment to inclusive, adaptive governance and empowering frontline workers to enhance the social care system's effectiveness and responsiveness.

LR noted unfairness in employer practices and local differences in interpretation of legislation, and asked how this would be addressed.

MT noted the differences in interpretation are influenced by risk appetite at local level and noted the updated SDS Statutory Guidance will support more consistent practice by shifting some of the risk from Local Authorities around decision making.

4. Updates from Subgroups

Training Subgroup - Joanne McGee shared a presentation:

Direct Payment National Agreement Subgroup - Donna Murray shared a presentation:

Recruitment Subgroup – Kayleigh Hirst shared a presentation:

Wellbeing Subgroup - Rhiann McLean and Richard Brunner shared a presentation:

Data Subgroup - Don Morrison highlighted key points:

1. SG are collaborating with Glasgow University on PhD Research into the PA Workforce. Lisa Paul will begin PhD in September.
2. The PA Workforce Survey report for 2023 was published in February, providing comparative data on the PA workforce in Scotland. The 2023 survey key findings included a lack of awareness among PAs about the work being done on their behalf, but significant levels of job satisfaction. Next survey is scheduled for early 2025.
3. Upcoming report on PA current data sources and future work. The report will provide a method to calculate the PA workforce in Scotland, which is essential for informed workforce planning and support.

5. PA Network Scotland (PANS) update

LW gave an update on PANS development, noting they have successfully transitioned into a free-to-join national PA membership organisation for PAs, and have put in place a new member database which will also enable easier communication with members. PANS membership is 1300 and growing, they also have 3000+ social media followers.

PANS offers a variety of member benefits, including a free PA ID badge, union membership, Blue Sky Card, PA training (including digital skills), and an employer-PA mediation service. They plan to add more benefits as membership grows.

PANS is planning a national awareness campaign in autumn, aiming for significant membership growth with support from SDS organisations. They are also forming a group of current PAs to ensure their perspectives shape PANS' future direction.

6. AOB

Pauline Nolan (Inclusion Scotland) noted she was moving to another role and someone else (TBC) would represent Inclusion Scotland at PAPB meetings going forward.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the PAPB is Thursday 26 September, 10am – 12 noon.