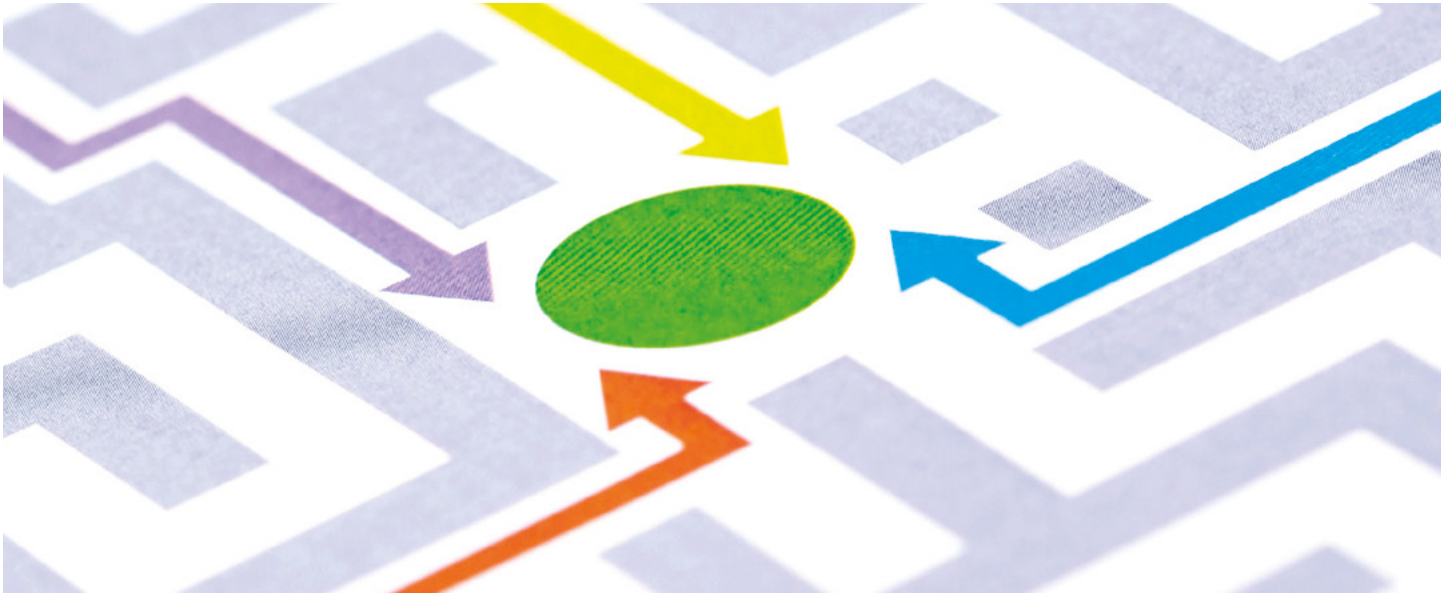


Project scope

Self-directed support

a follow-up audit



ACCOUNTS COMMISSION 


AUDITOR GENERAL 

Prepared by Audit Scotland
October 2016

Background

Self-directed support (SDS) is a major change in the way people with social care needs are supported. It aims to improve the impact that care and support has on people's lives by helping them to choose and control what type of social care services they get, when and where they get them, and who provides them. One of the options is to take a direct payment, but there are other ways they can have more control over their individual budget. We are now six years into a ten-year strategy, which expects councils to transform the way they deliver social care. The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 is part of that strategy.

Why are we doing this audit?

Our first audit, [Self-directed support \[PDF\]](#)  (June 2014), examined councils' early progress in implementing the ten-year strategy and their readiness for the Act, which came into force in April 2014.

We found that councils still had a substantial amount of work to do to make the cultural and practical changes needed to successfully implement SDS. The report identified risks and benefits in councils' chosen methods of allocating money to support individuals. It recommended closer engagement with people who need support, their carers and families, providers and communities, to involve them in planning, designing and delivering SDS strategies. It also recommended that the Scottish Government should measure and report on the progress and impact of SDS, and work with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)

and other national partners to provide further targeted support to help with SDS implementation.

SDS implementation is taking place within the context of mounting pressures from decreasing public sector expenditure and increasing demand for social care services. In addition, changes to organisational structures, procedures and cultures as a result of health and social care integration provide both opportunities and challenges to transforming social care services.

What will the scope of the audit be?

This audit will aim to establish whether councils, integration authorities (IAs) and the Scottish Government are making sufficient progress in implementing SDS to achieve the aims of the SDS strategy.

A key indicator of success in implementing the SDS strategy and legislation is the outcomes achieved by and for the people who need support and their carers and families, and the improvement these make to their quality of lives. For that reason, the audit will seek evidence from people themselves about their experiences of SDS. This will include older people, adults and children with physical, sensory or learning disabilities, people with mental health problems or addictions, and children and families.

SDS legislation also requires councils to involve, and work collaboratively with, service users, carers, families and communities as they plan, design and deliver the services and support that will best meet people's needs. We will assess how effectively councils are taking forward this important aspect of the SDS legislation as part of the audit.

The audit will also follow up on our previous recommendations to the Scottish Government to measure and report on what has been achieved with the investment made in this policy as part of a broader assessment of how effectively the Scottish Government has facilitated and supported SDS implementation to date. We will report how much money the Scottish Government has invested in SDS implementation and what has been achieved through that investment.

What questions are we trying to answer?

The audit will seek to answer four key questions:

What progress have councils and IAs made in implementing SDS?

- Are more people now being offered all the self-directed support options and facilitated to make informed choices about how they are supported?

- What choice and control are councils and IAs giving people over how they are supported to achieve their personal outcomes?
- How is social care provision changing as a result of SDS?
- How well are councils and IAs leading, planning and managing changes required to support SDS implementation?
- How effectively are users, carers and their families and communities involved in designing and developing how councils and IAs implement SDS?

What impact is SDS having on people with support needs, carers, families and communities?

- How well do people with support needs and carers understand what their right to choice and control means and how they can expect to be supported to achieve their personal outcomes?
- Is SDS implementation improving people's experiences and outcomes?

What factors are supporting and impeding effective implementation of SDS?

- What is the effect of different factors on SDS implementation?

How effectively is the Scottish Government supporting implementation of SDS and evaluating its impact?



- Has the Scottish Government provided effective guidance to help councils and IAs address the more challenging areas of SDS implementation?
- Is the Scottish Government providing appropriate practical support to councils and IAs?
- What are the risks to successful implementation of SDS for the Scottish Government and other organisations?
- Does the Scottish Government have adequate arrangements in place to assess the effectiveness of funding and other support/initiatives it has provided to councils and other organisations to support the implementation of SDS?
- Is the Scottish Government monitoring implementation and using indicators that will provide realistic measures of success?

How will we carry out the audit?

We will gather evidence using a range of methods, including:

- Interviews and surveys with service users, carers and families, using a variety of methods to suit people in different circumstances and with different needs, including those from different ethnic backgrounds, cultures, languages, religions, and sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Interviews and information from user and carer organisations, including work they have done to understand the experiences of service users and carers.
- Interviews with social workers, other staff and councillors at selected case study councils/IAs and relevant local people and organisations.
- Survey and discussions with frontline social workers and a sample of Chief Social Work Officers.
- Survey and interviews with service providers and provider organisations.
- Interviews and information from other key national organisations, including SDS Scotland and other national third sector organisations, the Scottish Government, COSLA, Scottish Local Government Partnership, Social Work Scotland, Care Inspectorate and Scottish Social Services Council.
- Document reviews (strategies, plans, reports) and analysis of available information and data from councils/IAs, the Scottish Government and other organisations.

We will select case studies across different council areas and service user groups to ensure that we evaluate a range of practices and their impact. For example, we will include large urban areas and those with dispersed rural communities, where SDS implementation is likely to include small, specific and innovative solutions.

We will also draw on our recent report [Social work in Scotland \[PDF\]](#)  (September 2016) and the work of previous related audits, including [Changing models of health and social care \[PDF\]](#)  (March 2016), the position statement on [Health and social care integration \[PDF\]](#)  (December 2015), [Reshaping care for older people \[PDF\]](#)  (February 2014) and [Commissioning social care \[PDF\]](#)  (March 2012).



What impact will the audit have?

The report will give an independent view of progress in implementing SDS. It will aim to support continuing improvement in implementation of SDS by:

- identifying factors that are supporting or impeding successful implementation of this complex programme of change
- sharing good practice examples that councils/IAs and other organisations and people can learn from
- making specific recommendations to councils/IAs and the Scottish Government.

During the audit we will consider whether there are additional outputs we could produce alongside the national report that would also support future implementation.

Audit timetable and contacts

We plan to publish a report in Summer 2017. Audit Scotland is doing this audit on behalf of the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the audit, please get in touch with Cathy MacGregor, Audit Manager, on 0131 625 1865 cmacgregor@audit-scotland.gov.uk  or Zoe McGuire, Auditor, on 0131 625 1633 zmcguire@audit-scotland.gov.uk .



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