

# Personalisation in Scotland - the Facts

DISABILITIES  
INCLUDED

JOBS, SERVICES AND BENEFITS  
**Scottish  
anti-cuts**

UNISON  
**NO IF'S  
NO BUT'S  
NO  
DISABILITY  
CUTS!**

NO BUDGET  
CUTS  
SAVE ALL LEARNING  
DISABILITY CLIENTS  
SAVE ALL THE CAREERS AND  
LOOK AFTER ALL THEIR CLIENTS

# Introduction

**UNISON's position on personalisation is clear - we support it, we have policy in support of personalisation. This is entirely consistent from a union that has equality at its core and has pioneered self-organisation and vigorously addressed access issues within its own organisation.**

UNISON has long been engaged in the personalisation agenda and the challenges it brings. As early as 2006 UNISON was meeting with representatives of disabled people's organisations such as the Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living, Scottish Personal Assistants Employers Network, and the Scottish Consortium of Direct Payment Support Organisations. A joint statement followed confirming our support for the principle of independent living. More importantly, all parties agreed to work together on areas of mutual acceptance.

The statement acknowledges that direct payments have a legitimate role. However, it makes clear that direct payments are not a substitute for other flexible and responsive public services, and are not appropriate for all people's needs. It further agrees that direct payments must complement a range of public services and must not be used to cover for inadequacies in public provision.

We take these same principles and approach to personalisation. UNISON believes that the personalisa-

tion and transformation of social care has been introduced without adequate funding, with the focus being on reducing the cost of supporting individuals and reducing the proportion of provision in the public sector and potentially the voluntary sector. This is incompatible with maintaining the quality of care provision.

Nowhere in Scotland has this been more brutally seen than in Glasgow where the Council's explicitly set out plan to make savings of 20 to 30% in care packages has resulted in cuts of over 70% to some. There has been massive stress and anxiety caused to service users and their families. The impact on staff has been devastating with redundancies, pay cuts and unsustainable split shift working patterns being introduced. If we let the Glasgow model go forward unchallenged then it will set a precedent to other authorities. This will also undermine the whole concept of personalisation.

It doesn't have to be like this. Personalisation can and should be introduced with adequate funding and safeguards for staff. That is why UNISON is delighted to support the publication of this bulletin and to be part of a broad alliance of service users, families and workers standing up for the services our communities need. Whilst it's learning disabilities today, and

mental health tomorrow all social services face being cut under the guise of personalisation. Please stand up for the principles of personalisation and join with UNISON and the STUC in campaigning for a better settlement for public services however they are provided.

**Simon Macfarlane & Mandy McDowall, Regional Organisers  
UNISON**



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# Personalisation: empowering service users and carers - or a cover for cuts?

Personalisation, or Self-Directed Support (SDS), as it's known in Scotland, is the new buzzword in government social care policy.

There's a lot of research evidence to show that it's a popular policy with some groups of service users – and it's not hard to see why. In the past, services for people with disabilities and people with mental health problems were often based on a 'warehousing' model, with everyone treated exactly the same. So it's not surprising that many individuals enjoy the freedom, choice and independence that comes from having a direct payment or individual budget, where, as one man I spoke to recently put it, 'you're your own boss'.

There's growing concern amongst service users, carers and workers, however, that behind the rhetoric of increased choice and control, self-directed support is increasingly being used by local authorities in some parts of the country as a cover for cuts in services. If that's true, then it raises a number of very concerning questions about the claims made for SDS.

## Increased choice and control?

Whether SDS gives increased choice and control will depend mainly on the size of the individual budget. And in a context of cuts, where Glasgow City Council for example is planning to make savings of 20% through SDS, then not only will service users not be able to purchase new services but often they won't be able to afford their existing services. According to Glasgow City Council's own website: 'An individual may choose to remain in current services but may not be able to buy as much of the service as they currently get. People may find it more cost effective to buy from an agency or a social care provider'.

## Support and advocacy?

One of the reasons that self-directed support has worked well until now is that it's been promoted in small, well-resourced pilot projects, where there's often been a high level of support and advocacy. It's not at all clear, however, that that same level of support will be there when SDS is 'rolled out' to much higher numbers of people. Already there are reports from workers and carers of individuals getting very little assistance in completing their self-assessment questionnaire or when they do, it's sometimes from a worker who barely knows them, with no other support.

## Increased social isolation?

In the past, people with disabilities were too often herded together into services based on their impairment, completely denying their individuality. There's a danger, however, that in its current form, self-directed support could simply lead to greater social isolation and

increased pressure on carers. That's why many activists and academics, including Professor Peter Beresford of Brunel University have argued that simply giving someone an individual budget does not in itself promote independent living. In reality, for many people, the closure of collective facilities and 'returning to the community' could mean days spent hanging about the local shopping mall, albeit in the company of a Personal Assistant, especially as public facilities such as libraries or swimming pool have their hours reduced or are closed due to cuts.

## Privatisation by the back door?

As the adjacent quote from Glasgow City Council's website shows, one of the main aims of SDS is to encourage service users to make less use of council services and to 'shop around' till they find a provider they can afford. However, as we know from the experience of residential care and home care services over the past twenty years, in practice, this is likely to lead to a 'race to the bottom' as voluntary sector providers cut the wages and conditions of their staff in order to compete with private sector providers.

**When service reviews of personal budgets are taking place, there's a very clear expectation on people to cut the amount of money..**

## A new philosophy for social work?

Changing Lives, the 21st Century Review of Social Work saw personalisation as offering 'a new philosophy for social work', an approach which would allow social workers to re-connect with their core values and aspirations. A survey of social workers by Community Care magazine in May of this year shows how different the reality is proving to be. According to the survey (which was commissioned by UNISON), while in 2009 two-thirds of respondents to Community Care's personalisation survey believed that personal budgets would be of benefit, the 2011 results show this has dropped to 41%. "People still believe in personalisation, but it's increasingly difficult to make it happen," said Helga Pile, UNISON's national officer for social care. "When service reviews of personal budgets are taking place, there's a very clear expectation on people to cut the amount of money provided and that's not what people want or expect."

**Iain Ferguson**  
University of Stirling and also Social Work Action Network

# Cuts to People with Learning Disabilities in Glasgow

**The impact of the introduction of the cuts currently being brought through personalisation in Glasgow is having a dangerously detrimental effect on people with learning disabilities in the city.**

While service providers were warned of a 20% cut in budgets, many individuals who receive support in their own homes have seen their personal budgets cut by 50% and some as high as 70%, leaving them unable to purchase the support that they need to live safely in the community.

Many of these people and their families have now been left in limbo, as they go through risk enablement, while many others, mostly those who live with their families, are still waiting to hear what their budgets will be. This has led to much stress and anxiety amongst people with learning disabilities, many of whom are not fully able to understand what is going on, as well as increased stress to family members, carers and support workers, who have been left in the dark.

Support workers in the meantime are facing dangerously increased workloads with the number of staff to service users being drastically decreased. Paper work has also increased, giving support workers even less time to provide individuals with the support that they need. There have also been cut-backs in training and supervision for support workers, while on top of this, support workers are being asked to take cuts in their pay and conditions and face the prospect of possible redundancies.

The implementation of these cuts by Glasgow City Council has not been needs-led and there has been a serious failure in consulting individuals and their families about what is happening to their support. The current financial packages of support that have been offered to individuals are unworkable and if the government can find the money for wars and bailing out failed bankers and their bonuses, surely they can find the money to continue providing support for society's most vulnerable, who have done nothing to cause the current economic crisis.

**Support Worker (Learning Disabilities)  
UNISON Steward**

## An extract from the public notes on Personalisation on GCC Website

### Can a service user opt out of Self-Directed Support?

The new system in Glasgow will involve **all individuals being reassessed** which includes using the self evaluation questionnaire. This means **everyone will have a new resource allocation**. People will be offered support to work out how to best use that resource to meet assessed eligible needs and offered flexible personalised way of meeting outcomes. **An individual may choose to remain in current services but may not be able to buy as much of the service as they currently get**. People may find it **more cost effective to buy from an agency or a social care provider**. A group of people may wish to pool resources to buy support for shared activities.



## The experience of the Day Care Worker

“When the idea of personalisation was introduced to day service workers, the concept was greeted with great enthusiasm. It was seen as the way forward for the most vulnerable people in our society. They would have a choice over where and when they would receive a service and what the service would consist of. If they want to go skiing, for example, then that could be made possible.

Suddenly this all changed. It was about a budget cut, not about the service user getting the best service possible. The changes started the day service workers where trained in the Self Evaluation Process. We were thinking ‘Well, at least we will have a say in the activities the service user has tried and enjoyed, and also the ones that have been tried and not worked’. Wrong - the service users were leaving with no consultation with the people who have supported them most of their adult life. They would be supported instead by their service providers.

We are not saying that this has to be a failing - but when someone is reliant on one service provider for all their service, then this could cause complacency. There needs to be a way of ensuring that the service user is receiving the new and innovative service that is being sold to them.”

# Save the Accord Centre!

The Accord Centre is a day care centre for adults with learning disabilities. It is situated on Springfield Road, Dalmarnock, the area which is to be home to the Commonwealth Games 2014.

The Centre is due to be demolished soon to allow for the creation of a bus park for the Commonwealth Games. However, within 3 to 4 years, carers and service users were promised, they would get a 'legacy' from the Games - in other words, a new day centre. But in November 2010, carers and service users were told there will be no legacy and no new replacement day care centre, due to the recession and Glasgow City Council having no money to build a new centre.

Until recently, 120 service users with various levels of learning disabilities used the Accord Day Care Centre. Now there are only 58 service users with various learning disabilities. Some of those service users who left on the basis of personalisation barely got a chance to say goodbye to their friends.

Glasgow City Council has had individual meetings with carers of the service users left at the Accord Centre. These carers were given the choice – either accept personalisation or move your relatives' day service to two hired small/medium- sized rooms in the Bambury Community Centre in Barrowfield. Many carers feel the Bambury Centre proposal will not deliver the same range of services currently provided from the Accord. Carers have asked for a full carers meeting with Glasgow City Council since March 2011, but to date no meetings have taken place.

Just under half the carers and service users of the Accord are still fighting for an adequate replacement day centre for the East End of Glasgow. If the closure does go ahead and the Centre is not replaced, then the most highly populated area of Glasgow, with the highest



number of people with learning disabilities, will be left with only one day centre (Riddrie Day Centre), which is already full.

According to Glasgow City Council there are two reasons for the Accord Centre closure. Firstly, the need for the Bus Park for the Commonwealth Games, secondly, 'day service modernisation' which is set out in the Scottish Government's The Same as You? policy document (2000). But according to that policy, day service modernisation should mean promoting inclusion, health and choice! Glasgow City Council has ignored this policy.

The Accord Day Care Centre is more than just a 'day centre'. This is a where a vital service is provided. This is where people with learning disabilities from East Glasgow can go and meet up with their friends, where they can gain specialist support and gain access to specialist equipment and facilities to meet their health and social care needs. It is important people can gain the 'choice' which they deserve to attend a day centre like this.

Therefore carers and service users are fighting for an adequate replacement day centre/ a legacy from the Commonwealth Games!

**East End Carers/Save the Accord Centre**  
- November 2011

**You can help by following us on Twitter:**

**@savetheaccord**

**LIKE! Our Facebook Page: Save The Accord Centre**

## Scottish Personalisation Conference

**UNISON Scotland, the Social Work Action Network and Defend Glasgow Services Campaign are planning to run a day conference on Saturday 10th March 2012 which will provide an opportunity for service users, workers, carers, families and those interested in the issues around personalisation to come together.**

The day will be made up of a variety of inputs and workshops covering the latest developments and pro-

viding an opportunity to discuss our aims for campaigning to make personalisation work in Glasgow and the whole of Scotland.

The conference will be of interest to all involved in personalisation and self directed support issues in Scotland.

To be kept in touch with details of the conference please contact Mandy McDowall on [m.mcdowall@unison.co.uk](mailto:m.mcdowall@unison.co.uk) or (0141) 342 2841.

# The Law, Campaigning and Personalisation

## Carol's Tale

**All Social Work services in Scotland operate within a legal framework designed to ensure that the duties of local authorities are balanced with the needs of individuals.**

There are many competing demands on local authorities and sometimes corners may be cut when they shouldn't be. Where concerns exist that people are not being treated fairly in the development of personalisation, then there might be recourse to the law.

There are a number of areas where challenges might be more successful.

First is on the grounds of Disability Equality. Whenever councils introduce new policies they are required by law to consider the implications of what that policy might be on people with disabilities. They must do this at the time they are drawing up the policy and the information must be available to councillors when they consider the policy. A recent court case in Birmingham saw the local authority being told to drop its plans to cut services due to failure to look at the Equality impact of its policy. Many councils in Scotland often make the same mistake.

Secondly social work practice should stick to the guidance issued by the Scottish Government. For example, there is clear guidance stating how any assessment of need for social care is carried out. The courts have already ruled that "self assessment" is not legal and that professional staff must be involved in the assessment process. However "self assessment" was such a prominent part of personalisation pilot projects that many councils still retain elements of this in their own pro-

grammes. If they do not ensure that professional staff are involved appropriately, then the assessment will be invalid and any change to support packages as a result will be illegal.

If you think that the law might have been broken in these or other ways in your case then you need to get legal advice. Sometimes legal aid might be available to help you progress this. Cases can also be stronger if groups of people who are affected seek the support of the same lawyer.

In fact, working together can make a real difference. The Learning Disability Alliance Scotland works with service users with learning disabilities and family carers across the country to help them campaign better.

Campaigning needs to be about:

- Getting people together
- Agreeing on a common set of aims
- Getting publicity about the concerns that people have
- Being resolute about changing the minds of politicians

Legal action can work best when its part of a campaign that highlights the problems with poorly delivered personalisation programmes.

Campaigning isn't about being rude and it isn't about being troublemakers. It is about standing up for what is right. Campaigning is about doing the right thing.

The Learning Disability Alliance Scotland can work with groups of people with learning disabilities and family carers across Scotland who are concerned about what personalisation might mean to them. Get in touch with us at [ldasscotland@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ldasscotland@blueyonder.co.uk) or 07920 141823.

'Our 23-year old son Mark has profound and complex learning disabilities. Up till now, he's been able to live quite independently but he needs 24-hour care since he has no sense of danger. That's meant 14 hours of one-to-one care and the rest two-to-one care. His package was assessed as costing £120, 000 a year. However, after being assessed for self-directed support, that was reduced to £60, 000! After we complained to Sense Scotland, Mark's service provider, it was increased to £78, 000.

We've always been involved in Mark's life but the Council now says that is purely a matter for them and Sense Scotland as the provider, so as parents we're not involved. Because they've reduced the number of carers, it means that Mark will now have to spend time with other service users, whether he wants to or not, either in their flats or in his. He'll have no choice about this. He's not used to being with so many other people and he also likes the privacy of his own flat, so we're very worried about how he might react.

**The National Care Standards talk about choice and dignity but I can't see much of that here.**

Sense Scotland say they think they can manage but they're not sure! It's been suggested that we go down the road of applying for legal guardianship for Mark but why should we have to do that?'

## Annual Reviews

Service Users/Carers & Families/Workers – Glasgow City Council have said that everyone who got a personalised budget in 2011 will have a full annual review in 2012.

This is a key opportunity to seek to address the some of the deficiencies in the 2011 process. We advise you to find out as soon as possible when the review that affects you or someone you care for will be held. This will give you a chance to prepare and gather your evidence.

There must be an opportunity for service users to state their case or have one advocated on their behalf. Learning Disability Alliance Scotland and the Coalition of Carers can help, their contact details are on page 2.

# What does Personalisation and Self-Directed Support Mean to Carers?

Choice and Control – That's not something many people will argue against when it comes to deciding what help you need to live your life. And that's what personalisation and self-directed support is about isn't it?

For unpaid carers their primary concern is most often accessing quality services for the person they care for, whether that is a son looking for help to assist an ageing parent as they struggle to live independently, or a mum who wants the best for their child who has a disability.

Those of us who work in the voluntary, social or health care sector are used to hearing the latest buzz words of the day. At the moment its all co-production, self-management, shifting the balance of care and of course personalisation and self-directed support. But for many people who use the services we are describing, these phrases are mostly bewildering or meaningless, that is if they have heard of them in the first place.

If you ask a service user or a carer what type of social care provision they want to see developed – and believe me, many people have asked them, many times – they will invariably answer with a good common sense answer like

'Services which offer me what I want, when I want it' or 'I don't want to have to go to bed at 8.00pm at night – let me choose the time' or 'Don't tell me I can only have a break on a Wednesday at 2.00pm, What about a Friday night – don't I deserve to have a life?'

Not a buzz word in sight and yet it makes perfect sense, and come to think of it – isn't that what personalisation is? Or what it's meant to be anyway.

Because all these buzz words mean the same thing. They mean people should have a say in how we make the best use of our limited resources. They mean that we need to focus on what people can do rather than on what they can't do. They mean that we need to recognise that people are the experts in their own lives and must be at the heart of developing the services which support them.

People have been asking for this for years and finally its all been rolled up into one

word – personalisation. So why does it strike fear in the hearts of so many?

The answer is – because of the way it is being implemented in some areas of Scotland. We know that local authorities are facing serious cuts and are looking to make savings, they have also been tasked with delivering on a massive programme of change which will re-shape the way services are provided to people.

In Glasgow it would appear these changes are being rushed through at breakneck speed with little thought to how they will affect people and with even less thought to the long term



consequences of getting it wrong. It's our understanding that Glasgow is looking to achieve a 20% reduction in costs through the introduction of personalisation and self-directed support, despite strong evidence that savings are not achieved in the short term when self-directed support is implemented properly.

So what have carers been telling us about how Glasgow's policy is affecting them and where do they appear to be going wrong?

Firstly, carers tell us have not been properly consulted about the changes. Yes there have been meetings with council representatives and carers, but consultation does not mean, we will tell you what we are doing as it is happening. It means we will LISTEN to your point of view and it will influence how we do things.

Similarly, carers feel that they have not been properly involved in the Self Evaluation process. Ticking a box at the end of a ques-

tionnaire does not count for involvement.

The Government's own Carers Strategy has recently recognised carers as 'equal partners in care' This is in recognition of the fact that they provide more care than the entire health and workforce combined and save the government £7.68 billion a year in doing so. Local authorities have a duty to involve carers when assessing the needs of the person they care for, a duty which Glasgow seems to be failing to deliver on.

We are now seeing people's care packages being eroded, despite there being no change to their assessed needs. And who is expected to pick up the burden? – unpaid carers.

All this is incredibly short sighted. Carers are the lynch-pin of our health and social care system. They give in abundance and in my experience they ask for very little in return.

We are already seeing carers' short break services being reduced, in some cases cut by 50% or more, forcing people to cope for longer without being able to re-charge their batteries.

So now as well as the usual demands placed on them, many carers in Glasgow are anxiously waiting to hear what

**the final outcome will be for them and the people they care for, once their care package has been 'personalised' or 'cut' (which would be a more accurate description).**

For some who have been through the process they are now facing another long battle as they make their way through the complaints process, or consider making a legal challenge.

So to go back to the beginning. All of us want to see more choice and control for people and the best use being made of our limited resources.

By promoting personalisation alongside a cuts agenda Glasgow City Council has undermined the positive outcomes associated with self-directed support. In order for them to achieve their stated objectives, they need to take stock and listen to the concerns of service users, carers and care providers.

'In learning disability services, implementation of a personalised approach (self-directed support) was progressing. Around 1800 people who used services were in the process of having their care packages reviewed.

Senior managers were confident that they had clearly communicated to all concerned that the process was driven by the imperative in the current austerity climate of making cost savings, by the need to re-direct resources more fairly to those who most needed them, and by a desire to deliver better outcomes.

However, almost all carers, staff, providers and partner agencies we met were discontent - to varying degrees - with the level and nature of communication with the service. They were also concerned about the process, the speed of change and the reductions in many care packages.

Many of those involved perceived the local authority's motive as primarily or solely that of saving money rather than that of improving services. These perceptions suggest a need to re-engage with those affected by, or involved in, delivering the approach and to spell out unambiguously the need to make savings, to achieve greater equity and to use whatever budget is available in a manner that maximises service user and carer choice and control. Without a greater level of ownership of these aims the approach is at risk of faltering'.

*Glasgow City Council Scrutiny Report, April 2011, SCSWIS, p9*