

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: PHYSICAL STANDARDS FOR ADULT CARE HOMES
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 25 October 2001	Ref: DOD/EOC	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Following a process of consultation this report advises members of a notification received from the Scottish Executive, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, regarding proposed future building standards and training standards. The relevance of these standards in relation to this Council's residential homes for all adult client groupings is commented upon.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act received Royal Assent in July 2001. This confirmed the establishment of a Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care which will take over inspection and registration responsibilities currently undertaken by local authorities and health boards and will extend the range of services subject to statutory regulation. The Commission will inspect against national standards based on outcomes for service users. A third tranche of proposed standards is currently out for consultation.
- 2.2. In May 2001 the Scottish Executive issued a consultation paper entitled "The Future for Care Homes in Scotland". North Lanarkshire Council's response was presented at Social Work Committee of 23 August 2001. Whilst consultation on future care standards was welcomed it was considered that that the consultation paper failed to adequately address time-scales and processes for implementation, failed to distinguish differences in types of adult services and gave no regard to cost implications.
- 2.3. This notification from ministers is significant in that, for the first time, indication is given of expected building standards and of qualification criteria and ratios for care workers.

3. KEY PROPOSALS

- 3.1. As from 1 April 2002 residential services provided by the Social Work Department will be subject to registration. This information provided by the Executive makes it clear that, despite not previously being subject to registration, existing services provided by local authorities will, for the purposes of compliance with new building and staffing standards, be treated as existing registered services.
- 3.2. The proposals distinguish between standards immediately expected in relation to new build properties, and those for existing services.

3.3. For **new homes**

- Everyone who wants a single room to have one.
- All places to be provided in single rooms with 12.5 sq metres or more usable floor space, excluding en suite facilities.
- Communal space of at least 3.9 sq metres must be provided per resident, excluding corridors and circulation areas.
- Multi-floor homes must provide a resident operated passenger lift.
- All doors to service users' accommodation to be fitted with locking systems suited to the users' capabilities which are accessible to staff in emergencies.
- All toilets and bathrooms/shower rooms to be lockable, with an emergency override.

In addition

- Staff ratios and skill mix must be sufficient to meet the needs of residents and will be determined on an individual home basis by the Commission and be reviewed at regular intervals.
- The ratio of trained to untrained direct care staff must be half by 2005 (at least SVQ level 2 or equivalent).

3.4. For **existing homes** the criteria outlined above at 3.3 in relation to communal space, door locks, staff mix and training will apply. Also:

- by 2007 everyone who wants a single room to have one.
- all places provided in single rooms of 10.25 sq metres usable floor space or more, excluding en suite facilities.
- where two people choose to share, the room should have 16 sq metres usable floor space or more (excluding en suite facilities).
- where existing bedroom and en suite provision cannot meet expected standards but is otherwise of good quality, specific criteria may be agreed with Commission registration and inspection staff to allow some facilities which do not meet these standards to remain in use.

3.5. There is no requirement to provide en suite facilities, although it is noted that many providers are doing so, or planning to do so to meet changing expectations of service users.

4. CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. The Executive has addressed several of the key issues raised through the consultation process. In particular, time-scales for existing services to achieve a total provision of single bedrooms has been extended to the year 2007, and there is increased scope identified for consultation and negotiation regarding rooms which are highly suitable for client use but may be just below required size specification. Both decisions are welcomed. Specifications in relation to bedroom sizes and circulation space are in line with current standards applied to registered services. The proposals do not clearly specify staffing requirements and it is disappointing, given the increasing complexity of the care task, that staff training requirements are being set at SVQ level 2 and not at level 3.
- 4.2. In due course a more detailed evaluation of the proposed standards and of projected costings for their implementation will be needed. The standards will influence the Social Work Department's future strategies in relation both to local authority and independent sector residential services, particularly with regard to time-scales and funding for change. Furthermore the findings of the joint officer members report "A Home for the Future" and current training strategies for residential care staff will be informed by these proposals.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the content of this report;
- (ii) remit the Director of Social Work to bring forward further reports relevant to changes in expected service standards and their implementation.



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11 September 2001

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