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Adult Support & Protection
National Learning and Development Network

Welcome

ASPire February 2026

Online launch of the National Adult Support and Protection Learning and Development Framework

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National Learning and Development Network

Brenda Walker
National ASP Coordinator

ASPire Resource Hub: Iriss - ASPire ASP Resource Hub

Previous ASPire recordings from November 2023 – available on the ASPire Resource Hub:
All ASPire Session Recordings-from 2023 onwards

National ASP Coordinator Newsletter Sign Up (next edition due out 30th May): NASPC Newsletter

National Adult Support and Protection Learning and Development Framework

Launch of the Framework - ASPire Event

Wednesday 25th February 2026

WELCOME

Jamie Aarons - Senior Professional Social Work Adviser (Adults)| National Social Work Agency Unit | OCSWA | Scottish Government

Brenda Walker - National ASP Coordinator
Iriss

- Who is in the room today?
- Challenges of delivering information to people with differing levels of experience with ASP
- Timings

ADULT SUPPORT AND PROTECTION

Workforce Survey Contributions to ASP Learning and Development Framework

Adult Support and Protection Policy Team
Scottish Government

Based on ASP Workforce Data 2023 & 2024

ASP: Workforce Data

Workforce Survey

- To better understand the position of local authorities to:
  - Fulfil statutory responsibilities
  - Implement changes within the updated ASP Code of Practice
  - Support initial thinking around local and national ASP workforce planning

•**“Council Officer” refers to those defined by Section 53 (1) of the Adult Support and Protection Act**:

•*A council must not authorise a person to perform the functions of a council officer under sections 7 to 10 of the Act (investigative functions) unless the person:*

- *is registered in the part of the SSSC register maintained in respect of social workers or social service workers or is the subject of an equivalent registration;*
- *is registered as an occupational therapist in the register maintained under article 5(1) (establishment and maintenance of register) of the Health Professions Order 2001; or*
- *is a nurse; and*
- *the person has at least 12 months' post qualifying experience of identifying, assessing and managing adults at risk.*

Survey limitations

- Did not capture whole time equivalent data
- It does not reflect the proportion of time spent on ASP activity
- It does not reflect the capacity to undertake ASP work
  - Figures need to be considered in the context of the wider capacity of the social work workforce
  - Resultant headcount figure is not a complete reflection of Council Officer capacity.

Links with ASP administrative data

- ASP Workforce considerations appear valued (100% response rate)
- The delivery of ASP services varies widely across the country

Demand on ASP services is increasing and has been on an upward trajectory for years.

LSIs can vary widely in scale and scope, impacting on the demands placed on the workforce

We lack robust national qualitative or quantitative evidence about the workforce that is expected to meet this demand. The implementation of the quarterly ASP Minimum Dataset brings improved data on ASP processes.

This information should be complemented by a better understanding of workforce resource and training needs.

ASP Workforce Arrangements

- Wide variation in Council Officer (CO) remit
- Variation in professionals fulfilling role of CO
    - **Training implications**

Oversight Arrangements highly variable

- Over 1/3 had paraprofessionals undertaking S4 inquiries
- Significant number of local authority areas had first-tier managers overseeing ASP activity who were not trained as COs
    - Inconsistent oversight generally by COs
    - Led to development of resource: Oversight of Non-Council Officers | Iriss
- Some local self-evaluation activity triggered to review CO and non-CO remits

Links to Local & National ASP Improvement

- Local ASP workforce **self-evaluation/audit** encouraged:
  - Consider data against referral rates; Investigative activity; Case Conference figures, etc and the proportion of time that COs have to devote to ASP activity
  - Utilise local Ntl Minimum Dataset indicators to inform training needs re: harm types; demographics, etc.
  - Utilise ASP Quality Improvement Framework (QIF) to inform workforce planning/training needs
  - Scrutinise the supervision of those involved in ASP activity and the training provided to those in supervisory roles
  - Senior leaders should assure themselves that their **entire** ASP workforce has the skills, support, tools, and capacity to fulfil statutory responsibilities underpinned by trauma informed practice and ASP principles

Council Officer and ASP Training

- Questions related to:
  - Frequency of CO training
  - Approximate duration of training
  - Refresher training
  - Number of people waiting to become COs (if identifiable)
  - Whether areas think their training offer and availability is sufficient

Council Officer & ASP Training – Key Findings

- **Significant variation** across local authorities in:
  - Ability to identify numbers awaiting CO training
  - Size of waiting lists and alignment between supply and need
  - Frequency and duration of CO training
  - Number of annual training cohorts

- **Training capacity challenges:**
  - Workforce movement increases demand for new CO training
  - Some areas train only when resources or trainers become available

- **Refresher training:**
  - Most require refresher training; others strongly recommend it
  - Typical refresher cycle varies

- **Broader implications:**
  - Need for improved understanding of ASP training requirements across multi-agency roles
  - Importance of ensuring all professionals in ASP pathways receive role-appropriate training
  - Clear requests for greater clarity (prescription) around ASP Training nationally
  - Gaps in training quality assurance (both content and impact)

Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Report on 2024 Workforce Data: Social Service Sector

Raw numbers rather than Whole Time Equivalents

Not a complete return and significant caveats to data quality

Links to L&D Framework: Call for local retention of CO lists

Outstanding gaps in knowledge of paraprofessionals' roles in ASP and accompanying L&D

"Workforce planning" is much more than recruitment

Brenda Walker

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The Story so far…….

2023 - ASP Workforce Survey

2024 - Publication of CP L&D Framework

2024/25

- Request to consider a National ASP L&D Framework from NIG - Service User Voice Subgroup*
- Multi-agency Writing Group set up - input from colleagues involved in CP Framework development
- Multi-agency Stakeholders Group Set up - 27 National Organisations
- 2 open drop-in sessions - very supportive of development of an ASP Framework - providing better national clarity and consistency re expectations regarding ASP L&D
- Survey to Stakeholders Group
- Various side meetings with colleagues with specialist knowledge and how their area of expertise might link to this work
- Wide Consultation exercise - over summer 2025
- Results analysed and discussed by the Writing Group - recommendations on the final version made to the Stakeholders Group - ratified jointly by 2 Groups
- Submitted to Scottish Government for internal processes
- Published on the Scottish Government Website - 19th February 2026

National Adult Support & Protection Learning & Development Framework 7 MINUTE BRIEFING

Background: In 2023 a WorkForce Survey of Social Work staff involved with Adult Support and Protection (ASP) highlighted the need for more national clarity and consistency in relation to training expectations for staff and volunteers concerning ASP Learning and Development.

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

What other Frameworks are out there? In 2024 the National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development in Scotland was published. Some agencies also have their own L&D Frameworks and some local work might be required to ensure there is appropriate 'read across' all the relevant L&D strategies etc..

Are there resources out there to assist with ASP Learning & Development? Most local Health & Social Care Partnerships and some single agencies - have a training calendar which includes training on Adult Support and Protection which can be accessed by a variety of organisations. You can also access resources (including some ASP training resources/recordings etc.) Click here to access the ASPire Hub Resources

Who is the National ASP L&D Framework intended for? The Framework is intended to provide improved national clarity and consistency in relation to ASP Learning & Development for all workers and volunteers from all Scottish organisations.

Why does my organisation need to concern itself with ASP Learning & Development? Adult Support and Protection is everyone's business and all staff and volunteers across Scotland should know what to do if they are concerned that an adult is at risk of harm Click here to access a helpful background document

What are the Workforce Levels? The Framework provides detailed information in relation to the five Workforce levels (see graphic) - organisations can map which of their staff groups would best fit into which Workforce Level. **Click here to access the full L&D Framework**

https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781806435319 | February 2026

And now the work begins ……

- An in person launch - 19.02.26
- An on-line launch - (today's session)
- An invitation to all agencies from across sectors to provide feedback on their implementation challenges /successes/gaps identified etc.
- Three early adopter and feedback sites - feedback via agreed template at 3 and 9 months post publication
- At approximately 10 months post publication - reconvene the Stakeholders Reference Group and the Framework Writing Group to discuss feedback both formal and informal
- One year post publication - 1st Review of the Guidance planned to incorporate early lessons learned and plan to address resource gaps etc. identified

Thank you!

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Thank you for attending

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